CAMBRIDGE Language Teaching Library

# Developments in English for Specific Purposes

## A multi-disciplinary approach

**Tony Dudley-Evans** and
**Maggie Jo St John**

CAMBRIDGE LANGUAGE TEACHING LIBRARY

A series covering central issues in language teaching and learning, by authors who have expert knowledge in their field.

*In this series:*

**Approaches in Methods in Language Teaching** *by Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers*
**Appropriate Methodology and Social Context** *by Adrian Holliday*
**Beyond Training** *by Jack C. Richards*
**Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching** *edited by David Nunan*
**Communicative Language Teaching** *by William Littlewood*
**Communicative Methodology in Language Teaching** *by Christopher Brumfit*
**Course Design** *by Fraida Dubin and Elite Olshtain*
**Culture Bound** *edited by Joyce Merrill Valdes*
**Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom** *by David Nunan*
**Developments in ESP** *by Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John*
**Developing Reading Skills** *by Françoise Grellet*
**Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers** *by Michael McCarthy*
**Discourse and Language Education** *by Evelyn Hatch*
**English for Academic Purposes** *by R. R. Jordan*
**English for Specific Purposes** *by Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters*
**Focus on the Language Classroom** *by Dick Allwright and Kathleen M. Bailey*
**Foreign and Second Language Learning** *by William Littlewood*
**Language Learning in Intercultural Perspective** edited by Michael Byram and Michael Fleming.
**The Language Teaching Matrix** *by Jack C. Richards*
**Language Test Construction and Evaluation** *by J. Charles Alderson, Caroline Clapham and Dianne Wall*
**Learner-centredness as Language Education** *by Ian Tudor*
**Managing Curricular Innovation** *by Numa Markee*
**Materials Development in Language Teaching** *edited by Brian Tomlinson*
**Psychology for Language Teachers** *by Marion Williams and Robert L. Burden*
**Research Methods in Language Learning** *by David Nunan*
**Second Language Teacher Education** *edited by Jack C. Richards and David Nunan*
**Society and the Language Classroom** *edited by Hywell Coleman*
**Teacher Learning in Language Teaching** *edited by Donald Freeman and Jack C. Richards*
**Teaching the Spoken Language** *by Gillian Brown and George Yule*
**Understanding Research in Second Language Learning** *by James Dean Brown*
**Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy** *edited by Norbert Schmitt and Michael McCarthy*
**Vocabulary, Semantics, and Language Education** *by Evelyn Hatch and Cheryl Brown*
**Voices From the Language Classroom** *edited by Kathleen M. Bailey and David Nunan*

# Developments in ESP

## A multi-disciplinary approach

*Tony Dudley-Evans*
*Maggie Jo St John*

www.alijafarnode.ir

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, United Kingdom
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011–4211, USA
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press, 1998

This book is copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1998

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in 10.5/12pt Sabon [CE]

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data applied for*

ISBN 0 521 59329 8 Hardback
ISBN 0 521 59675 0 Paperback

# Contents


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Preface | viii |
| | Acknowledgements | x |
| | Acronyms and definitions | xiii |
| 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 | Aims | 1 |
| 1.2 | Overview | 1 |
| 1.3 | A definition of ESP | 2 |
| 1.4 | Classification of ESP | 5 |
| 1.5 | Carrier content and real content | 11 |
| 1.6 | Roles of the ESP practitioner | 13 |
| 1.7 | ESP as a multi-disciplinary activity | 17 |
| 1.8 | Summary | 18 |
| 1.9 | Recommended reading | 18 |
| 2 | A historical perspective on ESP | 19 |
| 2.1 | Aims | 19 |
| 2.2 | The balance between research and practice | 19 |
| 2.3 | Trends in English for Academic Purposes | 20 |
| 2.4 | Authenticity of text and authenticity of purpose | 27 |
| 2.5 | Trends in English for Occupational Purposes | 28 |
| 2.6 | ESP now | 30 |
| 2.7 | Summary | 32 |
| 2.8 | Recommended reading | 32 |
| 3 | English for Academic Purposes | 34 |
| 3.1 | Aims | 34 |
| 3.2 | Four types of EAP situation | 34 |
| 3.3 | English for General Academic Purposes and English for Specific Academic Purposes | 41 |
| 3.4 | Engaging with the disciplines | 42 |
| 3.5 | Professional disciplines: EAP or EOP? | 48 |
| 3.6 | Summary | 52 |
| 3.7 | Recommended reading | 52 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | English for Business Purposes | 53 |
| 4.1 | Aims | 53 |
| 4.2 | Characteristics of Business English | 53 |
| 4.3 | English for General Business Purposes and English for Specific Business Purposes | 55 |
| 4.4 | The role of needs analysis in Business English | 57 |
| 4.5 | Teachers of Business English | 59 |
| 4.6 | Key issues for Business English | 61 |
| 4.7 | English for Business Purposes versus English for Academic Purposes | 72 |
| 4.8 | Summary | 73 |
| 4.9 | Recommended reading | 73 |
| 5 | Language issues in ESP | 74 |
| 5.1 | Aims | 74 |
| 5.2 | Grammar in ESP | 74 |
| 5.3 | Vocabulary in ESP | 80 |
| 5.4 | Discourse and genre analysis | 87 |
| 5.5 | Summary | 94 |
| 5.6 | Recommended reading | 94 |
| 6 | The skills in EAP and EOP | 95 |
| 6.1 | Aims | 95 |
| 6.2 | Reading skills in ESP | 95 |
| 6.3 | Listening to monologue | 101 |
| 6.4 | Listening and speaking skills in ESP | 105 |
| 6.5 | Speaking monologue | 112 |
| 6.6 | Writing skills in ESP | 114 |
| 6.7 | Summary | 120 |
| 6.8 | Recommended reading | 120 |
| 7 | Needs analysis and evaluation | 121 |
| 7.1 | Aims | 121 |
| 7.2 | Needs analysis | 122 |
| 7.3 | Evaluation | 128 |
| 7.4 | Collecting data for needs analysis and evaluation purposes | 131 |
| 7.5 | Summary | 139 |
| 7.6 | Recommended reading | 140 |
| 7.7 | Extracts | 140 |
| 8 | Course design | 145 |
| 8.1 | Aims | 145 |
| 8.2 | Parameters of course design | 145 |
| 8.3 | Balancing the parameters | 154 |
| 8.4 | Case studies | 155 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8.5 | Developing a course outline | 162 |
| 8.6 | Summary | 169 |
| 8.7 | Recommended reading | 169 |
| 9 | The role of materials | 170 |
| 9.1 | Aims | 170 |
| 9.2 | The purpose of materials | 170 |
| 9.3 | Writers or providers of materials? | 172 |
| 9.4 | Teacher-generated material | 176 |
| 9.5 | Learner-generated material | 180 |
| 9.6 | Materials and technology | 184 |
| 9.7 | Summary | 185 |
| 9.8 | Recommended reading | 186 |
| 10 | Classroom practice and beyond | 187 |
| 10.1 | Aims | 187 |
| 10.2 | Learners' specialist knowledge | 188 |
| 10.3 | Class size | 196 |
| 10.4 | Beyond the classroom | 204 |
| 10.5 | Summary | 209 |
| 10.6 | Recommended reading | 209 |
| 11 | Assessment: Continuous assessment and testing | 210 |
| 11.1 | Aims | 210 |
| 11.2 | Why assess? | 210 |
| 11.3 | Classroom assessment | 211 |
| 11.4 | Classroom tests | 213 |
| 11.5 | Public examinations developed in the UK | 214 |
| 11.6 | Reporting test results: band descriptors | 217 |
| 11.7 | In-house test development | 221 |
| 11.8 | ESP test questions | 225 |
| 11.9 | Summary | 228 |
| 11.10 | Recommended reading | 229 |
| Epilogue | | 230 |
| Extracts | | 233 |
| Guidance for tasks | | 263 |
| References | | 278 |
| Index | | 298 |

### 3.4.2 Collaboration

If cooperation largely involves the language teacher taking the initiative and finding out what happens in the subject department, collaboration involves the more direct working together of the two sides, language and subject, to prepare students for particular tasks or courses. In collaboration the language and subject teacher work together outside the classroom. The collaboration has clear goals but also defined limits. There are three options for collaborative work:

1. The planning of a series of classes where the language class prepares the students for a subsequent subject class taught in English.
2. The running of a class on a specific skill or related to a specific task where the subject department has a specific input to the materials or the language teacher uses material produced by the department.
3. The North American 'adjunct' model, in which the adjunct acts as a back-up class to the subject, helping students with difficulties with that class.

A good example of the first option was the collaborative economics-and-language course run for Iranian students of Finance at the University of Birmingham in the 1970s (Henderson and Skehan, 1980). The language level of the students was low and a major aim of the course was to move students from a dependence on rote learning towards developing critical thinking and a more questioning approach to learning. The economics lectures were based on a 20-minute tape accompanied by a set of 15 to 18 slides. Although the content and organisation of the course were appropriate for the students, the language was too difficult. A simplified version of the script was therefore written by the language teacher working with the subject teacher and recorded for use in the economics class.

All the language material was designed to prepare for the tape/slide presentation run by the economics teacher and its aims were thus subordinate to the aims of the economics class. Other English classes running in parallel with this course presented a more systematic approach to the teaching of relevant skills and language. Henderson and Skehan (1980) conclude that the course was successful because the collaboration resulted in a set of materials that were at the right linguistic level for the students, but also had validity from the subject point of view. They also recommend what they refer to as a 'phased approach to team-teaching', a point that we will take up later in this section (pp. 47–48).

An example of the second option is a reading programme run for

cannot be separated. In English L1 EAP situations, the NNS generally has to adapt to both language and culture. In EBP situations, the NNS may use the language but not adopt the culture: it is unlikely to be appropriate for a Finn negotiating with a Vietnamese to adopt an English-speaking cultural attitude.

We also mentioned that EBP teachers do not generally have any direct experience of their learners' context whereas all EAP teachers have studied in an academic environment.

## 4.8 Summary

Business English is the current growth area in ESP and covers both courses for pre-experience learners (EGBP) and courses for job-experienced learners (ESBP). The primary concern is to communicate effectively, not necessarily totally accurately. As professionals, business people have very clear purposes and expect high quality, value for money and professionally delivered courses. More courses now combine language and skills development and more account is taken of the business context and business relationships. It is being recognised that the language depends on variables such as status, power and how well established the relationship is. Although many of the short, intensive courses are for spoken interaction, writing is important. With more personal computers and e-mail and less secretarial support, more business people have to compose their own correspondence. With the growth of transnational corporations, NNSs may have to write in English because documents will be read or copied to a NS Head Office or to NS staff. The professional demands placed on Business English teachers may well be higher than on those in other fields.

## 4.9 Recommended reading

Dudley-Evans and St John (1996) and the special edition of *English for Specific Purposes* (vol. 15.1) provide an overview of both research and materials in the 1990s in BE. Ellis and Johnson (1994) provide an introduction to the teaching of BE. The books by Scollon and Scollon (1995) and Mead (1990) provide useful introductions to intercultural issues. The books by Trompenaar (1993) and Handy (1992) will interest those who want to find out more about business ideas and philosophy. The BESIG Newsletter and *Language and Intercultural Training* publish practical articles related to BE and training issues.

is what learners already know, a *present situation analysis (PSA)*, from which we can deduce their lacks. Thus, a TSA includes objective, perceived and product-oriented needs; an LSA includes subjective, felt and process-oriented needs; a PSA estimates strengths and weaknesses in language, skills, learning experiences.

**Task 7a**

Group the following statements under the headings target situation analysis (TSA), learning situation analysis (LSA) and present situation analysis (PSA).

1. I need to see vocabulary written down.
2. I have occasional meetings with British colleagues.
3. I find it difficult to write persuasively.
4. I pick things up by listening.
5. Student X needs to read more widely.
6. I like problem solving.
7. I get my tenses mixed up.
8. I hate group work.
9. I have to write reports.
10. My problem is finding the right word.

To establish a workable course design, means analysis is suggested (Holliday and Cooke, 1982: 133) as an adjunct to needs analysis. Means analysis looks at the environment in which a course will be run or, as in the original metaphor that generated the term, the environment in which a project will take root, grow healthily and survive. The two key factors considered are the classroom culture and the management infrastructure and culture. An important perspective is that these are viewed not as negative constraints but as relevant features. The negative-constraints view corresponds to: 'ideally we would do . . . but it is not possible so we will compromise and do . . .' The relevant-features perspective is a positive approach which says: 'what will be best in this particular and given situation?'

Means analysis is an acknowledgement that what works well in one situation may not work in another. While hotel staff around the world may share some similar language needs, how they learn the language, the conditions in which they are learning and where and how they apply the language are not the same. So the needs, and how they are prioritised, ordered and then met will be different.

analysis – E + F, p. 125.) For instance, the passive uses the verb *to be*; many 'if clauses' use the *would/should/could* modal verbs; the metaphorical meaning of expressions may derive directly or indirectly from their literal meaning.

These two criteria of 'when needed' and 'building' do not usually order everything. Some items will now be in specific places in the jigsaw, others could, at this stage fit in more than one place. They will fit into a specific place either because of other related variables in the grid or because of the materials or according to additional criteria such as: building confidence. For instance, at Dunchurch presentations come before meetings partly because it is easier to speak a prepared monologue than to take turns in a meeting. (Also, taking part in a meeting may mean giving a brief presentation so the building block criteria also applies to some extent.)

**Task 8c**

Look at the case studies and deduce some of the target events.

| Case study | Target events |
|---|---|
| JUST course 111 | |
| Research scientists, India | |
| Dunchurch | |
| University of Birmingham Masters in IBF (International Banking and Finance) | |

## (b) From target events and rhetorical awareness to skill areas to language

The target events will have been broken down into skill areas and the appropriate rhetorical awareness considered as part of the needs analysis. For the Birmingham IBF students, the needs associated with writing their assignments broke down into four skill areas:

- writing a good introduction
- citing sources and attributing ideas
- writing in an academic style
- discussing data

Within those the students needed to develop an awareness of how to

### Text comprehension

Working with a partner, learners prepare comprehension questions (and the answers) on a text. They exchange with another pair and answer the questions they are given. This can be extended to language work around the wording and phrasing of the questions. A further class activity is to compare all the questions and discuss which they think are best. The discussion usually helps to distinguish main points from minor issues. The group can select the best ones and then there is a set of questions the teacher can use for another group!

### Note-taking/information transfer

Similarly, learners can devise information transfer activities for their peers (and the teacher) to complete.

### Vocabulary development

We discussed techniques for vocabulary development in chapter 5. Learners can generate their own sets or word partnerships; they can devise matching and grouping activities and try them out on each other.

**Reflection 9g**

Take a text you use with learners (or one of our extracts, although they are rather short) and consider what activities learners could carry out on it. Write the rubrics that instruct them to generate their own questions, notes, vocabulary or other exercises.

## 9.6 Materials and technology

Technology offers the possibility of alternative materials and classroom interactions (chapter 10). After audio and video cassettes, the next major technological change, in the 1980s, was the use of computers and the opportunities for Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). CALL programs are largely linear, constructed along certain thought patterns, with a single or limited response. The development of CD-ROM has brought more interactive packages. For the learner, CD-ROM offers information and the opportunity for repetitive practice.

## Chapter 2

### Task 2d

Clearly the answer depends on circumstances in the ESP situation. We believe that there are advantages in ESP teachers specialising, but not to the extent that they teach only one skill or in only one department or sector. Some variety and flexibility seems desirable, so we support the idea that teachers should concentrate on certain subject areas for a period of time.

*EAP unit in department*: Advantages = easier administration; possibility of considerable integration of the EAP work with the subject teaching. Danger = professional isolation. *Centralised unit*: opportunity to coordinate work; greater variety of teaching; professional development through joint research projects, seminars and general discussion. Perhaps the ideal is a combination of the two systems with EAP teachers based in one centre, but working in teams in key departments?

## Chapter 3

### Task 3b

Both students will need all the skills. Postgraduate MBA: lecture comprehension a major priority; reading comprehension fairly important; writing essays very important – the use of source material and avoiding excessive copying from those sources can be a problem so this will be a priority. PhD research student: less need of listening comprehension; priorities will be reading and writing; may well need some induction into the expectations of the department about research students and the relationship with the supervisor, so spoken interaction skills and language.

### Task 3d

Different answers are possible. Our view is:

| | Situation 1 | Situation 2 | Situation 3 | Situation 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cooperation | Very feasible | Very feasible | Very feasible | Very feasible |
| Collaboration | Very feasible | Very feasible | Possible | Possible |
| Team-teaching | Very feasible | Possible | Possible | Unsuitable |

The answers will always depend on the language unit's relationship with the subject departments.

Dudley-Evans, A. 1994. Genre analysis: an approach to text analysis for ESP. In M. Coulthard (Ed.) *Advances in Written Text Analysis*. London: Routledge.

Dudley-Evans, A. 1995. Common-core and specific approaches to the teaching of academic writing. In D. Belcher and G. Braine (Eds.) *Academic Writing in a Second Language*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Dudley-Evans, A. and W. Henderson. 1990. *The Language of Economics: the Analysis of Economics Discourse. ELT Documents* no. 134. London: Modern English Publications in association with The British Council.

Dudley-Evans, A. and T. F. Johns. 1981. A team-teaching approach to lecture comprehension. In *The Teaching of Listening Comprehension. ELT Documents Special*. Oxford: Pergamon in association with The British Council.

Dudley-Evans, A. and M. J. St John. 1996. *Report on Business English: A Review of Research and Published Teaching Materials. TOEIC Research Report* no. 2. Princeton, NJ: The Chauncey Group International.

Dunn, R. and S. Griggs. 1990. Research on the learning style characteristics of selected racial and ethnic groups. *Reading, Writing and Learning Disabilities*, 6: 261–80.

Ellis, M., N. O'Driscoll and A. Pilbeam. 1987 onwards. *Longman Business English Skills Series*. London: Longman.

Ellis, M. and C. Johnson. 1994. *Teaching Business English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ewer, J. and G. Latorre. 1969. *A Course in Basic Scientific English*. London: Longman.

Ewer, J. and G. Hughes-Davies. 1971, 1972. Further notes on developing an English programme for students of science and technology. *English Language Teaching*, 26, 1 and 3. Reprinted in J. M. Swales (Ed.) *Episodes in ESP*.

Fairclough, N. 1989. *Language and Power*. London: Longman.

Fairclough, N. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Firth, A. 1995. *The Discourse of Negotiation: Studies of Language in the Workplace*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Fisher, R and W. Ury. 1981. *Getting to Yes*. New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co.

Flower, L. 1985. *Problem Solving Strategies for Writing*. 2nd ed. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Flowerdew, J. 1994. *Academic Listening: Research Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Flowerdew, L. 1995. Designing CALL courseware for an ESP situation: a report on a case study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 14: 19–36.

Flowerdew, L. (in press) CALL Materials derived from integrating 'expert' and 'interlanguage' corpora findings. *English for Specific Purposes*.

Foley, J. 1979. Problems of understanding science and technological textbooks in English for first year students at the University of Petroleum and Minerals. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.