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## Some Problems Of Teaching English For Special Purposes At University

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### ABSTRACT

Today, it is one of the most crucial tasks to discuss what to teach and how to teach a foreign language taking into account the objective social and professional needs of future specialists in our country. The need for businessmen, tradesmen, engineers, scientists and scholars all over the world must know English as it is the international means of exchange of information and experience.

In this article, the main problems concerned to teaching English for Specific

Purposes at university level are discussed.

### KEYWORDS

Aims and tasks of ESP; English for Specific Purposes (ESP); social and professional needs; teaching ESP course; university level.

### INTRODUCTION

By teaching ESP courses in higher education, our students learn the specialized vocabulary so that they are able to read and find information related to their field of areas in English. ESP course is oriented towards mastering skills for professional

communication. We know, there are many subdivisions of ESP. For instance, English for Business Purposes, English for Medical Purposes, English for Occupational Purpose, English for Computer students, Business English, English for Agricultural students,

English for Accounting, English for the students of Psychology. These subdivisions are based on the needs' analysis to meet the significance mentioned above. Since ESP is intended for specific disciplines, the methodology used in class should be designed in such a way to fulfill the learners' need. Thus, the primary goal of the ESP course is to teach professional communicative competence that is the ability to communicate in English according to the situation, purpose and specific roles of the participants. The ESP course builds on and extends the foundations for accurate communication and extends the learner's grammatical, lexical and functional skills.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

According to H. Radford, the structure and content of language curricula, when modern languages were first introduced into universities, were much influenced by the need to achieve academic respectability (Radford, 1985) and it is the most frequent concept of teaching ESP in universities. According to Maddock, the ability to speak the language is not emphasized as much as the ability to write, and, above all, the ability to read the language. Language curricula is therefore dominated by the systematic study of grammar, the regular carrying out of translation exercises into and out of language, the close study of set literary and science texts, the broad study of philological studies of the language (Maddock, 1994).

There is a difficulty while teaching ESP at university level is that the first-year students have different language background. From our point of view, the best way out in such situation is a modular type of English course curricula structure, but this is not quite acceptable in our universities because this

type of curricula demands great reconstructions in a university programs on the whole. What we can really do is to introduce diagnostic tests followed by an introductory English course if there is a need for students. The goal of the diagnostic test is to check students' knowledge in English and to see if students are ready to take on a Basic Course of ESP. The objects of test are lexical, grammatical and reading skills. Usually the test is based on the 400 most frequent words of school vocabulary / lexis inherent in the Basic Learner's Course, about 15 school grammatical items and 2 texts. The results of the test will show whether a student entering the university is ready to take on the Basic Course of ESP or not. As the result, the diagnostic test shows if there is a need in an introductory course. The introductory course should be devised as a transition course from the general English school course to the university course in ESP. The goal of the course is to review key language features taught at school as well as to form and develop reading and speaking skills of the ESP course. So that is one more teaching problem in ESP at university level. Another important aspect to be taken into consideration is distinguishing between passive, aimed at recognition (reading, comprehension) and active, aimed at production (speaking, writing) forms of language use. The distinction is essential because these two forms require different means and methods of teaching and – most importantly –different teaching materials (S. Ter-Minasova, 1994). Teaching methods must be learner oriented. In other words, ESP is concerned, first and foremost, with satisfying the real needs of the students and not with revealing the knowledge of the teacher. The intensive and efficient teaching of grammar, vocabulary, translation, etc. must be scientifically grounded and concentrate only on those items which students actually

need for the purposes specified at the beginning of the university course. This is an important statement which in theory is universally accepted but in practice is hardly ever followed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the challenges and problems in teaching ESP at university level is that the first-year students often have different language background. In this regard, we can introduce diagnostic tests followed by an introductory English course in order to know the needs of the students. The goal of the diagnostic test is to check students' knowledge in English and to prepare the teaching materials if students are ready to take on a Basic Course of ESP. The objects of test are lexical, grammatical and reading skills. Usually the test is based on the 400 most frequent words of school vocabulary / lexis inherent in the Basic Learner's Course, about 15 school grammatical items and 2 texts. The results of the test will show whether a student entering the university is ready to take on the Basic Course of ESP or not. As the result, the diagnostic test shows if there is a need in an introductory course. The introductory course should be devised as a transition course from the general English school course to the university course in ESP. The goal of the course is to review key language features taught at school as well as to form and develop reading and speaking skills of the ESP course. So that is one more teaching problem in ESP at university level.

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Another point to remember while teaching ESP nowadays is that it is necessary to consider the changes in the nature of students' need and the context in which they live, study and work. In any case the syllabus of ESP must improve the students' skills in all the aspects of language activities. The goal is the development of professional qualifications, for practical training abroad, for work in joint ventures, etc.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, to make good progress, the students have to practice various language activities, related to reception, production, interaction (or mediation, on particular interpreting or translating) and each of these types of activity being possible in oral or written forms.

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