



## ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC OR SPECIAL PURPOSES: ENGINEERING

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper deals with the nuances of English language used in the domain of Engineering. It focuses on the functional use of English with regard to what is indispensable for the betterment of the students who are engineers-to-be and the curriculum that boosts the performance level of the students at interviews and workplaces. The present world which has been hegemonized by the corporate giants demands certain anglicized etiquette to follow as far as the lifestyle and the language are concerned. Globalization has compelled students to be very good at English communicative Skills irrespective of their professional areas. IT companies, HR Managers and other Recruiters have been in search of competent communication and employability skills in the students who have finished their graduation through any stream. Two skills fetch success in one's life: English Communicative Skills and Other Soft Skills that provide a good grounding to their professional world. Students who are weak in communication have to confront with frustrations in all walks of life. It has been observed that such students make frantic efforts at the eleventh hour to groom their English Language Skills by visiting the tutors, tutorials and coaching centers mushroomed in their neighborhood.*

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**Keywords:** indispensable, hegemonized, corporate giants, anglicized etiquette, employability, soft skills,

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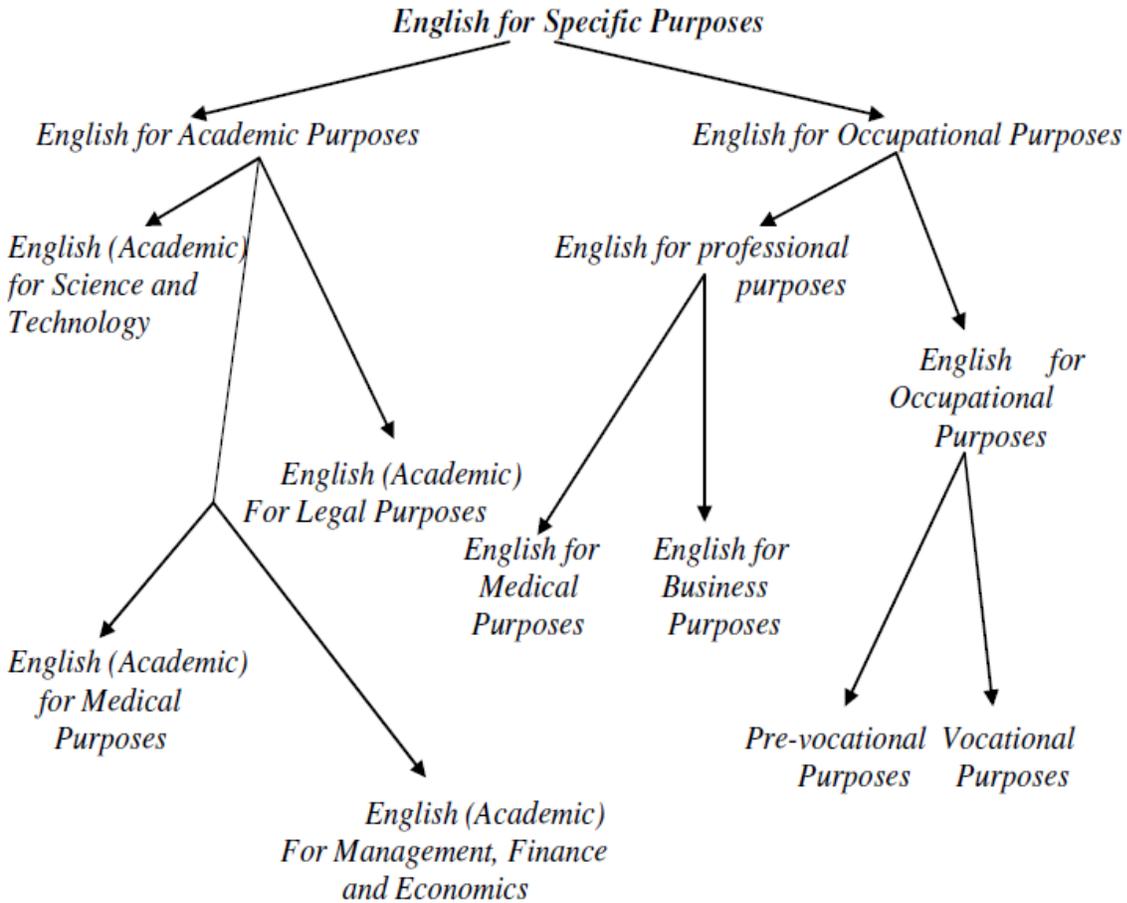
By now it is clear as crystal that English Communicative Skills are a must in the globalized scenario of the world. The concept of English for Specific Purposes' is to fulfill the demands of the technologically advanced world in which one has to show off the needs of the companies. The core purpose of *Functional English* is to help young learners in their attempts to fit well in all contexts, either social or professional needs.

According to Crystal (1997), English for Science(s) involves a special vocabulary, which often means a large set of words of Latin or Greek origin, but the development of sciences and new discoveries impose the continuous renewal or enrichment of this scientific vocabulary. There is also a "science-specific" grammar: this means that the language of science prefers very accurate and unambiguous expressions, which leads to a higher rate of repetitive expressions, to the frequent use of relative pronouns (*which, that, of which*) or adverbials. Linking words that express contradiction, explanation, and conclusion are unavoidable. Such linking words are the conjunctions (*and, although, though, since, as*), prepositions (*despite, during*) or adverbs (*usually, meanwhile, firstly, secondly*). 1

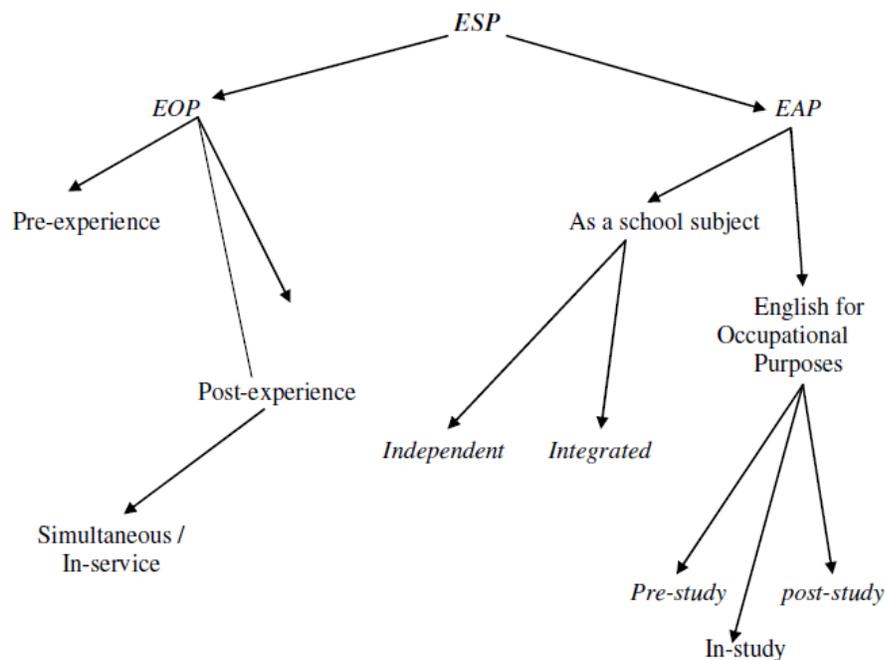
English for Special Purposes has been abbreviated to ESP. The first part of this article deals with the feasible areas that enhance the English language skills, may they be occupational or personal and the second section throws light on the pedagogic and academic aspects of Functional English. The ESP as a Movement goes back to the 1960s when linguistic scholars felt the need of the hour to teach English to the advancing world of technology. Thus ESP or EFL, i.e., English as a Foreign Language, has been serving promising students to accomplish great heights in the field of individual professional needs. Marianne Celce-Murcia succinctly puts the purpose of ESL/EFL in the following paragraph:

Almost thirty years ago, ESL/EFL practitioners in many parts of the world began to convene in order to discuss the development of systematic analysis of students' needs, particularly as they related to the features of the English that students must employ in the real world. 2

Other than ESP, ESL and EFL, there have been many nomenclatures of English for the specific purposes like EST which stands for English for Science and Technology. Business English concentrates on the arena of writing letters in the context of a business. The “Tree of ELT”(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 6) describes the classification of ESP in detail which offers significant insights into the broad scope of ESP: 3



The suggested classification of Dudley-Evans and St.John (1998, p. 5) is as under: 4



The areas to be covered in the nomenclature of English for Special Purposes have the following features to be earmarked as specific

:The field of reference is not a part of the speaker's regular routine;

It belongs to an area which has its own vocabulary and etiquette;

It may be termed as English as a medium of Specialized Communication;

It is the knowledge of the language that specific subject that demands training;

Its area is formally limited;

Its scope is governed by the requisite knowledge of specific sentence patterns and jargon;

Situational vocabulary and usage of particular sentence structures can be taught in the context of the profession of the user of English.

An important distinction is made between General English and English for Special Purposes. Imola Katalin NAGY opines that certain fixed expressions are frequently employed as representative modes of talking:

Certain structures and categories appear more frequently in special texts than in general language texts:

Morphological structures based on Greek or Latin

formatives

b. Abbreviations and symbols

c. Nominalizations based on verbs

d. Straightforward sentence structure with little complex

#### Subordination. 5

Functional English is the appropriate English for the sake of Engineering Students along with the basic and advanced vocabulary. It has been observed that Functional English has been prescribed without an objectively tailored syllabus and supplementary material that evaluates the course of study for the period of a couple of months.

To tell without mincing matters is that every profession needs two aspects of the English language: its jargon, occupational idiomatic expressions and professional manners with a good grounding in the basic and advanced sentence patterns. At this juncture, let there be light thrown on the ingredients of Functional English for Special purposes. The syllabus of Functional English for the Engineering Students has to include the following framework:

The syllabus has to cover LSRW skills in the respective fields;

It must be entirely learner-centred;

The teacher/tutor has to plan his pedagogic material by dividing it into daily units with a replete with a rich repertoire;

Long hours of daily drilling of passages, powered by technical words should be done without fail;

Purpose-related orientation (Gatehouse, 2001 cf. Carter, 1983) has been identified as the simulation of different communicative tasks to prepare the learners for different target situations. The learners are given practice through simulation to enable them to handle various linguistic roles in the target situation. Carter (1983) reported student simulation of different tasks which were required for a conference. 6

“Self-direction” is the third characteristic of ESP courses which means “that ESP is concerned with turning learners into users”(Carter, 1983, p. 134). It means that the students should “have certain degree of freedom to decide when, what and how they will study” 7

To illustrate the required vocabulary, the following terminology is presented for perusal; it is given in the form of ‘Substitute One-word’ for the following:

The manner in which certain data is stored

Data Architecture

Principles and rules to solve problems quickly, adopted from experience

Heuristics

Part-wise manufacturing , finished at the right moment to be processed further

Just-in-time manufacturing

The hours an employee works on a particular day

Band width

Coming to the illustration of the English language used in the engineering sector is given below; it portrays a typical engineering jargon. It elucidates the term ‘Delamination’:

Delaminations are horizontal separations of the top surface of a floor slab from the underlying concrete. Typically, delaminated thicknesses vary from about 1/8 to 3/8 inches but can be thinner or thicker depending on the cause of the delamination. Unfortunately, surface delaminations are

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difficult to detect during the finishing operations but become apparent later after the concrete has hardened or shortly after the floor has been placed into service. In some cases, workers including electricians or plumbers discover delaminations during construction by dropping tools or other items on the floor and hearing a “hollow” or “tinny” sound. Hollow sounds indicate the top surface of the floor has separated from the underlying concrete.<sup>8</sup>

It is logically concluded that the material and tasks given to the students has to cater to their needs. It should supply them with productively relevant and specialized content and practical tasks through drilling every day. Syllabus designers must make a note that the content ought to address the specific needs of the students concerned by attempting to motivate them towards realization of the intended goal.

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