

**The Use of ITC in Teaching ESP in
the Department of Economy, University of Saida**



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Abstract

English for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is treated as a pedagogical concern in the Department of Economy, University of Saida, Algeria. ESP courses are given in all specialties in order to develop students' linguistic skills. Although all the efforts devoted, there is a failure in achieving their target objectives. Since there is a rapid technological development, the teaching and learning process has been customized with technological aids. The current study is an attempt to test the effectiveness of the ICT-Based Approach in teaching ESP as a substitution to the traditional way of teaching through adapting various materials and methods. The study tends to shed light on the problem of the low level of students in English, by conducting interviews with ESP teachers and questionnaires answered by students. The results indicate the effectiveness of the use of technology in education. Some solutions are suggested to reduce the teaching/learning problems in ESP classes.

keywords: ESP; ICT-Based approach; Master students; materials; teaching/learning process

I. Introduction

The University of Saida in Algeria, was opened in 1998. It offers a set of scientific, technical, social and human sciences. English courses are taught for all the specialties in order to develop students' linguistic skills. Thus, the university administrators are aware of the position of that

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language in the world that is why they tend to give a hand to the students so that they become skillful.

The teaching process in the department of Economy is conducted through three years as under graduation, two years graduation: Master I and Master II, and PhD studies for four years. This research is concerned with M I where English is taught through the whole career, i.e, from first year under graduation to the step-one- year of PhD studies. Master studies are run for two years: Master I (M I) and Master II (M II) divided into three semesters; each about 12-14 weeks long.

There is no standard programme given to teachers to follow; however, it is just recommended to teach Business English. Students are supposed to study English related to their specialty. In the Department of Economy, there are, for the moment, two specialties: Economy and Enterprise Management (EEM), and Quantitative Economy (QE).

This research is concerned with QE and tries to investigate, discuss and analyse the major ESP difficulties and problems in the department of economy in teaching/ learning English. Since Arabic is the language taught in all the subjects, English is not of paramount importance to students. This led to having obstacles for both teachers and students. Both of them agree on the lower level of students, which hinders the process of teaching/learning English of Economy. In addition to the critical teaching situations, absence of standard programme and lack of teaching materials are definitely problematic. Therefore, it is urgently required to investigate on the reasons behind and provide some solutions and recommendations to improve the teaching/learning process of English for specific purposes.

2.ESP Development

ESP is the acronym of English for Specific or Special Purposes, which means that everyone learns English that suits his interests. For instance, a student of Medical Sciences needs to learn medical English and a businessman needs business English. In this vein, Strevens (1977: 145) states that "learners want to use Russian especially in order to read scientific papers on the aerodynamic of supersonic flight; German, especially to act as an important agent for domestic electrical appliances; English, especially to study textile at Leeds University; etc.". This new tendency to use a foreign language led to the emergence of different categories of learners; some are looking for a higher academic level, others seeking for careers and others learn a foreign language for fun: to listen to music or to understand a film.

English, like any other languages, turned towards a new trend of teaching, which is known as ESP- the acronym of English for Specific Purposes. It has some sub-categories EAP- English for Academic Purposes, EOP- English for Occupational Purposes, and EST- English for Science and Technology. ESP is a new branch of teaching/learning English which has spread worldwide and still continuing. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:6) wrote:

“As English became the accepted language of technology and commerce, it created a new generation of learners who knew specifically why they were learning a language- businessman and woman who wanted to sell their products, mechanics who had instruction manuals, doctors who needed to keep up with developments in their fields and a whole range of students whose course of study included textbooks and journals only available in English.”

In their turn, Dudley Evans and ST JOHN (1998) considered ESP as a discipline that attempts to meet the needs of specific population of students, employs methodologies and materials from the discipline it is centered on, and focuses on the discourse related to it.

Hence, an ESP teacher must conduct needs analysis. Before starting a lesson plan, we need to identify the gap between what students are able to do and what they need to be able to do. Also, the teacher has to identify the language level of the students, motivation and their different learning styles (Hamer: 2005). After that, the teacher draws up a programme with a set of suggested technology-based activities and tools (J Ritchards & T Rodgers 1986).

In Algeria, as elsewhere in the world, the decision makers in the ministry of high education were aware of the position of English as a *lingua franca*. They integrated it in almost all specialties taught in the Algerian universities being studied as English for special purposes, and the faculty of economy is non distinct. The current study is concerned with teaching ESP in the department of economy.

In 2002, there has been the creation of a new trend in Master studies labeled Quantitative Methods in Management (QMM). In 2016, its name was changed to Quantitative Economy (QE). The Master Cycle is held in two years divided into three semesters. Students are supposed to study a set of subjects as indicated in the table below:

Table 1: Master Cycle- translated from The University Canva 2016

Master Cycle		
First Year		Second Year
1 ST Semester	2 nd Semester	3 rd Semester
1-Time series analysis 1 2-Microeconomics 3-Inspection Techniques 4- record Economy 5-Contracting 6-Operation Research 7-Enlish	1-General Equilibrium models 2-Economic Phenomenon 3-Inputs /Outputs 4-National Accounting 5- Research Methodology 6-EVIEWS-QSB 7-Information 8-English	1-Time Series Analysis2 2-Macroeconomics 3-Demographic Analysis 4-Data Analysis 5-Administration Relationships 6-Public Accounting 7-English

At the end of the second year, the fourth semester, students are asked to prepare and present a research paper in one of the subjects studied; individually

or in pairs. During the cycle students are obliged to study English as a separate important module.

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

RQ1-How the lessons of English are conducted?

RQ2-does ITC affect students' level of English?

RQ3-How do the students of Economy feel after integrating ITC in teaching English lessons?

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study attempts to test the efficiency of using ITC in teaching ESP to students of economy in the University of Saida.

3.1. Data Collection

The research was conducted through semi-structured interviews and questionnaire. We had the opportunity to interview (6) six part time teachers and (30) thirty students- the whole class of MI that among (12) twelve boys and (18) eighteen girls have answered the questionnaire. All the papers of the questionnaire were returned back by the students.

The data was collected via two instruments:

3.1.1. Interview

The teachers were asked six questions; the first five questions were answered by all the teachers, while the sixth one was asked to the focus teacher after conducting the lesson under the new instructions.

Q1: "how long have you been teaching in the department of economy?"

The question aims to know if the teacher is novice or experienced.

Q2: "Have you received a training to teach ESP?"

The question aims to see whether the teachers received training on the methods on how to teach ESP or they are only formed just to teach General English.

Q3: "Is there a fixed syllabus that you rely on while teaching?"

The teachers must have a programme to follow in order to graduate in teaching from what is easy to what is difficult dealing with lessons that are related to the specialty of the students.

Q4: "How do you conduct the lessons?"

The method and the way how to present the lessons influence the reception of the information by the learners.

Q5: "What materials do you use while teaching?"

There are special materials used in order to succeed in transmitting the information to the learners.

The focus teacher was asked the following:

Q6: "What is your reflection to the new way of presenting the lesson?"

This question aims to know the feedback of the teacher on the new way of teaching using new device

3.1.2. Questionnaire

Two questionnaires were filled by 30 students chosen randomly. In the first questionnaire, students were asked four questions.

Q1: "Tick the appropriate column"

This question aims to know the gender of the student, either male or female.

Q2: "Are you interested in studying English?"

They have to tick one of the three columns: interested, somehow or not interested.

Q3: "How do your teachers conduct the lessons?"

They write in short how their teachers present their lessons; what materials and methods they use.

Q4: "how do you prefer studying English?"

This question aims to see what way the students prefer to study

Another questionnaire was directed to the same students after having attended the lesson proposed. They answered two questions:

Q1: "what is your reflection on the new way of presenting the lesson by your teacher?"

Q2: "what do you recommend?"

3.2. Data Analysis

The obtained data was analysed and discussed from which the following results were obtained.

3.2.1. Interview

When analyzing the teachers' interviews and the students' questionnaire at the department of Economy, it was noticeable that there are some difficulties that hinder the teaching/learning process to both teachers and students. These obstacles are due to the lack of experience for teachers; since the six interviewed teachers are novice (less than (5) five years of experience). In addition, they are not formed in ESP teaching; they all have General English teaching degree, with no training in how to teach business English. Above all, there is no standard programme to work on, each teacher works on his/her own, with no fixed orientations on what and how to develop an adequate syllabus for his specialty.

While answering a question on the presentation of their lessons, the six teachers answered that they used to type a text followed by tasks, then the students answer questions related to the given text, translate words or passages, summarise, or give their opinion. Texts are selected either from magazines, journals, internet or books. They have to rely on themselves: do research, read more to get appropriate contextualized information and make it available for students.

3.2.2. Questionnaire

The two questionnaires were given to thirty students; twelve (12) boys and eighteen (18) girls, all the papers were given back to the researcher.

Students showed a low interference with English for Economy. It was found that girls showed more interest than boys to learn English, as the following table indicates:

Table2: Students' Level of Interest in Learning English

Level of interest / sex	interested	somehow	Not interested
Boys/12	2	2	8
Girls/18	10	7	1

Boys think that it is not important to study English since all the subjects they study are in their mother tongue Arabic. More than half of them (8) answered that they are not interested in studying the English language. Just two of them see English as an important subject to study. While, girls seem more interested in learning the foreign language, ten out of eighteen see that it is important to study it. They agree that they will need English in their further studies, in reading articles and books that help them in conducting their research, and in writing up their theses.

The students were also asked how their teachers present the lessons.

Table 3: Materials used by the terachers

Materials	Text/questions	Authentic materials	Others
Students' answers	100%	0%	0%

According to the students, during their studies, their teachers use texts followed by questions related to those texts which they find in a difficult language that is in a higher level than theirs. Their low level is because of their poor English language background brought from their secondary studies that prevent them from scaffolding new language in their field of study.

In a answering a question concerning how do they want their lessons to be presented, they said that they prefer to read and discuss magazines and newspaper articles related to what they study. They also they prefer to surf on the net and watch videos in order to be easy for them to understand more and to be registered better in their minds.

The second questionnaire was given to students after attending the lesson using ITC. In the first question they were asked to reflect on the new way of teaching.

Table4: Students' Reflection about the Lesson

Evaluation / sex	excellent	good	average	Boring
Boys/12	8	3	1	0
Girls/18	16	2	0	0

In the second question the researcher asked the students to give their recommendation for future. The majority agreed on that integrating ITC in the teaching/learning process became a must.

4. Discussion

After the delivery of the lesson, which lasted one hour thirty minutes (1h30mn), the teacher was interviewed again and the students were asked to fill in another questionnaire.

The teacher claims that she saved time while preparing the lesson; before she was obliged to prepare the lessons at home and type it, then ask the administration to print for each single student. While this time, she had only to prepare it on her laptop then project it on the wall. This saved time for her and reduced the administration burden. As far as the students are concerned, the teacher said that they were focused all the time waiting for what comes next. As a result, this new method led to the engagement, motivation and interest of the students.

From the above results, we can say that the new way of presenting the lesson seems to be interesting to the students. Eight boys see the new way to be excellent, while three of them see it to be a good method. For the girls, almost all of the sixteen out of eighteen see it to be excellent. They showed more interest than before; also, they recommended that all the lessons had to be presented similarly to the one they attended with the forehead projector.

The traditional way of teaching: texts, and the lack of technological materials, make the process of learning boring for students. As we all know, nowadays students are living in a virtual world and technology is part of their daily routine, they are technology natives. There is a worldwide reform in the educational systems calling to integrate technology into education, and ESP is non-distinct (Avalos 2011). Technology is considered as an effective tool in achieving one's aim and goals in the teaching process (Costley:2014). In his turn, Gilakjan (2014) claims that using technology can change the atmosphere of teaching from a teacher-centered to learner-centered, this encourages the learner since he feels that he is responsible for his learning.

With the intention of changing the actual facts of teaching/learning English, the teacher was asked to prepare a lesson using an unusual way of teaching; using a forehead projector. New information demonstrated using screen. The students listen and take notes simultaneously writing things that are useful for them. They discussed and answered the questions individually and in small groups. They were also asked to use dictionaries from their own mobiles. In the end, the information used was posted on line so students use it later.

5. RECOMMANDATIONS

The ESP teachers need to be able to make decisions about language and language teaching. They also need credibility, professionalism and awareness of the ESP world. They must be experts of the language and the language specialty. Besides, they have to bear in mind that they are learners and researchers at the same time. In addition, they have to be in touch with subjects' teachers in order to tell them more about what to teach. Furthermore, the ESP teacher is the

language expert and the subject teacher is the resource. Above all, there should be training sessions for the teachers.

A standard syllabus should be provided in order to help the teachers do their job; especially for novice ones. Through using suitable aids such as technology, textbooks and articles in order to motivate the learners and make teaching/learning process successful.

The students must be aware enough of the position of the English language and its role in tackling the world economy. They will need it to write articles, thesis and research papers. In addition, almost all the business books are written in English.

6. Conclusion

Examining the status of ESP in the department of Economy in the University of Saida shows that there is a failure in the teaching/learning process. The learning atmosphere satisfies neither teachers nor students; thus, radical changes are needed. A syllabus should be designed to teachers that they have to work on. Also, visual aids must be available in order to facilitate the process of teaching and warm up students' interest in learning business English.

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