

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Olga Pavlenko (Kyiv, Ukraine)

With the development of economic globalization in the world and challenges posed by teaching/learning, some major changes have taken place in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Teaching ESP often requires a number of duties that go beyond the classroom and need to be defined. ESP courses are usually tailored to fit the specific needs of the students. It is widely known that there are three main areas in ESP course design: needs analysis, investigation of specialist discourse, and curriculum planning. To adapt to these, foreign languages teachers have been reforming their teaching methods and improving teaching approaches through establishing cross-disciplinary methods of teaching.

Employers want to see future graduates as not only competent people majoring in some field, but also as multi-talented and competitive workers who will be able to work with international partners effectively. This means that English language programs need a dual-focus approach to teaching ESP. Dual-focus approach covers such aspects as providing the language support required to fully comprehend the subject within a lesson and program content of the students' specialism. Therefore, ESP teachers experience a cross-disciplinary relationship between their subject and the specialism.

Cross-disciplinarity in teaching ESP explains aspects of one discipline (specialism) in terms of another (English Language Course). Best practices in teaching ESP show that teaching in cross-disciplinary context:

- examines a specialism outside the scope of its own discipline;
- needs no cooperation or integration from other relevant disciplines (as opposed to interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary teaching);
- provides ESP teachers with large number of resources from the specialism;
- allows to create cross-disciplinary projects and conduct research activities using English.

When students learn English through their specialism, ESP teachers use number of approaches, resources and methods that can greatly expand their repertoires of skills,

increase the resources they can make available to their specialism, and enhance their understanding of the problem.

At first stages of cross-disciplinary teaching, ESP teachers create separate lessons in the form of cross-disciplinary projects (in Ukraine such format of teaching will suit for first and second year students) and in the form of research activities in the field of their specialism with the help of ESP Course (more suitable for undergraduates).

One more important, but more complicated approach to cross-disciplinary teaching of ESP is creating language-plus-subject programs. At classroom level, however, ESP teachers face a number of obstacles including a lack of training, a poorly defined methodology, and the need for specialism teachers' consulting. Language-plus-subject programs in ESP require careful curriculum planning and needs analysis. Moreover, ESP teachers follow specialism program contents, pay great attention to specialist discourse and use the specialism resources to make the language-plus-subject program for their ESP course. Creating cross-disciplinary programs enhances students mobility, builds multicultural and multilingual society.

Having said this, we firmly believe that cross-disciplinary approach to teaching ESP has a bright future in its development and a lot of challenges for ESP teachers.

References

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