In the name of God

What is ESP?

- Definitions of ESP
- Areas of ESP
- Issues in ESP
- Controversies in ESP
- Approaches to teaching ESP
Definitions of ESP

- Master’s (2005, p.99) definition: A very broad definition
  “ESP is a division of English Language Teaching (ELT), the only other member of which is English for General Purposes.”
McDonough’s (1998, 105) definition: A dictionary definition

“‘ESP’ describes language programmes designed for groups or individuals who are learning with an identifiable purpose and clearly specifiable needs.”
Johns and Price-Machado’s (2001, p. 43) definition:

“English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a movement based on the proposition that all language teaching should be tailored to the specific learning and language use needs of identified groups of students—and also sensitive to the sociocultural contexts in which these students will be using English. (italics in the original)”
Johns and Dudley-Evans’ (1991, p. 298) definition: “ESP requires the careful research and design of pedagogical materials and activities for an identifiable group of adult learners within a specific learning context.”

• Paltridge and Starfield’s (2013, p. 2) definition: “English for specific purposes (ESP) refers 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.”
Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987, p. 19) definition:

“ESP … is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning.”
The most comprehensive definition

• Streven’s (1988, pp. 1-2) definition:
  1) Absolute characteristics:
  ESP consists of English language teaching which is:
  —designed to meet specified needs of the learner
  —related in content (i.e., in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities
  —centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc., and analysis of this discourse
  —in contrast with “General English”
2) Variable characteristics:
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

Claims: the claims for ESP are
— being focused on the learner’s need, wastes no time
— is relevant to the learner
— is successful in imparting learning
— is more cost-effective than “General English”
(Salient) features of ESP

1. ESP is goal directed in nature.
2. ESP is based on needs analysis.
3. ESP is discipline and context-specific.
4. ESP builds on language and skills of specific disciplines.
5. ESP is short-lived.
6. ESP is adults-centered.
7. ESP involves homogenous learners.
8. ESP is aimed at all four language skills.
9. ESP follows a distinct methodology.
Areas of ESP

- Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) metaphoric classification: the tree of ELT
- Robinson’s (1991) classification
- Jordan’s (1997) classification
- Johns and Price-Machado’s (2001) classification
- Johns’ (1990) classification in the USA
- Howard’s (1997) classification in the UK
Areas of ESP

- English for Medical Studies
- English for Technicians
- English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)
- English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
- English for Science and Technology (EST)
- English for Business and Economics (EBE)
- English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
- English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- General English (GE)

ESL can be divided in the same way as EFL.

EAP Courses often have a study skills component.

EOP is also known as EVP (English for Vocational Purposes) and VESL (Vocational English as a Second Language).

GE is usually studied for exam purposes.

In American ELT, the dominant branch is ESL.

Language Teaching

LEARNING

COMMUNICATION
Robinson's (1991) classification

ESP

- EOP
  - Pre-experience
    - Simultaneous/in-service
  - Post-experience
  - For study in a specific discipline
    - Pre-study
    - In-study
    - Post-study
- EEP/EAP
  - As a school subject
    - Independent
    - Integrated
English

Language skills

Speech-based
- Receptive
  - Listening
  - (Interpreting)
- Productive
  - Speaking

Text-based
- Reading
- Writing
  - (Translating)

General purposes
For no particular purpose
- e.g. school exams or (TENOR)

Social purposes
for conversational purposes, and communicative situations
- e.g. shopping, letter-writing, telephoning and 'survival English'

English for specific purposes (ESP)

English for occupational/vocational/professional Purposes (EOP/EVP/EPP)
- e.g. doctors, airline pilots, and hotel staff

English for academic purposes (EAP)

English for specific academic purposes (ESAP)
- e.g. medicine
- engineering
- economics

English for general academic purposes (EGAP)
- e.g. listening
- and note-taking
- academic writing
- reference skills
- seminars and discussions
- plus: general academic English
- register
- formal, academic style
- proficiency in language uses
English for Specific Purposes

English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
- English for Science and Technology (EST) (Academic)
- English for Business and Economics (EBE) (Academic)
- English for Medical Purposes (EMP) (Academic)
- English for the Law (ELP) (Academic)

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)
- English for Professional Purposes (EPP)
- Vocational ESL (VESL)
  - Pre-employment VESL
  - Occupational-Specific VESL
  - Cluster VESL
  - Workplace VESL
- English for Medical Purposes (EMP)
- English for Business Purposes (EBP)
John’s classification in the USA

English for specific purposes in the United States (Johns, 1990)
Howard's classification of ESP

**English for specific purposes in the United Kingdom**
Issues and controversies in ESP

- Specificity
- Authenticity
- Methodology
- The role of practitioner
- Subject-matter knowledge
- Accommodation or assimilation
- Needs
- Genre
Specificity

1. Language forms or features unique to a discipline
2. Discourse practices of target disciplines and learners
3. Communicative skills and strategies needed by particular disciplines
• Authenticity
  1. Genuine teaching materials
  2. Transferability of strategies and activities
• Methodology
  1. The same as General English
  2. A distinct methodology
The role of practitioner
1. English teacher
2. Subject-area teacher

Subject-matter knowledge
1. A well-acquainted content specialist
2. An interesting and well-motivated ESL teacher
Accommodation or assimilation versus critical ESP

1. EAP pragmatism
2. Vulgar pragmatism

Needs (objective and subjective)

1. Learners’ needs
2. Learning needs

Genre

1. Intrageneric analysis
2. Intergeneric analysis
Approaches to teaching ESP

- The sociodiscoursal approach: situated genre analysis
- The sociocultural approach: situated immersion
- The sociopolitical approach: overcoming the limit situation
• The sociodiscoursal approach: situated genre analysis
  1. New rhetoric school: contextual, immersion
  2. Sydney school: textual, explicit instruction
A specific-discipline based approach is adopted.
• The sociocultural approach: situated immersion: team teaching
  1. A more EGP approach is adopted.
  2. A more explicit, guided immersion approach is adopted.
The sociopolitical approach: overcoming the limit situation

1. Rights analysis than needs analysis
2. Collectivist action than collaborative learning
3. Text as the hybrid product of multiple contexts than situated in a context