Effective approaches in teaching English for specific purposes

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the English language is the language of international communication. It is used by representatives of various professional spheres. Consequently, there is high demand for ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses. ESP focuses on the specific needs of learners who require English for their professional or academic pursuits. This study aims to explore the most effective teaching methods for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as well as present an overview of various teaching approaches and highlights their effectiveness in ESP courses.

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Maxsus maqsadlar uchun ingliz tilini o'qitishda samarali yondashuvlar

ANNOTATSIYA

Hozirgi kunda ingliz tilini xalqaro muloqot tili hisoblanadi. Turli kasbiy soha vakillari tomonidan qo’llaniladi. Shi sababli, ESP (Maxsus maqsadlarga yo’naltirilgan ingliz tili) kurslariga talab yuqori. ESP o’z kasbiy yoki akademik faoliyat uchun ingliz tiliga muhtoj o’quvchilarning talablariga qaratilgan. Ushbu maqola maxsus maqsadlarga yo’naltirilgan ingliz tili (ESP)ni eng samarali o’qitish yondashuvlarini ko’rib chiqishga qaratilgan.

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Эффективные подходы в обучении английскому языку для конкретных целей

АННОТАЦИЯ

В настоящее время английский язык является языком международного общения. Его используют представители различных профессий. Следовательно, существует высокий спрос на обучение английскому языку для специальных целей. Английский язык для специальных целей (ESP) фокусируется на конкретных потребностях учащихся, которым английский язык необходим для их профессиональной или академической деятельности. Данная статья направлена на обзор наиболее эффективных подходов к обучению английскому языку для специальных целей (ESP).

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an approach to language teaching that focuses on the specific needs of learners. The main goal of ESP is to enable students to use English effectively in their professional or academic contexts. ESP courses are often provided to learners from various spheres, such as business, medicine, law, and etc. Therefore, ESP instructors must utilize teaching methods that effectively address the needs of their learners.

This article provides an overview of several teaching approaches used in ESP courses and discusses their effectiveness in achieving the desired learning outcomes. It also offers recommendations for ESP practitioners to enhance the quality of ESP teaching and learning.

An approach is a broad term that encompasses a range of ideas about language learning, including how learners acquire language, the role of the teacher, and the nature of language itself. The approach provides the general philosophy and principles behind language teaching.

Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998) have pointed out the necessity of ESP practitioners focusing on identifying the specific language needs of their learners and tailoring their instruction accordingly. Moreover, Swales (2011) puts an emphasis on ESP practitioners’ obligation to encourage their learners to actively engage with the language and content they are learning, through tasks such as problem-solving, negotiation, and critical thinking. ESP practitioners should utilize various teaching approaches to address all of the requirements.

In the article, we are going to review the benefits as well as difficulties of implementation of Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Problem-based Learning (PBL), and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in ESP courses.

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a learner-centered approach that emphasizes meaningful communication through authentic tasks. In ESP courses, TBLT can facilitate the development of learners' language skills by engaging them in activities that simulate real-life situations in their professional or academic fields. TBLT encourages active learning and promotes the use of the target language in context. According to Willis, J., & Willis, D. (2007). TBLT is an effective approach to language
teaching as it focuses on the learners' needs and interests, and provides them with opportunities to use the language in real-life situations. Nunan (2004) has pointed out the emphasis TBLT puts on the development of communicative competence through the completion of meaningful tasks that are relevant to the learners' lives and interests. Hence, this approach can be particularly effective in ESP courses as it helps learners develop the specific language skills required for their professional or academic aims in a natural way.

The second approach is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which integrates subject-specific content and language learning. In ESP, CLIL can be used to teach both language skills and profession-related knowledge simultaneously. This approach can be highly effective in ESP courses, as it enables learners to acquire language skills while simultaneously building their subject-specific knowledge. CLIL provides learners with opportunities to study a subject they are interested in while developing their language skills, cognitive skills, and academic skills. For instance, in the English for Law ESP course, students can learn about legal terminology and concepts while developing their language skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities related to the legal field.

The fact that high level of language proficiency requirements can be a challenge for students is noted by Ruiz de Zarobe & Jimenez Catalan (2009), while Coyle, Hood, & Marsh (2010), point out the challenges teachers might encounter while planning and preparing materials that integrate content and language. It is worth noting that while CLIL can offer many benefits for students, teachers, and educational institutions, it is important to consider the potential challenges and limitations of the approach when implementing it in a particular educational context. The third approach is Problem-based Learning (PBL) which is an instructional method that revolves around the investigation and resolution of complex, real-world problems. In ESP courses, PBL can provide learners with opportunities to apply their language skills and professional knowledge in context.

According to Savin-Baden and Major (2013), PBL involves students in active learning, encourages collaboration, and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills which are essential for learners in professional or academic contexts. Implementing PBL in ESP courses can help learners develop the language skills and professional knowledge needed for their careers or academic pursuits.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) involves the use of technology to facilitate language learning. In ESP courses, CALL can be employed to support various teaching methods, such as TBLT, CLIL, and PBL. According to Warschauer & Healey (1998) CALL can provide learners with access to authentic materials as well as opportunities for autonomous learning, while Chun & Plass (1996) point out learners’ access to immediate feedback, allowing them to correct errors and improve their language skills more quickly. Nevertheless, there is some criticism of CALL, such as Levy & Stockwell (2006) claim that CALL cannot provide learners with the same level of interaction and personalization as face-to-face instruction. Other researchers point out the problems associated with learners’ deprivation of technology access and not sufficient technological skills.

Overall, the use of multimedia resources, online platforms, and digital tools can enhance the learning experience and help learners develop their language skills and
professional knowledge. CALL can also provide opportunities for self-paced learning, personalized feedback, and collaborative learning, which can be particularly beneficial in ESP courses.

The effectiveness of teaching approaches in ESP courses depends on their ability to address the specific needs and objectives of learners. This article has highlighted several teaching approaches, such as TBLT, CLIL, PBL, and CALL, which have proven effective in ESP contexts. By adopting these methods and following the recommendations provided, ESP practitioners can enhance the quality of ESP teaching and learning, ultimately preparing learners for success in their professional or academic pursuits.

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