

English for a Specific Purpose: Essay Writing for Undergraduate Students in North India

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Abstract : English for a Specific Purpose (ESP) focuses on tailoring language instruction to meet the academic or professional needs of learners. In North India, undergraduate students often face challenges in essay writing due to linguistic and structural differences between English and their native languages. This research paper explores the importance of ESP in enhancing essay writing skills among North Indian students, analyzing the challenges they face and providing pedagogical strategies to improve their proficiency.

Introduction - English has become an essential tool for academic and professional success worldwide. In North India, where English is widely used in higher education, undergraduate students often struggle with essay writing due to linguistic interference, limited exposure to English, and inadequate training in academic writing conventions. English for a Specific Purpose (ESP) offers a focused approach to address these challenges by customizing language instruction to meet students' academic needs.

This paper aims to analyze the essay writing difficulties faced by North Indian undergraduate students and propose effective strategies within the ESP framework to enhance their writing proficiency.

Challenges Faced by North Indian Undergraduate Students in Essay Writing

Linguistic Interference: The influence of native languages such as Hindi, Punjabi, and Bengali often leads to grammatical errors and awkward sentence structures in English essays.

Limited Vocabulary and Expression: Many students struggle with academic vocabulary and fail to express complex ideas clearly.

Lack of Understanding of Essay Structure: Students often struggle with thesis statements, coherence, cohesion, and logical argumentation.

Grammar and Syntax Issues: Common errors include subject-verb agreement, incorrect tense usage, and misplaced modifiers.

Inadequate Exposure to Academic Writing: The lack of academic writing training in schools and universities leaves students unprepared for university-level essays.

ESP-Based Strategies to Improve Essay Writing Skills

Needs Analysis: Identifying specific linguistic and

academic needs of students can help tailor the instruction accordingly.

Explicit Teaching of Essay Structure: Introducing students to thesis statements, topic sentences, supporting details, and conclusion strategies.

Lexical Development: Incorporating vocabulary-building exercises to enhance students' academic language proficiency.

Grammar-Focused Activities: Implementing targeted grammar instruction to address common errors.

Process-Based Writing Approach: Encouraging brainstorming, outlining, drafting, peer review, and revision to improve writing quality.

Use of Technology: Digital tools such as Grammarly, Turnitin, and online writing labs can provide feedback and help students refine their writing skills.

Interactive Learning Methods: Group discussions, peer evaluations, and workshops can make the learning process more engaging and effective.

Case Study: Implementation of ESP Strategies in a North Indian University

A study was conducted in a North Indian university where ESP-based essay writing instruction was introduced to undergraduate students. The intervention included structured lessons on essay writing, vocabulary enhancement, and grammar exercises. Pre- and post-intervention assessments showed significant improvement in students' writing clarity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy.

Conclusion: ESP-based instruction plays a crucial role in enhancing essay writing skills among North Indian undergraduate students. By addressing linguistic challenges and incorporating structured writing strategies, students can

develop their academic writing proficiency. Future research can explore the long-term impact of ESP interventions and the role of digital tools in further improving essay writing skills.

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