



Course Design For Esp Students

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Abstract: This article presents an initial outline for an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) project focusing on English for Dentists, emphasizing the importance of effective communication skills in the dental field. The course aims to address the specific language needs of dental professionals, improve patient care, and facilitate professional connections within the industry. The course context, duration, participants, language skills to be developed, and selected ESP course example are outlined, with a focus on adapting materials and methodologies for the English for Dentists course. The Language in the Workplace course by Catherine Nickerson serves as a model for designing effective communication skills development in the dental profession. This project aims to enhance the communication abilities of dental professionals, improve patient care, and facilitate professional connections within the dental industry.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes, ESP, English for Dentists, communication skills, dental professionals, patient care, professional connections, language in the workplace, course design, adaptation, effective teaching materials

1. ESP Context Selection

Selected Context: English for Dentists

- The rationale behind the ESP course for Dentists has its foundation in the unique language needs of dental practitioners, the significance of



proficient linguistic skills to successful interaction in dentistry, the necessity of ongoing development in their careers, and the necessity of multidisciplinary cooperation. This course intends to provide dentists with the communication skills essential to succeed in their line of profession, improve patient care, and promote networking and professional advancement by focusing on the language skills needed for dental practice.

- Lasts one month two times a week for 1 hour.
- The course will be conducted in the seminar room of the private clinic “Denta Clinic”.
- Target language skills: speaking and listening
- Secondary improved area: vocabulary and dental terminology
- Integrated language aspects: vocabulary and pronunciation

Participants:

- Five dental professionals who work at “Denta Clinic”.
- They have acquired basic language skills in middle and high school instruction
- They only developed their knowledge on General English
- They have no background experience in ESP
- Proficiency level from A2 to B2.
- able to comprehend short stories as well as the major themes presented in plain, standard English on a range of topics often met at work, school, activities, etc.
- able to comprehend simple, factual information about typical daily or work-related issues, distinguishing between general concepts and detailed information, as long as the speakers speak clearly articulated utterances.
- able to understand the major ideas of an extensive discussion when it is expressed in straightforward English.
- able to make acceptable use of a broad variety of basic terminology while talking about familiar topics. (Council of Europe, 2020)



Language skills that need to be acquired and developed.

- Need to develop communication skills to deal with patients in the field of dentistry
- Need to develop listening comprehension to understand patients' complaints and concerns about their dental problems in the target language.
- Need to increase vocabulary range to produce coherent and fluent speech in interaction with foreign clients and colleagues.
- Need to comprehend the instructions for utilizing dental equipment.
- Need to expand vocabulary range and knowledge of dental terminology
- Need to develop communicative competence in order to interact with patients and foreign colleagues in meaningful and accurate speech utterance.

2. Selected ESP course examples

Language in the Workplace course by Catherine Nickerson

Table C1.1 Syllabus list for Language in the workplace

Week	Project title topic	Assigned materials (provided by faculty on Blackboard (BB))	Project description	Additional information
1	Introduction and academic conventions	Barrett, chapter 6 (or 8) – 'Realizing the value of cultural literacy' Canwall Case		Materials posted on BB
2	Giving presentations	Barrett, chapter 1 Canwall Case	Case analysis	
3-4	Intercultural communication	Barrett, chapter 5 www.geert-hofstede.com Goby (2009) Jameson (2007)	Case analysis	Not evaluated
5-8	Impact of English as a business lingua franca in the UAE	Charles & Marschan-Piekkari (2002) Ehrnsreich (2010) Hoeken et al. (2007) Nickerson (2009)	Survey of language use OR Attitudes to language use	Evaluated
9-12	Web-based communication: The ZU site	Askelhave & Ellerup-Nielsen (2005) Chaudhri & Wang (2007) Hynes & Janson (2007) Rogers et al. (2011)	Benchmarking survey OR Attitudes to ZU site	Evaluated
13-16	CSR communication	Barrett, chapter 10 Planken et al. (2010) Planken et al. (2007) Rettab et al. (2009) Vasser (2007)	Survey of CSR communication in UAE OR Attitudes to CSR communication in UAE	Evaluated
17-19	Women and leadership language	Web-based materials, as listed below (Tannen, Baxter, Cameron & Holmes) Barrett, chapter 1 – 'Pathos, ethos, logos'	Literature survey + Attitudes to leadership language	Evaluated

The Language in the Workplace course is considered a research-based course that is designed for teaching ESP to senior students of business school. The course offers interdisciplinary expertise and the development of skills in corporate communication with an emphasis on five key areas: audience awareness, language and genre, audience literacy, social influence and long-



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term sustainability, and persuasion. We can use the example as a model for designing an English for Dentists course that also focuses on developing communicative skills. Secondly, the labelled CLASP model can be adapted to the English for Dentists course design. In addition, in the *Approaches to Course Design* section, there are illustrated project-based methodology that contains implicating reading and discussion that further implications in course. Especially, useful for using as a course objectives and *Language in the Workplace* section is model on how to write learning outcomes. *The Workplace* course is through one of the Blackboard, moreover, these features the course could be designed to correspond with LMS such as Google Scholar, Canvas etc. Consequently, the course materials will be uploaded in *Files* sections to access easily. One of the significant things is that *the Language in the Workplace* course contains multiple effective teaching sample materials that can be adapted or modified for the English for the Dentists course.

Topic	Practical skills
Reading skills for nursing	Activating prior knowledge about a topic
Pre-reading strategies	Previewing a reading for organisational features
Reading skills and strategies	Skimming for an overview of a reading
	Predicting content
	Scanning for specific information
	Underlining main points
	Writing marginal notes
	Predicting test questions
Vocabulary strategies and skills	Using contextual clues
	Understanding general versus specialised definitions
	Understanding parts of speech
	Checking definitions
Thinking critically about nursing	Making inferences
Critical reading skills	Analysing and synthesising information
	Applying and evaluating information
Critical thinking skills	Evaluating sources of information
	Understanding different perspectives on a topic
Reading and interpreting figures	Understanding the author's perspective and purpose
Writing about culture in nursing	Understanding and using information from figures to support ideas
Research skills	Locating appropriate books and articles on nursing and healthcare topics, using online library catalogues and nursing-journal databases
	Evaluating information from websites
Writing skills	Integrating information from outside sources through paraphrasing and quoting
	Documenting outside sources through in-text citations and reference list
	Referring to outside sources through introductory sentences and phrases
	Choosing verbs to reflect author's stance towards ideas
	Summarising an article
	Developing a critique of an article
	Maintaining an objective voice
Developing note-taking skills for nursing	Strategies for overcoming barriers to listening
Effective listening skills	Guided notes/outline
Understanding note-taking systems	Think-link
	Cornell system

tasks, presentations, might be modified for the English for Dentists *Course aims* section is model on how to write learning outcomes. *The Workplace* course is through one of the Blackboard, moreover, these features the course could be



This course aims to provide foreign and immigrant students attending US universities with the linguistic and academic abilities as well as cultural knowledge required for success in undergraduate nursing programs. The course integrates different assessment types that may be adapted for the English for Dentists course such as tests, quizzes, and oral presentations. There is more emphasis on the multiple skills in the course syllabus, however, we can use only the parts that represent developing oral communication skills which is the primary objective of the English for Dentists course. On the other hand, the example course illustrates cross-cultural activities and tasks in the *Sample of Materials* section that would be affordable to adapt in the English for Dentists course. The *Needs Analysis* section includes several suitable methods such as observations, questionnaires, and interviews that can be implemented in relevant research methods framework for conducting needs analysis for the English for Dentists course project.

3. Needs Analysis

The first and most important step in determining the needs, lacks and wants of learners is to conduct a needs analysis. Additionally, it determines their preferences and linguistic background to create a successful and efficient course. As Serafini et al (2015) state “well-conducted NA can lead to courses designed to ensure that students will learn precisely what they need” (p.12). Our mission for conducting need analysis will include several phases:

- In the first phase, we will have direct observation in the context. Observing participants in the working field allows course developers to expand their understanding of how stakeholders behave and use the language in their professional environment (Flowerdew, 2013).
- diagnostic tests will help identify learners' strong and weak points in grammar and vocabulary.
- In the next phase, we will conduct unstructured interviews with participants, as well as they are important to collect qualitative and quantitative data (Flowerdew, 2013).



- questionnaires or surveys will be administered in the fourth phase that there are suggested to create an online survey in one of the effective surveymaker online app Typeform that practitioners could be engaged in this research method without being separated from their workplace and duties. Moreover, it will take them about 5 minutes to fill out the survey. It will be more convenient for us to collect and measure the data which is provided by online tool in statistical graphs.
- In the last phase, we will analyze the collected data and identify the basic needs, wants and lacks the dental specialists.

4. Assessment

Assessment is also a crucial part of the English for Dentists course. The reason for being an intensive course, the students are expected to take several following assessment tasks in each class:

- **Placement Test.**
- **Continuous assessment:**
 - Dental terminology quizzes
 - Role plays illustrating patient-doctor communication
 - Oral presentations
 - Problem-solving activities
 - Exercises in listening comprehension
 - Interviews
 - Speaking activities
- **Summative assessment**
 - Individual presentation
- **Rubrics**
 - The holistic rubric will be designed for continuous assessment
 - the analytical rubrics will be designed to assess the summative assessment
- **Nature of assessment** is informal. Taking account of the target course as EOP course the “assessment is likely to be much less formal and more likely to rely on teacher or classroom assessment” (Woodrow, 2018).



5. Approaches to ESP Course Design

- English for Dentists course will integrate several approaches to address the learner's needs because the needs of all the learners are not nearly the same. Moreover, integrating multiple approaches to course design evolves the effectiveness and authenticity of any ESP course (Woodrow, 2018).
- Content-Based Instruction:
 - Since the English for Dentists course combines studying a language with dental material, Content-based Instruction is vitally important to be incorporated to the course design. Through the integration of dentistry terminologies, and activities into language teaching, participants gain specific information pertinent to their line of occupation in addition to improving their language proficiency. With this kind of approach, participants are guaranteed to improve their language skills and acquire useful knowledge about their specialization.
 - Aligns with course objectives
 - Aligns with assessment criteria.
 - The materials will be designed relevant to the dental content, and medical sphere, such as diagnostic cards, patients' illness history, patient-doctor interviews etc.
 - The weekly topics will represent certain issues or facts of dental sphere.
 - The listening materials will be selected representing the dental contents such as podcast on medical field, movies, interviews, documentary films related to dentistry.
- Problem-based approach:
 - It is an alternative approach to traditional methods of teaching medicine (Woodrow, 2018)
 - PBL, or problem-based learning, is a method that is student-centered and involves having students work in groups to solve unsolved issues in order to gain knowledge *about a topic, moreover, the motivation and learning are driven by this issue.*



- *“The focus of the PBL approach to learning and teaching is based on the premise that learning occurs during the process of investigating and producing a solution to a problem” (Woodrow, 2018, p.132).*
- After analyzing the needs of the learners it would be necessary to analyze and synthesize the main problems and to set the goals of the ESP course.
- There are suggested to implement strong and weak problems those are suggested by Barron (2002, as cited in Woodrow, 2018)
- the tasks can include using English to diagnose a patient's symptoms or to perform a medical consultation.
- Communicative approach will be also integrated into the English for Dentists course that learners initial needs are connected with improving communicative competence in the target language. According to Woodrow (2018) each ESP course should demonstrate a communicative approach that it causes to learn the language through practicality.
- Learners use language to communicate on the topic of field interest.
- The English for Dentists course will use a communicative approach, emphasizing the improvement of speaking and listening abilities in situations encountered in actual dental practices. The focus will concentrate on interactive exercises, role-plays, and dialogues that replicate practical interaction circumstances that dentists may experience.
- Dental professionals will be able to develop their knowledge in dentistry simultaneously with linguistic skills (CBL), because the topics will be relevant to dentistry and will be taught in English, on the other hand, the learners will study collaboration in order to find a solution to specific issues (PBL), moreover implementing CBL and PBL requires to be engaged to the in-class activities and tasks through collaboration that allow learners to develop communicative competence for addressing learning objectives (Woodrow, 2018).



- The course implicates methods and activities that focus on oral comprehension and communication skills such as role plays, simulations, interviews, discussions etc.

6. Course Aims

- The course aims will be implicated in alignment with teaching methods and assessment.
- The course aims represent to develop learners' speaking, listening and communication skills, vocabulary and medical terminology acquisition. At the end of the English for Dentists course the students will be able to:
 - Speaking skills:
 - Develop speaking skills for giving clear instructions for diagnosis, treatment, dental procedures, operation manuals;
 - Provide accurate and understandable speech in dental practice, while working with colleagues and patients;
 - pronounce general vocabulary and dental terminology fluently and correctly to foster to provide clear explanations of the dental instructions,
 - Listening skills:
 - Enhance listening comprehension of patient concerns, complaints and illnesses and acknowledge the need to precisely comprehend patients' demands and symptoms.
 - Comprehend the dental problems of patients in detail in order to diagnose and treat them effectively;
 - Communicative skills:
 - Enhance communicative competence in interaction with dentist and patient communication.
 - improve the general standard of care, treatment results, and satisfaction among patients by strengthening their communication skills.
 - Providing effective instruction to the patients in meaningful interaction
 - Vocabulary aspect:



Expand their vocabulary range by acquiring general vocabulary and dental terminology to create meaningful conversations with patients.

7. Conclusion

Medical English is one of the widespread branches of EOP that course designers had to think critically to match the language with the medical content in a coherent order, however, the methodology, course objectives, and assessment should be designed in alignment with medicine (Ferguson, 2012). The dental care specialty is also a highly recognized area in the language and is used as an essential tool for doctor-patient communication. Therefore, we found it interesting and intended to choose the context of dentistry for outlining and developing the ESP course project. Multiple course readings helped us to organize our project, in what features we should be attentive and understand the general content of the ESP course. According to Viana et al (2019), the context represents a professional, academic or vocational setting that is very crucial in ESP. After selecting the context we have outlined the rationale for the target course and target language skills. Outlining information about participants helped us to consider exactly what kind of methodology should be implicated in the target course. Developing students speaking and listening skills are outlined as the target skills for course design. Additionally, there will be a significant focus on vocabulary and pronunciation, because “students need awareness of how vocabulary choices affect meaning and words are appropriate in certain registers” (Otto, 2021, p.32).

While outlining the English for Dentist course project we have provided several course examples to be used as models or frameworks to create the ESP project. The examples helped us to consider the content sequence of the project, and in what area we should focus on to develop effective course content.

“Needs analysis refers to the techniques for collecting and assessing information relevant to course design” (Flowerdew, 2013, p.325). To collect data to identify the needs of the dental professionals we have outlined several research methods, such as direct field observation, diagnostic tests,



unstructured interviews and questionnaires. According to Brown and Lee (2015) these research methods will be helpful for both qualitative and quantitative data collection in needs analysis.

The "English for Dentists" course assessment task outline has been designed with the purpose of catering to the unique linguistic requirements and goals of dental practitioners. This outline's rationale stems from many factors such as it has alignment with course learning outcomes and course expectations. There is a strong alignment between the assessment tasks and the course's general goals. They are intended particularly to assess participants' language competency and aptitude in professional interaction. The placement test will be administered at the beginning of the course. The test will be designed based on OET (Occupational English Test). Brown and Hudson (1998) state that continuous assessment nearly similar to formative assessment. The crucial aspect of CA is that data is gathered while students are actively learning about subjects and how they use scientific procedures and conceptual frameworks. Based on CA learners will have different assessment tasks such as role-play, problem-solving, stimulation etc. The summative assessment evaluates the educational progress of the students and determines whether they have achieved the set learning objectives. It assesses a learning program's efficacy or assigns a final performance mark to students.

Concerning the ESP course approaches it is crucial to indicate the appropriate and suitable language experience and address the learners' needs (John & Dudley-Evans, 1991). Admittedly, learners vary in terms of their needs, aims, and preferred methods of learning. We may make sure that the course design complies with the particular needs of the target learners by choosing a suitable strategy. It is possible to optimize learning results by customizing the course material, activities, and assessments to each student's professional context, levels, and preferred learning style. As an ESP course designer it seemed for us much more difficult to select particular approach because of participants different needs and learning styles. However taking account of general needs as improving speaking skills and communicative skills we intended to use



multidisciplinary approach as it facilitates the course design process with implementing various approaches to ESP course design (Huhta et al., 2013). For that reason we have selected Content-based Instruction (CBI), Problem-based learning (PBL) and Communicative approach in order to use them in mixture and keeping balance in equal implications. Different course readings helped us to come to the decision that they provide information about different approaches to ESP course design. The information about Problem-based learning in Woodrow's (2018) article served as one of the models for the selection approach as it provides information about the stages benefits and drawbacks of PBL. Especially, exemplified evaluation and reflection activities in *Figure 12.3* can be modified or adapted to enrich the English for Dentists course activity repertoire. In addition, we have analyzed several ESP course examples in Woodrow's book "*Introducing Course Design in English for Specific Purposes*" that they include the sections "Approach to course design" and those very sections helped us to come to a conclusion about what kind of approach and methods will be suitable for English for Dentists course design.

The next step is devoted to determining learning objectives or ESP course aims, as Viana et al (2019) mention that supplying students with the language skills and information they need to function in their particular professional or academic settings is the primary goal of an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. According to Woodrow (2018), the ESP course is "centered on the language, skills, and genres appropriate to this discipline"(p.5). Based on the needs analysis results and synthesized needs of the learners we selected four fundamental areas to improve and set as course aims, such as developing speaking, listening, communicative skills, and vocabulary aspects, moreover, all these selected areas are connected with each other. Different course readings helped us to come to the conclusion of which certain information should we rely on to indicate applicable course aims, such as different chapters in Woodrow's (2018) book and ESP course examples served as the essential framework for this outline.



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