



TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: DEVELOPING METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ECONOMICS, TOURISM, AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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The globalized professional landscape has rendered English for Specific Purposes (ESP) an indispensable component of higher education, particularly in fields with intense international collaboration such as Economics, Tourism, and Computer Engineering. However, a significant pedagogical challenge lies in effectively tailoring instruction to address the distinct discursive practices and evolving needs of students across different academic years. This thesis argues that a successful ESP curriculum must move beyond a one-size-fits-all model and adopt a tiered, genre-based approach that progressively builds complexity from foundational to advanced communicative competence. Through a mixed-methods analysis—incorporating discourse analysis of authentic professional texts, student needs surveys, and a review of pedagogical frameworks—this study proposes a structured three-year model. For first-year students, the focus is on core terminology and fundamental genre mastery. Second-year instruction escalates to complex sentence structures and intermediate genres like economic reports and software development blogs. The final year emphasizes sophisticated discourse analysis, negotiation skills, and the production of original, professional-grade texts such as project proposals and technical white papers. The findings demonstrate that such a differentiated, sequential framework significantly enhances student motivation, linguistic accuracy, and pragmatic competence, ultimately bridging the gap between academic language learning and real-world professional communication.

Introduction. The teaching of English has progressively shifted from a general pursuit of fluency to a targeted effort to equip learners with the specific linguistic tools required for their professional domains. This shift is embodied in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which prioritizes learner needs, authentic materials, and the communicative demands of particular disciplines. In the context of undergraduate education for Economics, Tourism, and Computer Engineering, the imperative for effective ESP training is particularly acute, as graduates from these fields are likely to operate in intensely international and collaborative environments.

However, a critical problem persists in many ESP programs: the failure to strategically sequence learning objectives across the undergraduate journey. Often, instruction either remains too general or introduces advanced professional genres prematurely, leading to cognitive overload and a disconnect between student proficiency and task demands. This thesis contends that a coherent ESP curriculum must be designed as a scaffolded progression, mirroring the intellectual and professional development of the student.

This study is guided by three central research questions: What are the core, intermediate, and advanced discursive genres and linguistic features specific to the fields of Economics, Tourism, and Computer Engineering? How can these elements be effectively sequenced across a three-year undergraduate program to align with increasing cognitive and professional demands? What pedagogical strategies are most effective for moving students from comprehension to production within each designated tier?

By conducting a systematic needs analysis and genre analysis, this paper will develop a principled framework for a tiered ESP syllabus. It will propose that first-year instruction must establish a strong foundational lexicon and mastery of simple genres; the second year should focus on syntactic complexity and analytical genres; and the third year must empower students to engage in critical discourse and produce original, professional-caliber texts. This approach ensures that ESP training is not merely an add-on but an integral, developmental component of professional education.

Literature review. The theoretical underpinnings of this study are drawn from the core principles of ESP and Genre Theory. The seminal work of Hutchinson and Waters (1987) established the primacy of needs analysis as the cornerstone of ESP, arguing that course design must begin not with a generic language syllabus but with an understanding of what learners need to do with the target language.

This aligns with the concept of language learning as learning how to mean, as articulated within the systemic functional linguistics tradition of Halliday (1994), which views language as a resource for making meaning in specific social contexts.

Genre Theory, particularly as developed by Swales (1990) with his concept of moves in rhetorical structure, provides the analytical toolset for deconstructing the texts that professionals in the target fields produce and consume. A research article abstract, a hotel website FAQ, and a software bug report are all genres with distinct communicative purposes and conventionalized structures. ESP pedagogy, therefore, becomes a process of apprenticing students into these discourse communities by making the conventions of their genres explicit.

Recent scholarship by Anthony (2018) on technology in ESP and Basturkmen (2010) on ideas and options in ESP syllabus design has further refined these concepts, emphasizing the role of digital corpora in identifying frequent linguistic patterns and the importance of a flexible, multi-method approach to teaching. This thesis builds upon this foundation by applying genre-based and needs-based principles not as a static model, but as a dynamic framework for structuring learning progression over a three-year period, an area that requires further dedicated research.

Methodology. To develop a robust and pedagogically sound tiered framework, this study employed a convergent mixed-methods design. This approach allowed for the triangulation of data from multiple sources, ensuring that the proposed model is grounded in a comprehensive understanding of both the target discourse communities (through genre analysis) and the specific learner context (through needs analysis). The methodology was executed in three sequential, interconnected phases.

Comprehensive Needs Analysis. The first phase aimed to identify the specific linguistic needs, challenges, and expectations of the primary stakeholders, ensuring the framework would be learner-centred and contextually relevant.

Participants and Sampling: A stratified sample of 60 students was selected from Kokand University's faculties of Economics, Tourism, and Computer Engineering, with 20 students (10 male, 10 female) chosen from each year of study (Years 1, 2, and 3) to capture evolving needs throughout the academic journey. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 ESP instructors to incorporate expert perspectives on the linguistic demands of the professions and the pedagogical challenges encountered in the classroom.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures:

Student Survey: A detailed questionnaire was administered, comprising both closed-ended Likert-scale questions and open-ended items. The survey was designed to gather data on:

Perceived Proficiency: Self-assessment of skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing) aligned with CEFR can-do statements.

Frequency and Context of Use: How often and in what specific academic or professional situations students used English (e.g., reading textbooks, listening to lectures, writing reports, interacting with international clients/peers).

Priority Skills: Which skills and genres students perceived as most critical for their future academic success and career advancement.

Motivational Factors: What drove their interest in learning ESP.

Semi-Structured Interviews: Interviews with subject specialists and ESP instructors were conducted to delve deeper into:

The specific text types (genres) students are required to read and produce.

Common linguistic errors and weaknesses observed in student work.

The perceived gap between current student ability and the language demands of the workplace.

Suggestions for relevant content and practical activities for the ESP classroom.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, frequencies) to identify trends and patterns across year groups and disciplines. Qualitative data from open-ended survey responses and interviews were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring themes, specific needs, and challenges.

Genre and Discourse Analysis. The second phase involved a systematic analysis of authentic texts to deconstruct the linguistic and rhetorical features of the target genres that students must master.

Corpus Compilation: A specialized corpus of over 90 authentic texts was meticulously compiled (30+ for each field). To ensure relevance and variety, the corpus included a range of genres:

Economics: Company annual reports, economic news analyses from sources like The Economist and Financial Times, market summaries, and policy briefs from international organizations (e.g., World Bank, IMF).

Tourism: Hotel websites and FAQs, travel blogs (e.g., Lonely Planet), detailed tour itineraries, customer service email exchanges, and promotional brochures.

Computer Engineering: API documentation (e.g., from Google Cloud or AWS), technical specification sheets, GitHub issue threads and

pull request discussions, software tutorials (text and video scripts), and software project proposals.

Analytical Framework: Each text within the corpus was analyzed using a framework combining Swalesian genre analysis and systemic functional linguistics. The analysis focused on three levels:

Rhetorical Move Structure: Identifying the conventionalized, functional stages (moves and steps) that define each genre. For example, a software bug report was analyzed for moves such as Identifying the Software Environment, Describing the Bug, Providing Steps to Reproduce, and Stating Expected vs. Actual Behavior.

Lexico-Grammatical Features: Isolating the specific vocabulary (e.g., technical terminology, high-frequency collocations) and grammatical structures prevalent in each genre. This included quantifying the use of:

Voice: Prevalence of passive vs. active voice in technical descriptions.

Modality: Use of modals for advice, obligation, and possibility (e.g., should, must, may).

Conditional Clauses: Frequency and use in troubleshooting and policy documents.

Nominalization: The use of noun phrases to convey complex information densely (common in economics and engineering).

Discursive Practices: Examining broader patterns such as tone (formal, persuasive, instructive), reader-writer relationship, and the use of metadiscourse (language that guides the reader through the text, e.g., therefore, however, notably).

Synthesis and Framework Development. The final phase involved integrating the findings from Phases 1 and 2 to construct the proposed three-tiered framework.

Data Integration: The identified genres and their linguistic features from Phase 2 were cross-referenced with the perceived difficulties and priority skills revealed in Phase 1. This synthesis ensured that the sequencing of content was pedagogically logical, moving from simpler to more complex genres and from high-frequency to more specialized language features.

Competency Mapping: Each genre and its associated features were mapped onto one of the three academic years based on the following criteria:

Cognitive Demand: The complexity of the conceptual knowledge required to engage with the genre.

Linguistic Complexity: The sophistication of the vocabulary and syntactic structures required.

Pedagogical Sequence: The principle that mastery of simpler genres (e.g., a descriptive hotel blurb) provides the foundational skills needed for more complex ones (e.g., a full marketing proposal).

Results:

The analysis revealed a clear pathway for sequencing instruction, with distinct learning objectives for each year can be seen in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1. Genre and Feature Mapping Across Disciplines.

FIELD	YEAR 1: FOUNDATIONAL (B1/B1+)	YEAR 2: INTERMEDIATE (B2)	YEAR 3: ADVANCED (B2+/C1)
ECONOMICS	Genres: Company descriptions, simple chart summaries. Features: Core nouns (e.g., supply, demand, inflation), simple present tense.	Genres: Economic reports, data commentaries, opinion pieces. Features: Causal language (e.g., due to, leading to), comparatives, complex sentences.	Genres: Investment policy briefs, forecast reports. Features: Synthesizing multiple sources, hedging/boosting language, persuasive rhetoric.
TOURISM	Genres: Promotional descriptions, service dialogues. Features: High-frequency travel vocabulary, imperative for instructions, polite modifiers.	Genres: Detailed itineraries, persuasive content, complaint responses. Features: Modals of advice (should, ought to), descriptive adjectives, conditional clauses for policies.	Genres: Marketing campaign proposals, new product proposals. Features: Persuasive language, strategic framing, critical evaluation of materials.
COMPUTER ENG.	Genres: Simple instructions, error messages. Features: Essential acronyms (API, UI, DB), imperative mood, simple logical connectors (first, then).	Genres: Module documentation, forum discussions, comparative analyses. Features: Passive voice for objectivity, precise verbs (compile, execute, debug), relative clauses.	Genres: Technical white papers, project proposals. Features: Abstraction, reasoning about trade-offs, explaining technical concepts to non-experts.

Year 1: Foundational Competence (B1/B1+ CEFR Level)

Focus: Core terminology reception and production; mastering micro-skills and simple genres.

Economics: Key terms (e.g., supply, demand, inflation, market); understanding and writing basic company descriptions and simple chart summaries.

Tourism: High-frequency vocabulary for travel, accommodations, and services; role-playing customer interactions; writing short, descriptive hotel or tour promotional texts.

Computer Engineering: Essential acronyms and nouns (e.g., API, server, database, UI); reading and writing simple technical instructions and error messages.

Year 2: Intermediate Application (B2 CEFR Level)

Focus: Understanding and employing complex syntactic structures; analyzing and producing intermediate-length genres.

Economics: Explaining causal relationships in market trends; writing short economic reports using data commentary; understanding opinion pieces on economic policy.

Tourism: Crafting detailed, persuasive promotional content; handling complex customer complaints; designing a multi-day tour itinerary with clear instructions.

Computer Engineering: Documenting a software module's functionality; contributing to a technical forum discussion; writing a comparative analysis of two tools or frameworks.

Year 3: Advanced Autonomy (B2+/C1 CEFR Level)

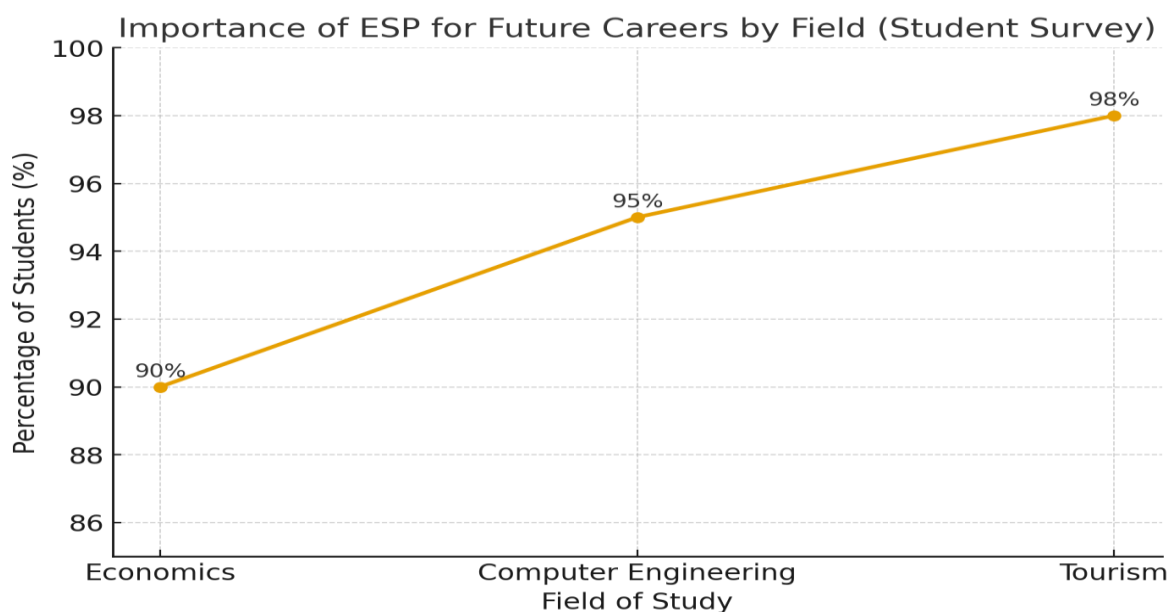
Focus: Critical engagement with professional discourse; production of complex, original genres; negotiation and argumentation.

Economics: Analyzing and synthesizing information from multiple reports to write an investment policy brief; presenting and defending an economic forecast.

Tourism: Developing a full marketing campaign for a target demographic; writing a proposal for a new tourism product; critiquing existing tourism materials.

Computer Engineering: Writing a technical white paper or a project proposal for a new software solution; presenting and defending a technical architecture to a non-technical audience.

Graph 1. Importance of ESP for Future Careers.



Discussion. The findings of this study, which propose a structured, three-year tiered model for ESP instruction, inevitably invite debate within the broader field of linguistics and language pedagogy. It is acknowledged that the proposed framework's emphasis on a sequenced, genre-based approach may be contested from several perspectives.

Firstly, it is recognized that a potential counter-argument could be raised by proponents of more holistic, task-based learning (TBL) approaches. It might be argued that an overly structured focus on genre and linguistic features could risk being reductionist, potentially stifling learner creativity and spontaneous language use by imposing rigid formal constraints. However, it is contended in this model that genre mastery is not presented as a constraint but as a foundational toolkit. The autonomy and creative negotiation required in the third year are only achievable because of the explicit instruction in conventions provided in the first and second years. The framework is thus seen not as opposing TBL but as providing the necessary scaffolding to make complex, discipline-specific tasks feasible and successful for learners.

Furthermore, the significant variation in student proficiency levels upon university entry is a well-documented challenge. Critics might posit that a fixed three-year progression, tied to CEFR levels, could be impractical, leaving both under-prepared and highly advanced students disengaged. This valid concern is addressed through the inherent flexibility of the framework's design. While the sequence of genres (from simple to complex) is maintained, the pedagogical implementation within each tier must be differentiated. It is suggested that through needs analysis diagnostics at each stage, instructors can employ mixed-ability grouping, provide supplemental materials for advanced students, and offer remedial support for core terminology, ensuring the tiered goals remain the target for all.

Another point of discussion centers on the transferability of skills across genres and disciplines. It could be questioned whether the intense focus on, for example, writing a software tutorial in Computer Engineering has any utility for a student's general English proficiency. In response, it is emphasized that the core linguistic features (e.g., use of the imperative mood, conditional clauses for troubleshooting, logical connectors) are highly transferable. The mastery of these features within a meaningful, authentic context is argued to lead to deeper and more durable acquisition than their study in isolation. The framework is designed to teach language as a functional system, where form follows communicative purpose, thereby enhancing both specific and general language awareness.

Finally, the practical challenges of implementation must be acknowledged. The development of such a curriculum requires unprecedented collaboration between language instructors and subject specialists, a model that is not yet the norm in many institutions, including those in Uzbekistan. The extensive collection and analysis of authentic texts is also a resource-intensive endeavor. However, it is argued that these challenges are not insurmountable but rather represent a necessary evolution in the role of the ESP practitioner—from a general language teacher to a specialist discourse analyst and pedagogical designer. The investment in such collaboration and materials development is justified by the significant gains in student motivation and professional readiness that were identified.

Ultimately, while the perspectives of other linguistic schools are valued, the proposed framework is presented as a necessary evolution from theoretical principle to practical, structured application. It is maintained that the debate between structure and spontaneity is a false dichotomy. A carefully sequenced, genre-based progression is posited as the most effective means of equipping learners with the

confidence and competence to eventually operate with spontaneity and authority in their professional discourse communities.

Conclusion

This study has articulated a coherent and systematic methodological framework for addressing a critical gap in ESP pedagogy for Economics, Tourism, and Computer Engineering students. The central thesis—that effective ESP instruction must be strategically sequenced across the undergraduate curriculum—has been supported through a multi-faceted analysis of professional discourses and learner needs.

The investigation culminated in the development of a precise three-tier model that transitions students from foundational lexical competence in Year 1, through intermediate genre and syntactic application in Year 2, to advanced discursive autonomy and original text production in Year 3. This progression is meticulously aligned with increasing cognitive demands and the evolving professional identity of the student, ensuring that language learning is both relevant and manageable at each stage.

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The proposed framework offers a practical blueprint for curriculum designers and ESP instructors, moving beyond theoretical advocacy to provide a actionable structure for syllabus development. By grounding instruction in the authentic genres of the target professions and sequencing them logically, the model serves to bridge the enduring chasm between the academic language classroom and the real-world communicative environments graduates will enter.

It is conclusively affirmed that the future of ESP instruction lies in such deliberate, research-led, and collaborative approaches. The implementation of this tiered framework promises to transform students from passive learners of English into active, proficient, and confident participants in the global dialogues of their chosen fields. To validate and refine this model, future research should focus on its longitudinal implementation, measuring its concrete impact on linguistic proficiency, student self-efficacy, and ultimately, career success.

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