

English for Specific Purposes: Its Definition, Characteristics, and the Role of Needs Analysis

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Abstract : The rapid expansion in the scientific fields and the growth of communication technology increased the use of English as international language in the world. Hence, over the past few decades, many researchers have been emphasizing on how the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or as an additional language can best help students to perform successfully. English for specific purpose is today quite literally regarded as the most global language discipline which existed practically in every country in the world. ESP (English for Specific Purposes) involves teaching and learning the specific skills and language needed by particular learners for a particular purpose. The P in ESP is always a professional purpose which is a set of skills that learners currently need in their work or will need in their professional careers. It has had an early origin since 1960's and has grown to become one of the most prominent of English language teaching today. Moreover, ESP learners are usually adults who have some quittances with English and learn the language so as to communicate and perform particular profession. Related activities are based on specific purposes and needs. They are integrated into subject matter area important to the learners. Unlike general English which focuses on teaching general language courses and all four language skills are equally stressed, ESP and practically needs analysis determine which language skills are the most needed by the learners and syllabus designed accordingly. This paper looked into the origin, characteristics, development of ESP, the difference between ESP and general English. Finally, the paper critically reviews the role of needs analysis in the ESP.

Keywords : English language teaching, English for general purposes, English for specific purposes, needs analysis

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