



## TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIAL PURPOSE AT THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING IN ADEN UNIVERSITY, YEMEN

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### ABSTRACT

The development of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has brought new avenues to reframe the language learning mechanism. On the contrary note ICT has also brought new challenges to language learners as well as teachers. ICT is widely used in all areas of the curriculum. Yet, most teachers would acknowledge, there is still much more to do to make effective and efficient use of the technology. English language is not an exception, the development of Information and Communication Technologies in English is seen as a progression, a gradual evolution, rather than a dramatic leap.

A gale of change is blowing in the English Language Teaching. ICT has initiated new possibilities into the classroom. Until now little studies have been achieved in the field of theoretical approaches and their underlying practice in Yemen. This paper aims to identify the methodologies that are used by English for specific purposes (ESP) teachers at the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University, Yemen. It focuses on the dominated method and techniques used in teaching ESP and discuss why it dominates the ESP teaching at the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. It will present a brief review of the studies which have systematically verified the development of the ESP in the world and Arab countries. The researchers used questionnaire and interview to collect data for this study. 100 students were randomly chosen and 05 teachers of ESP in the Faculty of Engineering were the sample of the study. It has been noticed that, lecture method is the dominated method used in teaching ESP in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University, Yemen. Large classes and the limited time available of English language subject on the time table are main reason for the domination of the lecture method. The ICT based teaching is also used, but not often.

**Keywords:** *English for Specific Purpose (ESP), Information Communication Technology (ICT), English Language Teaching (ELT), Teaching Methodology, Language Skills.*

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## INTRODUCTION

It has become a recognized fact that English language has become a link language for communication worldwide whereby people can get access to the up-to-date developments in many fields. Besides that English has become a necessary tool in order to obtain a job; get promoted and perform effectively in the world of work. Many countries, therefore have introduced English in their education programme as the best foreign language which their students can learn.

In Yemen, English language is a medium of instruction for teaching and learning of other subjects, especially in the scientific faculties such as medicine and engineering Alwalidi (2013). Therefore, students need to have an adequate amount of knowledge of English language to be able to study in these faculties. English is taught in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University as a subject to the students at first and second level for four terms. However, the students still faced difficulties in learning technical topics in English medium. The researchers believe that the analysis of the methodologies currently used in teaching English language in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University will help to identify reasons of the weaknesses of the student in English language.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

English for specific purposes (ESP) rose to the world of English language teaching (ELT) in the sixties of the last decade when Barber published his paper which was entitled "Some Measurable Characteristics of Modern Scientific Prose in Contribution to English Syntax and Phonology" (1962). After that in 1965, Herbert published the first textbook for teaching ESP which was entitled *The Structure of Teaching English*. Swales (1985) states that the Herbert's textbook was the first real ESP textbook (17). From 1967 the focus is shifted from the discussion of actual materials of teaching ESP to the actual teaching situation of ESP. Consequently, Higgins (1967), as cited in Swales (1985), published the "Hard Fact" (Notes on Teaching English to Science Students). From this point, ESP has spread in wide range of countries, especially, in the Middle East and Arab countries. In 1970, Swales published his textbook which was entitled, *Writing*

*Specific English*. This textbook was the first textbook designed for the Arab students at the Faculty of Engineering, Al-Fatah University, Libya. "ESP in Yemen can be traced as far back as to the period of British occupation of south part of Yemen, particularly after the foundation of the Technical Institute, Aden in the sixties of the last decade" (Hasan 11)

In 1987, Hutchinson and Waters offer an abroad definition of ESP. They state that "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and methods are based on the learner's reasons for learning" (19). In 1998, Dudley-Evans and others divide the ESP into absolute and variable characteristics:

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

## THE VARIABLE CHARACTERISTICS

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situation, a different methodology from that of General English;
- ESP is usually 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 advance students.( 4-5)

'Method' which linguistically means a way, can be defined as an asset of procedures upon which classroom lesson is executed (or taught based upon an approach). A method specifies teachers' role, skills, material, content and graduation of content, techniques and learners' roles. Robinson in his book, *ESP Today* (2001) introduces some key issues to be considered in ESP methodology. They are:

- The relationship between the method and the students' specialism.
- The place of language practice.
- The relationship between acquisition and learning and between old and new knowledge and abilities.



- Authenticity. (49)

Water (1989) focuses on consideration of basic learning factors such as learner interest, enjoyment, creativity and involvement in both ESP methodology and materials. However, there is a question, whether ESP practitioners use special methods in producing their ESP lesson totally different from those of 'General English' (35). Swales as cited in Robinson identifies that ESP practitioner learns more from General English material and methodology. Robinson states that "ESP teachers use methods which are used in general English but there is little difference could be appeared". (50). According to Robinson the differences might be on that: ESP can task classroom activities on students' specialism, and that activities can have a purely authentic purpose related to students target needs.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

##### USING DISCOURSE OR TEXT IN TEACHING ESP

Item	Subject	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Using discourse and text	Students	17%	48%	12%	7%	16%
	Teachers	40%	40%	20%	0%	0%

Table (1) teachers and students' questionnaire: Using discourse or text in teaching ESP.

The table above shows that, discourse and text are used to teach ESP in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. In the other words, content approach and task based approach are used in teaching ESP in the faculty. These two approaches are the most suitable to teach ESP. They yield the chance to ESP teacher to use the task or text that related to students' specialized as abased of English language teaching. In the help of these approaches, the ESP teacher can provide the students with knowledge of their specialization field and at the same time teaches them the language aspects like grammar, vocabulary and four skills.

##### THE TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

Item	Subject	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Use of lecture method	Students	26%	26%	17%	14%	17%
	Teachers	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%
Use of ICT based teaching	Students	20%	25%	15%	16%	24%
	Teachers	60%	40%	0%	%	0%
Use of both lecture method and ICT based teaching	Students	19%	26%	17%	16%	22%
	teachers	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%

Table (2) teachers and students' questionnaire: The teaching methodologies.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES TO BE USED

For the purpose of collecting valid and reliable data about the research topic, the researchers have chosen two applicable instruments.

1. Questionnaire
2. Interview

##### Sample of the study

The study will be conducted at the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University, Yemen. It will investigate the responses of the ESP teachers about five teachers and one hundred of students. The students sample is chosen randomly from the students in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University, Yemen.



Table (2) reveals that, the lecture method and ICT teaching based are used to teach ESP in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. According to the teachers' responses which are 100% between strongly agree and agree as well as the students' responses which are 52% between strongly agree and agree, it is clear that, the lecture method is used more frequently in teaching ESP. This result is reasonable, since, the situation where ESP is taught is of that of crowded classes. The number of the students in each class reaches to 100-150 students. As well as the available time to teach English subject is two hours in the time table and one hour and have in the applicable situation. For these reasons the teacher prefer to use the lecture method to present his lesson, since the lecture method gives the chance to the teacher to produce a large amount of knowledge to a large number of students in a limited time.

#### THE COMMON METHODOLOGY USED IN TEACHING ESP

Common method	Lecture	ICT teaching based	Communicative approach	Others
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table (3) teachers' interview: The common methodology used in teaching ESP.

The table above indicates that the lecture method is the common method used to teach ESP in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. This result is in consistent with the student responses about the teaching methodologies in table 10 since the majority of responses (52) were between strongly agree and agree that the ESP teachers used lecture method in teaching ESP.

#### THE TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Item	Subject	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Use communicative games and role-play	Students	14%	36%	7%	13%	30%
	Teachers	40%	40%	20%	0%	0%
Use group-work and pair-work activities	Students	11%	29%	26%	15%	19%
	Teachers	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%

Table (4) teachers and students' questionnaire: The teaching techniques.

The above result reveals that the language games, role-play, group-work and pair-work techniques are used in the ESP classroom in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University.

#### THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Item	Subject	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The medium of instruction: English	Students	25%	36%	20%	11%	8%
	Teachers	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%
The medium of instruction: both English and Arabic	Students	32%	35%	15%	11%	7%
	Teachers	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%

Table (5) teachers and students' questionnaire: The medium of instruction.



The above table shows that both English and Arabic languages are used as a medium of instruction in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. However, English language is the language of instruction whereas Arabic language only used in limited situation to clarify the difficult word and grammatical rules.

### CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that, the discourse and text are used to teach English language. Therefore, content approach and task-based approach are used in teaching ESP. The lecture method and ICT teaching based are used to teach ESP. The lecture method is most preferred to teach ESP in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. Many times the language games, role play, group-work and pair-work techniques are used in the ESP class. Both English and Arabic languages are used as a medium of instruction in the Faculty of Engineering, Aden University. However, English language is the language of instruction whereas Arabic language is only used in limited situation to clarify the difficult word and grammatical rules if it is needed.

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