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**ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF MODERN SCIENCE, EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING IN THE REGION**

**АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ НАУКИ,  
ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И ВОСПИТАНИЯ В РЕГИОНЕ**





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## ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF PEDAGOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

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### TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES AT URGENCH STATE UNIVERSITY (URSU); EXPERIENCE AND CHALLENGES

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**Annotation.** This article deals with the pedagogical challenges of teaching English for specific purposes at Urgench state university.

**Аннотация.** Ушбу мақолада Урганч давлат университетида муайян мақсадлар учун инглиз тилини ўқитиш билан боғлиқ масалалар ҳақида сўз боради.

**Аннотация.** В этой статье речь идёт о вопросах, связанных с преподаванием английского языка в определённых целях в Ургенчском государственном университете.

**Key words.** English for specific purposes (ESP), learners' needs, needs analysis, syllabus, materials design, authentic text

**Калит сўзлар.** Муайян мақсадлар учун Инглиз тили, ўқувчилар эҳтиёжи, эҳтиёжлар таҳлили, ўқув дастури, ўқув материалларини яратиш, аутентик матн

**Ключевые слова.** Английский язык в определённых целях, потребность в слушателях, анализ потребностей, учебная программа, аутентичный текст, создание учебных материалов

English for specific purposes (ESP) is a rather new approach in English language teaching (ELT) and one of the most challenging approaches language teachers are practicing in higher educational institutions of Uzbekistan. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) try to explain why ESP has become so renowned among language learners: "English became the accepted international language of technology and commerce, it created a new generation of learners who knew specifically why they were learning a language – businessmen and women who wanted to sell their products, mechanics who had to read instruction manuals, doctors who needed to keep up with developments in



their field and a whole range of students whose course of study included textbooks and journals only available in English. All these and many others needed English and, most importantly, they knew why they needed it". [4] Business cannot prosper without communication with the world. Most giant companies are asking their staff to use only English to reduce language barriers in the workplace and to be able to do business internationally. For example, The Japan Times reported that Japan's car making company Honda is planning to switch its official language into English by 2020. According to the news report "The Japanese education system needs to recognize that companies are increasingly settling on English as their official language. It is not easy to find appropriate ways to develop confidence, positive mindsets and strong study skills in students, but it is one of the challenges of the current English system." [5] English has become the language of international communication and how to teach English to people with different needs has become a topic for research for many language teachers. Dudley-Evans and St John give definition of absolute and variable characteristics of ESP and this description helps the language teachers to distinguish the difference between ESP and other branches of ELT.

#### 1. Absolute characteristics

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and the activities of the discipline it serves;
- ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

#### 2. Variable characteristics

- 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 used for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most



ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners. [1]

From Dudley-Evans and St John's description it is obvious that general English teaching approaches cannot fully cover the needs of ESP learners and different language teaching approach is needed to impellent the teaching process successfully.

Urgench state university has been practicing teaching English for non-linguistic majors for many years but not much has been done to formulate its procedure according to theory of teaching ESP. Currently the following pedagogical challenges of ESP teaching are being experienced at UrSU:

**Needs analysis.** One of the most important initial phases of designing ESP courses is called "needs analysis" in which course developers investigate the specific and languages skills of the learners to consider while designing the whole course. "ESP course design usually includes a stage in which the course designers identify what specific language and skills the group of language learners will need. The identification of language and skills is used in determining and refining the content for the ESP course. It can also be used to assess learners and learning at the end of the course. This process is called "needs analysis". [2] In most cases "needs analysis" is conducted in the form of "questionnaires" or "interviews" which allow the needs analyst to explore people's opinions of needs, difficulties and the importance of language skills and areas. According to Helen Basturkmen the following processes should be included in "needs analysis":

*Target situation analysis:* Identification of tasks, activities and skills learners will be using English for; what the learners should ideally know and be able to do.

*Discourse analysis:* Descriptions of the language used in the above.

*Present situation analysis:* Identification of what the learners do and do not know and can or cannot do in relation to the demands of the target situation.

*Learner factor analysis:* Identification of learner factors such as their motivation, how they learn and their perceptions of their needs.

*Teaching context analysis:* Identification of factors related to the environment in which the course will run. Consideration of what realistically the ESP course and teacher can offer.[2]



To develop questionnaires and interview questions to identify learners' needs and to conduct the analysis before starting ESP courses is one of the challenges language teachers at UrSU should consider and implement.

**Syllabus design.** A syllabus is document which shows what will be taught and its units might be construed as areas of grammar, vocabulary, genres, language functions (speech acts), notions, skills and strategies. Basturkmen (2010) identifies the decisions about what to include in planning the syllabus:

- Types of units such as: skills, vocabulary, genres, functions, notions and disciplinary, professional or cultural content;
- Items in the unit such as: which genres, semantic sets and functions;
- Sequencing – what should come first, second and so forth and decisions made according to considerations; such as immediate and less immediate need, level of difficulty with easier items before more difficult items and logical flow – for instance, in Business English, opening meetings before closing meetings. [2]

One of the major considerations while designing a syllabus is to consider its content and at this stage of the process “needs analysis” plays an important role in determining course content of ESP. A syllabus should be designed to assist language teachers to find the best and effective way of teaching ESP to meet the learners' needs. At UrSU the curriculum for ESP courses is handed down by Ministry of higher education of Uzbekistan and syllabuses are designed by the teachers of ESP department. However, there is a huge divergence between the content of curriculum and syllabuses. While the curriculum is concentrated on meeting the students' needs and stands as a guideline to develop a syllabus taking different majors into consideration, the syllabus designed by the teachers of the department do not fully meet the students' range of needs and more of general English character.

**Materials design.** Developing materials is one of the most characteristic features of ESP in practice and a large amount of teachers' time is spent on writing materials because ESP is experiencing a shortage of course books written for the needs of a specific group of ESP learners. Developing both language and professional skills of learners requires intensive work on selecting and developing materials related to their needs identified in “needs analysis” as it is almost impossible to find a unique course



book that matches the needs of the learners of different majors. One of the key features of selecting and developing materials for ESP classes is to select authentic texts. The term “authentic” means that the text is not written for the purpose of teaching and learning languages. Harding suggests taking into account the following advices while working on materials design:

- Use contexts, texts and situations from the students’ subject area. Whether they are real or simulated, they will naturally involve the language the students need.
- Exploit authentic materials that students use in their specialism or vocation – and don’t be put off by the fact that it may not look like ‘normal English’.
- Make the tasks authentic as well as the texts. Get the students doing things with the material that they actually need to do in their work. [3]

Materials designing should be considered as one of the key and challenging stages of organizing ESP classes at UrSU and developing teachers’ skills in selecting and designing authentic materials must be improved by organizing workshops on the very topic.

**Teacher collaboration.** Teachers collaboration is another issue to consider with language teaching at UrSU. Collaborative teaching involves a language teacher and a content teacher working together on developing ESP courses and designing syllabuses relatively. Collaborative teaching approach will help the language teachers to understand the content knowledge to identify the language and professional skills that students are likely to need in future.

**Readiness for teaching ESP.** Another challenge of teaching ESP classes is that most language teachers focus on General English and are not aware of teaching theories, skills and knowledge to teach ESP. Most language teachers claim that they have never been trained to teach ESP classes and only have basic theoretical knowledge of specific language teaching. While hiring language teachers to ESP department, teachers must participate short courses organized and conducted by more professional teachers of the department to provide basic theoretical knowledge of ESP.

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