STUDENTS' NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS IN ESP CLASSES

Kambarova Diloram Yusupovna

Associate Professor, PhD Fergana State University, Uzbekistan Email: Kambarova3112@gmail.com

Jurayeva Shakhlo Ergashboyevna

Fergana State University Master's degree student Fergana city, Department of English Practical Course, Uzbekistan Email:shaxlojurayeva02@gmail.com; Phone: +998907776101

Abstract: *This article examines students' needs and expectations in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes, focusing on learning modes, course design, and professional relevance. Based on a review of recent international studies, the paper identifies key trends in students' attitudes, perceived challenges, and preferred learning outcomes. The findings highlight the importance of needs analysis, blended learning approaches, and communication-oriented instruction in ensuring effective ESP education.*

Key words: *English for Specific Purposes, needs analysis, students' expectations, ESP course design, blended learning, professional communication*

INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become an essential component of higher education due to the increasing demand for professional communication skills in global academic and workplace contexts. Unlike general English courses, ESP focuses on discipline-specific language needs, making students' expectations and learning goals a central factor in course effectiveness (Otanjac, 2021). Understanding learners' needs allows educators to design courses that are relevant, motivating, and aligned with real professional tasks.

Recent research emphasizes that students expect ESP classes to provide practical language skills applicable to their future careers rather than theoretical language knowledge. Studies indicate that learners value communication-based activities, authentic materials, and task-oriented instruction that reflects workplace realities (Maruf et al., 2021; Huang & Yu, 2023). As a result, needs analysis has become a fundamental tool in ESP course development.

Moreover, technological integration and blended learning environments have reshaped students' expectations of ESP instruction. Learners increasingly anticipate flexible learning formats, digital resources, and interactive platforms that enhance engagement and autonomy (Gaffas, 2023; Taylor, 2024). These evolving expectations require educators to continuously reassess course objectives and instructional strategies.

Methodology

This study is based on a systematic literature review of recent scholarly articles focusing on students' needs, attitudes, and expectations in ESP courses. The selected sources analyze ESP instruction across various disciplines and educational contexts, providing a comparative perspective on common trends and challenges in ESP education.

Results

The reviewed studies demonstrate a strong correlation between students' professional goals and their expectations of ESP courses. Otanjac (2021) found that university students expect ESP instruction to be directly connected to their field of study, emphasizing relevance and practicality over general language skills.

Similarly, Maruf et al. (2021) and Dou (2024) highlight that needs analysis consistently reveals students' preference for materials tailored to their academic and professional contexts. These studies confirm that learner-centered course design increases motivation and perceived usefulness of ESP classes.

Research on vocational and professional education further supports these findings. Kamaruddin et al. (2021) report that ESP courses designed according to learners' specific needs significantly improve engagement and learning outcomes among vocational students.

Studies in medical and nursing education reveal a strong demand for communication-focused ESP instruction. Huang and Yu (2023) and Farea and Singh (2024) emphasize that students expect ESP courses to develop interactional competence, particularly in professional-client or professional-patient communication.

Technological aspects also play a crucial role in shaping students' expectations. Gaffas (2023) demonstrates that students perceive blended and virtual ESP courses positively when they are interactive and well-structured. However, poorly designed digital instruction can reduce learner satisfaction.

Taylor (2024) further identifies that while AI-integrated and blended ESP courses offer flexibility and innovation, students still require guidance, clear objectives, and meaningful interaction to fully benefit from technology-enhanced learning.

Finally, Enesi et al. (2021) underline that mismatches between course content and students' needs often result in learning difficulties and reduced motivation. Across studies, the correlation between effective needs analysis and positive learning experiences remains consistent.

Discussion

The findings suggest significant implications for ESP instruction in Uzbekistan. As the country continues to integrate into international academic and professional environments, students increasingly require ESP courses aligned with their future careers and global communication demands.

Implementing systematic needs analysis in Uzbek ESP programs would allow universities to design courses that reflect students' academic disciplines and labor market requirements. This approach would enhance learner motivation and professional readiness, as supported by international research (Dou, 2024; Maruf et al., 2021).

Additionally, the integration of blended learning and digital tools could expand access to ESP education across regions of Uzbekistan. However, as noted by Taylor (2024) and Gaffas (2023), such integration must be pedagogically grounded to ensure quality and effectiveness.

Conclusion

This review confirms that students' needs and expectations are central to the success of ESP classes. Across diverse educational contexts, learners consistently expect practical,

discipline-specific, and communication-oriented instruction supported by appropriate technology.

For Uzbekistan, adopting needs analysis-based ESP course design and learner-centered methodologies can significantly improve the quality of English education. Aligning ESP instruction with students' professional goals will contribute to stronger academic outcomes and greater international competitiveness.

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