A Comparative Study of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs for hotel management students

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ABSTRACT: English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Programs are designed for students who want to improve their English in a certain professional field of study normally taught at university. Different from pre-academic and university ESL programs, which teach basic academic skills for all fields of study, ESP Programs teach the English needed in specific academic subjects, such as in hotel management or engineering. For example, a student who hopes to study engineering in the future would take an ESP class entitled "English for Engineering"; and a hotel management student would choose the ESP class "English for hotel management." This paper aims to study the role of English as a language provide for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs for hotel management students

I. INTRODUCTION

English language has acquired a very important and dignified place not only in our country but across the globe. Although it is not a global language, yet communication between two countries is hardly possible without this language. In India, its need was felt more than a century ago much before India got freedom. Raja Ram Mohan Roy advocated the use of English like most of the developments in the activities in human life, ESP was not developed coherently. Rather, its development came according to the need of people in different parts of the world and the most striking factor about its need is that it was not felt in the same way at the same time across the world. Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters in their English for Specific Purposes: A Learning Centered Approach (1987) write:
As with most developments in human activity, ESP was not a planned and coherent movement, but rather a phenomenon that grew out of a number of converging trends. These trends have operated in a variety of ways around the world [1].
"ESP is a major activity around the world today. It is an enterprise involving education, training and practice, and drawing upon three major realms of knowledge: language, pedagogy, and the students' participants' specialist areas of interest." The full name of "ESP" is generally given as "English for Specific Purposes", and this would imply that what is specific and appropriate in one part of the globe may well not be elsewhere. Thus, it is impossible to produce a universally applicable definition for ESP [2].

English for specific purposes (ESP), not to be confused with specialized English, it is a sphere of teaching English language including Business English, Technical English, Scientific English, English for medical professionals, English for waiters, English for tourism, English for Art Purposes, etc. Aviation English as ESP is taught to pilots, air traffic controllers and civil aviation cadets who are going to use it in radio communications. ESP can be also considered as an avatar of language for specific purposes. Students focus more on syllabus contents and get less time to concentrate on expanding their knowledge outside syllabus. Same thing happens in case of English learning also. Students concentrate more on learning answers to the questions provided to them by their teachers and grammar exercises done in the class [3]. The obvious result is though they score very high in their subject but when it comes to using the knowledge they are complete failure. They lack appropriate words to convey their message in their work place. My paper deals with same issue and also with the importance of English for specific Purposes in present scenario particularly in the field of hotel management students.

II. GROWTH OF ESP

From the early 1960's, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today. Its development is reflected in the increasing number of universities offering an MA in ESP (e.g. The University of Birmingham, and Aston University in the UK) and in the number of ESP courses offered to overseas students in English speaking countries.

There is now a well-established international journal dedicated to ESP discussion, "English for Specific Purposes: An international journal", and the ESP SIG groups of the IATEFL and TESOL are always active at their national conferences. In Japan too, the ESP movement has shown a slow but definite growth over the past few years.

David Carter (1983) identifies three types of ESP: English as a restricted language: The language used by air traffic controllers or by waiters is examples of English as a restricted language [4].

English for Academic and Occupational Purposes: An example of EOP for the EST branch is 'English for Technicians' whereas an example of EAP for the EST branch is 'English for Medical Studies'.

This type of ESP is uniquely concerned with anticipated future English needs of, for example, scientists requiring English for postgraduate reading studies, attending conferences or working in foreign institutions.

Strevens' (1988) ESP may be, but is not necessarily:

Restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only); Not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Anthony (1997) 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 [5].

ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students; Absolute Characteristics

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

Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines.
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English.
3. 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.
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems.
6. This definition of Dudley-Evans is influenced by Stevens but he has significantly improved the number of variable characters.
7. There are several other scholars who have defined ESP as the need based language.

Richards (2001) finds ESP as the driving force behind need analysis and writes:

The emergence of ESP with its emphasis on needs analysis as a starting point in language program design, was an important factor in the development of current approaches to language curriculum development [6].

The study and analyses of the work of different scholars make it clear that all the definitions given so far are having one common idea that ESP is the study of specific vocabulary, grammar, select phraseology and select sentence patterns of English language for achieving the goal of communicative proficiency in a specific field. It has always been the matter of discussion whether grammar should be taught to the learners of ESP or not. Lorenzo (2005) says that ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. (pp-1)7 Some scholar think in a different way and find that ESP and its teaching should be based on the problems and need of the people which varies from person to person, time to time and place to place. Belcher (2006:134-5) finds that ESP has a varied field of study which may be having many problems. He states:

ESP now encompasses an 'ever-diversifying and expanding range of purposes...ESP assumes that the problems are unique to specific learners in specific contexts and thus must be carefully delineated and addressed to fit instruction [7].

Like the other fields of studies, ESP as a branch of English Language Teaching has been a matter of contention because the scholars have not yet reached the conclusion yet as what are the fields of study of ESP. There are several sources which provide different information regarding the fields of study. One of the authentic sources is Longman Dictionary of Business English which tell as many as twenty-five fields of ESP. They are:

Accounts, Advertising, Agriculture , Banking, Commerce, Commodity exchange, Computers , Economics, Economic history, Economic theory, Finance , Industry, Industrial relations, Industrial safety, Insurance, Law, Management , Marine insurance, Public finance, Quality control , Shipping, Stock exchange, Taxation, Tourism, and Transport. (LDBE, 1982).

Another authentic source is Macmillan Career English Series which includes twelve books nine for teaching ESP. They are agriculture, aviation, business—banking, general business, international trade, computers, engineering, hotel personnel, medicine, restaurant employees, secretaries, and tourism.

ESP today is not something that can be confined to certain fields of studies. In this era of rapid development and rocket science, it has become more vibrant than ever before. Every day we find a new field of occupation which needs a specific language and a distinct content. Therefore, defining ESP is a very difficult task though analysis of need gives a solid clue to decide the kind of ESP one needs.

III. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TEACHER FOR ESP

A teacher that already has experience in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) can exploit her background in language teaching. He should recognize the ways in which his teaching skills can be adapted for the teaching of English for Specific Purposes. Moreover, He will need to look for content specialists for help in designing appropriate lessons in the subject matter field He is teaching. As an ESP teacher, we must play many roles. We may be asked to organize courses, to set learning objectives, to establish a positive learning environment in the classroom, and to evaluate student s progress [8].

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT FOR ESP

What is the role of the learner and what is the task he/she faces? The learners come to the ESP class with a specific interest for learning, subject matter knowledge, and well-built adult learning strategies. They are in charge of developing English language skills to reflect their native-language knowledge and skills. They have opportunities to understand and work with language in a context that they comprehend and find interesting. In this view, ESP is a powerful means for such opportunities. Students will acquire English as they work with materials which they find interesting and relevant and which they can use in their professional work or further studies. Learners in the ESP classes are generally aware of the purposes for which they will need to use English. Knowledge of the subject area enables the students to identify a real context for the vocabulary and structures of the ESP classroom. They are constantly expanding vocabulary, becoming more fluent in their fields, and adjusting their linguistic behavior to new situations or new roles. ESP students can exploit these innate competencies in learning English [9].

V. ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

English as a Second Language (ESL), also called English as a Foreign Language (EFL), is an English language study program for non native speakers. Most ESL programs have small classes so that students receive individual attention from their teachers. Students study English and also participate in the cultural and social activities of the school and community where they study. The goal of an ESL program is to improve the students' level of English. ESL classes teach different language skills, depending on students' English abilities, interests, and needs. All programs teach the following: conversational English, grammar, reading, listening, comprehension, writing, and vocabulary. Many people go to ESL schools to prepare for study at a College or University. In this case, students can choose an intensive program that teaches academic English. Other students study at ESL schools to improve their English for travel or social purposes. They can study in General English classes to practice conversational English and learn the skills necessary for communicating in many different situations. Hotel English courses are also available for students who want to learn the specific vocabulary and communication skills necessary for doing business in English.

VI. DIFFERENT ESL STRATEGIES USED BY THE TEACHER

A. Methodologies Strategies
- Total Physical Response (TPR)
- The Natural Approach
- The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach
- Whole Language Approach
- Language Experience Approach

- Retelling a Story
- Activating Prior Knowledge

B. Visual Strategies

Teachers should use visual displays (i.e. graphs, charts, photos) in the lessons and assignments to support the oral or written message. Visual / graphic organizers should be used before presenting a reading passage. The provision of additional contextual information in the form of a visual should make the comprehension task easier. A teacher can use these visual aids e.g. Flow Charts, Maps, Charts, Graphs, Pictures, Mapping, T-Charts, Venn Diagrams, Story Maps, Timelines, Computer / Software, Videos, Films, CD-ROM, Demonstrations, Captioning, Labeling for delivering meaningful information.

C. Interactive Strategies

- Peer Buddy / Small Group Activities / Pairs and Threes
- Think / Pair / Share
- Cooperative Learning (Group Reports / Projects)
- Panel Discussions / Debate
- Choral Reading / Read Around Groups (RAG)
- Field Trips
- Role Play
- Games

D. Modified Class-work (Based on Level of English Proficiency) Strategies

Modifying class-work involves the use of a variety of adaptations or modifications that provide class- work appropriate to the language proficiency level of the LEP students, so that comprehensible instruction can occur. Modifying class-work allows for differences in student learning styles and cultural diversity factors.

(i) Directed Reading / Thinking Activity (DRTA). The teacher directs the students in activities to check their prior knowledge of the subject, set the purpose for reading, and become acquainted with new vocabulary and concepts. At this stage, the students may also predict the content. Students then read small sections silently, while keeping their predictions and purposes for reading in mind. They read critically. After reading, the students think about what they read. They revise predictions or prove them. Follow-up activities help students expand, summarize, and restate their ideas.

(ii) Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review (SQ3R). This is a pre-reading activity that helps students focus on their topic, develop questions about that topic, and answer those questions based on the reading.

Procedure: S-Survey-"preview"

Q-Question-Why-words, such as: why, who, what, etc. 3R-Read, Recite, Review

(iii) Question-Answer Relationship (QAR)

Teachers can use QAR when developing comprehension questions, helping students to identify different question types, and teaching text organization.

VI. DIFFERENT ESL PROGRAMS HELP US TO

(i) Read, write, understand, and speak English more fluently by enhancing our grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills.- Prepare us for academic study at college, university, or professional schools.

(ii) Improve our scores on the English examinations we may need in the future, such as the TOEFL, IELTS, or Cambridge Exams.

(iii) Satisfy our personal English learning needs and interests by offering many choices of classes, such as Business English or Conversational English.

(iv) Teach us first-hand about the culture and customs of the host country.

(v) Immerse us in a new language and culture, providing many opportunities to practice English both at school and in the local community.

(vi) Meet many new and different people both in and outside of school.

(vii) Provide accommodations, cultural and social activities, and other student services to make our.

VII. HOW IS ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP) DIFFERENT FROM ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)?

If we agree with this definition, we begin to see how broad ESP really is. In fact, one may ask 'What is the

difference between the ESP and General English approach?' Hutchinson et al. (1987:53) answer this quite simply, "in theory nothing, in practice a great deal". When their book was written, of course, the last statement was quite true. At the time, teachers of General English courses, while acknowledging that students had a specific purpose for studying English, would rarely conduct a needs analysis to find out what was necessary to actually achieve it. 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. Clearly the line between where General English courses stop and ESP courses start has become very vague indeed.

Rather ironically, while many General English teachers can be described as using an ESP approach, basing their syllabi on a learner needs analysis and their own specialist knowledge of using English for real communication, it is the majority of so-called ESP teachers that are using an approach furthest from that described above. Instead of conducting interviews with specialists in the field, analyzing the language that is required in the profession, or even conducting students' needs analysis, many ESP teachers have become slaves of the published textbooks available, unable to evaluate [10].

The most important difference lies in the learners and their purposes for learning English. ESP students are usually adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular job-related functions. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required.

ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. It covers subjects varying from accounting or computer science to tourism and business management. The ESP focal point is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world (or wishes); instead, it is integrated into a subject matter area important to the learners [11].

However, ESL and ESP diverge not only in the nature of the learner, but also in the aim of instruction. In fact, as a general rule, while in ESL all four language skills; listening, reading, speaking, and writing, are stressed equally, in ESP it is a needs analysis that determines which language skills are most needed by the students, and the syllabus is designed accordingly. An ESP program, might, for example, emphasize the development of reading skills in students who are preparing for graduate work in business administration; or it might promote the development of spoken skills in students who are studying English in order to become tourist guides.

As a matter of fact, ESP combines subject matter and English language teaching. Such a combination is highly motivating because students are able to apply what they learn in their English classes to their main field of study, whether it be accounting, business management, economics, computer science or tourism. Being able to use the vocabulary and structures that they learn in a meaningful context reinforces what is taught and increases their motivation.

The students' abilities in their subject-matter fields, in turn, improve their ability to acquire English. Subject-matter knowledge gives them the context they need to understand the English of the classroom. In the ESP class, students are shown how the subject-matter content is expressed in English. The teacher can make the most of the students' knowledge of the subject matter, thus helping them learn English faster [12].

VIII. CONCLUSION

ESP programs focus on developing communicative competence in a specific field, such as HTM, business or technology. Some course prepares students for various academic programs like English for science and technology. Others prepare students for work in fields such as law, medicine engineering, tourism or graphic design. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes, needs and the functions for which English is required. ESP is normally goal directed. That's students study English not because they are interested in the English language (or English language culture) as such but because they need English for study or work purposes. At the end, the paper argues that ESP involves specialist language (especial terminology) and content to improve professional work, engineering, tourism or graphic design. An ESP program is therefore, built on an assessment of purposes, needs and the functions for which English is required. ESP is normally goal directed. That's students study English not because they are interested in the English language (or English language culture) as such but because they need English for study or work purposes. It is concluded that ESP involves specialist language (especial terminology) and content to improve professional work.

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