

## ENGLISH FOR COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT: AN ESP APPROACH

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### ABSTRACT

English Language in Business along with the discussion of ESP approach used for Business Purposes. This paper highlights the needs and uses of English language in business sectors. Business English (English for Business Purposes) is a new branch of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) which is a type of ELT (English Language Teaching). The students of commerce need a specific set of language skills for their success in their profession and place of Work. They are unable to use suitable words and expressions for their specific task due to lack of training and practice. This study focuses on the enhancement of business language skills for commerce students. The main purpose of this paper is to deal with the enhancement of a specific set of business terms and vocabularies of commerce students. Business English allied with the skills that most of the students need to improve their trades well.

**Keywords:** English for Specific Purposes, Business Communication Skills, Business English, English Language Teaching.

### INTRODUCTION

At the present time, English is considered to be the “Language of Communication” even English as an International Language. Now-a-days, the people in this universe mandatory to learn English, which has resulted in an enormous demand for the instructors of English. However, the gradual economic globalization, among other aspects, has brought about the boundless demand of one other aspect within English Language Teaching (ELT) that is, the instruction of ESP (English for Specific Purposes). The teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been seen as a separate activity within English language teaching (ELT). It is believed that for some of its teaching ESP has developed its own methodology and its research draws on research from several disciplines in addition to applied linguistics – this is the key distinguishing characteristic of ESP. ESP, if sometimes moved away from the established trends in general ELT, has always been with needs analysis

and making learners to communicate excellently in the tasks arranged by their field of learning or work situation.

Business English is one of the forms of the language used for a Specific Purpose. In the case of Business English, it is mainly used in universal trade by many whose primary spoken or written language is not in English language. Business English is becoming gradually important as more and more companies need their staff to be multi-lingual. The ultimate goal of any Business English Course is to permit its users to effectively communicate with others in a business setting, whether that communication is in correspondence, face to face meetings, or other methods. Therefore, a Business English Language Progression may contain topics such as business English in writing letters, reading, business phrases, advertising, and marketing aspect.

*English is the real global language and is important in education, relations and business. I am the Chairman of one of the largest Italian Bank Foundations and we are dealing with more than 100 countries. Our work language is English.*

-Professor Francesco Profumo, Politecnico di Torino, Italy.

The aim of the present paper is to focus on English for Business Purposes helping the students of business find out and review their needs and uses of English language in commercial or workplace. It also discusses ESP Approach which is used for Business Purposes exactly interrelated to the area of business and management.

## ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

The study of languages for specific purposes has had a long and stimulating history going back, some would say, as far as the Roman and Greek Empires. (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1997) According to Hutchinson & Waters (1987), ESP is a phenomenon resulting from human activities' development – “ESP was not a planned and coherent movement, but rather a phenomenon that grew out of a number of converging trends.” The development of ESP is considered as a logical result of a number of converging movements such as:

- The expansion of demand for English after the world war-II to suit specific needs of a profession
- Development in the field of linguistics (the use of language in real communication)
- Educational psychology (learner's need and interest have an influence on their motivation and effectiveness of their learning)

Dudley-Evans (1997) defined ESP (English for Specific Purposes) with the following Characteristics:

## ABSOLUTE CHARACTERISTICS

- ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners.
- ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.
- ESP is centred on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

## VARIABLE CHARACTERISTICS

- 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 systems.

ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions; content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning (Hutchinson and Waters 1987). Its intentions to meet the learners' specific needs and to develop linguistic competences of learners. Learning aims can be defined in terms of these specific purposes to which the language will put, whether it will be reading scientific papers or communication with technicians in an oil rig (Mackay, 1978).

In the current situation, English is an indispensable language for communication and occupation, and to become endorsed and achieve successfully in the world of Business. So, it is considered an innovative linguistic branch within the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), which is further divided into two sub branches, English for professional purpose and English for vocational purpose. Then it is termed as Business English from the 'English for professional purpose. Business English is presently one of the areas of growth in ESP (Ellis & Johnson, 1994). Dudley-Evans & St John (1996) says "Business English as an umbrella term used similarly to the term English for Specific Purposes to embrace both general courses in the appropriate lexis and grammar for business communication.

Benefits of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) On the basis of what has been said before, one is now in a position to state the assistances of ESP. Fundamentally; these are threefold in that they help achieve speed, efficiency, and effectiveness in learning. The description as follow:

### 1. Learning Speed

ESP outcomes in faster achievement of essential linguistic items. This is because it follows the pattern of the native speakers' achievement of language for specific purposes, in which speakers acquire what they need, when they need it, in authentic, content-based contexts. ESP does not only follow this pattern, but also improves upon it by providing an opportunity to acquire in an accelerated, intensive context (Wright, 1992: 5).

### 2. Learning Efficiency

On an ESP course, the trainees make the maximal use of their learning resources, all of which are brought to accept on acquiring specific, pre-identified linguistic items and skills. Obviously, the needs analysis is of vital importance here since it allows instructors to determine the specific necessities of learners.

### 3. Learning Effectiveness

On completion of an ESP course, the trainees are ready to use language properly in job related tasks, which have been recognized prior to the course by means of a need's analysis. Therefore, English becomes usable immediately in the employment situation. In addition, the trainees are prepared for further job-related training in English. Such preparation will result in greater academic performance since no time is wasted in acquiring the necessary language.

The benefits of ESP can be brought out further by contrasting ESP courses with General English courses. Such courses deal with many different topics, inevitably at a superficial level. In addition, they deal with many different skills, regularly attempting to give equal treatment to each. Due to the general nature of these courses, they can be enormously valuable, which is why they comprise the vast majority of English courses. However, for students with specific learning needs, they are seriously lacking because their scope is too wide. The trainees learn several inappropriate things. Relevant material, if it is included at all, is treated in insufficient depth. These deficiencies cause the procurement of the essential linguistic items to be slow and minimal, and upon the completion of the course, the trainees are not prepared to function effectively in the compulsory employment contexts.

## **BUSINESS ENGLISH IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP)**

Business English is one of the forms of the language used for a Specific Purpose, such as Nautical English, Aviation English, Technical English, or Scientific English. In the case of Business English, it is largely used in international trade by many whose primary spoken or written language in English. In a altogether connected world, Business English is becoming increasingly important as more and more companies need their staff to be multi-lingual language.

The ultimate goal of any Business English Course is to allow its users to effectively communicate with others in a business environment, whether that communication is in correspondence, face to face meetings, or other methods. Therefore, a Business English Language Course may include topics such as business English reading, letters and resumes, business phrases, or terms of sale, advertising, and marketing.

As esteems a definition of Business English or English for Business Purposes, it shares the important elements of needs analysis, syllabus design, course design, and the variety and development of materials with all ESP fields of work. Likewise, other varieties of ESP, Business English necessitates the definition of a specific language corpus. It also emphasizes particular kinds of communication in a specific context. As for differences between Business English and other varieties of ESP, Business English is frequently a combination of specific content which is related, e.g., for a particular area of industry and to a general content which is related to the general ability of effective communication, albeit in business contexts and environments (Ellis & Johnson, 2003:3).

Though, Business English, as a variety of ESP, shares a number of characteristics with General English, still differing in point of content: it is a mixture of specific content and general content; therefore, Business English is English for communication in a specific context. As Bradridge tells that teaching Business English means saying goodbye to crowded classrooms of unmotivated noisy teens and hello to negotiating the time schedule and better pay with very motivated and highly intellectual professionals.

Hence the challenges that teachers of Business English face in their activity are as follows: What should the main focus be on? Specialized vocabulary? Enlightening communication skills in a business-related context? More specifically, what do non-native students in economics and business need to know about Business English in order to face the future challenges in their careers. How should a Business English course be designed in order to fulfil the potentials and requirements of the future. And what teaching and learning techniques are most suitable to the content of such a course.

### **TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH (ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS)**

Teaching Business English (English for Business) requires a teacher's awareness of the subject matter. As a matter of fact, ESP combines the subject matter and English language teaching skills. The role of a teacher at this stage is managing to adapt teaching skills and approaches for teaching Business English. Such combination is very encouraging for students because they will have the chance to put into practice their knowledge developed during their Business English lessons in their major sphere of study, whether it is economics, commerce, business management or marketing. In this course, students have particular purpose and focus for learning the language as they study English not only to understand everyday speech, but also use the language in a special context for profession opportunities. A Business English program is therefore built on the valuation of purposes, needs and functions for which

English is required. More and more universities all over the world are offering ESP courses to meet the global need as well as to meet students' future career needs.

### **COURSE DESIGN OF BUSINESS ENGLISH (ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS)**

There have been many developments over the past decades in terms of the way teachers and course designers look at Business English. In the 1960s and 1970s the specialist vocabulary was seen as the distinguishing component between General English and Business English. Textbooks at that time were projected to offer target specialist words in a context of a written text or dialogue which dealt with a specific topic (for example, banking). Exercises mainly comprised comprehension questions about the text and vocabulary drills. Such textbooks did not take into account the learners' previous knowledge nor did they consider how the learner might use language in real life. Later on, in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s course books began to put a greater emphasis on communication skills, on speaking, writing, listening and reading within a business context. Business English teaching became thus more focused on functional areas – language for recommending, expressing opinions, giving advice, showing agreement, etc. These developments have continued so far as there appeared a growing need for enhancing such skills as presentation techniques, negotiating or meeting skills. The practical use of language prevailed over the theoretical knowledge about the language. In what concerns teaching Business English speaking skills, the learners should be trained how to handle a job interview, which is an important part of an employment file, what tips they should have in mind when they apply for a particular job. When designing a course in Business English, Ellis and Johnson (1994) suggest a few specific steps to consider, in contrast to General English courses, such as:

1. Need's analysis: what do learners need to know in order to face the necessities of their future job environment?
2. Assessment of level: using written tests, we can see what level of language students have at the beginning of the course.
3. Syllabus: set courses, like the ones taught in colleges, should have a fixed objectives and syllabus.
4. Course objectives: should be defined in relation to the needs analysis findings; in the case of pre-experience learners, they can be worded in terms of their course of study or in terms of essential language development (command of structures, functions etc.)
5. Time: in the case of college language training, time is limited so the course should be organized according to the period (number of weeks, semesters etc.).
6. Learner expectations: in the case of Business English, students are likely to be more goal orientated and to expect success.

7. Evaluation of progress: written or oral examination, dependent on particular situations. What is certain that a key feature of an ESP course is that the content and objectives of the course are focused towards the specific needs of the students. This means that ESP courses emphasis on the language, skills, and genres suitable to the specific activities the learners need to carry out in English. The material (the content) should be provided by the professors or specialists in the subject. It should always be reliable (the main purpose of training skills is to allow students to deal with dependable information despite their level of English), up-to-date (the informational exchange is growing more intense), and related for the learners' specializations (they ought to be given the information representative of their target language use situation).

The most important difference between ESP and general ELT lies, therefore in the learners and their purposes for learning English. Typically (although not always) ESP students are adult learners who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform certain job-related functions. ESP emphasizes more on language in context than on teaching the structures of language and grammar aspects.

Thus, "English for specific purposes is a term that refers to teaching or studying English for a particular career (like law, medicine) or for business in general". There is a specific reason for which English is learned. If we emphasis on the origin of ESP and its development is closely linked with students' interest in various specific disciplines, e.g., law English', English for Hotel Industry or English for Tourist Management', English for business, English for medicine, etc. Learners learn English for a specific purpose, signified by studying the subject matter, to gain and develop proper knowledge and skills through English. Learners study ESP not only they are interested in English language, but because they have to achieve a task in English. Their command of the English language must be such that they can reach a satisfactory level in their expert subject studies. In other words, students who have studied English for Specific Purposes during their university years, would be easy for them to adapt to their work conditions and would be easily employed in their field.

### **TIPS FOR TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH**

Many trainers of English as a foreign language feel intimidated by the prospect of training business English. Here are some tips to teach Business English:

1. Find out what your learners want to accomplish You'll be teaching busy adults who are used to working towards objectives. You should therefore discuss with them at the beginning of the course what they would like to accomplish. This usually means breaking things down into skills: telephoning more efficiently, writing more coherent emails, chairing meetings, etc. Trainers should help set these objectives by analysing the needs of the students early on. This needs analysis can then be shared with the students and referred to as a way of keeping them engaged and motivated throughout the course.

2. Get a clear idea about the contexts in which students use English is a very significant part of the need analysis process should be a discussion about the context in which the course participants need to perform: Why are they learning English? Who do they communicate with in their work and under what conditions? Someone who is learning English just to brush up fluency skills will have dissimilar requirements and opportunities for someone who is learning English to supervise a team working in another country. We should also recall that business is shown on a universal level and there is a strong possibility that your students will be communicating with other non-native speakers. It's a good idea to research, cross-cultural communication and find out how people from dissimilar backgrounds do business.

3. Be business-like but keep energy levels high to make the right impression, it is significant to explain in a business-like way. This affects what you say, and how you perform, but also what you wear. If people are going to work in-company, then punctuality, professionalism and capability are crucial. Student Talking Time (STT) is likely to be much higher in a business English classroom, so ensure there are plenty of opportunities for collaborative task work and speaking practice. Where possible, leave reading and writing for self-study or homework.

4. Choose your materials wisely as in the general English classroom, students will expect you to bring materials to class. There are lots of books and online resources available, but it is important to choose materials that create authentic situations in the classroom. Probably the most significant resource is the students themselves. They can provide you with real materials from their working lives the things they need to read and comprehend, or perhaps even create and present. These could be leaflets, emails, PowerPoint presentations or reports. Don't forget: concentrate on goals and needs. Find out why these resources are significant and what your students need to take away from the lesson. Then come to an agreement with them about how to meet these needs.

## **CONCLUSION**

English is indisputably the language of business and Business English, which is a variety of ESP, and shares a number of characteristics with General English, still differing in point of content; Business English is the English required when you do business; Business English became a topic to be taught distinctively in the late 1960's and early 1970's when it was already very clear for specialists that it was different from General English at least in point of terminology. There have been four major influences over the last decades with a great impact on the methods of teaching and learning of Business English: the growth of technology, new powerhouse economies, financial sector and markets. The Business English teacher is mainly a language teacher and does not need to be an expert in any specific field of business, does not need a business background to succeed in teaching Business English. When used successfully, authentic materials help bring the real world into the classroom and knowingly brighten the language classroom.



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