



The Teacher as Student in ESP Course Design

Laurence Anthony

Center for Language Education in Science and Engineering
Faculty of Science and Engineering, Waseda University
<http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/>
anthony@antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp

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1



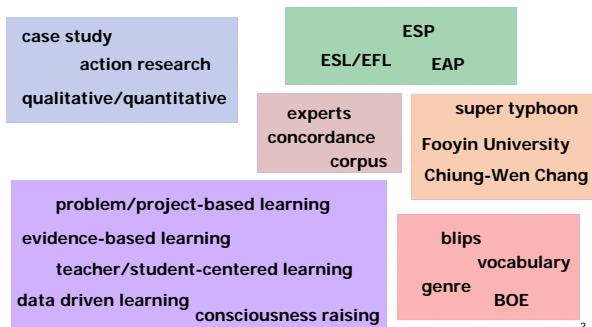
Outline

- Recurrent Themes at Kaohsiung
- What is ESP?
- Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design
 - Foundations
 - Debate
 - Implications
 - Genre-based teaching
- The "Teacher as Student" Approach to Course Design
 - Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

2



Recurrent Themes at Kaohsiung



3



What is ESP? - A Definition (Dudley-Evans, 1997)

- ESP is an "attitude of mind"
 - Absolute Characteristics
 - 1. ESP is defined to **meet specific needs of the learners**
 - 2. ESP makes use of **underlying methodology** and **activities of the discipline** it serves
 - 3. ESP is centered on the **language appropriate to these activities** in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

4



What is ESP? - A Definition (Dudley-Evans, 1997)

- ESP is an "attitude of mind"
 - Variable Characteristics
 - 1. ESP may be related to or **designed for specific disciplines**
 - 2. ESP may use, in **specific teaching situations**, a different methodology from that of General English
 - 3. ESP is likely to be **designed for adult learners**, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level
 - 4. ESP is generally **designed for intermediate or advanced students**.
 - 5. Most ESP courses **assume some basic knowledge of the language systems** .

5




What is ESP? - A Definition (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987)

"ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning"

(p. 19)


6



Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design - Foundations

- Engineering an effective ESP course involves:
 - 1) considering the **needs of students** and the **goals of an integrated set of lessons**
 - 2) determining what **classroom materials, teaching methods, and testing procedures** can be used to **attain the goals**
 - 3) **working within the constraints of the program** in terms of human resources, technical resources, student ability, university policy, ...


7



Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design - Foundations

- Engineering an effective ESP course involves:
 - 4) **negotiating with other faculty and the university** to reduce the number of constraints by addressing issues of scheduling, class hours, teaching loads, ...
 - 5) **establishing a program of teacher training** for both full-time and part-time faculty
 - 6) **understanding that no course is perfect** from the start, and that it **requires regular assessment and adjustments**

8




Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design - The Debate

- Should the ESP course teacher be an expert in the field?
 - Some people think "YES"!
 - Field specialists know the **what, how, and why** of the field.
 - Field specialists know the **past, present, and future trends**.

"Outstanding teachers can do intellectually, physically, or emotionally what they expect from their students"

What the best college teachers do - Ken Bain (2004, 16)


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Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design - The Debate

- Should the ESP course teacher be an expert in the field?
 - Maybe the answer is "NO"!
 - Field specialists don't want to teach the 'what'.
 - Field specialists don't have time to teach the 'what'.
 - Field specialists know the 'what' but can't teach the 'what' in English.
 - Field specialists don't know the 'what'.
 - They are not language experts.
 - They don't know the strengths and weaknesses of students.
 - They have no experience of ESP course design


10



Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design - Implications

- Good news for ESP teachers
 - We should not feel inferior to field specialists
 - We should not be dictated to by field specialists in terms of course development and implementation
 - But ESP teachers must be experts in their field...
 - understanding the principles of good course design, teaching, and testing
 - knowing the needs/wants/goals/strengths/weaknesses of students
- Bad news for ESP teachers
 - We still have to decide "what to teach"
 - Choosing the latest published textbook is not the answer

11



Recurrent Issues in ESP Course Design - Genre Based Teaching

Definition of Genre

"A **genre** comprises a **class of communicative events**, the members of which **share some set of communicative purposes**. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute a rationale for the genre... In addition to purpose, **exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.**"

Genre Analysis - John Swales (1990, p.58)

12

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13

The "Teacher as Student" Approach to Course Design

Overview

- ESP teachers are on a more equal playing field with their students. Both have important knowledge they can bring to the classroom. Both lack critical knowledge to actively participate in the field (in English).
 - Teachers can determine goals based on the wants/needs of students
 - Students know what they want (and need?)

14

The "Teacher as Student" Approach to Course Design

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- ESP teachers are on a more equal playing field with their students. Both have important knowledge they can bring to the classroom. Both lack critical knowledge to actively participate in the field (in English).
 - Teachers can identify patterns in structure, style, content and intended audience
 - Students understand the 'why' of these patterns

15

The "Teacher as Student" Approach to Course Design

Overview

- ESP teachers are on a more equal playing field with their students. Both have important knowledge they can bring to the classroom. Both lack critical knowledge to actively participate in the field (in English).
 - Teachers understand language and how meaning is negotiated in a discourse community
 - Students (often) understand the core concepts, conventions, and idiosyncrasies of the discourse community

16

The "Teacher as Student" Approach to Course Design

Overview

If ESP teachers do not assume an expert status in the classroom, but encourage students to act as valuable contributors in a collaborative learning environment, a more productive atmosphere can be created that leads to greater all-round learning.

17

Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

Lesson Needs/Goals

- Step 1: Don't assume you know what the students need
 - ESP teachers are NOT experts in the field!
 - Students won't/shouldn't believe you anyway!
 - Step 2: Establish the needs/goals through...
 - consultations with field specialists
 - observations of nursing practices
 - references to the literature
 - Step 3: Present the results of Step 2 to the students in order to explain the rationale for the lesson
- or
- Step 1: Ask students to investigate the needs/goals of the course, and collaboratively prioritize these

18

Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

- Lesson Needs/Goals

In a survey of 200 hospitals and nursing schools in Japan, 92.4% of the hospitals felt English was necessary, and 92.8% felt there was a great need for nurses to speak with patients and their families

Yamanaka & Amino (2000)

19

Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

- Lesson Materials: What data should we use?
 - Intuition-based or evidence-based (corpus-based) materials development
 - Intuition-based: What do people think nurse-patient interactions are like?
 - N: "Hello, Mr. Smith. How are you feeling today?"
 - P: "I'm feeling very well. But, my back is still in pain."
 - N: "Really. Maybe I can get some medicine for you."
 - P: "Thank you, nurse. That would be very nice."

20

Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

- Lesson Materials: What data should we use?
 - Intuition-based or evidence-based (corpus-based) materials development
 - Corpus-based: What are nurse-patient interactions really like?
 - The British National Corpus (BNC) contains 119 samples of medical consultations totaling 86,567 words
 - (unfortunately these are doctor-patient interactions)

21

Teaching about Doctor-Patient Interaction - An Example

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22

Teaching about Doctor-Patient Interaction - An Example

A: What's worrying you?
 B: Och, I don't know. I haven't the foggiest.
 A: Have...
 B: I feel awfully depressed as well.
 A: Right.
 B: Whether it's this pain that's doing it I know I don't know.
 A: Let's get this head of your x-rayed and see what's going on.
 B: I don't know what's causing it. Just not going away, even the tablets that you gave me, they wasn't even taking it away, it, away like .
 A: The ...?
 B: Aye, I mean for a while I think it was maybe my glasses, but these are just new
 A: No.
 B: lenses I've got.
 A: Now then.
 B: I thought the change of life would be starting on me as well. Well this is the other thing that could be starting.
 B: Ah.
 A: You're a bit young.
 B: Ah but even me ma me mammy she was young and all, she was thirty seven.
 A: She was just thirty seven, was she ?

23

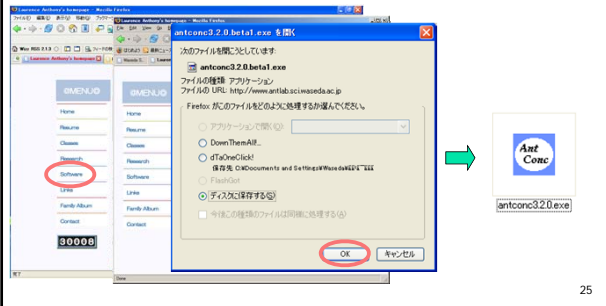
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 B: ...

24

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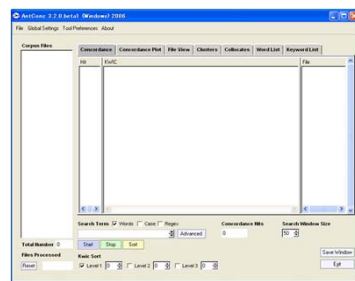
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25

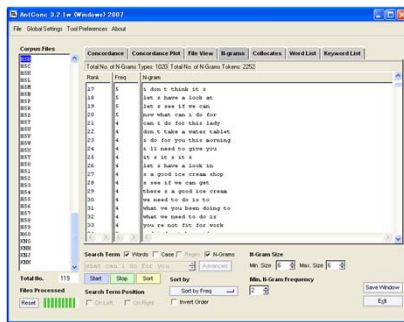
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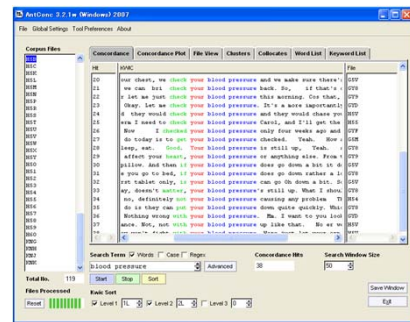
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Teaching about Doctor-Patient Interaction - An Example



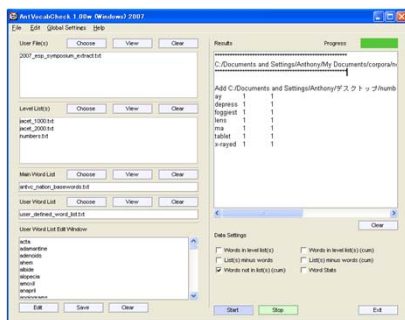
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Teaching about Doctor-Patient Interaction - An Example



28

Teaching about Doctor-Patient Interaction - An Example




29

Teaching about Doctor-Patient Interaction - An Example

- What are doctor-patient consultations really like?
 - They are **highly conversational**.
 - e.g. "Let's", "Oh, I don't know", "Right", ...
 - They are **highly idiomatic**.
 - e.g. "I haven't the foggiest"
 - They include **few technical words**.
 - e.g. "depressed", "pain", "x-rayed"
 - They are **highly fragmented**.
 - e.g. "But these are just new..." - "No" - "Lenses I've got"


30



Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

- What are **nurse**-patient consultations really like?
 - They are **highly conversational**.
 - e.g. "Let's", "Oh, I don't know", "Right", ...
 - They are **highly idiomatic**
 - e.g. "I haven't the foggiest"
 - They include **few technical words**
 - e.g. "depressed", "pain", "x-rayed"
 - They are **highly fragmented**
 - e.g. "But these are just new.." - "No" - "Lenses I've got"


31



Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

- Classroom Methods: What should we do?
 - teacher-centered or student-centered methods
 - Teacher-centered methods place emphasis on teachers delivering explicit knowledge and insights to students often in the form of 'facts'.
 - Student-centered methods place emphasis on students constructing knowledge through formulating and testing hypotheses based on real-world examples.
 - e.g. data-driven learning (Johns, 1991, 1994)
 - advantages of student centered learning
 - The insights and strategies used to formulate the insights are valuable to the students long after the class has finished.


32



Teaching about Nurse-Patient Interaction - An Example

- How can we teach nurse-patient interaction English?
 - Engage the students in deep thinking through student-centered, meaningful discussions and exercises
 - Include many different tasks and exercises for students who prefer different learning styles
 - One exercise is for students to analyze authentic nurse-patient interactions and note the similarities and differences between these and general English
 - The "Teacher as Student" can be an 'expert' in this activity as he/she uses the same technique for class preparation


33



Conclusions

- ESP involves knowledge of many different aspects of the field:
 - needs, wants, goals, content, structure, purpose, audience, social context, ...
- ESP teachers must avoid giving students intuitive ideas that are inaccurate, over-generalized, or out-of-date
 - using corpus-based materials selection?
- ESP teachers can increase learning by raising the status of students in class through genuine learner centered classroom methods and data-driven learning

34



Conclusions

- When using a corpus-based approach, ESP teachers have to...
 - analyze a large number of target texts to produce accurate descriptions using corpus linguistics techniques
 - work with specialist informants to design the corpus and interpret the results
 - clearly state the sources of corpus data
 - show exceptions
 - re-analyze the data regularly
 - teach learners how to use corpus linguistics techniques

35