

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF CONTENT BASED LEARNING FOR ESP IN HIGHER EDUCATION (IN THE FIELD OF BIOLOGY)

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Annotation: In this article The most important difference lies in the learners and their purposes for learning English. ESP students are usually adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular job-related functions. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required.

Keywords: student, engineer, nurse, categorizations, namely proficiency objectives, knowledge objectives, affective objectives, norms of society, values, orientations.

English for specific purposes (ESP) teaching conducted to equip learners with a certain English proficiency level for a situation where the language is going to be used, termed target needs. Since it provides instructional objectives, materials and methods developed on the basis of learners' needs and potential of interests, from the early 1960s, ESP has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of English foreign language. Nowadays, ESP is not only applied for adults of English language learners who have mastered basic level of English proficiency or those with specific purposes of learning English, but also is adopted for English language learners learning general English.

Many definitions are given to ESP. Some people describe ESP as simply being the teaching of English for any purpose that could be specified. Others, however, are more precise, describing it as the teaching of English used in academic studies or the teaching of English for vocational or professional purposes, or as the teaching of English for non-native speakers of English who learn English on specific purposes. Hutchinson & Waters (1987, p.19) define ESP as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learners' reason in learning. Robinson (1991, p.1) viewed ESP as an enterprise involving education, training, and practice and drawing upon three major realisms of knowledge namely language, pedagogy, and students'/participants' specialist area of interest. Richards & Rodger (2001, p.107) saw ESP as a movement that seeks to serve the language needs of learners who need English in order to carry out specific roles (e.g. student, engineer, nurse) and who need to acquire content and real-world skills through the medium of it rather than master the language for its own sake. The more detail definition of ESP comes from Strevens (1998) who defined ESP as a particular case of general category of special purpose language teaching. He further revealed that the definition of ESP is needed to distinguish between four absolute and two variable characteristics. The four absolute characteristics of ESP consist of English language teaching, they are:

1. design to meet specific needs of the learners,
 2. related to content (i.e. in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities,
 3. centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc and analysis of this discourse, and
 4. differentiated to General English. While the two variable characteristics are ESP may be, but is not necessarily:
 1. restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only),
 2. not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology. (Strevens, 1998, p.1-2)
- Dudley-Evans (1998) improved the definition of ESP offered by Strevens substantially by removing the absolute characteristics that ESP is

“in contrast with ‘General English’, and has revised and increased the number of variable characteristics. The definition of ESP, therefore, in terms of absolute and variable characteristics given by Dudley-Evans:

Absolute Characteristics

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners,
2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves,
3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in term of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse, and genre.

Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level,
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students

5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems (Dudley-Evans, 1998) It is agreed that the most primary account of ESP is that any decision made in designing language teaching programs should hinge on the learners’ needs for learning English. Related to this, the word “specific” in ESP has different interpretation along with the development of this area. In 1960’s it meant a list of technical vocabulary of a given field or profession (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.9; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p.1; Smoak, 2003, p.23). In 1980’s up to now it refers to the learners’ needs and interests (Stevens, 1988, p.2).

Based on the definitions given, ESP is understood to be about preparing learners to use English within academic, professional, or workplace environments, where the language is going to be used. In ESP, English is learnt not for its own sake or for the sake of gaining a general education but to smooth the path to entry or greater linguistic efficiency in particular environments.

An objective is a description of a desired pattern of behavior for the learner to demonstrate. To formulate objectives for ESP teaching, the assumption should be considered is that ESP teaching as a benign and neutral operation that simply set out to help non-native speakers of English cope with language demand in their target environments that of which leads to such questions not only related to objectives formulated for the teaching, but the critical approach to ESP teaching as well. Stern in Basturkmen (2006) distinguished language education objectives into four categorizations, namely proficiency objectives, knowledge objectives, affective objectives, and transfer objectives. Proficiency objectives concern mastery of skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Knowledge objectives concern the acquisition of linguistic and cultural information. Linguistic knowledge objectives include language analysis and awareness of the systematic aspects of language. Cultural knowledge objectives cover control of sociocultural rules (mastery of the norms of society, values, and orientations) and also the ability to recognize culturally significant facts, knowing what is acceptable and what is not. Affective objectives concern the

development of positive feelings toward the subject study. They include attitudes toward attaining second language competencies, sociocultural competencies and language learning. Transfer objectives concern the ability to generalize from what has been learnt in one situation to other situations. The four types of objectives represent four different orientations to teaching ESP, orientation that aim to more that reveal subject-specific language use. Competency-based occupational education can be described as an approach focused on developing the ability to perform the activities of an occupational and function to the standards expected of those employed in that occupation. In language education, teaching oriented toward this objective presents language operationally in terms of what people do with language and the skills they need to do it. Courses are organized around core skills and competencies that also subdivided into microskills and more specific competencies. This orientation can be categorized as a proficiency objective, according to Stern's classification (1992).

How many types of English for specific purposes do we have and what does each of them study in particular? What are the expectations of ESP learners who attend such courses? Regarding to the expectations, learners have at least three kinds of expectations:

1. Cultural-educational
2. Personal and individual
3. Academic/occupational

The first two have a close relationship with the learner's own background and his view of himself as a learner, his expectation of success, his optimism or pessimism about the ESP course in terms of what he expects

to learn. The last ones relate to the branch of ESP, which represents the type of ESP. These sets of expectations (academic or occupational) are the ones most commonly expressed in advance, when a needs-analysis is carried out. With reference to "ELT" these two kinds of expectations are mainly two types of ESP according to the motivation, position, and status of the learners which become reasons of learning English: English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Kennedy and Bolitho (1984) add more type of ESP according to the need of scientists and technologists. This type is called English for Science and Technology (EST).

The first two types are as follow:

1. English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) EOP is taught in such a situation in which learners need to use English as part of their work or profession (Kennedy and Bolitho, 1984: 4). There will be differences in such courses depending on whether the learners are learning English before; during or after the time they are being trained in their job or profession. The content of an English program for someone actually engaged, for example, on a secretarial course - with its acquisition of practical skills and theoretical knowledge - is going to be different from a program for someone who is already a qualified secretary but now needs to operate in English.

2. English for Academic Purposes EAP is taught generally within educational institutions to students requiring English in their studies. The language taught may be based on particular disciplines at higher levels of education when the student is specializing (in study) or intends to specialize (pre-study) in a particular subject. In cases such as an overseas student studying in university level, the learning of study skills (listening to lectures, taking notes, writing reports,

reading textbooks) will probably form a major part of the student's English course. Frequently in such a situation it is common to find the aims and methods of the English language department at variance with the requirements of science and technology departments, the former still concerned with drilling conversational English and manipulating structural patterns while the latter require swift and effective reading skills. However, in these situations, there is a need to see the role of English basically in terms of its providing accessibility to knowledge contained in textbooks, periodicals, and journals, reports, and abstracts (Mackay and Mountford, 1978:7). Further they will have to involve in presentation of new knowledge such as papers, university theses, longer reports, articles in scientific journals, and others.

3. Characteristic features of ESP course
Another thing that should not be forgotten while dealing with such courses is the organization of course which means that should be a different curriculum with different types of exercises and different materials. Why is organizing an ESP course important and how can it be implemented? Organizing the ESP course is very important step to achieve a satisfying goal in the course. There exist many factors playing a crucial role in organizing ESP course without them the learning process would not lead to effectiveness. The term "specific" in ESP refers to a specific purpose for which English is learnt and teacher should be familiar with. He or she should be able to find an answer to what Hutchinson and Waters (1992) describe as "language description". The "language description" involves questions, e.g. What topic areas will need to be covered? What does the student need to learn? What aspects of language will be needed and how will they be described? (Hutchinson and Waters, 1992, p 19, 2 2). Hutchinson and Waters (1992) speak about "learning theory" which provides the theoretical basis for the methodology, by helping us to understand how people learn. (Hutchinson and Waters, 1992, p 2 3). It is natural that learning strategies vary and corresponds with learners' groups, their age, level or reason they study. The way adults acquire language is differ from children, the group of advanced expects different attitude from beginners and teachers determine which aspects of ESP learning will be focused on to meet learners' needs and expectations successfully. Hutchinson and Waters (1992) point out another aspect affecting the E SP course as well. It relates to learner's surrounding and discusses the questions of "who", "why", "where" and "when" connected with the nature of particular target and learning situation. They describe them as 'needs analysis'. (p 22)

Conclusion

The key to this assessment is presenting learners with tasks that resemble in some ways to sort of things they may have to do with the language in real life. Relating to this, ESP approach in testing should be based on the analysis of learners' target language use situations and specialist knowledge of using English for real communication. This is in line with the ESP test criteria that a throughout coverage of typical real life communication events would, firstly, result in the selection and creation of suitable test tasks, secondly, facilitate a more integrated and thematically linked assessment, in which test tasks authentically characterize the reality of the learners, and, not lastly, such tests would have higher validity (Douglas, 2000, p.10).

In place of the conclusion, it should be said that the role of the teacher and the pupil, that is, the educator in increasing the effectiveness of education in the teaching of biology is one. Traditional education, which has

maintained its dominance in the modern educational process, presupposes the establishment of the pupil's gross teaching and the cognitive activity of the pupil as a passive listener. In the organization of educational work, a secondary schoolboy is prescribed, the independence of the students is neglected, the educational activity is managed by the teacher. The classification of ESP courses creates numerous problems by failing to capture fluid nature of the various types of ESP teaching and the degree of overlap between "common-core" EAP and EBP and General English - e.g. Business English can be seen as mediating language between the technicalities of particular business and the language of the general public, which puts it in a position between English for General Purposes (EGP) and specialist English. Therefore, some authors suggest (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998) the presentation of the whole of ELT should be on a continuum that runs from General English courses to very specific ESP courses as illustrated in Table 1. Regarding positions 2 and 3, it is only the overall context of the program that decides whether a particular course is classified as ESP or not. At position 4, the work is specified in terms of the skills (it is important to choose appropriate skills to focus on - e.g., some doctors will need to read some medical journal, others will need oral skills to talk with their patients) taught, but the groups are not homogenous from one discipline or profession (scientists, engineers, lawyers, doctors), so the individual members can need texts dealing with their specific profession [2, p. 127]. Teaching materials prepared need contexts acceptable and understandable to all branches. At position 5 the course becomes really specific – the key feature of such courses is that teaching is flexible and tailored to individual or group needs. Special training as a teacher of a foreign or second language. The complexity of this training which constitutes the core of most teacher training courses can be made simpler if the distinction is to be made between three aspects of it. They are: 1) The skills component which includes three different skills required by the teacher:

a) command of the language the teacher is teaching – this component must ensure that teacher's command of foreign language is at least adequate for class purposes; b) teaching techniques and classroom activities – the major part of teacher training is to assimilate a great body of effective techniques; c) the management of learning – it is a crucial part of teacher's classroom skills to learn how to assess from moment to moment the progress of each individual in the class and how to manage the classroom activities so that most able learners are not frustrated by being held back, while the slowest are not depressed by being left behind. The skills component requires practical training in performing the skills themselves. Using skills as a framework of ESP, ESP teachers are provided with the necessary knowledge and tools to deal with their own students' specializations. It should be remembered - ESP teachers are not specialists in the field, but in teaching English, their subject is English for the profession but not the profession in English. A professional ESP teacher must be able to switch from one professional field to another without being obliged to spend months on getting started. The material should be provided by the professors or experts in the subject. It should always be authentic (the main purpose of teaching skills is to enable students to deal with authentic information despite their level of English), up-to-date (the informational exchange is growing more intense), and relevant for the students' specializations (they ought to be given the information representative for their target language use situation) [3, p. 147-160].

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