

English for Specific Purposes: An Overview: Definitions, Characteristics and Development

Omnia Ibrahim Mohamed^{1,2} & Nowar Nizar Alani²

¹ Sadat Academy for Management Sciences, Cairo, Egypt

² RAK Medical and Health Sciences University, Ras Al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

Correspondence: Omnia Ibrahim Mohamed, RAK Medical and Health Sciences University, Ras Al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates; Sadat Academy for Management Sciences, Cairo, Egypt.

Received: October 20, 2022

Accepted: November 15, 2022

Online Published: November 18, 2022

doi: 10.5539/elt.v15n12p28

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n12p28>

Abstract

This paper discusses the importance of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and traces its historical growth. It comprises the attempts of linguists to define it, each from a different prospective. This review also attempts to find out the purpose of ESP and its scope and how ESP courses are different from General English (GE) courses as well as the features and the requirements of an ESP course. It also discusses the needs analysis that is a crucial requirement for an ESP course and the importance of ESP courses for students as well as professionals. It discusses the teaching and learning process of an ESP course and highlights the fact that the creation, planning and structuring of an ESP course is a very challenging mission because it has to be tailored to the requirements of its learners.

Keywords: English for specific purposes (ESP), General English (GE), needs analysis, English language teaching (ELT), English as a second language (ESL), English as a foreign language (EFL)

1. Introduction

The predominant use of English as a method of international communication is constantly expanding. This was mirrored in several areas as English started to be used in the business field. To achieve these exact and special goals, many nations around the world, including Arab countries, have presented and used English language courses in all stages of education, and presented ESP courses as early as the university level. It is the common teaching method that instructors tend to use to be able to meet the special and exact demands and needs of the students according to their major or profession. Therefore, researchers continuous attempt to understand this significant branch of English language teaching (ELT) has become mandatory.

In Arab countries, like Egypt and The United Arab Emirates, ESP has become one of the most important branches of English language that has become a common denominator specifically in the foundation year at universities. The aim is to help students in developing their professional vocabulary as well as to develop their professional language and to graduate students who are ready to merge in the employment market and to facilitate this merge without feeling that they cannot cope with the market or the career they have chosen to join. Furthermore, it can be noticed that the importance of English language in general and ESP in particular has become prominent in Arab countries, which was not the case in previous years. It was not until the eighties that ESP was acknowledged contrary to America and Europe where it was acknowledged earlier.

The term special or “specific” in ESP means “the exact objective” for learning English language. Learners study the English that is related to their major or field in which they are involved in work or education. This way they can immediately utilize what they have learned in the ESP classrooms in their work and studies.

English is an international language that is divided into English for General Purposes (General English or GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The ESP is divided into three categories: English for Sciences and Technology (EST), English for Business and Economics (EBE) and English for Social studies (ESS). This branching was first rooted by Hutchinson and Waters in 1987. Each of these three categories is branched into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Therefore, it is clear by observing the bottom line of that tree that learners need this kind of English either for Academic studies for certain speciality colleges or they need it for certain professions in the working milieu after graduation.

In other words, ESP is meant to be taught to either students at the tertiary level in colleges like medicine, pharmacy, nursing, business... etc. or people who are already employed according to the special skills and the terminology that they need in their profession. Each occupation has its own set of vocabulary on which the ESP course focuses. For example: there is English for medical professionals, scientific English, technical English, English for business, English for aviation, English for tourism, ... etc. Therefore, the student is required to have adequate knowledge of the General English (GE) first to benefit from an ESP course. This is because ESP has to be built on a solid base of General English.

Teaching ESP and preparing a curriculum is very professional and challenging as ESP is a variable course that varies according to the needs of its learners. It also varies according to the type of students regarding their profession, age, ethnicity, ... etc. Thus, its curriculum has to be learners oriented because its purpose and the students it targets are different than General English courses.

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

- 1) Tracing the historical growth of ESP.
- 2) Tracing different papers that discussed ESP as its topic (Background literature).
- 3) Exploring various linguists' efforts to define it.
- 4) Attempting to find out its purpose and scope.
- 5) Discussing its characteristics.
- 6) Discussing the educational process and the preparation of curricula by analyzing the needs of the students (needs analysis).

2. Historical Background

Specific Purposes Languages started appearing years and years back in history. It was applied to several languages before, but as English has become the most prominent global language, it has become the most identified language in this branch of specific purposes. There are three fundamental reasons that led to the development of all kinds of English for specific purposes. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:6) state these reasons "as the need for a courageous and daring new global universe, a revolution in linguistics and recognition and specific attention to the learner."

English became the acknowledged international language of business and technology after the end of the Second World War in 1945. It produced a new group of scholars who were in desperate need for English to suit the advances in their fields: They were engineers, businessmen, doctors, technicians, tour guides, waiters..., etc. These aspects resulted in the growth of teaching English for Specific Purposes in the late 1960s.

After 1945, there was a large and unexpected development in all aspects specifically the medical, technical and economic aspects which consequently triggered a call for a global language. The English language has become the dominant language. This language was targeting to fulfil every day's requirements which involved the knowledge of the easiest catalogues and brochures to the hardest and intricate types of speech as business, medical or technical essays.

For the past few years, ESP has been a major developmental focus in the area of communicative syllabus design and material production. Learning ESP is intended to encounter precise needs of a certain profile. This includes introduction to specific written and spoken English needed for a certain official or academic job. This was because a new group of learners evolved.

Several linguists, who have noticed the global development in this sector, started to research the methods in which English language is employed in actual settings. When ESP first appeared, the usual old method in researches of language targeted the grammatical rules in language usage, yet it was essential to reorganize the learning and teaching methods taking in consideration the discourses variety according to its contexts or scenarios.

The English terminology differs from one profession to the other. The English utilized by engineers differs from that used by doctors ... etc. Accordingly, the learning method depended basically on the usage of specific vocabulary for every field. In similar context, psychologists started to study the learners' motivation towards a foreign or a second language. They perceived that learners use various learning methods and that they have different interests, attitudes and needs. There emerged a concept that was based on the fact that the English that you learn should be the kind of English that you need. That philosophy expanded to the extent of planning different courses for every group of students.

There existed "a major tide in the educational thought, in all countries and affecting all subjects. The movement referred to is the global trend towards learner-centered education. Similar to the entire world, study of language

and ideas of instruction were basically modified. The English pedagogy also altered with it, and knew the evolution of teaching English for Specific Purposes that is perceived as a consequence of the global evolution.” (Strevens, 1977:152)

Therefore, ESP was considered a special language that has its own terminology and special features of language. It also focused only on parts of grammar that were only required in the chosen field or profession. It did not focus on how to put words together to form a correct sentence, but on how and when to use these sentences in the required context.

3. Background Literature

Since the early seventies, many studies discussed English for Specific Purposes; some of them were in the form of books and others were in the form of research papers. Some of the books and researches discussed all aspects of ESP and its emergence as a very significant branch of English, whereas others discussed the learning process of ESP as well as the methods of teaching. Recently, most of the ESP researches focus on the needs analysis process that is required prior to beginning an ESP course.

Ibrahim (2020) conducted an exploratory study to assess the needs of the medical students at the *Faculty of Medicine at Al-Neelain University* in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). It examined the perceptions of the students and their instructors about the present syllabus and the challenges, which the students and the instructors face. The findings of this study confirmed that there were several problems that the students faced at the faculty such as the lack of some of the basic skills, especially speaking and listening skills.

Buriro & Soomro (2013) conducted another study that scrutinized the needs of undergraduate students at QUEST University where they used a questionnaire to identify the perspectives of the final year students from Civil Engineering Department and English teachers of The English Language Centre. The main findings of the study were that the specific needs of the students were not met. The students considered that productive skills (writing and speaking) were more important than receptive skills (reading and listening) for their academic and professional success. In addition, students were keener to learn technical vocabulary than general vocabulary, and were relatively uninterested in learning grammar through traditional methods. However, their teachers from the ELC believed that both receptive and productive skills were equally important for students' success in their academic and professional endeavours.

Beshaj (2015) attempted to see the importance of the ESP methods in the Albanian higher education system. She conducted a survey to highlight the benefits that the students, who major in different fields ranging from social to exact sciences, acquire from using these methods. As Albania strived to be a part of the European Union, certain criteria had to be completed meeting certain high standards required in higher education. Since language in the European Union is mostly English or French and language is the place of social activity, therefore an effective and constructive dialogue is required by the participants. Thus, a growing demand is seen towards the English language. This is the reason why this language is included in the Albanian school curricula and the Albanian students are in contact with the English language for more than a decade. Basically, it was seen an immediate necessity to introduce the ESP methods into the University level as an innovation, which in fact, was not new in the other countries of the region and the Balkans.

Soliman (2016) takes ESP a step further, invading the digital world and relating it to mobile technologies and smartphones. In her research, she investigates the efficiency of the application of the Flipped Classroom pedagogy in an English for Academic Purposes class. By analyzing the findings of the presented literature review regarding the Flipped Classroom pedagogy, examining the benefits of this strategy and demonstrating the author's qualitative reflections based on personal pedagogical experience, she suggests ways to implement the Flipped Classroom pedagogy in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) module and finally the paper examines the challenges that may be faced and ways to overcome them.

Franklin-Landi (2017) follows a recent tradition in French higher education to exploit fictional representations of specific domains, such as medicine or law in ESP teaching. She charts students' perspectives on the medical TV series *Grey's Anatomy* following classroom activities based on a video extract, highlighting advantages and risks in using such material as a pedagogical resource. Franklin-Landi voices a common concern among language instructors regarding their own legitimacy in a domain where they cannot claim content expertise, and sees specialised fiction as a kind of third space where errors committed by non-specialist writers and actors provide both motivation and resources for fruitful discussion in the target language.

Khalil (2020) in another research investigates the most appropriate and useful teaching methods for teaching General English (GE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the Saudi context. This study is an attempt to

share experienced English as a foreign language (EFL)/ English as a second language (ESL) teachers' methodology for teaching GE and ESP to Saudi EFL learners. The paper aims to answer the following questions: 1) What are the conventional methods for teaching GE and ESP? 2) What are the English teachers' perceptions of these effective teaching pedagogies? 3) What are the practical measures to improve student efficiency in learning English? The sample of the study was $n = 63$ English teachers randomly selected at different universities in Saudi Arabia. For collecting the quantitative data, 63 native and non-native experienced English teachers were requested to fill in a semi-structured questionnaire. The results show that 73% of the English language teachers prefer to use the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) along with other teaching methods.

The findings of the study shed light on some highly useful teaching methods that have proved successful in EG and ESP classes. The researchers expect the study will be significant in contributing to the most appropriate methods used in Saudi Arabia for language teachers. Hopefully, teachers wishing to teach in the future will have an insight into the teaching methods that fulfil the requirements of the students.

4. Definition of ESP

There are several definitions by many researchers each with different perspective for English for Specific Purposes. The rapid development of ESP led to its prominence and led to the need to define it and define its teaching and learning methodologies and conditions.

ESP is a general expression used to show an approach that instructors adopted in teaching of English that has included a certain content for any specific purpose. Learning that type of English is actually designed to fulfil certain needs that are specific for a certain profile. This includes training and practice of specific spoken and specific written English, required to accomplish specific official or academic work.

There are several versions of definitions of ESP, some are very old definitions and some are very recent. Mackay and Mountford (1978: 2) stated that "ESP is generally used to refer to the teaching of English for a clearly utilitarian purpose." Therefore, English needs a certain type of training and practice to attain specific language competencies for the use in professional context in a certain mode that qualifies learners to utilize it in upcoming professions, and to understand English discourse associated with their profession.

Basturkmen (2006: 18) defined ESP as a language that 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 academic, professional or workplace environments." This implies that, the function of ESP is to assist language beginners to collate the needed skills to utilize them in a special area, job, or profession. These definitions were in line with ESP development over the years.

Most Recent definitions were by Saber (2016: 2) as "a 'variety of English' that can be observed in a given perimeter of society, delineated by professional or disciplinary boundaries". Moreover, Sarre and Whyte (2017) defined it as "the branch of English language studies which concerns the language, discourse, and culture of English-language professional communities and specialized groups, as well as the learning and teaching of this object from a didactic perspective." (p. 150)

From the above definitions, it is clear that the definitions tend to be very close in meaning despite the fact that they are expressed differently and each researcher may have a different perspective of ESP. It is also obvious that specific language and the general language are inseparable although each one has its own characteristics and potential learners. The core of all the definitions is the same, which is teaching English to be able to communicate in a professional or an academic milieu.

5. Purpose, Characteristics and Requirements of ESP Courses

There is great resemblance that is noticed between English for Specific Purposes and General English vis-à-vis the teaching method to achieve specific requirements and needs, but they are diverse to some extent too. General English deals with English language in general that is not related to a certain context. It deals with the four skills of language whether it be speaking, reading, writing and listening equally with absolutely no preference of any skill over the other. Its objective is to attain a certain level of proficiency that qualifies the learner to communicate with native speakers of the language. General English can also be intended for school modules as parts of the subjects that are required to achieve a certain grade from primary to secondary.

Whereas, English for Specific Purposes targets English that is related to a certain professional context that is required by the learner. The focus on certain skills depends on the type of potential profession. Like for example if the profession is telemarketing then the focus will be on the listening and speaking skills more than the other writing or reading skills. Moreover, contrary to General English, ESP is intended for either adult students in

universities to enhance a certain major or for graduates who want to enhance their proficiency in a certain profession by learning its English. Therefore, ESP may focus more on practicing and training that includes employing English in a specific context.

Moreover, General English does not require a needs analysis for its courses. Dealing with General English the components of any course would be reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, various speaking and listening texts and any other content related to language usage. In other words, the curricula in GE are somewhat standard. Whereas, in ESP courses a needs analysis is preferable before the courses to know what are the exact needs of the learners and target them in a certain curriculum and sometimes it is conducted after the course to measure the feedback of the learners and whether the course have achieved its target and was satisfactory to the learners or not in order to develop it if it needs any development.

Another aspect is that ESP seems to be more complicated and difficult for instructors than the General English. This tends to be due to the fact that the instructor has to learn and study the vocabulary of a certain profession that is totally unknown to him or he may have a general idea about but not to the extent of teaching it. Thus, preparing an ESP course needs research from the instructor as well as profound preparation to be ready for any question in class. Whereas in general English, since the instructor is an expert in this area then he will not need to study before giving a class other than the normal preparation for classes. Therefore, it is obvious that the teaching methodology for ESP is different than General English.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) mentioned that EGP and ESP are analogous in theory; yet, they are very different in practice. ESP, like all language instruction activities, is based on facts regarding learning and teaching of language as well as its nature and it is usually compared to General English. The teaching methods of ESP are known to focus on the learners' desires, goals and needs behind the language he learns, whereas General English focuses on language and its learning from a comprehensive point of view covering all the skills of language as well as the social features of communities that communicate in English.

Another difference between General English and ESP courses is that the learners are mostly adults compared to general English courses that may have children or adults sometimes. This is because ESP courses mostly target certain professions that university students seek after graduation or graduates seeking potential careers. Yet, general English courses give the general fundamentals and basics of the English language that are required to communicate with native speakers, to study in English language or any general usage of the language. That was mentioned by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as he said that learners of the latter are mainly adult with a certain degree of awareness concerning their language needs Whereas, General English courses are provided to pupils as compulsory module at schools, their unique purpose is to succeed in the examinations.

Moreover, in ESP courses a certain level of English proficiency is required. It needs the learner to have a basic knowledge of English to add to it the professional English. But you cannot start an ESP course with a learner who does not know any English. Yet in the General English Courses, the learners can start from scratch learning all the skills of English and develop these skills level after level until they reach the proficiency required. Basturkmen (2006: 9) states that General English Language teaching tends to set out from a definite point to an indeterminate one, whereas ESP aims to speed learners and direct them through to a known destination in order to reach specific objectives. The emphasis in ESP on going from A to B in the most time- and energy-efficient manner can lead to the view that ESP is an essentially practical endeavour." Similarly, Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998:4) state that ESP "is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems, but it can be used with beginners". Likewise, Hutchinson and waters (1987:19) stated that, "ESP should properly be seen not as any particular language product but as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning".

Hence, it is clear, from the differences mentioned, that General English and ESP courses are variant in the learning outcomes and the objectives, as well as the type of learners. The type of learners that had also been a point of argument among linguists regarding the genres of ESP and the classification of its subjects. That is why course titles or major related terms are very different from one type of ESP course to the other.

Yet, there are several views regarding the types of ESP. Many linguists suggested different types. In 1987 Hutchinson and Waters established the most popular and worthwhile theory in English language teaching called "The Tree of English Language Teaching" or "Tree of ELT" in which they divided ESP into three types: English for Science and Technology (EST), English for Business and Economics (EBE), and English for social studies (ESS) as previously mentioned in the introduction. And every kind has a particular discipline of know-how as studies of humanities, enterprise, financial system, general social disciplines, technology or the diverse human

sciences studies in general. Therefore, the goals of the learners whether it be scientific, professional or academic is the main objective of the language education.

ESP concerns the emergence of a number of activities, movements and subjects that are carried out predominantly not exclusively in English across the world (Strevens, 1977). It focuses on the objective or the reason why the learner needs to learn English. It can be for study purposes or professional purposes. ESP is a term that refers to change over the day in English for a particular career like law medicine or business in general.

Carter (1983) believes that self-direction is important in the sense that an ESP course is concerned with turning learners into users of the language. Coffey (1985) observed that ESP “is a quick and economical use of the English language to pursue a course of academic study (EAP) or effectiveness in paid Employment (EOP).”

Hutchinson and waters (1992) emphasize ESP to be an approach and not product which means language learning not language use is highlighted. They draw attention to a learning centered approach “in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning.”

Lorenzo (2005) mentions that ESP “concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structure. It makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.” ESP focuses on the language that is suitable for that certain domain in all aspects like: discourse, grammar, terminology and skills whether it be spoken or written.

Regarding the objectives of teaching, first of all, learning a language required for a specific field by building up the vocabulary related to it as well as certain skills required for communication in this specific field. Moreover, adding to the current language skills, that the learner already has, another new knowledge that the learner will be able to utilize proficiently. Furthermore, the ESP courses create this connection between the general English Knowledge of the learner and the specific knowledge that he receives in the ESP course.

6. ESP Educational Process

One of the most important challenges for any language teacher is the content of a curriculum. Most of the time, there is controversy among members who are trying to create a valuable content. Some members may believe that specialized terminology is more important, whereas, others may believe that the base of language has to be fortified first before introducing the specialized terminology. There are also several controversial points of view that arise while constructing an ESP curriculum around priorities of the skills of language. Some believe that productive or active skills like speaking and writing are more important than receptive or passive skills like listening and reading, whereas others believe that the proficiency in all skills is a must and that the content has to be divided equally among the four skills, and the controversy never ends.

First of all, before starting an ESP course, a needs analysis has to be conducted. But what is a needs analysis and what are the steps to achieve it? To design an ESP course that will serve the learners in a certain profession or situation, first of all, the required context has to be identified, then an analysis of the components of language or linguistic components of that context is done putting in consideration the learners’ needs as a priority. That needs analysis could be in the form of a questionnaire, an interview, or both. The components of the questionnaire or interview should try to relate what are the linguistic components that are required by the learners of the course. The learners set their priorities and what is more important and what is the least important. For example, teaching students at the university level ESP requires a needs analysis to be conducted periodically for curriculum development. From the statistics of the needs analysis, curriculum designers can detect the priorities and focus on them in the upcoming years. Similarly in courses for employees or potential employees, a needs analysis need to be conducted to detect the priorities and that can be done before the course and after the course as well to check the feedback of the learners.

There are main issues in the design of any ESP curriculum. First of all, students have to learn essential skills for effective communication in professional settings, that means the acquisition of the required language which is different from acquiring the general language. Moreover, the type of students has to be put in consideration and whether they are a heterogeneous group or a homogenous group. Furthermore, the development of material is a very crucial part in designing curriculums for ESP courses.

Although it is previously mentioned that ESP and General English courses has many differences, yet, the educational process and the activities involved in teaching these courses are nearly the same. Like any English or language course, both has to involve activities, practicing and motivation of the learners. Therefore, in ESP education, some fundamentals must be considered, but the most important element is the learner’s needs, objectives and inspiration. Moreover, learners’ approach towards education strategies are vital to the ESP education process.

However, preparing or designing a curriculum is not a burden or a problem for the instructors of General English Courses as the content topics are always the same; focusing on the four skills. The contents vary between grammar and practice, reading comprehension topics, listening practice or speaking topics. Moreover, the same curriculum can be given to different groups of learners. It can even be applied for several years without any change as there is no evident development in the English language itself through the years. An instructor may update the topics or add new activities of practice or may change the books. But for an ESP instructor preparing the curriculum prior to a certain course is crucial and mandatory. It is also changeable according to the targeted group of learners. It is a very significant and vital part of their work.

An ESP course should be directed to a certain target or aim, it should also target a certain student as well as a certain context of situation. It should also have three main characteristics: a reliable material and a guide related to the purpose it serves. As Javid (2013) states “Generally ESP has the following features: authentic materials, purpose-related orientation and self-direction. It is more relevant than the general English. Moreover, ESP is used as register analysis. Register analysis has been defined as an attempt to analyze the linguistic foundations of language we use in given situations and the ways in which the language you speak or write varies according to the type of situation. Register analysis has been a strong research area in linguistics for several decades. Many people are now working with examples of Genuine texts in the hope of establishing the linguistic features which characterize them. Text linguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics and register and genre, all depend on communicative events which have taken place.”

ESP is used as a rhetorical and discourse approach. Rhetorical means the ability to speak and write correctly and effectively to impress or inspire your targeted individuals. On the other hand, Discourse means expressing the thoughts on a certain subject in a proper, formal and organized manner. ESP is used as a communicative approach and it is used as a target situation analysis. It is a familiar activity in teaching English that has some particular features.

Dudley-Evans and St. Johns (1998:4) attempt to specify the major characteristics of ESP as absolute and variable. The first absolute characteristic is that ESP meets certain needs of the learners; the second is that ESP utilizes primary methods and activities of the discipline it attends to; the third is that ESP is centered on the English grammar, terminology, skills, discourse and genre relevant to those activities. They are related in content to particular disciplines or occupations and centered on language specific to those disciplines. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar lexis, register study skills, discourse and genre.

Robinson (1991) also suggests two absolute criteria that signifies an ESP courses: The first is that ESP programs are normally goal oriented. The second is that they are derived from a needs analysis that will state as accurately as possible what the learner will have to do when speaking the language. The variable characteristics of ESP courses means that the course may be restricted in the skills to be learned and may not be taught according to a particular methodology that may be associated with or planned for specific disciplines. The course may use methodologies in particular situations different from general English. Moreover, the course is likely to be designed for adult learners at either an institute or at a workplace, as previously mentioned, these courses are commonly planned for intermediate and advanced students.

7. Conclusion

As ESP has become popular and productive all over the world, more and more people are adopting it for various personal and professional reasons. It has developed tremendously to the extent that it has become one of the most important areas of teaching English as a foreign or a second language. As mentioned, linguists have tried to define ESP, each from his/her own point of view, yet although the definitions may seem different, the core is the same. However, they all tried to differentiate it from the general English as the two types are completely different in prospective and objective.

Teaching ESP is intended for certain objectives that the learner requires. The content of the course or the theme has to be related to a specific discipline or a certain profession. ESP employs a certain method of teaching and learning that serves or aids the profession or the activity that the learner requires. The course should be tailored to this activity in terminology, discourse, grammar, sentence structure...etc. Since it is agreed that ESP and EGP are two faces of the same coin that cannot be separated. Students' skills have to be tested before any ESP course since any technical or specialty texts can be very difficult if they do not have the minimum required level of language.

Moreover, Teaching ESP is not an easy task. First of all, the type of potential students may be older than the instructor, as most of them may be working for years and they want to enhance their profession or may be change their career. Or may be they are university graduates who want to learn English for their potential career.

In other words, the instructor will not be dealing with young students. The instructor may also face a difficulty that the group he is teaching is not a homogenous group. This means that they might be of different ethnicity, different ages, different level of education or even different level of English. Another difficulty is the curriculum; since it has to focus on a certain profession or needs, therefore, a needs analysis has to be conducted to find the topics that are suitable for the respective course. Also it is not easy because the teacher himself has to teach a topic that he might know nothing about, therefore he has to study it himself in order to be able to convey it to the students. This may not only involve reading about the topic, but also studying it thoroughly to be able to grasp it and eventually teach it and be able to answer any questions related to it. For example, teaching students or graduates of medicine requires that the instructor learns about medical terminology that might be very complicated as most of the medical words are not from an English origin. Similarly, teaching business or banking students can be very challenging as the instructor has to know all the financial and monetary words that are used in these fields and teach them to the students when he/she is not a business school graduate, but just an English instructor.

It is also important to note that there is no specific agreement on what should or should not be included in an ESP course. Yet, there is a major agreement that a needs analysis before starting any ESP course is a very important step that shows exactly what to focus on for a certain group of learners. It can act as a compass to the instructor as to what to focus on in the course as a priority. It can also help in creating a curriculum that will be useful to the learners, gain their satisfaction and motivate them at the same time.

From all of the above, it is concluded that English for Specific Purposes is a very important genre of English that requires periodical development to be relevant with any development that is occurring in any of the potential fields. Moreover, constant alterations of the curriculum in every field is crucial and mandatory.

References

- Anthony, L. (1998). Preaching to Cannibals: A look at Academic Writing in Engineering. In *The Japan Conference on English for Specific Purposes Proceedings*.
- Basturkmen, H. (2005). *Ideas and Options in English for Specific Purposes* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617040>
- Beshaj, L. (2015). The Growing Importance of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) In Albanian Higher Education. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*, 3(6), 10-13.
- Birch-Bécaas, S., & Hoskins, L. (2017). Designing and Implementing ESP Courses in French Higher Education: A Case Study. In C. Sarré & S. Whyte (Eds), *New Developments in ESP Teaching and Learning Research* (pp. 51-69). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2017.cssw2017.745>
- Carver, D. (1983). Some Propositions about ESP. *The ESP Journal*, 2(2), 131-137. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0272-2380\(93\)90003-P](https://doi.org/10.1016/0272-2380(93)90003-P)
- Coffey, B. (1985). ESP--English for specific purposes. In V. Kinsella (Ed.), *Cambridge Language Surveys 3*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St Johns, M. (1998). *Developments in ESP: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fiorito, L. (2005). *Teaching English for specific purposes*. Retrieved from <https://www.usingenglish.com/teachers/articles/teaching-english-for-specific-purposes-esp.html>
- Franklin-Landi, R. (2017). Identifying and responding to learner needs at the medical faculty: the use of audio-visual specialised fiction (FASP). In C. Sarré & S. Whyte (Eds), *New Developments in ESP Teaching and Learning Research* (pp. 153-170). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2017.cssw2017.750>
- Hutchison, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learner-centered Approach*. England: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511733031>
- Ibrahim, H. (2020). Needs Analysis as a Prerequisite for Designing an ESP Course for Medical Students. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 10(2), 83-103. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2020.102006>
- Javid, Chaudry Z. (2013). English for Specific Purposes: Its Definition, Characteristics, Scope and Purpose. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 112(1), 138-151.

- Khalil, L. (2020). Appropriate Teaching Methods for General English and English for Specific Purposes from Teachers' Perspectives. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, 11(1), 253-269. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no1.19>
- Mackay, R., & Mountford, A. (1978). *English for Specific Purposes: A Case Study Approach*. London: Longman.
- Robinson, P. (1991). *ESP Today*. UK: Prentice Hall International Ltd.
- Saber, A. (2016). Editorial: Immanuel Kant and ESP's New Frontier. In *ASp*, 69, 1-6.
- Sarre, C., & Whyte, S. (2017). *New developments in ESP Teaching and learning research*. Published by Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2017.cssw2017.9782490057016>
- Soliman, N. A. (2016). Teaching English for Academic Purposes via the Flipped Learning Approach. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 232, 122-129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.036>
- Strevens, P. (1977). *New Orientations in the Teaching of English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).