1. Introducing ESP
2. Development of ESP
3. Needs analysis of ESP
4. Analysing ESP language

Lecture contents
Lesson objectives

- Define English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
- Describe the classification of ESP
- Analyse ESP learner needs
- Needs analysis
- Text analysis
- Preparing learners to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by their study or work situations

MAIN CONCERNS OF ESP
HOW DO WE DEFINE ESP?
Hutchinson and Waters (1987)
Stevens (1988)
Robinson (1991)

FIND OUT THE DEFINITIONS
The use of a particular variety of English in a specific context of use and justified by learners’ needs.
What distinguishes ESP is learners’ needs.

ESP requires **analysing** language required in the area/profession, **conducting students’ needs analysis**, **conducting interviews** with subject matter specialists in the area.
ESP is designed 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 (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to the activities

ABSOLUTE CHARACTERISTICS
- May be related to or designed for specific disciplines
- May use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English
- Likely to be designed for adult learners or secondary school level learners
- Generally designed for intermediate or advanced learners

VARIABLE CHARACTERISTICS
ENGLISH FOR GENERAL PURPOSES

1. **Learners**
   — high school

2. **Aims**
   - to improve overall English competence involving a range of skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation)

ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

1. **Learners**
   - working adults

2. **Aim**
   - to meet the needs of particular learners

COMPARISON
Concerns

EGP
on vocabulary work, spelling, grammar, pronunciation, language functions

ESP
to design appropriate courses for various groups of learners according to their needs
CLASSIFICATION OF ESP BY PROFESSIONAL AREA
English for Specific Purposes

English for Academic Purposes
- English for (Academic) Science and Technology
- English for (Academic) Medical Purposes
- English for (Academic) Legal Purposes

English for Occupational Purposes
- English for Professional Purposes
  - English for Pre-Medical Purposes
  - English for Business Purposes
- English for Vocational Purposes
  - English for Vocational English
How did ESP emerge?

3 main reasons …

Brief History of esp
1. **Demands of the world after WW2**

- expansion in science, technology and commerce generated a demand for an international language
- English became the language of tech and commerce
- this created a demand for a generation of learners who needed the language for the specific purposes of tech and commerce
2. **A revolution in linguistics**

- While the demands for English was growing, new ideas began to emerge in the field of language.
- Linguistics shifted from focus on grammar to focus on communication.
- Linguists realised that language varies from context to context and that there are important differences in English for commerce and English for engineering.
They realised that if language varies from situation to situation, it should be possible to determine the features of specific situations and then make those features the basis of the learners’ courses.

This then gave rise to an expansion of research in English for Science and Technology and English for Business.

In short, the English needed by a particular group of learners could be identified by analysing the linguistic characteristics of their specialist area of work or study.

‘Tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need’ became the guiding principle of ESP
3. **Developments in educational psychology**

- There were also new developments in the area of educational psychology which contributed to the rise of ESP.
- The central importance of the learners and their attitudes to learning.
- Learners are seen to have different needs and interests, which have an influence on their motivation to learn and therefore on the effectiveness of their learning.
- This supported the development of courses relevant to learners needs and interests.
- The standard way of achieving this was to take texts from the learners’ specific area of study/work.
- The assumption is that the relevance of the English course to their needs would improve the learners’ motivation and make learning better and faster.
The growth of ESP came about by the combination of these three factors: the expansion of demand for English to suit particular needs and developments in the fields of linguistics and educational psychology.

All three factors pointed to the need for specialisation in learning English.

THEREFORE,
Needs analysis

For practical purposes, it involves:

- collecting and collating relevant information about a single learner’s or a set of learners’ common purpose(s) for learning English, and

- interpreting the data so that choices and/or decisions can be made about defining objectives and principles for course design and materials.
Concept of ‘needs’

- In general, ‘need’ = gap between what is and what ought to be
- Needs = *objective* vs. *Subjective* (Brindley, 1989)
- Needs = *perceived* vs. *felt* (Berwick, 1989)
- Needs - target situation / goal-oriented learning
- Needs = product-oriented vs. process-oriented (Brindley, 1989)
- *necessities, lacks and wants* (Hutchinson & Waters, 1986)
“what the learner needs to do in the target situation”. What the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation.
Eg: A businessman will need to understand business letters, communicate at sales conferences, get necc info from sales catalogues and so on.

TARGET NEEDS
He will presumably need to know linguistic features – lexical, structural, functional, discoursal – which are commonly used in the situations identified.

Learning needs are “what the learner needs to do in order to learn” and includes affective and cognitive factors.

See module 41
DEFINITIONS

- **Necessities**
  - determined by the demands of the target situation, i.e. target needs)

- **Lacks**
  - the gap between target proficiency and existing proficiency of the learners. What the learners already know, to help decide which of the necessities the learner lacks.
Wants (learning needs)

- what the learners want or feel they need.

  The learners' perception or awareness of the target necessities, their lacks, and what they feel they need.

- It is possible that the learners’ views may conflict with the views of teachers.

See module pg 40.
Target Situation Analysis (TSA) seeks to establish what learners need to know in order to function effectively in the target situation. pg 32-36

Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) seeks to establish the pedagogical, methodological, logistical factors which affect decisions about the language learning course. pg 41
Present Situation Analysis (PSA) seeks to establish what the students are like at the beginning of their language course, investigating strengths and weaknesses.
METHODS OF NEEDS ANALYSIS

- Tests
- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Observation
- Case studies

(Refer to module pg 45)
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