

## ○ **BASTURKMEN, H., *DEVELOPING COURSES IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES.***

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Helen Basturkmen's book provides clear strategies on how educators can develop courses for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at both an institutional and classroom level for a variety of learning contexts. The book, which extends on a previous publication (Basturkmen, 2006), draws on the experiences of New Zealand educators from various disciplines who have found innovative ways to provide instruction in ESP, and is well organised and highly accessible. Beginning with an examination of nuances in definitions of terms related to the subject area, the author follows with well researched perspectives on needs analysis, highlighting the importance of research about the needs of students before any planning or teaching is done. However, she does recognise that, to target any course development for a specific student body, a realistic and pragmatic approach must acknowledge the limited time and resources many institutions have for specialised language courses. Refreshingly, Basturkmen does not purport to advise on course structures, but illustrates methods and ideas to solve problems that individuals or institutions may have when providing specialised courses for areas of language deficiency, rather than for overall language needs.

The book is divided into two main parts which form a useful and integrated balance between theory and practical application. The first part extensively explores aspects that should be considered when developing a course that focuses on specific language needs in a particular discipline area, noting the need for 'goal driven' learning. Strategies for clearly defining the course needs are provided. These strategies emphasise a balance between analysing students' difficulties with written or spoken language in a target genre and a form of ethnographic inquiry based on their learning needs. This ethnographic inquiry is illustrated by hypothetical scenarios that bring to life a number of situations in which ESP courses could be developed for specific student needs. Especially useful are the pragmatic approaches that are suggested for small client groups over short periods of time. The author emphasises ways that an individual teacher or work unit can draw on previous models to determine course structure. She also prioritises the investigation of spoken and written discourse in determining a curriculum for any area where English is required for a specialised domain of knowledge and emphasises that, in developing ESP curriculum, course content, relevance of materials and evaluation must be thoroughly considered.

The second part of the book gives the reader four diverse case studies of ESP provision and offers critical comment about how these evolved and their outcomes. To illustrate the variety

of conditions one may consider, the case studies cover teaching fields ranging from workplace communication to formal study situations. The case studies cover English for police; English for patient consultations by medical doctors; academic literacies for students of visual communication degrees, and English for thesis writing at post-graduate level. Each section gives evidence of educators grappling with problems and solutions in their teaching field in a realistic way. As the author has drawn on the experiences of four colleagues in the field of ESP, this section moves away from hypothetical to practical and actual scenarios. Cohesion between these diverse situations is effectively provided through the reporting of each case under seven sub-titles. Firstly the context and the participants are clearly defined. Then the methods of investigating needs and the specialist discourse are covered for each case. This is followed by a summary of how the course and learning materials were designed based on the investigations. Next there is a section on how each ESP practice responded to difficulties and constraints. The last two sections provide a well organised critical summary by the author and discussion questions that direct further analysis of each situation.

For example, after the case study in chapter seven on teaching writing skills for Visual Arts students (pp.108-120), Basturkmen provides guiding questions, directing the reader to explore a hypothetical project investigating expectations for students' writing in a discipline area of their own choosing. The task closely relates to the processes described in the chapter. Consistent advice is given to evaluate any course in terms of student needs and language difficulties, not just the demands of the target genre. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as well as Dubin and Olshtain (1986) laid the groundwork for language course design that has been extended to develop expertise in teaching ESP in many institutions. What Basturkmen has added to this area of knowledge is a clear and pragmatic set of examples of how practice can be better informed by this knowledge.

I would have liked to see this book address some of the technological innovations of this century – for example, on-line teaching – and how these could be integrated into the diverse requirements of teaching ESP to people who are in disparate physical locations. Nevertheless, this is an extremely useful text for those educators who are working with local situations and face-to-face in classrooms. While this work presumes some previous knowledge about genre theory and the capacity to analyse the form and function of texts for specialised subject areas, it does provide the reader with extensive case studies alongside theoretical viewpoints related to the diverse field of English for Specific Purposes.

The structure of the book and the clarity of the writing indicate that this would be a very useful text-book for both lecturers and students in applied linguistics as well as for teachers who work with students from other countries in universities, language schools or specialised English language courses. The book would also be interesting for experienced practitioners who want alternative insights into this field or ideas on how to approach problems in defining ESP course requirements.

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## REFERENCES

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- Dubin, F. & Olshtain, E. (1986). *Course design: developing programs and materials for language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: a learning-centred approach*. Glasgow: Cambridge University Press.