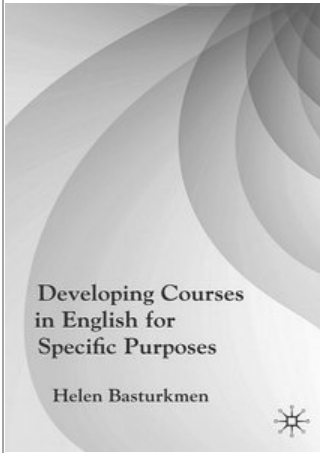


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Developing Courses in English for Specific Purposes		
Author:	Helen Basturkmen (2010)	
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Currently, ESL/EFL generalist teachers attempt to make a transition from teaching general English to teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) due to an increase in vocational training and learning with the spread of globalization. Helen Basturkmen (a lecturer at the University of Auckland, and an ESL teacher who has also worked in teacher education in the Middle East and the UK) has made a significant contribution in defining three major aspects of ESP course design in her book. This book fundamentally intended to portray ESP course design taking advantage of hypothetical scenarios in this regard. The book is divided into two major sections: (1) Main Considerations in ESP Course Development and (2) Case Studies in ESP Course Development.

In Chapter One, the author succinctly touches on different writers' definitions of ESP, areas in ESP, demands of teaching ESP, and effectiveness of ESP. ESP directly addresses different communicative needs of disparate groups of learners and this meticulous analysis of learners' work- or study-related needs is the dividing line of ESP from General English Language Teaching. The second section offers a categorization of the areas of ESP teaching: a) English for Academic Purposes (EAP), b) English for Professional Purposes (EPP) and c) English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Defining external goals as the uses of language outside the classrooms for real world communications (Cook, 2002) specifies that ESP is concerned with these goals. Teaching ESP makes demands on teachers because it deals with domains of knowledge that average educated native speakers are not familiar with (Tudor, 1997). Furthermore these courses often run for a limited period of time as needs change. Empirical investigations into the effectiveness of ESP teaching has been limited due to the

lack of a large number of situations in which experimental study can be conducted (Johns and Dudley-Evans, 1991; Master, 2005). Catering to students' interests and needs and dealing with limited and highly specified aims provide theoretical support for the effectiveness of ESP teaching.

In Chapter Two, the author provides an insightful notion of needs analysis as a combination of target situation analysis, present situation analysis, learner factor analysis, and teaching context analysis. Identification of activities and skills learners will use English for in the target situation; identification of learners' present knowledge in relation to the demands of the target situation; identification of learners' motivations, styles, and perceptions; and identification of practical possibilities and constraints of teaching context are the definitions of each step, respectively. Needs analysis plays a crucial role not only in designing ESP courses but also in refining and evaluating them. Various types of information, based on the unique situation, should be collected in the needs analysis process to meet the desired expectations of an ESP course, though literature review can be helpful in similar and comparable situations. Questionnaires, interviews, and observations are introduced as the most fruitful data collection techniques.

Chapter Three touches on the descriptions of specialist discourse as the core building block of ESP course design, furthermore defines it as communication and language use in the specialist field. The central premise in ESP course is to enable learners to communicate effectively in the unique work- or study-related settings, while each provokes its own specific ways of communication. Though investigation of specialist communication is a time-consuming endeavor, three approaches- ethnography, genre analysis, and corpus analysis- are suggested to provide the needed information. Ethnography is a form of qualitative research that has been described as study of phenomena in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). Genre analysis is the most influential one that ends to identify patterns underlying specific genres (text type) and how particular social groups (discourse communities) organize specific types of texts (genres) to accomplish their aims (communicative purposes). Finally corpus analysis is a collection of authentic written or spoken texts available electronically and can be accessed with computer software.

In Chapter Four, the author outlines four areas of curriculum development- focusing the course, determining the course content, developing the materials, and evaluating courses and materials. In the first section, wide- and narrow-angled course designs are defined as two ends of a continuum. The first is presented as courses designed for a more general group of learners and the latter as courses for a very specific group of learners. In the second section, a distinction between real and carrier content is drawn; the first denotes pedagogical aims such as the features of language to be mastered while the latter denotes the means of delivering the real content such as the use of texts or activities (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Belcher, 2006). In the third section, course developers value the use of authentic texts and tasks that are written for purposes other than teaching and learning. In the final section, decisions should be made on whether a course revision is needed based on teachers' and students' evaluation of its effectiveness.

In the second part of the book, Basturkmen presents the development of two work-related and two study-related ESP courses. Each case study chapter follows the same organization. These chapters first describe the context in which the course emerged and then go to focus on the decisions taken by the course developers with regard to the three areas of ESP course design-needs analysis, investigating specialist discourse, and determining the curriculum.

Chapter Five relates to English for the police. Multiple sources of information were used to provide meticulous descriptions on the police-specific language and academic language. Police-specific language enables the learners to talk about crimes accurately and unambiguously at high speed in stressful situations and academic language focuses on academic skills such as listening to lectures, to fulfill Police College requirements. Participants' busy schedules led to the development of a set of online lessons. In order to address officers' individual needs, one-on-one tutorials were also provided. Internal assessment, involving the use of proficiency and competency language tests, and external assessment, involving working with the police to identify learners' improvements to meet the language demands of Police College, were the two tools used to evaluate the course.

Chapter Six offers a description of oversea-trained doctors' difficulties in conducting medical consultations leading to the course development. Since the needs were highly context specific, general English for Medical Doctors or research literature were not doing the job. After careful examination of needs, some criteria in the observed Consultation Appraisal Form were listed including establishing rapport, understanding the patients' perspectives, and offering options. Observations of the role plays, authentic medical consultation, and filmed materials helped to the detection of a set of key features of the discourse in the consultation. The course was designed on a two-pronged strategy-feedback on students' performance in role plays and input on the expert language use.

Chapter Seven examines the development of a pre-experience course in the area of English for Visual Art Studies. The course was developed because of students' struggle on a university certificate program to enter into the bachelor degree program. In investigating needs, the teacher's and students' experiences and difficulties and teacher's theoretical orientation implying that academic writing cannot be separated from disciplinary content were taken advantage of to design the course. Furthermore students' prior textual experiences and subject knowledge and exploring genres and textual practices to foster students' understanding of socio-historic practices and beliefs were two major principles which were incorporated into the design of the course.

The first section of Chapter Eight describes the context of course development, the postgraduate center at the university had become aware that a common problem for thesis writing was how to formulate the literature chapter, hence a workshop was to be held during the weekend and was an open-access arrangement for a wide range of disciplines. In an effort to understand needs, the teacher drew on a number of sources due to the diversity of members. In the development of the workshop sessions, discussions with the colleagues and student, research literature, and designer's own experiences shed a better light on this regard.

The author claims the chief aim of the book is “to make the topic of ESP course development as accessible as possible to a wide audience of teachers and prospective teachers” (p. x). This end is successfully achieved through the articulation of theoretical perspectives in their general sense as well as through representation in a number of case studies.

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