

BASIC FEATURES OF ESP

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Teaching English as a specific language has been a focus of many recent studies. The most quoted definitions in this sphere, ‘ESP must be seen as an approach not as a product. ESP is not a particular kind of language or methodology, nor does it consist of a particular type of teaching material. Understood properly, it is an approach to language learning, which is based on learner need.

All ESP is claimed to be based on the key question: Why does this learner need to learn a foreign language? A lot more other questions arise from this, and some of them will relate to the learners themselves, some to the nature of the language the learners will need to operate, some to the given learning context [5].

The basic division in characteristics in ESP is mostly suggested as absolute characteristics and variable characteristics.

Absolute characteristics suggest that ESP consists of English language teaching which is:

- designed to meet specified needs of the learner;
- related in content (i.e. in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
- centred on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc., and analysis of this discourse;
- in contrast with general English.

Variable characteristics ESP may be, but is not necessarily:

- restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only);
- not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology’;
- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- 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;

- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students [1; 2].

Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems'. Maley (2007) also states that 'Since then [i.e. the 1970s] ESP... has seen the hiving off of English for Business Purposes and English for Academic Purposes as largely independent focuses. Nonetheless there has been a steady demand for courses related to the immediate needs of students rather than to the ENOP (English for No Obvious Purposes) offered in most secondary education institutions' [3].

Most general English courses are satisfied with general context of language proficiency. In ESP teaching training gap helps to organise the educational process more thoroughly, adapting to the specific needs of learners, which makes the learning process learner's centered. So, it is more motivating if it is related to the reality in profession.

The main reasons for necessity of providing the needs analysis are outlined in the study of Richards (2001). The author claims that needs analysis in language teaching can be used for a number of different purposes, for example:

"To find out what language skills a learner needs in order to perform a particular role, such as sales manager, tour guide or university student; to help determine if an existing course adequately addresses the needs of potential students; to determine which students from a group are most in need of training in particular language skills; to identify a change of direction that people in a reference group feel is important; to identify a gap between what students are able to do and what they need to be able to do; to collect information about a particular problem learner are experiencing" [4].

References

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5. *Strevens, P.* (1988). *The learner and teacher of ESP. ESP in the classroom: Practice and evaluation,* 31, 91-119