EAP or ESP? That is NOT the Question

Jordi Piqué, J.-Vicent Andreu-Besó
(Universitat de València), and
David J. Viera
(Tennessee Technological University)

> "the learning of communicative conventions
> no less than the learning of grammatical
> conventions has to be planned for"
>
> (Wilkins, 1976: 11)

Academicians have debated, often bitterly, the exact place of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and whether or not English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is valued on a par in higher education vis-a-vis ESP or vice versa. Some linguists tend to reject this parity on the grounds that one discipline devalues the other, or because the practical emphasis attached to ESP excludes it from the area called "hard linguistics." On the one hand this situation is brought about by a frame of mind in the traditional Spanish university structure, in which those who teach English to students in the different non-language specializations are considered to be simply users and/or teachers of a practical foreign language by those in other specializations; on the other hand this circumstance is further exacerbated due to some faculty members who have not adjusted to new curricular advances and current widely-accepted ideas in applied linguistics.

This discussion, which seem futile to many, has already begun in different fora, such as in the conference on EAP Networking in Europe, held in Lancaster (England), in March 1993, and sponsored by the British Association of Lecturers of English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP). There exists a general feeling that EAP and ESP should be separated, precisely because of a false understanding that both of these academic areas are unrelated. In addition, some individuals in academe downgrade ESP to a purely practical subject area in our curricula. Recent research, however, confirms a contrary opinion, viewing ESP in an equitable relationship with EAP (Swales, 1988: xvi). Kenneth James (1988: 83), drawing from his work

with overseas university students, further lends support to the idea that "an EAP common core exists for a range of special subject disciplines." Most essays in Chamberlain and Baumgardner (1988), Robinson (1988) and Chamberlain and , as well as in George Blue (1993) and others, elaborate on this point when they comment on the importance of ESP/EAP teachers' contributions to the development of science. Also, Kachru (1988: 9) defines his concept of ESP as follows:

> In ESP texts generally three basic assumptions are made. These relate to the appropriateness of language corpus; formal organization of the corpus at various linguistic levels: phonetic, phonological, lexical, syntactic, and discoursal; and the relationship between the formal features and the functions of the texts in terms of the profession, participants, and so on.

In addition, well-organized ESP courses offered in different departments and faculties worldwide usually take two basic orientations: EAP, primarily directed to first/second-year students, and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) aimed at third year students. In addition, Tan (1988: 110-111), in her report on organizing an ESP Unit in Singapore, clearly asserts that both EAP (understanding lectures; note taking; writing notes, reports, papers, dissertations, etc.) and EOP (writing/taking letters, memos, reports, telephone conversations, interviews, oral presentations, etc.) must complement each other in successful teaching. While, traditionally, ESP has been taken as having two main branches –EAP/EOP–, George Blue (1988: 96) suggests that "EAP can often be more general than ESP"; thus, when speaking of Writing for Academic Purposes (WAP), he distinguishes two main approaches to writing: Writing for General Academic Purposes (WGAP) and for Specific Academic Purposes (WSAP).

We propose, therefore, that we concentrate on what can be developed in common to contribute positively to the debate mentioned earlier. As Florence Davies (1988: 130) has pointed out, our work in ESP classrooms is equally applicable to an EAP environment. As Ann Johns and Tony Dudley-Evans (1991: 303) put it, ESP has now been recognized and accepted internationally and "it is now possible for teachers, especially in EFL contexts, to pursue a career in ESP work." We hope this message will come through upon reading the essays included in this collection.

This volume contains selected papers, specialized studies of what Wilkins (1976: 11) describes as "communicative conventions" for the classroom. We have grouped the papers, which cover different areas, as

follows: in the initial study, focused on genre, Rosa Giménez relates genre to oral academic English; Inmaculada Fortanet offers concrete data on the structure of the business research article; Elena Bosch discusses the appropriateness of the business letter; Ed Turney studies the computer's English, and Santiago Posteguillo analyzes the structure of computer science abstracts.

In our second division, which is also based on observations and experiences teaching business English, Rosana Dolón studies conversational behavior in business negotiations, and J. J. Lanero gives insights on assessing oral presentations. In addition, Juan Carlos Palmer analyzes obstacles and solutions to writing business English, and José Castro reports on foreign language needs in export-import firms.

The third division of our classification deals with communicative strategies: Anna Lubecka takes up questions regarding intercultural communication, and Victoria Guillén studies business negotiations in terms of communicative competence. In a third paper, M. Dolores Romero applies the communicative approach to the learning of veterinary students.

In the fourth section, on teaching strategies, Tina Suau deals with strategy processes in second language acquisition; Nicolás Estévez, Ingrid Ostbye and Jordi Piqué focus on teaching writing strategies; Patricia Edwards offers an innovative approach to task production; Frances Watts and Amparo García Carbonell take a close look at the modified Oxford placement tests. Lastly, Ramón Escoda researches how methodology can significantly affect motivation, and Isabel González Pueyo employs the functional approach to analyse EST procedures and reports.

The fifth and final section deals with translation as a teaching device. First, in terms of its role (Cristina Pérez, Luz Gil and Ed Turney), process (J. Vicent Andreu-Besó), and use (María del Pilar García) in the classroom. Finally, Carmen Gregori and Ángeles Sanz take a look at translation in terms of cohesion in ESP texts.

In the competitive world in which we live, it is imperative that university students develop proficiency in at least a second language and, in some cases, that they become specialists in more than one academic area. Given the importance of English internationally and especially within the European community, we hope that the studies contained in this volume will help teachers, students, and other professionals understand the function, use, and importance of English in the university curriculum, in academe, and in the various professions.

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