



ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE (ESP)

M.S.B.JESSICA

E2 ECE ,

AP IIIT- RGUKT RK VALLEY,

r161056@rguktrkv.ac.in

Abstract:

After the end of the Second World War in 1945, English became the accepted international language of technology and commerce. As most of the trade and most of the business were dealt mostly in English. It created a new generation of learners who need English to keep up with developments in their fields. They are businessmen, technocrats, doctors, mechanics, waiters, tour guides, translators etc. These factors led to the emergence of the teaching of English for Specific Purposes in late 1960s.

What is ESP?.According to the definition of ESP said by Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and methods are based on learners' reasons for learning. And according to Mohan ESP is that area of English language teaching which focuses on preparing learners "for chosen communicative environments". ESP simply means teaching and learning English for a very specific goal rather than for a very general or broad purpose.

Absolute characteristic of ESP are: 1) designed to meet the specific needs of the learners, 2) must be related to discipline it serves in terms of methodology, 3) it is a language course and must be taught by a language teacher. 4) designed for the adults mostly not for the beginners. Classifications of ESP are two types they are English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Learning English for the specific academic needs is known as English for Academic Purposes(EAP). Examples are: Medical purposes (students), Legal purposes, Science and Technology, Finance and Economics etc. English for Occupational Purpose (EOP) is learning English for the specific needs in your occupation. Examples are : Medical purpose(Doctors), Business purposes, Vocational and Pre-Vocational etc. The purpose of an ESP course is to enable learners to function adequately in target situation. Thus an ESP program should be Aim directed, Learner directed and Situation directed. An ESP course must contain three features they are: 1) Authentic Material 2) Purpose-Related Orientation and 3) Self-Direction. ESP is specially designed for the adult learners. When we deal with ESP there are certain branches, certain areas, certain vocations where there is need of English keeping in mind those points the curriculum is being designed.

KEY WORDS:

Commutative environments, discipline, methodology, authentic Material, purpose-related orientation, self-direction

INTRODUCTION:

To begin with I am going to talk about the development of English, particularly English as an international language. When a language is called the lingua franca, we clearly know that it is a language that is widely used as a means of communication among speakers of other languages. The acknowledgement of English language as the lingua franca of most activity in the international setting has been generally recognized and it is not a shocking phenomenon that most people learn English just to communicate with English speaking people. In the era of globalization, people have now realized the importance of English and the need to master the English language therefore the role English has expanded tremendously. This can be seen in the use of English at a higher level of education as in 'specialized area of research and scholarship' and the most apparent proof can be seen in the number of English speakers. Estimates of the numbers of English speakers are difficult to make however, according to Summer Institute for Linguistics (SIL) Ethnologue Survey,



the numbers of English native speakers are approximately million which has shown the proof that English is extensively used around the globe. For example, the main language of books, airports, international business, academic conferences and in fact over two thirds of the books available in the world are in English. Consequently 80% of all the information in the world's retrieval system is stored in English. We tend to think that English is only needed by linguists, grammarians and those who are in the English linguistics field however, the truth is English is vastly used in almost all profession.

What is ESP? Using English for a specific purpose for example, medical students need English for their Medical courses and even pilots need English for their aviation courses. Therefore, English for Medical Purposes and English for Aviation were established to suit those specific needs. According to Crystal, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can be simplified as the use of a particular variety of the language in a specific context of use. In addition, Robinson has talked about ESP as a 'language in context' and the courses are designed based on the learners' communicative needs.

According to Hutchinson and Waters, ESP was not a 'planned and coherent movement' but it has emerged because of numerous unified trends based on notably three main reasons that have been identified in the emergence of ESP: the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner. Hutchinson and Waters have emphasized two key historical periods that gave life into ESP. In 1945, it was the end of the Second World War which had brought with it an age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international scale, which was then had given rise to the creation of two forces: technology and commerce world which then had initiated a 'demand for an international language'. Because of the importance of technology and commerce in this period, the demand for English to suit those needs had vastly expanded and people now learn English because of very specific reason: because English had become the language of technology and commerce. Long time ago, the learning of English (or other language) was never this lucid. People used to ponder why it is essential to learn a language, now that English had become so powerful and influential; corporate people used English to promote their product globally, technicians who had to use English to read the manuals, researchers who needed English to be able to read textbooks and journals in English for their research. Because English was crucially imperative, it had created a brand new type of learners who indeed understand why they need English for and they surely know how to strike while the iron is hot. In addition, the Oil Crisis of the early 1970s was one of the factors that contributed to the development. English had suddenly become a big business and due to this it had created time and money constraints that lead to 'the need of cost effective courses which clearly defined goals'. English has now become 'subject to the wishes, needs and demands of people other than language teachers'.

Another factor that contributes to the emergence of ESP is a revolution in linguistics. In this period of time, the demands of English courses for specific need were increasing while at the same time new ideas began to take place in the field of study. The conventional linguists sought to describe the features of language (grammar), whereas the radical pioneer in linguistics put a focus on the ways in which language is used in real communication (Widdowson, 1978). The outcome of the research was that language, whether it is spoken



or written, varies in certain ways and contexts. In another words, the language use will varies in given the particular context in which English is used, the variant of English will change. This idea was taken one step farther. If language in different situations varies, then it is possible to tailor language instruction to meet the needs of learners in specific contexts. Hence, there was an immense increase of in the late 1960s and the early 1970s in researching particular areas of English as we can see in the attempts of describing English for Science and Technology (EST) by Ewer and Latorre, Swales, Selinker and Trimble and many others. In this phase, it can be concluded that by analysing the linguistic characteristics of the specific area of study or work, we would be able to identify the English needed by a particular group of learners.

English for Specific Purposes, simply means teaching and learning English for a very specific goal rather than for a very general or broad purpose. The term special or “specific” in ESP refers to the specific purpose for learning English. Students approach the study of English through a field that is already known and relevant to them. This means that they are able to use what they learn in the ESP classroom right away in their work and studies. The ESP approach enhances the relevance of what the students are learning and enables them to use the English they know to learn even more English ,since their interest in their field will motivate them to interact with speakers and texts. There are certain absolute characteristics of ESP they are: ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner; ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves; ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities. There are some variable characteristics of ESP: 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. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

ESP is further divided types based on the needs of the learners. According to David ESP is of three types: 1) English as restricted language: The language specifically used by air traffic controllers or by waiters are examples of English as a restricted language. Mackay and Mountford clearly illustrate the difference between restricted language and language with this statement: The language of international air-traffic control could be regarded as ‘special’ in the sense that the repertoire required by controller is strictly limited and can be accurately determined situationally, as might be the linguistic needs of a dining room waiter or air-hostess. However, such restricted repertoires are not languages, just as a tourist phrase book is not grammar. Knowing restricted ‘language’ would not allow the speaker to communicate effectively in novel situation, or in contexts outside the vocational environment; 2) The second type of ESP identified by Carter is English for Academic and Occupational Purposes. In the ‘Tree of ELT’, ESP is broken down into three branches: a) English for Science and Technology(EST), b) English for Business and Economics (EBE), c)English for Social Studies(ESS). Each of these topics are further divided into two branches; English for Academic Purpose (EAP) and English for Occupational Purpose (EOP). An example of EOP



for EST branch is 'English for Technicians' whereas an example of EAP for the EST branch is 'English for Medical Students'; 3)The third and final type of ESP identified by Carter is English with specific topics Carter notes that it is only here where emphasis shifts from purpose to topic. This type of ESP is uniquely concerned with anticipated future English needs of, for example, scientists requiring English for postgraduate reading studies, attending conferences or working in foreign institutions. However, it is an integral component of ESP courses or programs, which focus on situational language. This situational language is based on the interpretation of results from needs analysis of authentic language used in target workplace settings. ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. Some other areas where ESP can be used are banking and finance, hospitality and tourism, human resources, law, marketing/scales, nursing/medical, engineering.

In ESP syllabus, the teaching content is geared to the special language 'repertoire' pertaining to the specialized aims that are required of the learners. ESP syllabus design should cover the three factors: What – syllabus, How – methodology, Who?Why?Where?When? - nature of particular target and learning situation. One of the main purposes of a syllabus is to break down the mass of knowledge to be learnt into manageable units. This breakdown has to be based on the certain criteria. The different criteria that can be used: Topic syllabus, Structural/situational analysis, Skills and strategies, Functional/national syllabus. The designing of syllabus may be: 'A language-centered approach': In this approach the syllabus is the prime generator of the teaching materials. This sort of approach is still widely used in ESP. 'A skill-centered approach': The aim is not to present and practice language items, but rather to provide opportunities for learners to employ and evaluate the skills and strategies considered necessary in the target situation. 'A learning-centered approach: This syllabus is used in a more dynamic way in order to enable methodological considerations, such as interest, enjoyment, learner involvement, to influence the content of the entire course design. In this way, it serves the needs of the students both as users and learners of the language. 'The post hoc approach': This is, of course, one of the best way of using the syllabus which is probably more widespread than we might suppose.

An ESP teacher's work involves much more than teaching. An ESP teacher is also known as practitioner. His role can be classified as: teacher, evaluator, ESP practitioner, reasearcher, collaborator. There are many ideas practical resources for teaching ESP. As a matter of fact, ESP combines subject matter and English language teaching. Such a combination is highly motivating because students are able to apply what they learn in their English classes to their main field of study. Being able to use the vocabulary and structure that they learn in a meaningful context reinforces what is taught and increases their motivation.

CONCLUSION:

English is an international language and is used widely all over the world. So it is important to learn English in this competitive world. Rather than learning English for general purpose like from basics we can learn English based on our needs by using ESP. ESP is a process in which English is taught for the specific needs of the learner. It is started during the time of Second World War as most of the international trade and business were dealt in this



particular language. ESP is further divided into types like: for specific purpose, academic and occupational purpose, and specific topics. ESP is mostly taught by the language teacher. And the ESP teacher also acts as a evaluator, collaborator, researcher and evaluator. Based on the specific needs of the learner and keeping in mind where the learner is to be trained the curriculum is being designed. Through ESP one can gain the knowledge of English needed for the specific purpose, communicative skills etc.

The guiding principle proposed for ESP by Hutchinson and Waters “**Tell me what you need English for and I will tell you what English you need**”.

REFERENCES:

1. *Hutchinson, T. and A. Waters, (1988) English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centred Approach.*
2. *Holden, S. (1977) English for Specific Purposes, Modern English Publications.*
3. *Robinson, P. (1991) ESP Today: A Practitioner's Guide, Prentice Hall.*
4. *Bloor, M. and T. Bloor, (1986) “Languages for Specific Purposes: Practice and Theory”, CLCS Occasional Paper, No 19, Dublin: Trinity College.*