

**Lecture 4: ESP Teaching and Learning**

ESP practitioners are experts in teaching English for any profession, able to design teaching materials based on the content materials or the subject. In addition, they have other roles to perform, to maintain learners' interest throughout his teaching by creating lively situation, to develop relations with the learners, understanding their psychological problems, to motivate them, to have an idea of the social, economic and cultural background of those learners. Therefore, ESP teacher finds himself in a position that allows him to perform pivotal roles in class, these roles are essential to simplify ESP teaching process for learners.

**I. The Role of ESP Teacher**

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998, p. 13) have contended that "we regard ESP teaching as extremely varied, and for this reason we use the term "practitioner" rather than teacher to emphasize that ESP work involves much more than teaching". They have identified the following key roles for ESP practitioners who need to discharge their work as a:

**1. Knowledge provider**

The ESP teacher in the classroom is "...a knowledge provider and a facilitator of students' learning and no more as a resourceful authority." (Kashani et al 2007)

**2. Facilitator**

The teacher's main role is as a facilitator – there to offer support and advice when needed, and to provide the necessary scaffolding and teaching of skills when necessary.

**3. Researcher**

"Before designing courses or providing materials, they need to do research in order to investigate the genres of texts, language, and skills required by the specific field of study" (Dudley-Evans and ST John 1998). The role of ESP teacher as a researcher requires to establish his own way to explore and investigate genres, skills, strategies, methods, principles, language and all what can simplify ESP teaching process.

**4. Collaborator**

Nunan (1996) states that "Coordinating with colleagues is considered to be an essential step in any educational task". In other words, the teacher cooperates with the other teachers, in teamwork to discuss the courses and comment on their content according to program of specialty and willing to collaborate with his learners. Dudley-Evans and St. John claim that, this role refers to the collaborative teaching between the subject specialist and language teacher. They also argue that "the objective behind this cooperation is to have knowledge about the subject skills, tasks, and syllabus and to discover how the subject integrates with the language in order to bring the suitable material and courses for the learners" (1998).

**5. Material provider & 6. Course designer**

One of the ESP teacher's roles is designing the course and adapting materials for it when published materials are unsuitable, or writing his/her own materials in order to cope with the various levels of the students within the same class.

Designing courses and providing relevant materials are the most important aspects of ESP teaching which are based on the learners' needs and interpretation of prepared courses and adaption of materials when the materials are not authentic (written or spoken textbooks) are inappropriate to what fit his learners' needs.

## 7. Evaluator

Evaluation is a crucial step where the teacher assesses his/her learners' progress, level of achievement of their language competence and abilities to know how much they benefit during the session and at the end of the course. Furthermore, confirming the effectiveness of materials and see their appropriateness. Dudley –Evans and St. John state that " tests are conducted to assess whether students have the requisite language and skills to undertake a particular academic course or career, and usually but not necessarily at the end course- the level of their achievement " (1998, p.16).

Briefly, Professional ESP teachers are experts in teaching English for any profession, able to design teaching materials based on the content materials or the subject. In addition, the ESP practitioner has other roles to perform, to maintain learners ' interest throughout his teaching by creating lively situation, to develop relations with the learners, understanding their psychological problems, to motivate them, to have an idea of the social, economic and cultural background of those learners.

### II. ESP Learners

ESP is a learner-centered approach where the learners are active participants in the ESP class with a **specific interest** for learning, **subject matter knowledge**, and **well-built adult learning strategies**. They are in charge of developing English language skills to reflect their language knowledge and skills.

There are two learner aspects of paramount importance when the topic of ESP learner-centered approaches is the objective of research and discussion: **age** and **motivation**.

Sifakis (2003) refers to ESP **adult learners** in terms of age, educational, professional, and social background. He characterized adulthood in terms of age, social status, and a number of values adults possess.

ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of learners. Learners are expected to perform with adequate language skills in target situations at the end of the ESP courses. is the fact that learning processes are voluntary and purposeful; so by actively involving learners in the planning process, they would ultimately improve their **motivation** and **commitment** to fully participate in the course and improve their language proficiency.

### III. **Objectives in Teaching ESP**

Concerning ESP, Basturkmen (2006, p. 133) explains the existence of five broad objectives, on which specific teaching process is based and should be reached:

- To reveal subject-specific language use.
- To develop target performance competencies.
- To teach underlying knowledge.
- To develop strategic competence.
- To foster critical awareness.

The following section details these objectives.

- a- **Reveal subject-specific language use:** this objective aims to demonstrate to the learners how the language is used in the target setting.

- b- **Develop target performance competencies:** this objective is concerned with what learners do with language and the needed skills to be competent. In other words, “This orientation can be categorized as a proficiency objective, according to Stern’s classification (1992)” (Basturkmen, 2006, p. 135).
- c- **Teach underlying knowledge:** the aim is to focus on developing students’ knowledge of fields of study or work in addition to their language skills. “The objective of teaching underlying knowledge can be classified as a cultural knowledge objective, according to Stern’s categorization (1992)” (Basturkmen, 2006, p. 137).
- d- **Develop strategic competence:** “Strategic competence is the link between context of situation and language knowledge” (Basturkmen, 2006: 139). It also enables successful and efficient communication
- e- **Foster critical awareness:** “This objective can be linked to the cultural knowledge and affective objectives in Stern’s classification (1992)” (Basturkmen, 2006, p. 143), and it aims at making students conscious and culturally aware of the target situation.

The teaching /learning process associated to appropriate methodology may result in mastery of language by correctly using it in the context.

#### **Questions:**

1. What are the challenges that face ESP practitioner in teaching ESP Algeria?
2. What is the impact of the concept of motivation on ESP learners’ outcomes?