

THEME: DESIGNING AN EFFECTIVE AVIATION ENGLISH COURSE: A NEEDS ANALYSIS APPROACH FOR ESP LEARNERS.

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Abstract. This article focuses on the development of an Aviation English course tailored for graduate students at the International University of English (TIUE) in Tashkent. The primary objective is to equip learners with the necessary language skills and knowledge to communicate effectively in various aviation-related scene. It emphasizes a task-based approach, incorporating role-plays and authentic materials to enhance learners' proficiency in aviation terminology, safety protocols, and emergency communication.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Aviation English, Needs analysis, Language skills. Communication, Task-based approach, Learner profiles, Assessment methods, Curriculum design, Professional development.

Introduction. This ESP (English for Specific Purposes) project focuses on the development of an aviation English for the learners. The primary aim is this Aviation English course is to equip learners with the necessary language skills and knowledge to communicate effectively and confidently in a wide range of aviation-related scenario. To be more specific, this syllabus is designed to address the challenges faced by aviation English learners and to prepare them for the dynamic and high-stakes environment of air travel. By the end of this Aviation English course, learners will be equipped with the linguistic competence and confidence to thrive in the environment of the aviation industry, contributing to the overall safety, efficiency, and professionalism of their future respective roles.

Participants & ESP Context Selection (Aviation English. The learners in this ESP project are a group of 12 graduate students at the International University of English (TIUE) in Tashkent. Their language proficiency level is assessed at B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). These learners are motivated, academically oriented, and eager to enhance their English language skills for professional success. In the context of aviation English, the learners for this ESP course are individuals who want to be professionals in the sphere of aviation. In particular, as an ESP instructor, I conducted a needs analysis to check their abilities, interests, strengths, and weaknesses in learning styles by using diagnostic tests and questionnaires. I analyzed that, regarding their current skills, some learners have a solid foundation in general English language skills but lack the specialized aviation-related

vocabulary and communication skills required in their field. Others may struggle with both general English and language skills and the technical terminology of aviation. Moreover, they can communicate effectively in everyday conversations, understand a wide range of vocabulary, and express themselves clearly in various contexts. When it comes to language skills, which learners need to acquire and develop, they enable them to communicate effectively and accurately in various aviation-related contexts. Basically, understanding and using standard aviation terminology, abbreviations, and procedures is crucial for clear and precise communication within the aviation environment. For example, it involves using clear pronunciation, and concise language to ensure effective communication. They should focus more on improving their listening and speaking skills to ensure effective communication in the aviation industry. Developing language skills related to aviation safety, navigation, weather conditions, and emergency situations is essential for the learners to perform their future duties efficiently and ensure the safety of passengers and crew members.

Needs Analysis. It is clear that “needs analysis is a systematic collection and analysis” of all information to identify and assess the language needs of a specific group of learners in order to design tailored language courses that meet those needs effectively” (Brown, 2019, p. 12). I conduct a needs analysis for my learners in the specific ESP context of aviation English, to identify their linguistic abilities, knowledge, interests, and learning styles. Particularly, Cutting (2012) emphasizes that identifying learner profile is crucial in designing effective language training as it allows educators to tailor instruction to meet the specific needs, preferences, and individuals of individual learners. Precisely, to effectively assess the language skills of my learners in the context of aviation English, I used language assessments such as placement tests and diagnostic tests not only to evaluate my learners’ abilities but also to analyze the strengths and weaknesses in students’ knowledge. They helped me tailor instruction and choose appropriate materials to address the specific needs of individual learners. Besides, Viana et al. (2019) demonstrate the value of using data collection methods such as surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and observations for an effective needs analysis. By engaging in surveys or interviews, I know about their communication challenges, language learning goals, needs, preferences, and expectations.

Approach to the ESP Course. In developing an ESP course for aviation English, I wanted to utilize a task-based approach for my learners that focuses on practical, real-world tasks and role-plays relevant to the aviation industry. To be more specific, this approach aligns with the specific needs of my learners who want to be aviation professionals, emphasizing the acquisition of language skills. This can be done through the completion of authentic aviation communication scenarios, role-plays, and real-world activities that learners are likely to encounter in the future. In this approach, the primary focus is on conveying meaning and accuracy in communication. For my

learners, I selected to conduct a role-play activity, as it allows them to practice communication skills, decision-making abilities, and teamwork. In addition, Nunan (2004) advocates for the use of task-based activities that mirror authentic professional tasks. He suggests that role-play scenarios that stimulate learning, can help learners develop both linguistic and pragmatic competencies.

Task-based Approach and Assessment: Main goal is to enhance learners' proficiency in airport English communication through a simulated role-play scenario and prepare them for active interaction in airport settings. In this task, two students will role-play a conversation between an airport customer service agent and a passenger who needs assistance at the airport. Also, assessments play a crucial role in evaluating learners' language proficiency and their ability to communicate effectively in specialized domains. Hamp-Lyons (2016) argues that in the realm of language assessment, one of the key directions taken by modern language testing is a focus on test purpose, ensuring that assessment instruments are aligned with their intended objectives. In the context of aviation English training for the learners, I selected a combination of formative and summative assessments tailored to their specific language needs. To be more specific, the research by Cutting (2012) on "English for Airport Staff" provided valuable insights into the specific language needs of the learners. The insights from Cutting's research have been instrumental in shaping the direction of the ESP project and guiding our decisions on course content, activities, and objectives. I concluded that course readings, needs analysis, assessments, course aims, and approaches are integral components of the ESP project, as they are helpful to the design of tailored language training programs, address learners' specific needs, and provide mechanisms for evaluating learners' language proficiency. I consider that this ESP course (Aviation English) will be beneficial for my learners, enhancing their skills and knowledge in the field of aviation.

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