

TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH IN ESP CLASSES

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Abstract: *In the era of the rapid and increasing economic globalization the necessity of teaching Business English cannot be disputed. The paper addresses the basic concepts of Business English (BE), emphasizing the importance of the learner's needs, i.e. usage of English in a business setting. The focus is also placed on the main topics covered in BE courses, skill areas and lesson formats. The teaching of BE is regarded through the necessary context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), whose part it doubtlessly is. Moreover, the paper tackles the origins and difficulties one encounters when trying to define the very concepts of both ESP and BE.*

Key words: *ESP, Business English, globalization, teaching, origins, learner's needs, business skills.*

English language is used for business purposes and the language particularly connected with international trade, and so it is considered a part of English for Specific purposes; English has been widely used and spread as the globalization of business environment. Moreover, international and multinational business companies are expected to increase. Now-a-days, many international native to nonnative or non-native to non-native communications are undertaken in the business settings. Business people have to learn how to perform English language skills they already master in their native language such as presentations, negotiations, meetings, small talk, correspondence, report writing, and so on. The term, Business English is wide; according to the Oxford Business English Dictionary, it covers the areas, such as, accounting, commerce, e-commerce, economics, finance, HR, insurance, IT, law, manufacturing, marketing, production,

property, the stock exchange, (international) trade, transport. Business English is associated with the skills which most people need to perform well are writing e-mails and reports, making presentations, doing negotiations, using the telephone, attending and participating actively in meetings or telephone conferences, receiving visitors, etc.¹

ESP refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain. ESP is considered as a broad approach rather than a product, by which they mean that ESP does not involve a particular kind of language, teaching material or methodology. ESP has traditionally been divided into two main areas: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). The best definition highlights the characteristics of ESP; they are: designed to meet specified needs of different learners; related in content to particular disciplines, occupations and activities; centred on language appropriateness. ESP has been conceptualized by its leading scholars, as a multi-stage process, where the ESP practitioner fulfils a variety of roles, including learner needs researcher, course designer, language instructor, learning assessor, and course evaluator. The performance of these roles requires considerable knowledge of a linguistic, socio-cultural and pedagogical nature, necessary to inform the teacher's cognitive processes. ²Five key roles of ESP practitioner are teacher, course designer and materials provider, collaborator, researcher and evaluator. There are additional requirements of ESP, compared with the general English teachers. For example, they need to be able: to carry out and interpret a needs analysis for a group of students; to design a syllabus for their classes; to select and adapt teaching materials for their classes, to device

¹ Swartley and K. Westerfield. ESP Seminar. January 2007.

² J. Hughes (2014) ETpedia 1000 ideas for English language teachers.

appropriate activities; to prepare course outlines; to develop a working knowledge of their students' subject.³

In recent years, ESP has become the core of the reform in English teaching in Uzbekistan. Undergraduates are required to study ESP after the study of College English. The focus on ESP has been motivated by a number of factors. The first is that globalization has given rise to the use of English as a global language. International businesses increasingly require a bi-or multi-lingual workforce, with English as one of the working languages. The demands of vocational training for employment have necessitated ESP teaching in universities world-wide, including programmes across English-medium institutions. The objective of internationalism, as part of the push to social and economic reform, can be attained by cultivating batches of intellects with world vision, a command of international regulations, and the ability to be involved in international affairs and competitions. It is proposed that, with the increasing English competence of students and greater exposure to English in daily life, it is the right time to shift from general English to ESP pedagogy. The second reason for the increased emphasis on ESP is that it is recognized as a learner-centred approach to language instruction. It is distinguished from other approaches by 'a commitment to the goal of providing language instruction that addresses students' own specific purposes' (Belcher, 2009:2). For a long time English teaching has been criticized for producing low output with high input. It is generally accepted that successful learning is crucially dependent on motivation (Ellis, 1997). Students complain that, despite assurances of the usefulness of English, after studying English and passing examinations for at least ten years, they have gained little from College English classes. This greatly reduces their motivation. By contrast, involvement with academic subjects in ESP prioritizes learners' needs and makes them aware of the practical value of English, thus increasing their motivation. One of the advantages of ESP is being focused on

³ Oxford learner's pocket dictionary of Business English.(2006). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

the learner's needs, it wastes no time; is relevant to the learner; is successful in imparting learning; and thus is more cost-effective than 'general English'.

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