

EVALUATING OF STUDENTS' NEEDS AND TEACHING MATERIALS FOR THE ESP COURSE IMPROVEMENT: A CASE STUDY

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English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is one of the predominant approaches to language teaching in tertiary education, as it is directed towards the specific needs of the particular speciality students. The paper deals with the role of needs analysis and materials evaluation adjusting ESP courses to the needs of students in tertiary education. Students' needs analysis is a reference base for both the development of a new ESP course and alterations of an existing ESP course in the changing environment and demands for English language skills. Teaching materials determine the content of the course and affect teaching methods, students' motivation, vocabulary and language functions taught. The evaluation of teaching materials allows the teacher to improve the ESP course constantly, to better adjust it to the changing needs of students. An attempt was also made to find out if the students' needs change over time and to investigate whether the ESP teaching materials at KTU meet the students' needs. The theoretical considerations are supported by a survey of students' needs and their evaluation of teaching materials. A questionnaire was administered to two groups of students: bachelor and doctoral. The students had to evaluate their future or present needs for English language, to assess their present skills of English as well as to express their needs for certain types of them. In addition, bachelor students had to evaluate the materials they had in their ESP courses. The results of the survey reveal whether the students' needs are met in the ESP course they have attended. The implication of the survey results is that the most topical students' needs, such as the development of productive skills, and especially speaking skills, do not change over time. Students' evaluation of the tailor-made ESP coursebooks is also presented, as well as some suggestions to make the ESP courses more attuned to students' needs.