

Teaching English to Engineers: Between English Language Teaching and Psychology

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Abstract : Teaching English to Engineers is part of English for Specific Purposes, a domain which is under the attention of English students especially under the current conditions of finding jobs and establishing partnerships outside Romania. The paper will analyse the existing textbooks together with the teaching strategies they adopt. Teaching English to Engineering students can intersect with domains such as psychology and cultural studies in order to teach them efficiently. Textbooks for students of ESP, ranging from those at the Faculty of Economics to those at the Faculty of Engineers, have shifted away from using specialized vocabulary, drills for grammar and reading comprehension questions and toward communicative methods and the practical use of language. At present, in Romania, grammar is neglected in favour of communicative methods. The current interest in translation studies may indicate a return to this type of method, since only translation specialists can distinguish among specialized terms and determine which are most suitable in a translation. Engineers are currently encouraged to learn English in order to do their own translations in their own field. This paper will analyse the issue of the extent to which it is useful to teach Engineering students to do translations in their field using cognitive psychology applied to language teaching, including issues such as motivation and social psychology. Teaching general English to engineering students can result in lack of interest, but they can be motivated by practical aspects which will help them in their field. This is why this paper needs to take into account an interdisciplinary approach to teaching English to Engineers.

Keywords : cognition, ESP, motivation, psychology

Conference Title : ICPEHSS 2016 : International Conference on Psychological, Educational, Health and Social Sciences

Conference Location : Vienna, Austria

Conference Dates : June 16-17, 2016