

Introduction

Preparations for the First National ESP/EAP Conference started in May 2004 when preliminary sessions of the Academic Committee were held at the Foreign Languages Department of SAMT, and some early decisions were made on how to conduct the program. Five months later, a call for papers was sent to universities and other related centers. Two months after the announcement, abstracts of papers and proposals of sample lessons were received by the Conference Secretariat via mail and e-mail.

On March 13, 2005, a total of 96 paper abstracts and sample lesson proposals were distributed to the jury for assessment. Each item was judged by at least three referees. 46 papers and 11 sample lessons were approved to be presented at the conference. The papers themselves were assessed and graded by several Academic Committee members. The received sample lessons were also evaluated by some Academic Committee members. This volume contains 11 papers and 4 annotated sample lessons. 14 papers were published in the first volume, and the remaining accepted papers and annotated sample lessons will hopefully be published in the third volume.

The Academic Committee held a panel discussion on April 24, 2005 and the members' views were later published in SAMT's newsletter. Meanwhile special programs were broadcast on national radio and TV where some of the Academic Committee members elaborated on the conference. Other executive tasks were dealt with in parallel by the respective officials in SAMT. We hope that the outcomes of this conference will be followed up by concerned academics and students to upgrade the status of ESP/EAP in the country.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to this conference. I would like to thank SAMT President, Dr. Ahmad Ahmadi, Deputy for Research Affairs, Dr. Seyyed Taha Merghati, and Deputy for Executive Affairs, Mohammad Reza Saeedi for their support and encouragement. I would also like to express my gratitude to the following for their partnership: The Center for Research and Development in

Humanities (affiliated to SAMT); The English Language and Literature Association; The English Language Department of Tarbiat Modarres University; and The Faculty of Foreign Languages of Tehran University.

Special thanks should go to the conference Academic Committee whose names are listed on a separate page (IV) in this book. I appreciate the assistance of SAMT's Public Relations Department, directed by Simin Hashemi, for taking care of the information dissemination. The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) provided media coverage before and during the conference, so we feel indebted to them as well. I also thank all those who offered services to the participants on the day of the conference or helped in the executive phase of the conference in any way.

And last but not least, I should specially thank my colleagues at the Foreign Languages Department of SAMT without whose devoted efforts and concern it would have been impossible to hold such a program: Nooshin Ghabdian served as Executive Secretary of the conference; Majid Khayyamdar copyedited the papers; Mojgan Zarghamy carried out the formal editing; Leila Khaknegar Moghaddam took care of proof reading; Seyyede Soghra Mirzahed did the typesetting and page design; and Roohollah Tavakolian served as assistant to the Executive Secretary. The conference owes to them all.

As a final note, it is worth mentioning that although we did our best to avoid any pitfalls, there might have been some faults beyond our control for which we would be so sorry. Such possible shortcomings are hoped to be compensated in the next conference.

Overview

Papers

In “ESP in Iran from Language Planning Perspective”, Lotfollah Yarmohammadi presents a brief history of the development of ESP in Iran. He labels the current paradigm in the country as “teaching English for no specific purpose” and believes the objectives of language teaching and learning should be operationalized. Yarmohammadi views ESP in the broader context of

multilingualism and emphasizes the roles of minority languages and translation in relation to national development. He also offers a package of proposals to improve ESP materials development and methodology.

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Aram Reza Sadeghi in “ESP Methodology: A Transition from the Present State” suggests a carryover from the existing situation. He considers ESP in terms of student, teacher, materials, and methodology, and is concerned mainly about the inadequate language skills of students upon entering university, and most ESP teachers’ incompetence with respect to either language or subject knowledge. Quoting Johnson (1982), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Robinson (1991), and Jordan (1997), among others, Sadeghi attempts to highlight the importance of communicative and learning-centered approaches to ESP practice and materials production.

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In “Trends in ESP & EGP”, Mohammad Zohrabi tries to make clear the relationship between English for General Purposes and English for Specific Purposes. Reviewing the literature, he identifies the areas of overlap and difference between these two divisions of EFL. Zohrabi explains ‘needs analysis’ as an essential requirement for any valid language course, and ‘better appreciation of content’ as an advantage for ESP. He argues for meaningful learning, learner-friendly materials, and revision of the materials to explode the cycle of forgetfulness.

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“EAP and the Communicative Use of Language” by Giti Karimkhanlui addresses a series of questions concerning the use of English in academic settings. Karimkhanlui elaborates on the communicative approach to English language learning and teaching, English in academic discourse and texts, and ways of teaching academic writing.

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Massoud Rahimpour presents “Current Views on Syllabus Design”. He introduces three major schools of syllabus design, namely Lancaster School, London School, and Toronto School. Rahimpour also includes discussions on synthetic & analytic and Type A & Type B syllabi and examines three recent

approaches to task-based syllabus. He further comments on curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation.

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“Developing Communicative Syllabus in ESP/EAP Classes & How to Deal with it in EFL Situations” by Mehdi Rahimian highlights some challenges and shortcomings of language teaching in Iran. Rahimian presents the results of his field study in which a group of students reported on the use of communicative activities in their ESP classes. Overall, the results are unsatisfactory and in some cases disappointing. He cites techniques suggested by some authorities in TEFL to make up for the present deficiencies.

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Ayyob Jodairi in “Teachers as Coordinators in Developing ESP Curriculum” underlines a bi-planner approach to meeting ESP students’ needs. In this approach, materials development and teaching methodology, or content and context of language teaching, are coordinated by the teacher to best meet the students’ real-life needs. Jodairi repeatedly refers to Strevens (1998), Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, 2001), and Nunan (1987, 1989, 1999), among others, to make his case.

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“Issues of Learning EMP at University: An Analysis of Students’ Perspectives” by Jafar Askari Arani presents the results of a study in which a group of students expressed their views on their language learning needs and priorities, difficulties in ESP classes, and self-assessment.

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Amir Mahdavi-Zafarghandi in “Failure of EST Objectives” reports the findings of his study on a group of students (majoring in dentistry) to see how skilled they are in understanding educational films and texts. Mahdavi-Zafarghandi’s research indicates they fall short of proficiency standards in terms of the listening and reading skills. He suggests that listening be incorporated into the curriculum and recommends reforms to the admission and evaluation procedures, as well as using integrated language teaching.

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Saber Delshad in “Teaching Writing for Academic Purposes” explains major

problems in university students' writing skill and provides remedies. Through a series of writing assignments administered to students of journalism, Delshad practically shows the success of process approach to writing. He evaluates the skill from the points of view of both grammar and communication.

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Maryam Hosseini and Mahmood Reza Atai in "An Evaluation of Writing Courses for Tourism in Iran" notice poor needs analysis. In their research report, they also identify shortcomings in ESP courses for tourism such as lack of a fixed syllabus and special teacher training courses, inappropriate admission criteria, heterogeneous classes, and inadequate evaluation. The authors wrap up their paper with a series of practical suggestions to improve the present state.

Sample Lesson Proposals

Morteza Asl Rasouli, Javad Gholamy, and Zhila Mohammad Nia in "A Process-oriented, Interactive EAP Project on Medical English: A Case Report" present the rationale behind the content and organization of "Bridging the Gap" authored by Asl Rasouli for students of Medical Sciences. They begin with general assumptions and principles in language teaching, and later integrate them with the theoretical underpinnings of EAP. They also theoretically explain each item in the book and report on the pilot implementation and feedback of the course.

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"EAP Materials Evaluation in Iran: English for Students of Civil Engineering" by Seyyed Mohammad Reza Hashemi is an attempt to come up with ideas for pragmatic, eclectic and authentic materials development in Iran. To do so, he carries out needs analysis on a group of students (civil engineering) using a questionnaire and on several teachers using structured interviews. Hashemi emphasizes the reading skill. He includes strategy training, follow-up tasks, and homework in his lesson proposal.

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Afsaneh Dehnad proposes "Graphic Organizers as an Effective Study Technique in an ESP Class". She gives a full account of the uses and applications of

graphic organizers in learning in general, and language courses in particular, and shows them to be effective in a wide range of areas, from warm-up to recall. Dehnad presents a sample lesson, which includes various graphic organizers in the exercises.

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Sasan Baleghizadeh puts forward an annotated sample lesson for students of psychology, namely “What Type Are You?”. He explains the lesson’s overall design and its separate components. His approach to the course is task-based and favors group work. Baleghizadeh incorporates a Language Focus section and a little fun into the lesson.

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&
Conference Academic Secretary**