

## МУТАХАССИСЛИК УЧУН ИНГЛИЗ ТИЛИ (ESP)

УЎК (УДК, UDC): 372.881.111.1

DOI: 10.36078/1565762675

### ENHANCING READING SKILL



**Khasan Shaymanovich ABDINAZAROV**

Senior Lecturer, Researcher

Department of Foreign Languages

Karshi Engineering-Economic Institute,

[Abdinazarov\\_2017@mail.ru](mailto:Abdinazarov_2017@mail.ru)

#### Abstract

ESP courses mostly text-based and lexical. Therefore, reading authentic text, and comprehending technical and semi-technical vocabulary words are quite complicated, in such case, we, teachers of English language, have to use different techniques.

This paper highlights concepts of how to improve linguistic skills of learners, especially, reading skills. Furthermore, we carried out interview with the staff at the Department of Foreign Languages, Karshi Engineering-Economic Institute. The interview based on questionnaire consisting of questions of how to comprehend authentic text in ESP classes and what kind of techniques are acceptable to use in reading and understanding written context. Moreover, variety of techniques was shown in the open questionnaire and the result was shown in below-mentioned diagram.

**Keywords:** ESP course; reading skill; questionnaire; authentic text; technical English.

### ЎҚИШ ҚОБИЛИЯТИНИ ЯХШИЛАШ

**Ҳасан Шаймонович АБДИНАЗАРОВ**

Катта ўқитувчи

Чет тиллар кафедраси

Қарши муҳандислик-иқтисодиёт институти

Қарши, Ўзбекистон

[Abdinazarov\\_2017@mail.ru](mailto:Abdinazarov_2017@mail.ru)

#### Аннотация

ESP (Аниқ мақсадларга йуналтирилган инглиз тили) курслари асосан матнга таяниб иш кўради. Асл матнни ўқиш ва техник сўзларни тушуниш жуда мураккаб бўлганлиги боис, инглиз тили ўқитувчилари турли усуллардан фойдаланишга мажбур. Ушбу мақолада ўқувчиларнинг тил кўникмаларини, айниқса, ўқиш кўникмасини яхшилашга қаратилган концепциялар ёритилади. Бундан ташқари, Қарши муҳандислик-иқтисодиёт институтининг Хорижий тиллар кафедрасида ўтказилган сўровнома асосида ESP курсларида асл матнни тушуниш, ўқиш учун мақбул педагогик технологиялар аниқланди. Шунингдек, очик анкетада педагогик технологиянинг турлари кўрсатилди ва натижалар диаграммада кўрсатилди.

**Калит сўзлар:** ESP курси; ўқиш қобилияти; анкета; асл матн; техникавий инглиз тили.

## КАК УЛУЧШИТЬ НАВЫКИ ЧТЕНИЯ

**Хасан Шаймонович АБДИНАЗАРОВ**

Старший преподаватель

Кафедра иностранных языков

Каршинский инженерно-экономический институт

Карши, Узбекистан

[Abdinazarov\\_2017@mail.ru](mailto:Abdinazarov_2017@mail.ru)

### Аннотация

В основном курсы ESP (Английский для специальных целей) текстовые. Чтение аутентичного текста, понимание технических и полутехнических слов довольно сложно, поэтому преподаватели английского языка должны использовать различные методы.

В статье описываются концепции улучшения языковых навыков учащихся, особенно навыков чтения. Кроме того, мы провели собеседование с сотрудниками кафедры иностранных языков Каршинского инженерно-экономического института. Интервью основано на вопросах о том, как понимать аутентичный текст в классах ESP и какие приемы необходимы для чтения и понимания письменного контекста. Различные методы были представлены в открытой анкете, а результат показан на диаграмме.

**Ключевые слова:** ESP классы; навыки чтения; анкета; аутентичный текст; технический английский язык.

### 1. Introduction

Course design is the process by which the raw data about a learning need is interpreted in order to produce an integrated series of teaching-learning experiences, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge (18, 65). ESP courses are designed according to the needs of learners and their skills (speaking, reading, writing, and listening). Furthermore, ESP courses mostly focused on reading books, different materials; video, audio which tell about the subject matter in FL, and which enhance knowledge of learners. Besides, meeting the target needs and making use of the underlying methodology, materials, activities, and assessment techniques of the learners' field of study serve as the absolute characteristics of ESP (19, 56). In this frame, the emphasis on learners' specialism and the need to address their target needs require ESP practitioners to adopt a distinguishable methodology. Consequently, one way of undertaking this is to evaluate the methodology component of ESP courses to understand whether they actually match course aims and meet learners' needs (18, 19, 12). The present study attempts to examine the methods of reading skill in ESP course. Therefore, we need to design our ESP courses according to the needs of learners. Moreover, there are different methods to reading the au-

thentic or technical texts, which are full of terminology of one's specialty. For knowing which method is acceptable in reading and comprehending authentic texts, technical vocabulary words and word-combinations, we set up questionnaire consisting of different questions with some options to be chosen by participants in the interview. The interview carried out at the Department of Foreign Languages, Karshi Engineering-Economic Institute. The Participants were professor-teachers at this Department. The interview held in 2018 April and the result was shown in the below-mentioned diagram. The qualitative analysis took 3 months.

## **2. Comprehending the written context, figures, visuals**

Golinkoff (7) compared the reading comprehension strategies of poor and good readers and found that good readers have rapid and accurate word recognition and automatic decoding skills. They read in phrasal units, are flexible in their reading pattern, vary their eye movements, and shift the size of their processing units. They also make use of contextual information in the text and pay attention to information relevant to their purpose, while ignoring information that has no utility for the task. On the other hand, poor readers are slow decoders and are less able to organize texts, which they read word by word. They are inflexible when it comes to variations in task demands. Furthermore, Hosenfeld (10) reported that good readers keep the meaning of the passage in mind as they read and skip words that they view as unimportant to the total meaning. They use context cues as aids in decoding meaning of unfamiliar words and look up words only as a last resort. They also have a positive self-concept of themselves as readers. Training in text organization can facilitate reading comprehension, that readers' background knowledge about text structure affects their reading comprehension (2, 461–481), and that the organization of expository text may be used to familiarize students with text structure (17).

A schema is a variable, abstract and mental structure that pertains to previous experience: i.e. it is prior knowledge. In reading, readers need to activate appropriate schemata for each new text they encounter, in terms of content, culture, text structure rhetorical patterns (5–6, 173). It was sometimes difficult to understand the more specialized content of some texts and it was therefore necessary to consult subject-specialist lecturers at the Technical Department. Consequently, students need to focus on reading skill in order to understand terminology of specialty and pronounce it correctly. Furthermore, where the learner's grammatical weaknesses interfere with comprehension of meaning, the relationship between meaning and form can be taught or revised in context through analysis and explanation. Engineering specialist

subject texts frequently comprise figures, and pictorial data and the ability to deduce information from them facilitates the reading process. It is more effective to review them before reading the descriptive discourse as they activate learners' schemata about the text topic and sometimes give meaning to words. The visually depicted information is much easier and faster to find and assimilate than the verbal items in reading comprehension. The research project included a variety of visual data associated with reading comprehension and questions, as well as information transfer. For example: the figures of sedimentary rocks, instruments of mining engineers, and visual aids showing the process of pumping the oil and gas in the well, or exploration and prospecting works of engineers can be authentic transferable information for learners in the ESP classes. There are numerous textbooks designed to direct and support communicative language teaching. Their tables of contents sometimes suggest a kind of grading and sequencing of language practice not unlike those found in structurally organized texts. Others, has none of the usual dialogues, drills, or sentence patterns and uses visual cues, taped cues, pictures, and sentence fragments to initiate conversation (14, 79). The more time a student devotes to the learning language, the higher his/her level of proficiency will be (4).

### **3. Variety Tools**

One of the most important approaches to reading in ESP classes was the shift from text as a linguistic object to text as a vehicle of information. Hosenfeld (10) had shown that less successful foreign language learners had a fragmented approach to text, while successful learners went for overall meaning, guessing or skipping language and information. Alderson (1) tested several hypothesis about the role of language and skills and showed that poor reading in a foreign language is due to poor reading in L1, together with an inadequate knowledge of foreign language. He showed that learners need to reach a threshold level of language knowledge before they are able to transfer any L1 skills to their L1 reading tasks. Some features in reading technical written context in ESP classes:

- Identifying organizational patterns.
- Understanding relations within a sentence and between sentences.
- Using cohesive and discourse markers.
- Predicting, inferring and guessing.
- Identifying main ideas, supporting ideas and examples.
- Processing and evaluating the information during reading.
- Transferring or using the information while or after reading.

- Understanding the gist of a text (skimming).
- Locating specific information (scanning).
- Comprehending explicit and implicit information stated in a context.
- Comprehending and acquiring new information from figures, pictures and visual aids.
- Comprehending imperative and instructional language.
- Recognizing synonyms in similar contexts.
- Recognizing and understanding nominal compounds and other parts of speech.
- Summarizing and drawing conclusions about a text.

While the ESP course was purposefully designed to help students develop all four-macro skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing within the courses. However, ESP course based on mainly reading because students read technical texts relevant to their specialty, and through authentic written contexts, they acquire words and word-combinations. What is more, some reading skills such as skimming, scanning, close reading, and speed-reading is considered as important method in reading comprehension in ESP courses. The aim of this method is “finding, rephrasing, underlining the topic sentence, main ideas, and supporting ideas”. They are necessary for quick and efficient reading, and can only be ‘achieved’ by practice on longer texts (13, 23). Skimming is defined as quickly running one’s eyes over a text to get the gist of it, whereas scanning is going through a text quickly to find a particular piece of information (8, 4. 6, 10). A skimmer browses over large areas of material rather than concentrating on words or sentences. Skimming is a twofold process: rapid reading to locate the desired piece of information and slower reading to assimilate it fully (15). It may involve careful as well as expeditious reading and bottom-up as well as top down processing (20, 213).

Authentic material gives ESP teachers, learners new data which may reflect students in learning the subject matter, consequently, improve student's professionally-oriented knowledge in FL; furthermore, it may give them experience, instruction, description of works what they will be accustomed to. Authentic material not only gives information about profession but also it prepares students for job-oriented purposes and develops their linguistic and professional skills in FL. As a result, they may comprehend the specialty in FL

### **Extract from the Technical text:**

Natural gas, once flared-off as an unneeded by product of petroleum production, is now considered a very valuable resource. Natural gas deposits are also the main source of the element helium.

The engineering students may scan or skim the authentic text only by their post-experience in L1.

### **4. Method of the research**

There are different ways of finding information about students' needs and their previous experience. The use of questionnaires can produce a large amount of information about many different issues such as communication difficulties, preferred learning styles, preferred classroom activities, attitudes and beliefs (14).

Evaluation is an essential stage of any ESP course and an inseparable part of course design, which encompasses needs analysis, syllabus design, materials preparation, method and activities selection and implementation, and assessment (12).

The main aim of this research is to find a solution to the target needs of students who found technical texts difficult to read and comprehend in ESP classes. There organized an interview with the staff at the Department of Foreign Languages, Karshi Engineering-Economic Institute, Karshi, Uzbekistan. Furthermore, we made a questionnaire consisting of different questions with some options, which participants have chosen according to their ideas, attitudes, and wishes. The questionnaire was openly introduced. The process of interviewing with the staff was 2018 April, spring. The participants were interviewed one by one. The interview was designed with questions and twenty professor-teachers invited to be interviewed with following questions:

1. How do you find, scanning and skimming technique is important to develop students' reading skill in ESP courses?
  - a. Not so much b important c. very important d. no result
2. How do you think, scanning technique is useful in acquiring technical vocabulary in ESP courses?
  - a. Important b. not useful c. useful d. desirable
3. Why do you consider translation is an essential method in ESP classes?
  - a. Because it may promote acquiring technical and semi-technical vocabulary
  - b. Because it can help us study and teach subject matter
  - c. Because it gives us exact explanation of the technical word of the specialty which we find difficult to comprehend

- d. Because we may comprehend authentic text
4. Why do you consider; improving reading skill of engineering students important in ESP classes?
- a. Because reading is important in analyzing whole text and acquisition of subject matter
- b. Because of understanding profession in FL, c. Because it meets the needs of students, d. Because it is needed
5. What do you think; which of the learners' linguistic skills is usually improved in ESP classes?
- a. Mostly reading and speaking. B. reading, speaking, writing, listening comprehension C. listening comprehension and speaking. D. writing and speaking
6. Which approach is useful in ESP classes?
- a. Text-based approach b. variety of approaches are needed c. content-based approach d. CLIL approach
7. How do you think, an authentic text is essential in perceiving subject matter in FL?
- a. Yes, it is very important. B. not necessary. C. yes, for perceiving profession in FL. D. No, we found authentic text difficult to teach.
8. Is a dictionary technique necessary to use in ESP classes?
- a. Yes, it is very necessary because we can only translate technical terms by this technique
- b. Not so important because we may rely on students' concepts in L1
- c. Yes, it is important to improve our reading skills and to gain wide knowledge about specialty in FL
- d. Yes, with this, we may comprehend information stated in the technical text, and it is a key in acquiring technical terms.
9. Is an activity needed in order to develop reading and other macro skills of students?
- A. Yes, it is very needed B. No, not so important. C. an activity is much needed for advancing students' speaking, listening and reading skill. D. it is more than we need in ESP classes.
10. Can visual aids and pictorial data, and content-based figures give you and your students all about profession in FL and how do you measure them?
- a. Yes, with the help of these techniques we may teach engineering students all about profession, full explaining and paraphrasing technical words
- b. Not so much, technical text is rather important than them

c. Yes, we may improve students' vocabulary knowledge with these techniques

d. These live techniques give students and us main idea about specialty, and they increase the quality of ESP courses.

11. What kind of materials do you need to develop your teaching methods?

a. Material based on textbook b. ICT material c. handmade-material d. visual aids

12. How do you consider, what kind of material, especially, may reflect the needs of students?

a. Electronic material reflect more than textbook in ESP classes

b. Internet based material, c. Textbook d. Visual aids

13. How do you consider, schematic approach promotes comprehending technical text?

a. Yes, of course b. not so much c. yes, much more d. have no idea

14. How do you think, realia may give full explanation about the topic?

a. May be b. yes, of course c. yes, realia gives full explanation about the topic d. no, I do not think so

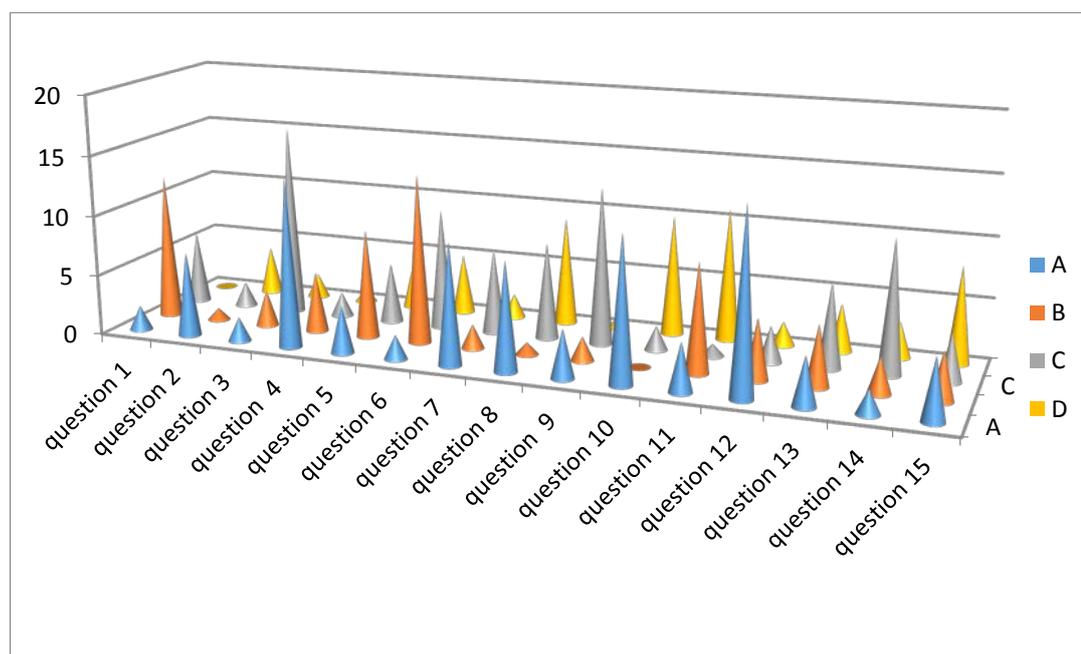
15. How do you think, activity should be organized according to levels or age of students?

a. Yes, it should be b. not important c. I think so d. if it would be according to the levels, it may give effective result.

## 5. Data Analysis

Some needs analysis follow ethnographic principles and aim for a thick description of the target environments (19, 14). This approach to needs analysis involves in-depth ethnographic data collection.

Objective needs are not necessarily the same as subjective needs or wants. For example, engineering students may objectively need to deal with written texts concerned with technical matter but may want to read topics in English on other general interest subjects. Using technical texts, topics, or tasks may turn out to be demotivating (9, 20). Perspectives of needs vary and the needs analyst has to decide whose perspectives to take into account in designing ESP courses or synthesize divergent perspectives (11).



According to the collected data, analysis showed that:

In the above-mentioned diagram, we may see the data collected from the interview. The findings were as following:

According to **1<sup>st</sup> question**, option (b) scanning and skimming technique is important to develop students' reading skill in ESP classes

And **2<sup>nd</sup> question**, option (a) scanning technique is useful in acquiring technical vocabulary in ESP classes

**3<sup>rd</sup> question**, option (c) translating technical word gives learner to comprehend written context.

**4<sup>th</sup> question**, option (a)- reading is important in analyzing whole text and acquisition of vocabulary words.

**5<sup>th</sup> question**, option (b)- reading, speaking, writing, listening comprehension.

**6<sup>th</sup> question**, option(b) variety of approaches are needed

**7<sup>th</sup> question**, option (a)- yes, it is very important

**8<sup>th</sup> question**, options (a and d)- it is very necessary because we can only translate technical terms by this technique, / with this, we may comprehend information stated in the technical text, and it is a key in acquiring technical terms.

**9<sup>th</sup> question**, option (c)-an activity is more needed for improving students' speaking, listening and reading skills.

**10<sup>th</sup> question**, option (a)-with the help of these techniques we may teach engineering students all about profession, just explaining and analyzing it.

**11<sup>th</sup> question**, option (d) -visual aids

**12<sup>th</sup> question,** option (a)-Electronic material reflects more than textbook in ESP classes.

**13<sup>th</sup> question,** option (c) schematic approach promotes comprehending technical text

**14<sup>th</sup> question,** option(c) realia gives full explanation about the topic

**15<sup>th</sup> question,** option (d)if it would be, it may give effective result

As we analyzed the results; ESP teacher has to use variety of techniques in order to enable learners comprehend technical words in the text while reading an authentic text. Besides, different materials must be involved to enhance the linguistic skills of learners in ESP classes. Moreover, there are a lot of techniques to improve reading skills of the learners, and those, surely, reflect the target needs of learners.

### **Conclusion**

The efficient reader makes use of redundancy of authentic texts while reading until s/he arrives at global understanding, and then s/he skips over them to fulfill the specific reading purposes; e.g. in skimming or scanning. In engineering discourse, padding always comprises elucidative devices such as exemplification, explanation by rewording etc, and the student with competent reading faculties can make use of them. That is to say, the programme adopts a skills-based approach. Since it is tailored for given students with specific needs for learning English in an ESP setting, it also adopts a learning-centered approach (18, 14).

Where English is used as the medium of communication and students are expected to present written work and make oral presentations in accurate English, serious weaknesses in grammar require more specific help. This may mean allocating time to concentrate on the given difficulty, teaching both the form and its use in contexts relevant to learners' needs (19, 75). The ESP teacher is to know what kind of tasks and processing would be associated with particular texts or information. Furthermore, reading technical texts and understanding them is difficult not only for English learners but also English language teachers who does not have any idea about learner's specialism. Experiences, knowledge gains not in a day, it takes some years, and surely, teachers who have wide knowledge on subject matter must help learners and English language teachers to comprehend the authentic texts and subject matter. Moreover, we should use all conveniences; such as techniques/ methods in reading and comprehending the written context in FL.

## REFERENCES

1. Alderson, J. C., & Urquhart, A. H. (1985). The effect of students' academic discipline on their performance on ESP reading tests. *Language Testing*, 2 (2), 192–204.
2. Carrell, P. L. (1987). Content and formal schemata in ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(3), 461–481.
3. Carrell, P. L. 1991. Readers and reading strategies.. *PALM*, 6 (1): 13–21.
4. Carrell, P. L. 1992. Awareness of text structure: Effects on recall. *Language Learning*, 42 (1): 1–20.
5. Carrell, P.L., Devine, J. and Eskey, D.E. (eds.) (1988) *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*. Cambridge: CUP. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2006. ISSN 16970381
6. Davies, F. (1995). *Introducing reading*. London: Penguin.
7. Golinkoff, R. M. 1976. .A comparison of reading comprehension processes in good and poor comprehenders.. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 11: 623–659. *Vial, Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2006. ISSN 16970381
8. Grellet, F. (1981). *Developing reading skills: a practical guide to reading comprehension exercises*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
9. H.Basturkmen. *Ideas and Options in English for Specific Purposes*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associations, publishers 2006 Mahwah, New Jersey, London.
10. Hosenfeld, C. (1977). Learning about learning: Discovering our students' strategies. *Foreign Language Annals*, 9, 117–129. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2006. ISSN 16970381
11. Jasso-Aguilar, R. (1999). Sources, methods and triangulation in needs analysis: A critical perspective in a case study of Waikiki Hotel maids. *English for Specific Purposes Journal*, 18(1),27–46.
12. Momeni, M. and Rasekh, A. E. (2012). Investigating class coherence and its effect on EAF course evaluation: a case study of MA students of Geography and Tourism. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 2(2), 219–236.
13. Nuttall, C. (1982). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. London: Heinemann.
14. Richards, J. and Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
15. Rubin, D. (1982). *A practical approach to teaching reading*. New York: Walker.
16. Seal, B. (1997). *Academic encounters: reading, study skills, and writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
17. Tang, G. 1992. .The effect of graphic representation of knowledge structures on ESL reading comprehension.. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12: 393–410. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2006. ISSN 16970381
18. Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters. *English for Specific Purposes. A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge University Press.1995
19. Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John. *Developments in English for Specific*
20. Urquhart, S., & Weir, C. (1998). *Reading in a second language: process, product and practice*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.