

Initiation to General English and Specialized English

Introduction

General English and *Specialized English*, also known as *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*, represent two separate methodologies for instructing and acquiring proficiency in the English language, each tailored for distinct purposes and contexts. Within the realm of *specialized language*, we delve into *community discourse*, which entails the use of specific language to particular fields or domains. Consequently, every domain possesses its unique terminology, register, and jargon.

Within the domain of *specialized English*, there exists a dedicated field focused on the teaching and learning of the English language, namely *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*.

Table 1: Comparative Overview: General English vs. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

General English	Specialized English / English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
<p>1. Definition</p> <p>General English refers to the use of the English language in everyday, non-specialized contexts. It encompasses the essential grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills that people need for everyday life, work, and social interactions. General English is not focused on any specific field or profession but instead provides a foundation for effective communication in various situations.</p>	<p>1. Definition</p> <p>English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can be defined as an approach to teaching and learning English as a second or foreign language for the purpose of using it in a particular domain. It tailors language instruction to the needs of learners in specific fields like science, business, medicine, or engineering.</p>
<p>2. Aim</p> <p>General English often referred to as “GE,” focuses on teaching English language skills that are applicable in everyday life. It aims to provide learners with a solid foundation in English grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking, and listening.</p>	<p>2. Aim</p> <p>ESP, as the name suggests, is designed for learners with specific professional or academic needs. It tailors English language instruction to the precise requirements of particular fields or disciplines. The goal is to equip learners with the language skills needed to excel in their specialized area.</p>

<p>3. Audience</p> <p>General English is suitable for a wide range of learners, including students, professionals, and individuals who want to improve their English proficiency for general communication purposes. It is not specifically targeted at any particular field or industry.</p>	<p>3. Audience</p> <p>ESP is typically intended for professionals, students, or researchers who require English to succeed in specific contexts, such as business, medicine, engineering, law, aviation, or academic research.</p>
<p>4. Content</p> <p>General English courses cover a broad spectrum of topics and contexts, including everyday conversations, social interactions, and general reading and writing tasks. They typically do not delve deeply into specialized terminology or jargon associated with specific professions or industries.</p>	<p>4. Content</p> <p>ESP courses are highly specialized and focus on the language, terminology, and communication skills relevant to the chosen field. They often include authentic materials such as industry-specific texts, case studies, and simulations.</p>
<p>5. Skills Development</p> <p>General English courses aim to develop well-rounded language skills that are useful in various situations, such as travel, socializing, or reading newspapers and novels.</p>	<p>5. Skills Development</p> <p>ESP emphasizes the development of language skills within the context of the learner's field or discipline. This may include specialized vocabulary, writing reports, giving presentations, and engaging in profession-specific conversations.</p>

Branches of ESP

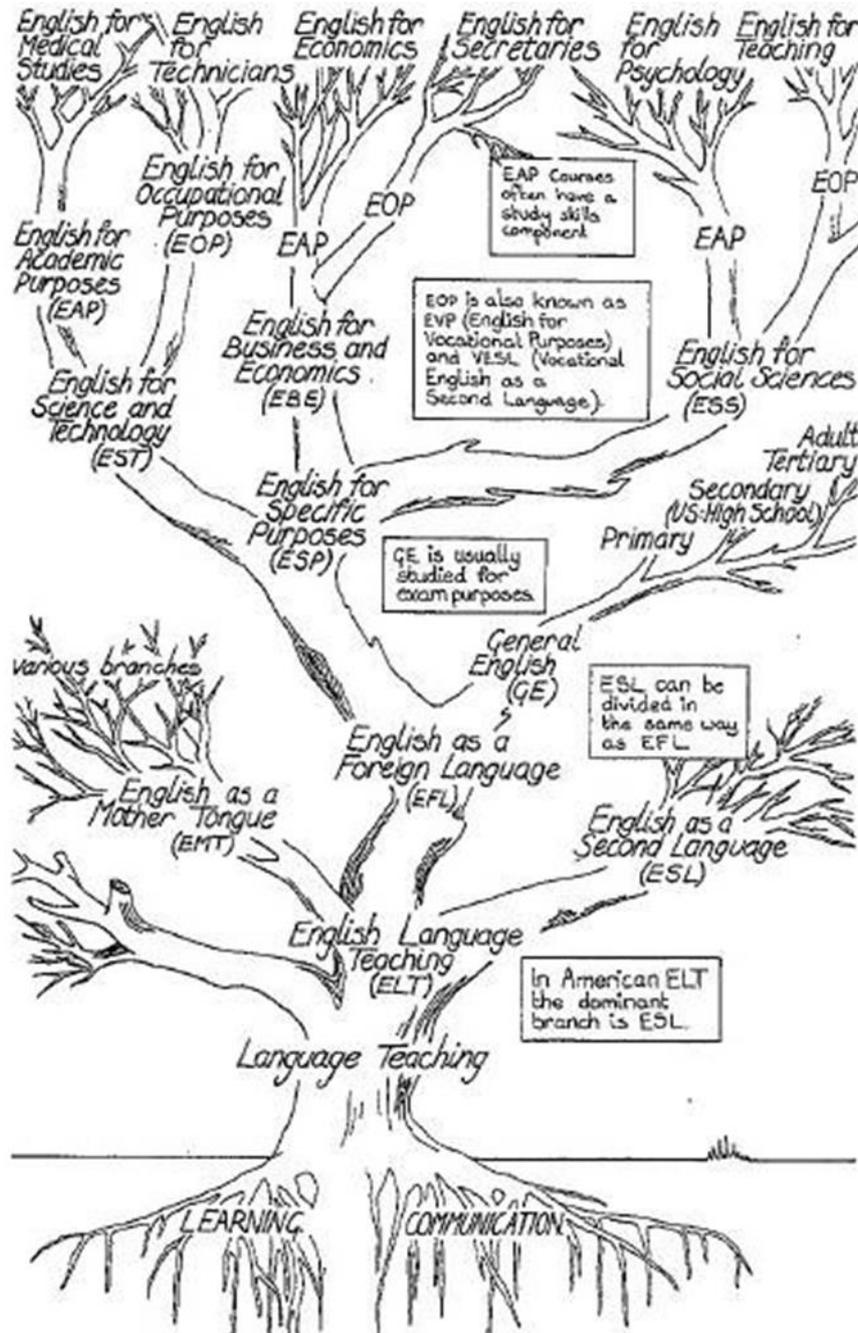
Since 1960s ESP has become a distinctive part of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) its importance being due to the fact that English has become the contemporary lingua franca. Thus, the growing demand for English as a medium of communication and the introduction of governmental mass educational programs in which English was the first or even the only language contributed to the rapid expansion in English for Academic Purposes.

The following are some of the main branches of ESP:

- **BE:** Business English is designed for individuals in the business world. It addresses language skills required for professional communication in areas like: marketing, finance, international trade, and management. Topics may include business negotiations, business deals, exporting and importing...etc.
- **EOP:** English for Occupational Purposes is a specialized form of English language instruction tailored to the needs and requirements of specific professions or occupational fields. It is designed to help individuals acquire the language skills and communication abilities necessary to excel in their chosen careers. It is used in craftsmanship such as: Barber, Carpenter, and Plumber....etc.
- **EAP:** English for Academic Purposes. It focuses on preparing non-native English speakers for academic study in English-speaking universities and colleges. It covers academic language skills, such as academic reading, writing, listening, and speaking, as well as research skills and academic vocabulary.
- **EMP:** English for Medical Purpose is tailored for healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, and medical researchers. It covers medical terminology, patient communication, and academic writing in the medical field.
- **ELP:** English for Legal Purposes is aimed at legal professionals, such as lawyers, paralegals, and law students. It teaches the language skills necessary for legal documents, contracts, courtroom interactions, and legal research.
- **EST:** is a specialized branch of English language education designed to teach individuals the language skills and communication techniques needed to excel in scientific and technological fields. It focuses on the unique vocabulary, terminology, and communication styles used in science and technology-related professions.

Within EST, a dichotomy manifests in the delineation of two distinct branches: one dedicated to scientific discourse and the other to technological discourse. In the former, discourse revolves around things that already exist naturally in the universe and how they function. For instance, how volcanoes are shaped and how they erupt. However, technological discourse focuses on addressing technological topics, namely inventions made by humans and how they work. Examples include how humans invented the wheel, means of transport, household appliances, and measuring instruments.

Figure 1: Hutchinson and Waters' ELT Tree (1987)



Description: This ELT tree shows the different branches of ESP.

The Language of Science

When we talk about science, we may find long and complicated words to pronounce and they sound very hard to understand. It is the main reason why students find scientific language challenging due the difficulty to write, spell, and read words. In fact, scientific vocabulary is a “*hodge podge*” of little words that are linked together to have different meanings. These words are composed of small parts called “*morphemes*” and each small morpheme has a specific meaning and the combination of these morphemes together will form us a meaningful word. These words are not put randomly; linguists carefully select and combine these morphemes to create meaningful scientific terms. If you learn the meanings of the little words, you will find scientific vocabulary much easier to understand.

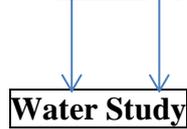
- The table provided below will assist you in discerning the significance of each respective term.

Table 2: Root Words and Meanings in Scientific Terminology

Root	Meaning	Root	Meaning	Root	Meaning
aero	aircraft	epi	above	macro	large
anti	against	gastro	stomach	micro	small
aqua	water	genesis	origin, beginning	multi	many
auto	self	hemo	blood	plasm	form
bi	twice, double	hetero	different	proto	first
bio	life, living	hydro	water	photo	light
chloro	green	intra	within	poly	many
chromo	color	itis	disease, inflammation	synthesis	to make
cide	killer	lateral	side	sub	Lesser, below
cyto	cell	logy	study of	therm	heat
endo	inner, inside, internal	meter	measurement	zoo	animal

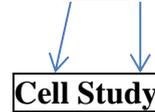
Examples:

1. Hydrology



- ✓ Hydrology: The scientific study of water.

2. Cytology



- ✓ Cytology: The scientific study of cell.

Summary

The key difference between General English and English for Specific Purposes lies in their focus and target audience. General English provides a broad and foundational understanding of the language for general communication, while ESP tailors language instruction to the specific needs of professionals and students in particular fields. The choice between the two depends on the learner's goals and the context in which they intend to use English.