

ELT in India: Need for ESPs

Rutvik Dilipkumar Patel

Abstract

English for specific purposes (ESP) has gathered attention of English language learners over a couple of years. However, most of the ESP learners are either graduates or post-graduates and somewhat General English is learnt by them at the school level. Hence, this condition suggests that more attention is ought to be paid to English for General purposes that can lead the learners towards ESP. Thus, the question here is that can an ESP program help the learners learn if they are not aware of General English? Therefore, the research paper is to create a path way from EGP to ESP which include (i) situational - based content, (ii) practical use of English, (iii) creative tasks which may create multiple opportunities for learners. Moreover, a bridge from EGP to ESP can increase an overall English proficiency of the learners which increases the motivation of the learners. The research paper concludes that EGP is the core foundation of ESP, and ESP is the mandatory requirement in any profession, so both of them need to be respected and promoted equally.

Key Words

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

EGP: English for General purposes

Introduction

In the present era English language plays an effective role as it has become a base for communication between people either laymen or specialists. In other words, it is a bridge to communicate as it has transformed the pace of development by effacing the common global problems in any research. Thus, ELT is the sound of the day. No doubt, students acquire the knowledge of EGP in their school and colleges, but once they are out of their cocoon, ready to spread their tentacles in the practical world, ESP plays a vital role. The professionals of this competitive era need to spread their wings in their special and respective field. Therefore, there ought to be a shift in the instructional focus from EGP to ESP as it aims to increase learners' motivation for English learning and help them prepare themselves to enlighten their career. However, in order to prosper in their respective fields, a step towards ESP is necessary.

English for General Purposes

English for General Purposes is appropriate for anyone who desires to improve their everyday English communication skills and fluency. Therefore, by focusing on real situations and tasks a learner finds becoming more fluent and confident enough.

English for General Purposes is designed for:

- Any individual who wishes to improve everyday English communication skills and fluency
- Institutions who wish to help their employees settle comfortably in the workplace and team work

English for Specific Purposes

English for Specific Purposes is meant that type of language learning which has its focus on all aspects of language pertaining to a particular field of human activity. In other words, it is a way of teaching/learning English for specialized subjects with some specific purposes in mind.

English for Specific Purposes is designed for:

- Any individual who wishes to improve English communication skills for specialized subjects
- To meet the specific needs of the learners ESP

However, apart from a vague separation at the definition level there is an overlapping separation and connection between them. Widdowson (1983) has distinctively differentiated the key features of **EGP** and **ESP**.

English for General Purposes	English for Specific Purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The main concern is on education ➤ The course content is difficult to select ➤ It gives them ability to generate more general language ➤ The age group is usually varies from children to adults ➤ There is a focus on all the four language skills ➤ It is usually exam oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The main concern is on training ➤ The course content is easy to select ➤ It gives them ability to generate more subject oriented language ➤ The learners are usually adults ➤ Most probably needs analysis determines the use of the specific language skills ➤ Useful in employment context

Need for ESP

Learning General English will help the learners to improve their general English skills, including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, reading, writing and fluency. However, if the learners know the general English they will be able to do the common conversation. For example, there is a conversation between friends as stated under:

Conversation Related to Consumer Products

Vinay: Have you read today's newspaper?

Shyam: No. Is there anything interesting in the paper?

Vinay: There is nothing attractive, but there is an advertisement of shoes in the paper.

Shyam: Which company's advertisement is it?

Vinay: It is of Red Chief. The shoes seem to be attractive.

Shyam: They would be very expensive. What is rate printed in the newspaper?

Vinay: There are four patterns shown and the rates differ for all the patterns. It starts from Rs. 2500/- .

Shyam: Is it the last rate or the beginning rate?

Vinay: It's the beginning rate. The last rate is Rs. 4000/-.

Shyam: Is there any discount in the shoes?

Vinay: No, there is no discount shown in the newspaper. Are you planning to purchase?

Shyam: Not really. I recently got a new pair of Woodland shoes and they were expensive as well.

Vinay: Don't you think consumer products have become very expensive these days?

Shyam: Exactly.

On the other hand, the aim of ESP is to get insights into the learners' attitudes to improve their English for Specific Purposes through various activities and assignments. For instance, if there are learners of law, they would require their speaking skills to be mastered, in accordance with the scientific requirements of the learners they will have to learn English for Law. If there are learners of business management, they would require their writing skills to be perfect as they require maximum drafting in the form of mails, reports and business letters. Therefore, ESP has become mandatory and is sure to be a basic requirement for the youth to create their fortune.

For example, if a Law student goes for an interview, has to be capable of answering the interviewer in the following manner as shown in the interview ahead.

Interview between an Interviewer and an Interviewee

Interviewee: Good morning sir. Please may I come in?

Interviewer: Yes please. You may come in. You may have your seat.

Interviewee: Thank you sir.

Interviewer: It's my pleasure. May I know your full name?

Interviewee: My full name is Pranav Dhagat.

Interviewer: Where are you from?

Interviewee: I am from Nadiad.

Interviewer: Where did you complete your education from?

Interviewee: I have completed my education from two places. The first one is from my native place Nadiad and second from Anand.

Interviewer: Coming to the core questions. How would you define a legal advisor?

Interviewee: Sir, Legal advisors are lawyers who are employed by large companies or organizations to provide legal advice and services to both the organization and its employees.

Interviewer: Then how would you define a lawyer?

Interviewee: Lawyers are generally divided into attorneys and advocates. Attorneys are general legal practitioners who offer their client services on all legal aspects, including company law, criminal law, taxation, estate planning and personal advice. Attorneys represent their clients in magistrates' courts and generally prepare cases for presentation by an advocate in the High Court. On the other hand, Advocates specialize in giving legal opinions and presenting cases in court and participate in litigation only when they have been instructed or briefed to do so by an attorney.

Interviewer: How would you define the job of a legal advisor?

Interviewee: Well, Legal advisors are lawyers specialized in a particular field. They are employed to prevent from any legal disputes in their clients' companies. Moreover, while advising they must compare those cases with previous similar cases. They should be able to apply those laws and terms on their clients' issues.

Interviewer: What are the duties of a legal advisor?

Interviewee: A legal advisor has many duties. They provide advises to the head of the legal services of a particular company. The legal advisors manage both the internal; and external legal resources. They give legal support to the company during company policies, disputes, employment, contracts etc. Advisors even read and review all the legal documents of a particular company and make sure they are properly made and drafted.

Interviewer: I would like to ask you an important question, which type of skills should a legal advisor have?

Interviewee: A legal advisor must have ample of skills, such as- Good oral and written communication is a must. He must have a strong knowledge of the law. Discipline and punctuality is necessary. A well organized nature with a grasp for knowledge is really helpful.

Interviewer: How would you solve critical case if you are appointed in this firm?

Interviewee: Well sir, dedication to the job is extremely necessary to solve any case. However, each and every case is different in this job. So, each one should be handled with intelligence and care.

Interviewer: A final question, what is vital for a legal advisor to know?

Interviewee: Personally speaking, as a legal advisor, all the basic laws should at the tips of one's fingers.

Interviewer: That's a brilliant answer. Well, that's the end of your interview. We shall approach you very soon.

Interviewee: Thank you sir.

Therefore, learners are able to use what they learn in ESP classes right away in their work and for future development. This means that learning ESP enables them to use the language for specific purposes.

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be stated that in India, ESP is still in its infancy and so now is the ideal time to form a transformation. If the ESP community hopes to grow and flourish in the future, it is vital that the community as a whole understands what ESP actually represents. Only then, can new members join with confidence, and existing members carry on the practices which have brought ESP to the position it has in ELT today. Teachers nowadays, however, are much more aware of the importance of needs analysis, and certainly materials writers think very carefully about the goals of learners at all stages of materials production. Perhaps this demonstrates the influence that the ESP approach has had on English teaching in general. However, it is difficult to draw a clear line where EGP courses stop and ESP courses start. In other words, the two are highly inter related, therefore learners need to learn EGP and then focus on ESP as would be related to the learners' specific area of specialisation.

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