

**PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ESP
FOR LEARNERS OF NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS**

MAKALAH



IAIN JEMBER

Oleh:

**Febrina Rizky Agustina
NIP. 199502212019032011**

IAIN JEMBER

**INSTITUT AGAMA ISLAM NEGERI JEMBER
LEMBAGA PENJAMIN MUTU
SEPTEMBER, 2021**

**PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ESP
FOR LEARNERS OF NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS**

MAKALAH

Diajukan kepada Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu UIN KHAS Jember
untuk dipresentasikan dalam seminar diskusi periodik dosen



Oleh:

**Febrina Rizky Agustina
NIP. 199502212019032011**

IAIN JEMBER

**INSTITUT AGAMA ISLAM NEGERI JEMBER
LEMBAGA PENJAMINAN MUTU
SEPTEMBER, 2021**

DAFTAR ISI

	Hal
Halaman Judul	i
Halaman Judul dalam	ii
Daftar Isi	iii
Bab I INTRODUCTION	
A. Background of Study	1
B. Focuses of Study	2
C. Purposes of Study	2
BAB II PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ESP FOR LEARNERS OF NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS	
A. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)	3
B. Characteristics of ESP	5
C. Why do we need ESP?	5
D. Principles of ESP Implementation	6
1. Principles for Learners' Factors	6
2. Principles for Instructor's Problems	9
3. Principles for Facility Factor	11
BAB III CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS	
A. Conclusion	12
B. Suggestions	12
References	13

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Some experts of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) argued that language will be better acquired when the language learners are being engaged in a contextual situation where learners can use the language. This thinking leads to the emergence of communicative approaches. Communicative approach has two sub-approaches (Brown, 56:2015). The first one is general approach, and the other one is specific approach. The general communicative approach focuses on the basic knowledge and skills of the target language, and it is applicable for various settings. Meanwhile, the specific approach refers to the certain approaches of language instructions for certain purposes and they are only applicable in certain contexts. One of the examples of specific communicative approach is Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) or commonly addressed as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in ELT. This branch of specific communicative approach targets those language learners whose fields of study are non-English.

The reason why communicative approach are divided into two sub-approaches is because of the language instructions for each sub-approach is different. In ELT context, the approaches employed for regular English instructions in lower-level schools are mostly general approach. This is because general approach instructions include grammar, structures, and broad vocabulary of English. However, such instructions do not occur in classrooms where specific approach is applied. In specific approach, instructions are strongly determined by things such as age, purposes, institutions, even sociopolitical and sociocultural constraints (Brown, 57:2015). The focus is broader than general approach, in terms of the goal of learning, vocabulary choices, techniques used, and so on. Meanwhile, specific approach is mostly implemented in university, in ESP program, where the goal of learning is to get the learners be able to use the language in a communicative way according to their field of study.

Despite of the differences in the instructions, the implementation of specific approach in the classroom is far from the principles, especially for ESP program. This is because the instructors and the educational instances may be facing some problems in the practice, in which they have to shift the ESP instructions. The problems may emerge from various factors. These factors may lead to the unsuccessfulness of ESP implementation in the classrooms.

Therefore, this conceptual paper is intended for ESP instructors and educational instances, to share ideas related the principles to follow in conducting specific communicative approach, especially for specific approach such as ESP (English for Specific Purposes).

B. Focus of Study

The focuses of the current study are to share: (1) ideas of problems occurring in ESP classes for non-English learners which obstacle the implementation of ESP program, and (2) some principles in teaching ESP to non-English department learners which are generated from the problems occurred.

C. Purpose of Study

The followings are the purposes of the current study:

1. To explain about the problems and obstacles that learners experience in ESP classes.
2. To give insight in how to teach ESP to non-English department learners.

IAIN JEMBER

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ESP FOR LEARNERS OF NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS

A. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

Back in the 19th century, people from English speaking countries started to travel around the world for gold, glory and gospel. Yet, they thought that language had become a barrier in successfully launching their mission. Thus, the thought of teaching English for specific purpose emerged. The emergence of educational psychology, which focused more on *who* to teach instead of *what* to teach, and a revolution in linguistics were also became the factors of the emergence of ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). All the three factors led instructors and linguists to have more specific approach in English instructions.

In recent studies, Kiran (2013) mentioned ESP as an umbrella term covering a wide range of interests and student centered learning. Ahmed (2014) also referred ESP to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language, where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain. In line with Ahmed, Chang (2009) and Tsao (2011, in Tabatabaei & Mokhtari, 2014) stated that ESP courses are taught at universities in order to meet learners' specific needs, and prepare them for academic and vocational contexts in future. So, ESP is commonly taught in higher-level education instances rather than in lower-level schools because the purpose of ESP is to teach English to the learners in a narrower spectrum based on what learners need to learn for their future career. For example, learners of Biology department will have a different need compared to learners of Management department. They will need more scientific vocabulary choices and how to use them in scientific papers or researches whilst the Management learners will need terms related to marketing, etc. This explains the term “specific” or “special” as Halliday, Mackintosh and Strevens referred it as the language varieties typical of a professional activity.

B. Characteristics of ESP

Teaching English for Specific Purposes is quite different than teaching English for General Purposes (EGP). Strevens (1988, in Otilia, 2015) proposed that there are three absolute characteristics which strongly differ ESP with EGP, namely: (1) ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learners, (2) ESP is related to content (particular description, occupations and activities), (3) ESP is centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc. In this case, Dudley-Evans et al (1998) and Strevens stated some additional characteristics of ESP: (1) ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation but it could be used for learners at secondary school level, (2) ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced learners, (3) Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

From the characteristics given, it can be perceived that how much different ESP is from EGP in terms of the kinds of learners, the goal of learning, and how the instructions are carried out. The important thing is that, many of ESP courses assume the learners have already understood the basic knowledge of English. Therefore, instructors are strongly advised to teach the parts where the learners still need to dig deeper. Things like specific terms and specific contexts for communicative purposes are obligatory to be taught in ESP.

C. Why do we need ESP?

Referring to the background of ESP emergence, one of the reasons why ESP was needed was because the people thought language was a barrier and there was an urge to have across communication. Today, in the era of technology and information, the urge still exists and gets even greater. For example, a learner needs to pursue better education related to his or her field of study and it is only available by learning abroad then English will be greatly required. Another reason of why ESP is needed is because language learners need specific English for certain subject areas, in terms of specific terms (jargon) and proper settings of

where English is used. In addition, this is also because in EGP, communicative use of English has often been neglected. Learners are mostly taught how to use the language in general contexts such as how to apologize in general transactional and interpersonal context, rather than the communication occurs between a doctor and his patient.

D. Principles of ESP Implementation

In teaching ESP to higher level learners, it is not as easy as instructors thought it would be. In many cases, ESP instructors are required to change their course outlines from ESP approach into a more similar approach to EGP. This occurrence is common to non-English department learners. Such occurrence leads to a not well-implemented ESP unless the three factors affecting ESP implementation are minimized.

The three factors which affect the implementation of ESP can emerge either from the learners' side, instructors' side or even from the facility. Most of the time, at least two or three of these factors are inevitable in ESP practices. Thus, in implementing ESP, instructors and educational instances should follow the principles of ESP implementation. The principles of ESP implementation are generated from the problems of each factor, which will be explained as follows.

1. Principles for Learners' Factors

Learners' factors are the problems which emerge from the learners themselves and these issues have a great role in the successfulness or unsuccessfulness of the teaching and learning process of ESP.

The first problem is learners' lack of proficiency. Many people may think that university learners have acquired good English competence. However, in reality, learners from university still face difficulty in learning English during the process of ESP teaching and learning because they do not have sufficient competence in English. This problem occurs either because they do not like English in their previous lessons or they do not like English in the first place.

From the first factor, instructors have to create meaningful ESP instructions where learners can engage in various activities without leading them to believe that ESP is all about tasks, but a fun way to use English as a mean of communication.

In addition to the previous problem, learners also have difficulty in learning ESP during the lesson because they find it very different between their L1 and English. For Indonesian learners, English is syntactically different. For example, In Bahasa Indonesia, they do not have 'to be' preceding and '-ing- form following verbs in order to show an activity in progress, so it is a brand new structure for the learners compared to that of Bahasa Indonesia. As for this occurrence, instructors should follow the principle of reducing grammar-focused instructions, grammar should be taught in context. Explaining grammar not in context will only lead the learners to think twice to use the language.

The third problem is that learners have lack of English vocabulary. As opposed to EGP, ESP provides more specific terms than EGP. This is why learners need the help of dictionary to aid them during the lesson. The principle is that ESP instructors should oblige the learners to bring a dictionary every time they go to class. However, not every student has the skill to use dictionary right. Conventional dictionaries may be very useful, only if they know how to use it. Most learners, however, only look up the words they want to find in the dictionary without even considering the context of the meaning. Hence it is not a surprised if they do not understand the main ideas of a text. A language learner needs to see the use of the word in context. For example, the word 'book' can have different meanings when it is used. However, conventional dictionaries lacks of this facility. Therefore, ESP instructors can also persuade their learners to start installing dictionary software on their pc or laptop as an additional aid. Learners can also be taught to use Corpora, a software that is available online and offline to aid them in looking for the meaning of a word by showing the word in various contexts.

The fourth problem is that, learners have difficulties because not everyone in the university entering a particular department because of their own willing. Especially with ESP being practiced in the 1st and 2nd semester, they will face a lot of problems related to the specific terms of the subject. In this case, to prevent them to feel left out and help all learners learn ESP equally, instructors and educational instances have to follow the principle of having ESP in the later semester, not in the beginning of the term. However, this principle can be difficult if the instructors do not have the authority to do so.

The fifth problem is learners' lack of motivation. This factor has always been an inevitable problem which learners have to face. It may occur either related to the learners' intrinsic motivation or extrinsic motivation. As for intrinsic motivation, the learners may not see any benefit from the teaching and learning process of ESP. They may think that English is not really important towards their future career. Then, in this case, ESP instructors need to ensure the learners by letting them know the importance of English for their career, for example, instead of going straight to the lesson in every meeting. Mai (2016) and Unal (2014) suggested that students should try looking for a part-time job that requires the use of English so that they can be motivated to learn more. As for extrinsic motivation, it can emerge from the instructor' sides or the facilities and they will be discussed further in respective points.

The sixth problem is that learners mostly feel bored during the reading session, especially reading pages after pages and they are served in English. There are too many words to read, especially when learners do not consider reading as a habit. Most learners may have difficulty in reading because they have been using the wrong reading strategy. They tend to feel that they need to know the meaning of every single word in the text, instead of looking for the main ideas of the text. At this point, the learners will get bored, and instructors have to shift the teaching and process learning into something

meaningful. Therefore, instructors are now being persuaded to use computers or other technologies in order to improve the learners' reading interest. They can be reading online or reading video transcript, where they can also perceive the pictures.

The last problem in learners' factor is that they have low self to language production. They feel afraid and intimidated as they are being asked something about which they do not know. In this case, an ESP instructor should make benefits of the large class learners to make small group discussions. They need to have peer assessment, so that instead of going to the front of the class, learners may be assessed from their seat

2. Principles for Instructor's Problems

Instructors' problems are the issues with which ESP instructors have to deal. In many cases, the Instructors have already met the first criteria, which are having sufficient knowledge regarding English language and how to teach it. However, there are inevitable things that may occur during the practice.

The first problem faced by ESP instructors is the difficulties in selecting materials (Rus & Medea, 2012). This is because there are not many course materials which are able to support the learning process of ESP learners. Some educational instances try to adopt and adapt some existing course materials yet not all the existing books are sufficient in terms of language use, and the specific terms to provide learners with the knowledge they need. Many of them were produced in the 1960s, so they are not appropriate with the recent use of language anymore. For example, books for learners of flight schools use words like steward and stewardess instead of flight attendant. Therefore, due to the lack of good and appropriate books or course materials in ESP classrooms, instructors are strongly advised to follow the principle of designing their own books or course materials to be used within the classrooms.

The second problem is related to the instructors' skills, that they are lack of specialists' knowledge. Many ESP instructors are English-department graduates (Duyen, 2014), so they may not have deeper knowledge on the respective subjects. Therefore, it can be hard sometimes when they want to relate English with a particular subject. Specific terms can also be a problem for the instructors. For example, the word "mass" may mean differently in English for Physics Department and in general English. Therefore, the instructors are advised to ask their collegians and discuss the problems in a kind of ESP instructors' association.

The third problem is almost similar to the previous one that is the lack of special training for ESP instructors. In some instances, although during ESP class, each skill (listening, reading, speaking and writing) has different instructor, they still need to be trained on how to teach the learners of ESP. ESP instructors have to gather and learn from each other. This is in line with Sierocka (2008) who argued that ESP instructors must have knowledge on their teaching content and show interest on the discipline. They should also cooperate with subject specialists in order to teach better ESP to the learners (Mai, 2016).

The fourth problem emerges as many instructors are still confused on the differences between teaching ESP and teaching EGP (English for General Purposes) in terms of the objectives, materials, and approaches. For objectives, ESP is focused more on how to use the language in real life contexts based on particular fields of study. Whilst EGP focuses more on teaching the general knowledge of English, the structures, general vocabulary, etc. Therefore, following the principle of conducting a need analysis on the learners to understand more about what they need (Andriani, 2014) especially when designing a course materials and the use of specific approaches for the learners are strongly advised.

All of the confusion and lack of training also lead to another problem emerges from ESP instructors that are the teaching methods are still passive.

This is because the instructors tend to end up teaching grammar rather than blending them with other skills or activities. Therefore, the instructors have to update the methods regularly by reducing grammar-focused learning, by integrating grammar and vocabulary into texts or activities, or implementing alternative assessment as Kavaliauskiene and Anusiene (2007) suggested, may boost the students' motivation in learning.

3. Principles for Facility Factor

Facility factor deals with the problems which neither the learners nor instructors have the authority to change. The first problem in facility factor is the lack of good qualified books in the market for ESP program. Gatehouse (2001) added that this is because many ESP instructors are not provided with ample of time to conduct need analysis so that they are unable to produce good books. This problem can be resolved by giving having a group of ESP instructors of the same fieldwork to work together making their own books and course materials.

The second problem is that ESP classroom is not too different than any other subject classes, which consists of 40-60 learners in one big room. This kind of class is too overcrowded for the learners to gain maximum learning process. Instructors will also have difficulty in taking control of the learners at once. In this case, instructors may not have any authority to change the classroom system. However, it is strongly advised for the respective instances to have the limit of 20-30 learners in one class (Mai, 2016).

The last problem is time restriction. Some ESP learners felt that the ESP course credits weren't enough for them to excel in the language use (Boniadi, et al., 2013). Such limited time of ESP program is not suitable for the standard language learning for specific purposes. In many instances, ESP is only allowed for two meetings per week. The authority may need to change the schedule based on the principle that is to have ESP broken down into four meetings in a week, with different skill taught in each meeting. ESP should

not be done in only one semester; the authority should at least have ESP in 2 semesters in a row. For instances, in the first semester, the skills taught for ESP are only reading, speaking, and listening and the second semester, the skills taught are speaking, writing, and listening. In a week, there are four meetings, reading is taught twice a week, whilst the others once a week. However, if it is not possible to be conducted, ESP instructors may employ task-based approach to save time in the classroom. Task-based approach can be used for most skills. Instructors may integrate two skills at a time, for example reading and speaking. As for speaking skill using Task-based approach, the instructor can have the learners conduct an interview with a doctor or to have a role-play with the classmates. So, everyone in the classroom can try speaking at once which does not waste much time. As for reading, instructors can assign the learners to read certain texts and give them group tasks in which they do some kind of game-questions related to the text. Time restriction can also be solved by using blended-learning. In blended-learning, instructors may have face-to-face classes and online-classes which involve the use of social media or other available online learning platforms.



CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

ESP is very much required to aid learners in competing and surviving not only for their current study but also for their future career. However, teaching ESP to higher level learners is quite difficult due to the emergence of inevitable problems from the three factors, namely: (1) factors from the learners' side, (2) factors from the instructors' side, and (3) factors coming from the facility. There are six problems which emerge from the learners' factors. They are mostly related to the learners' lack of English proficiency and low motivation to learn English. As for problems occurring from the instructors' factors are mostly related to the teaching method and how to teach ESP in the classroom. Meanwhile, the problems in the facility factor are related to the things which are not possible for both the instructors and learners to change, such as the lack of good qualified books, overcrowded classes, and time restriction. Therefore, there are solutions for each problem from the three factors to be made as the principles in teaching ESP classes. These principles should be followed by both ESP instructors and the educational instances.

B. Suggestions

Based on the conceptual paper, several suggestions can be generated, namely:

1. Institution should allow some changes in the curriculum or course regulations in order to have quality instructional process of ESP.
2. ESP Lecturers should team-up with other lecturers of non-English courses in order to get better and more contextual material to teach the ESP to the students.
3. Institution should differentiate the curriculum for ESP and the curriculum for General English.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, M.K. "The ESP Instructors: Issues, Tasks and Challenges." *English for Specific Purposes World*. 15 (2014).
- Andriani, G. 2014. "Problems in Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Higher Education". *NOBEL: Journal of Literature, Language, and Language Teaching*. 5 (2014).
- Boniadi, A., Ghojazadeh, M., Rahmatvand, N. "Problems of English for Specific Purpose course for medical learners in Iran". *Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. (2013) pp.4-6.
- Brown, H.D. *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. 4th Ed. New York: Pearson Education, 2015.
- Duyen, L. T. H. "Learning to Teach ESP: Case Studies of Two Vietnamese General English Instructors". *Language Education in Asia*. 5(2)(2014). PP. 22-237. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A05/Duyen>
- Gatehouse, K. "Key Issues in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Curriculum Development". *The Internet TESL Journal*. 7(10) (2001). <http://iteslj.org/>
- Hutchinson, T. Waters, A. *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centred approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Kavaliauskiene, G. Anusiene, L. "The Challenges for ESP Learners: Alternative Assessment of Performance and Usefulness of Class Activities". *Socialinis Darbas*. 6(1) (2007). Pp.134-143
- Kiran, P. "Challenges to an ESP Instructors". *Journal for ESL Instructors and Learners*. 11(2013).
- Mai, P. T. T., Hoa, N. T. T. "Difficulties in Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Empirical Study at Vietnam Universities". *Higher Education Studies* 6 (2)(2016). Pp. 154-161), (<http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/hes.v6n2p154>).
- Medrea, N. & Rus, D. "Challenges in teaching ESP: teaching resources and learners needs". *Procedia Economics and Finance*, (2012) pp. 1-5.
- Negrea, V. "English for Specific Purposes (ESP): Curriculum Development". *Euromentor Journal*. 1(3) (2010).
- Tabatabaei, O., Mokhtari, A. "ESP Learners' Perception of ESP Program Problems at Iranian Universities (A Case Study of Islamic Azad University Najafabad Branch)". *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(6)(2014). pp.1144-1154.

Tsao, C., Wei A., Fang, A. "ESP for College Learners in Taiwan: A Survey of Students and Faculty perceptions." *International Symposium on ESP*. (2008)

Otilia, S.M. "Challenges Facing the ESP Practitioner." *ACADEMICA BRÂNCUSI Economy Series*. (2015), Pp.245-248.

Otilia, S.M. "English for Specific Purposes: Past and Present." *ACADEMICA BRÂNCUSI Economy Series*. 1(1)(2015).

Sierocka, H.. "The role of ESP Instructors". *Business English*, (2008). ([http. www. Instructors.pl](http://www.Instructors.pl)).

Unal, A. "The Problems Encountered in English for Specific Purposes: Business Department Case." *The Clute Institute International Academic Conference*. (2014), PP. 418-424.

