

## Reviewing ESP Teacher Education Model: Teachers' Role

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### Abstract

*English for Specific Purpose (ESP) course has been taught over the years in many in Indonesia. In recent years, there has been widespread demand for English language in Indonesia. The development of global market makes people need English in their job environment in order to perform well in their respective fields and to compete in international dimension. Many educational institutions offer a program of ESP courses to meet students' future career need in global trend. In this case, teachers of English who just teach English for general purpose try to do many efforts to be professional ESP teacher. However, the ESP teaching practice in national wide are confronting with several serious problems. One of the major problems lies on its teachers. This paper tries to analyze the present situation of ESP teacher education model in Indonesian context particularly in teachers' role. Then, it will be analyzed the existing of ESP school in other countries. The last, the writer will offer a model of ESP teacher education that best suit ESP school in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** *English for Specific Purpose (ESP), Teachers' Role*

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been widespread demand for English language in Indonesia. The development of global market makes people need English in their job environment in order to perform well in their respective fields and to compete in international dimension. Many educational institutions offer a program of ESP courses to meet students' future career need in global trend. In this case, teachers of English who just teach English for general purpose try to do many efforts to be professional ESP teacher.

The term "specific" in ESP refers to the specific purpose for learning English. Students approach the study of English through a field that is already known and relevant to them. This means that they are able to use what they learn in the ESP classroom right away in their work and studies. The ESP approach enhances the relevance of what the students are learning and enables them to use the English they know to learn even more English, since their interest in their field will motivate them to interact with speakers and texts. ESP assesses needs and integrates motivation, subject matter and content for the teaching of relevant skills.

However, teaching English for specific purpose is not easy to do and it has many challenges. It needs not only good knowledge, skills, but also a lot of preparation and creativity. A teacher that already has experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), can exploit her background in language teaching. She should recognize the ways in which her teaching skills can be adapted for the teaching of English for Specific Purposes. Moreover, she will need to look for content specialists for help in designing appropriate lessons in the subject matter field she is teaching. ESP teacher must play many roles. The teachers may be asked to organize courses, to set learning objectives, to establish a positive learning environment in the classroom, and to evaluate student s progress.

This paper tries to analyze the present situation of ESP teacher education model in Indonesian context particularly in teachers' role. Then, it will be analyzed the existing of ESP school in other countries. The last, the writer will offer a model of ESP teacher education that best suit ESP school in Indonesia.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Defining English for Specific Purpose**

Before discussing ESP teacher education model in Indonesian context, firstly, it is better to understand some theories about ESP. According to Hutchinson and Water (1987: p.19, in Chia-Hsiu Tsao, *Asian ESP journal* volume 7-2 Spring 2011 p.4) ESP as "an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on learners' reason for learning". Stevens (1988) describes ESP as "English language teaching which is designed to meet specified needs of learners". Next, Chen (1993, p.80), defines ESP as "a major specification within the disciplines of English language teaching". Other definition is "teaching an academic studies, or for vocational or professional purposes, as opposed to EGP, English for general knowledge and skill (Brunton, 2009; Cartuver, 1983; Hyland, 2006). From some of ESP definition above, it can be concluded that ESP is a kind of English language which is designed for specific learners' need in their discipline related to their future career.

Besides defining ESP terms, some experts mention the characteristics of ESP. Belcher (2006:135 in Mike Brunton, *ESP issue 3 (24) volume 8, 2009*) says that "ESP assumes that the problem are unique to specific learners in specific context and that must be carefully delineated and addressed with tailored to fit instruction". Mohan (1986:15) states that ESP course focuses on preparing learners for chosen communicative environment". While Lorenzo (2005:1) adds "ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures". He point out that ESP is delivered to adult students; frequently in a work related setting (EOP), that motivation to learn is higher than usual ESL context. The meaning of Lorenzo statement is the motivation of ESP students is higher than ESL students because ESP students learn English in the importance of their future career while ESL students take English course to pass university entering test, to get scholarship, etc.

What can be seen from the characteristics above is the learners are prepared to be best communicator not only in national dimension but also in international dimension. Facing the globalization era with one international language demands all people around the world must to master English not only for educational purposes but also for international communication purposes. I believe that all students from various disciplines need English for communication. For example, business English students who learn how to make effective negotiation, meeting, dealing and it absolutely needs English communication skill. Another example is students of medical disciplines. They also have to learn how to communicate with the patients.

### **Roles of the ESP practitioners**

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998; 13) coined the term "practitioners" for ESP teachers since, they believe that ESP work involves much more than teaching. Many pivotal roles such as course designers, materials developers, researchers, evaluators, and classroom teachers should be taken on by an ESP instructor in addition to their role as teacher. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998; 13) mention that one of the basic differences between ESP and GE teacher is that the teacher in ESP is not in the position of being 'the primary knower' of the carrier content of the material. They further argue that the students in many cases, certainly where the course is specifically oriented towards the subject content or work that the students are engage in, know more about the content than the teacher. In other words, the students do know more the context of the subject matter than the teachers do. At the same time it advocates that

teacher-centered learning that puts teachers as the source of knowledge is totally inappropriate in ESP since it neglects the aspect for which the language skills is required to carry out function related to the context, in this regard the students workplace situation.

As course designer and material provider, ESP practitioners often have to plan the course they teach and provide the materials for it. The use of particular textbooks without need for supplementary material is rarely possible. The ESP practitioners need to choose published material, adopt it or even write material where to make it suitable (Dudley-Evans and St. John(1998; 14, 15). It means that in the role as course designer and material provider ESP practitioners may have three specific roles namely as a chooser, adopter and writer of material as well.

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998; 15) argue that ESP teachers need to be aware of and in touch with research in the area of ESP. They advocate that research finding need to be able to be incorporated when carrying out needs analysis, designing a course and or writing teaching materials. What they advocate seems important since the ESP practitioners may benefit from the research finding primarily when they it has to do with the specific context the teacher teach. This finding may varied in terms of needs analysis, methodology, approach and model.

Since the ESP teacher lack knowledge in the student subject matter particularly when it is too specific, it is highly advised to work with specificsubject teacher. The ESP teacher may work with other teacher which is knowledgeable in the subject matter to support their pedagogical knowledgein language. According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) this may involve simply cooperation in which the ESP teaches finds out about the subject syllabus in an academic context or the task the students have to carry out in work or business situation (Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998; 16).

Similarly, an ESP teacher is also evaluator. The ESP teacher also needs to be able to devise achievement test to assess how much learners have gained from a course. Evaluating course design should be done while the course is being taught, at the end of the course and after the course has finished (Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998; 16, 17)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Review ESP Teacher Education Model in Indonesian Context

Indonesia is one of the world's citizens who had also been developing ESP project in vocational schools, academies and universities. Many teachers of EFL make transition to teach ESP because the number of students who need ESP learning is increasing from year to year. Theexistence of ESP teachers in Indonesia helps the Indonesian students to fulfill their needs related to their jobs at present or in the future. AsWasimin (2011) says "*the existence of international level of vocational schools is really needed to educate and prepare Indonesian human resources*". It absolutely needs teachers' competences in teaching English to the students. Teachers' experiences in teaching EFL can be adopted for the teaching of ESP.

However, the quality of ESP teachers in Indonesia still is still low because they lack competences, knowledge, and some kind of training. Suparlan, (2008:91, in Wasimin (2011: 42) states that the *low quality of Indonesian education based on some experts' analysis is caused by the lack of Indonesian English teachers' competences and participation*. Based on the statistic data, from 32 teachers in these schools, there is only 18% who has pedagogical competences and professionalism. From educational background, it is recorded that there are 28 teachers (87, 5%) bachelors and4 teachers (12, 5%) are English magister.

In line with this problems, Kusni (2011) found that some of the ESP teachers do not have any qualification in English teaching. Also, Kusumaningputri (2010:3) said that ESP teachers, especially in Jember, are inexperienced and junior teacher. They have less knowledge about the real ESP characteristics which is relatively dissimilar to EGP teaching

practice. Consequently it directly effects material, learning goals, and methodology applied in ESP class and finally ESP learning is far from the expectation. in addition, Paniya (2008) justified that because of the inadequate principles of ESP, the ESP instruction in Indonesia has been limited to specialized lexicon and sentence structures and ignored the learners' interest

Based on the data above, it means that English teachers in those schools cannot be a model of best suit of ESP teacher. It is surprising because those teachers are the best of English teachers who represents their regions. They actually should a good English competences, good personality, and professionalism. Hutcinton and water (1987) argue, *the ESP teachers should have the same qualities of general English teacher. He/she should have language knowledge, thorough command of course design, and expert knowledge of related filed.* Fortunately, the governments of Central Java always pay attention to improve education in this province especially in improving English teacher quality by giving the teachers some kinds of trainings. There are training institutions such as LPMP (Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan) and P4TK (Pusat Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan) which focus to give trainings to many teachers in order to increase teachers' competences. Yet, there are weaknesses in the existence of these institutions. The training is only partial and temporary. It is called partial because the trainings given to the teachers do not cover all competences and temporary means the training only depends on the financial conditions.

The other case is subject teachers such as mathematics, biology, physics teachers are demanded to teach the subject using English. They are also called ESP teachers because they are bilingual teachers. According to Hutcinton and Water in Atika (2008) in the context of international standardized school teaching by using English is a kind of ESP program. Yet, the English teaching activity it is not handled by teachers who have English educational background. As a result, many problems they face in teaching the subject through English because almost teachers have no enough English skills. According to coordinator of international standardized school in Central Java, although the teachers have joined the training for several months, they don't give positive impact to the improvement of their skills of teaching by using English.

### **ESP Teachers' Role**

ESP teacher must play many roles. The teachers may be asked to organize courses, to set learning objectives, to establish a positive learning environment in the classroom, and to evaluate student s progress.

#### **a. Organizing Courses**

The teachers have to set learning goals and then transform them into an instructional program with the timing of activities. One of your main tasks will be selecting, designing and organizing course materials, supporting the students in their efforts, and providing them with feedback on their progress.

#### **b. Setting Goals and Objectives**

The teachers arrange the conditions for learning in the classroom and set long-term goals and short-term objectives for students achievement. Your knowledge of students' potential is central in designing a syllabus with realistic goals that takes into account the students' concern in the learning situation.

#### **c. Creating a Learning Environment**

The teachers' skills for communication and mediation create the classroom atmosphere. Students acquire language when they have opportunities to use the language in interaction with other speakers. Being their teacher, you may be the only English-speaking person available to students, and although your time with any of them is limited, you can structure

effective communication skills in the classroom. In order to do so, in your interactions with students try to listen carefully to what they are saying and give your understanding or misunderstanding back at them through your replies. Good language learners are also great risk-takers, since they must make many errors in order to succeed: however, in ESP classes, they are handicapped because they are unable to use their native language competence to present themselves as well-informed adults. That is why the teacher should create an atmosphere in the language classroom which supports the students. Learners must be self-confident in order to communicate, and you have the responsibility to help build the learner's confidence.

#### d. Evaluating Students

The teacher is a resource that helps students identify their language learning problems and find solutions to them, find out the skills they need to focus on, and take responsibility for making choices which determine what and how to learn. The teachers will serve as a source of information to the students about how they are progressing in their language learning.

#### e. The responsibility of the student

What is the role of the learner and what is the task he/she faces? The learners come to 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 native-language knowledge and skills.

#### f. Interest for Learning

People learn languages when they have opportunities to understand and work with language in a context that they comprehend and find interesting. In this view, ESP is a powerful means for such opportunities. Students will acquire English as they work with materials which they find interesting and relevant and which they can use in their professional work or further studies. The more learners pay attention to the meaning of the language they hear or read, the more they are successful; the more they have to focus on the linguistic input or isolated language structures, the less they are motivated to attend their classes.

The ESP student is particularly well disposed to focus on meaning in the subject-matter field. In ESP, English should be presented not as a subject to be learned in isolation from real use, nor as a mechanical skill or habit to be developed. On the contrary, English should be presented in authentic contexts to make the learners acquainted with the particular ways in which the language is used in functions that they will need to perform in their fields of specialty or jobs.

#### g. Subject-Content Knowledge

Learners in the ESP classes are generally aware of the purposes for which they will need to use English. Having already oriented their education toward a specific field, they see their English training as complementing this orientation. Knowledge of the subject area enables the students to identify a real context for the vocabulary and structures of the ESP classroom. In such way, the learners can take advantage of what they already know about the subject matter to learn English.

#### h. Learning Strategies

Adults must work harder than children in order to learn a new language, but the learning skills they bring to the task permit them to learn faster and more efficiently. The skills they have already developed in using their native languages will make learning English easier. Although the teachers will be working with students whose English will probably be quite limited, the language learning abilities of the adult in the ESP classroom are potentially immense. Educated adults are continually learning new language behavior in their native languages, since language learning continues naturally throughout our lives. They are constantly expanding vocabulary, becoming more fluent in their fields, and adjusting their linguistic behavior to new situations or new roles. ESP students can exploit these innate

competencies in learning English.

## **Teaching ESP in Other Countries**

### **ESP in India**

In India especially at Indian School of Mines, ESP is being practiced with the students of Engineering and Technology to develop their professional communicative skills and enhance their sociolinguistic competence for the last Three decades. A survey conducted Shrivastava (2011) shown that ESP teachers in this school are well qualified and experienced. The teachers agree to do course design based on the learners' need. They also discuss their course with the subject teachers. It is useful for the teachers who want to do course design. I think this is a good idea because it is a kind of sharing knowledge so that more scientific information can be gathered. They work together to plan and design ESP courses. Besides, ESP teachers are motivated to try new methods and techniques to develop standard in language teaching. However, this school lacks some resources such as money and facilities. Therefore, in such a context, ESP practitioner must to be innovative.

### **ESP to in Malaysia**

From research conducted by Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2011) in the students of petroleum engineering at Hadhramout University of Science and Technology, teaching ESP in this department are also based on the students' necessities. Again, need analysis plays important role in designing students' needs and wants. From the need analysis conducted by the researchers it shows that the students in this field need many English languages sub-skills in order to function effectively in the target situation. There are ten sub-skills and task and those skills are reading textbook, writing lab reports/lab assignment, following lectures, reading instruction for lab and assignment, listening to the instruction for lab and assignment, reading course and lecture handout, note taking in lectures, listening to the presentation and participating in the discussion, preparing projects, and preparing answer to the question from text book. It can be seen that there are many kinds of students' need are and it is difficult for teachers to make the students be competent in all skills above while the time allocated to the course is not enough to enable them use language effectively.

### **ESP in Thailand**

Teaching ESP to the students of civil engineering in Thailand is using genre-based analysis which has important pedagogical implication for ESP teaching. According to Swales (1981) genre analysis was designed to help non-native speakers of English to read and write research article. In civil engineering department, research article is a small project in academic English. When the students are familiar with a genre, it will be easier for them to write a particular genre and share it to friends. Teachers then allow the students to analyze the text they write by themselves. It can be seen that, teachers are using students-center approach in teaching ESP. it means that the students are independent and more active in the classroom. All decision is from them and the teachers just act as facilitator, motivator, and evaluator.

## **A Model of ESP Teacher Education that Best suit ESP Schools in Indonesia**

### **ESP teacher should be well-educated people**

It is obvious that the right people who teach ESP must be well- educated people because this kind of teaching really needs broad knowledge besides the English skills that become the basic of their disciplines. Actually the minimum educational backgrounds of many ESP teachers in Indonesia are from undergraduate level and they are from English department. However, their English skills are not satisfied for example their speaking and writing skill. It is my friend's experience. Although she realized that her speaking is not too good however she keep continues to teach ESP in tourism students. Because she focuses on communicative skill of students so she uses communicative language teaching as method in teaching speaking.

She uses role play and problem solving way in order to make her students active in the classrooms. Her role is a facilitator who prepares material of speaking in each meeting of the course. She told me she is less to speak than the students so that she can cover her weakness. Referring to my friend's experience, I think a model of ESP teacher's education must have good English competences and it can be reached when she/he are well-educated.

### **ESP teacher should be high motivator to their students.**

One of challenges teaching ESP in Indonesia is students' low learning motivation. It becomes a big problem for the teachers because when the students are low-motivated the ESP teaching will be not successful. Kubanyiova (2006 p.1) argues *that the success of ESP learning "does not depend on students' cognitive ability alone, but it is also influenced by learning motivation"*. Kevin (an English teacher of engineering department) said that *"I don't know what is wrong with these students. They seem to be lack of interest to learn English. How can we teach well if they show no sign of motivation think this mainly happens because they come here not for English but for learning the subject matter....so, it can be said that they treat English, despite its importance for their future life, as a secondary subject"*. Having said so, then he stresses *"I sometime feel useless as an English teacher here. I don't know what to make the students in this department become motivated to learn English. All I do know is only to perform all my tasks as a teacher and get paid what for I have done. I have tried my best efforts but the result appears to be till negative. What more can be done? I don't know myself because my voice is never heard by decision makers"*. From Kevin's statement above it means that he is not a teacher who cannot raise students' motivation in learning. I think it is the same case of some teachers in Indonesia so that training is really needed for the self-improvement of the teacher.

### **ESP Teacher should Incorporate Self Training and Training Program**

Based on my review of ESP teacher education model in Indonesian context, it can be seen that teacher of ESP are lack of training not only self- training but also program training. Self training means teachers themselves train their self because the awareness of competence lacking. They made improvement by themselves by reading ESP book for gathering as much of information related to ESP field, sharing with friend who are well- experienced in teaching ESP, etc. according to Feng (2009) *the self training model can be developed through such kinds of approaches as self-directed learning of the concerned subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, corpus based analysis of target language to get familiar with discourse community....."*. Program training, in my opinion, it is from the governments' program or educational stakeholders who concern about the Indonesian education. So, the training call comes when the government carried it out. Of course, it needs a big awareness of teachers for self- improvements.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is undeniable that being the best model of ESP teacher is not easy. There must be some efforts to do and it should be supported by other elements such as educational stage holders, and facilities. It is realized that ESP teaching in our country, Indonesia, is far from the expectation. The low competences of teachers cause many effects. So, for all Indonesian teachers let's together improve ourselves for the better Indonesian future.

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