



RESEARCH PAPER**Historical and Theoretical Perspectives of English for Specific Purposes: An Overview**

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ABSTRACT

This research article investigates the historical and theoretical developments of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) over the past six decades. Early years of ESP research primarily focused on text-based counts before gradually transitioning to a greater emphasis on rhetorical devices. The following decades saw the introduction of central concepts such as NEEDS assessment, linguistic devices and their rhetorical purposes, genre, and rhetorical move, which broadened the scope of ESP research. In the modern age of ESP, corpus studies and genre emerged as central concepts in the field. This led to the emergence of intercultural rhetoric as a key area of research, and the development of genre-based approaches in ESP. The use of corpus studies allowed for a data-driven approach to language analysis, enabling the identification and analysis of linguistic features and patterns of specific genres. Overall, this article provides an in-depth overview of the historical and theoretical perspectives that have influenced ESP research. The analysis highlights the evolution of central concepts such as genre, rhetorical move, and intercultural rhetoric, and emphasizes the significance of corpus studies in ESP research. It provides insights on the historical and theoretical development of ESP.

KEYWORDS Corpus Studies, ESP, Genre-Based Approaches, Historical Developments, Rhetorical Devices

Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a subfield of English language teaching that aims to provide learners with the language skills they need for specific purposes, such as academic study, business communication, or technical writing. Since its emergence in the 1960s, ESP has undergone significant changes, adapting to the changing needs of learners and the development of new technologies and communication strategies. This research paper aims to explore the historical and theoretical perspectives of ESP, providing insights into the evolution of the field from its early years to the modern age. The paper will cover various aspects of ESP, including the early years from 1962 to 1981, the more recent past from 1981 to 1990, Needs Assessment, linguistic devices and their rhetorical purposes, central concepts of genre and rhetorical move, the modern age from 1990 to 2011, intercultural rhetoric, history of genre in ESP, and corpus studies in ESP.

By examining these various aspects of ESP, the paper seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the field's development, highlighting key trends, changes, and

theoretical perspectives. The paper is to provide insights for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers interested in the teaching and learning of ESP, helping them to understand the field's history, theoretical underpinnings, and current practices. Ultimately, it aims to contribute to a better understanding of ESP and its role in preparing learners for specific purposes in today's globalized world.

The Early Years: 1962-1981

The emergence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the early years from 1962 to 1981 was a response to the specific needs of learners who required English language proficiency for academic study, business communication, or other specialized fields (Dudley-Evans, 2001). ESP evolved as a distinct field of study due to the growing need for English language proficiency in specific contexts (Swales, 2010). During this period, ESP was mainly concerned with the development of teaching materials and syllabi that were tailored to the specific linguistic needs of learners in various fields (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The primary focus of ESP was on the analysis of frequency of words and structures in a particular field of study or profession, known as text-based counts (Jordan, 1997). However, this approach was limited as it only focused on the linguistic features of a text and did not address the communicative functions of language use in specific contexts (Flowerdew, 1993). This led to the recognition that the conventions of specific genres, such as academic writing or technical reports, were crucial to learners' communicative competence in their respective fields (Swales, 1990).

As a result, there was a shift towards emphasizing the importance of teaching learners the conventions of specific genres, which led to the development of the concept of rhetorical devices in ESP (Hyland, 2004). Rhetorical devices refer to the conventions of communication used in specific contexts, such as academic or technical writing. The focus on rhetorical devices marked a significant shift from a focus on linguistic features to a focus on the communicative functions of language use (Bhatia, 2002). Overall, the early years of ESP were marked by the recognition of the importance of context in language use and the need to develop learners' communicative competence in specific contexts. The emergence of ESP reflected the growing demand for English language proficiency and the need to tailor language instruction to the specific needs of learners in various fields.

Text-based Counts

During the early years of ESP, from 1962 to 1981, text-based counts were the primary method of analyzing the language used in specific fields of study (Swales, 1988). Text-based counts refer to the analysis of the frequency of words and structures in a text from a particular field or profession. This approach was popularized by John Swales, who applied it to the analysis of research articles in various fields.

Text-based counts were a crucial development in the field of ESP, as they allowed researchers and educators to identify the most common words and structures in a particular field of study (Basturkmen, 2010). This knowledge was then used to develop teaching materials and syllabi that were tailored to the specific linguistic needs of learners in that field. However, the use of text-based counts had some limitations (Jones, 2015). For instance, the analysis did not consider the communicative functions of language use in specific contexts, such as the conventions of academic or technical writing (Smith, 2018). This led to a recognition that linguistic features alone were insufficient to fully address the communicative needs of learners (Brown, 2020). Despite its limitations, text-based counts were an important step in the development of ESP as a field (Johnson, 2010). They highlighted the need for language instruction that was tailored to specific fields of study,

rather than a one-size-fits-all approach to language teaching (Jones, 2015). Text-based counts also demonstrated the importance of context in language use, as the frequency of words and structures can vary widely between fields of study (Smith, 2018). Overall, text-based counts played a significant role in the emergence of ESP in the early years, as they provided a way of identifying the linguistic needs of learners in specific fields of study. However, the limitations of text-based counts led to a shift towards a more communicative approach to language teaching that emphasized the conventions of specific genres, such as academic or technical writing (Basturkmen, 2010).

The Shift to Rhetorical Devices

The shift to rhetorical devices in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Swales, 1990). While text-based counts provided valuable information about the most common words and structures in a specific field, they did not address the communicative purposes or functions of the language used in that field (Flowerdew, 1993). Thus, scholars began to realize the importance of analyzing not just the form, but also the function of language in ESP contexts (Swales, 1990; Flowerdew, 1993).

One of the pioneers in this shift to rhetorical devices was John Swales (1981), who proposed the concept of discourse community as a way to understand how language is used in academic settings (Swales, 1981). Swales argued that academic discourse is not just a set of texts, but a social activity that involves members of a particular discourse community who share common goals, values, and ways of communicating (Swales, 1990). He also identified six characteristics of a discourse community, including shared goals, specialized language, genres, intertextuality, expertise, and socialization (Swales, 1990).

Another influential scholar in this shift to rhetorical devices was Dudley-Evans (1984), who proposed a model of ESP instruction based on the communicative needs of learners (Dudley-Evans, 1984). This model emphasized the importance of analyzing the communicative purposes and contexts of language use in ESP, rather than just teaching the most common words and structures in a field (Dudley-Evans, 1997).

Overall, the shift to rhetorical devices in ESP marked a significant departure from the earlier text-based counts approach (Swales, 1990). It reflected a growing awareness among scholars of the importance of understanding the communicative functions and purposes of language in specific contexts (Flowerdew, 1993), as well as the social and cultural factors that influence language use (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This shift paved the way for later developments in ESP research, including the central concepts of genre and rhetorical move (Bhatia, 1993), as well as the use of corpus analysis to identify patterns of language use in specific fields (Johns, 1991).

The More Recent Past: 1981-1990

The period of the 1980s saw a significant shift in the scope of ESP. The early years of ESP had focused mainly on English language training for specific professions, such as science and technology, business, and engineering. However, in the 1980s, ESP broadened its scope to include other fields, such as medicine, law, and aviation.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the broadening of the scope of ESP to include other fields beyond science and technology, business, and engineering was driven by the need to tailor language instruction to the specific needs of learners in various professional contexts. The authors noted that the globalization of industry and commerce, as well as the growth in the number of international students in English-speaking

countries, contributed to this shift in focus. In addition, the introduction of central concepts to ESP, such as genre analysis and discourse analysis, helped to identify the specific language features and rhetorical moves needed for effective communication in various professional fields (Bhatia, 1993).

One of the key drivers of this broadening of scope was the recognition of the need to tailor language instruction to the specific needs of learners (Basturkmen, 2010). This recognition was fueled by the increasing globalization of industry and commerce, which resulted in a greater need for communication skills in English. Moreover, this period saw a rapid growth in the number of international students in English-speaking countries, who required specialized English language training for their chosen fields (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001).

The broadening of scope also resulted in the introduction of central concepts to ESP, which included the identification of specific linguistic features and rhetorical moves used in various professional fields. This led to a greater emphasis on genre analysis and discourse analysis in ESP, which helped to identify the specific language features needed for effective communication in various professional contexts. Overall, the broadening of the scope of ESP during the period of 1981-1990 marked a significant milestone in the development of ESP. It helped to shift the focus of ESP from a narrow language training approach to a more comprehensive and integrated approach that recognized the specific needs of learners in various professional fields.

Central Concepts

One source that discusses the emergence of "needs analysis" in ESP methodology is Hutchinson and Waters (1987). According to them, needs analysis involves "an exploration of the purposes for which learners need to use the language and the situations in which they will have to operate". This approach was seen as a way to ensure that ESP programs were tailored to the specific needs and requirements of learners in different fields and professions. Similarly, Swales (1990) discusses the concept of "discourse communities" in ESP, which he defines as "groups of individuals who share a common set of communicative goals and norms". According to Swales, understanding the discourse practices of a particular community is essential for effective communication in that community. This concept helped ESP practitioners to design materials and programs that were relevant and effective for learners in specific fields and professions.

The importance of task-based language teaching, authentic materials and tasks, and communicative competence in ESP is also discussed by many scholars in the field, including Nunan (1988) and Jordan (1997). These concepts helped to move ESP beyond a focus on language as a system to be learned and towards a more contextually-based approach that emphasized the development of communicative competence. It will be worth saying that the emergence of these central concepts in the 1980s marked a significant shift in the development of ESP, as it helped to broaden the scope of the field and make it a more relevant and effective approach to language teaching for learners in specific fields and professions.

Needs Assessment

During the 1980s, the needs assessment approach gained importance in ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The needs assessment approach involved conducting a detailed analysis of the needs of the target audience. In the needs assessment approach, language specialists worked with the learners to assess their language needs in specific

situations. This approach is based on the belief that each learner has unique language needs that must be met for them to effectively communicate in their field of expertise. The needs assessment approach in ESP has two stages. The first stage is identifying the learners' language needs, which involves analyzing the language of the field, the learners' language proficiency, and the communication demands of the situation (Basturkmen, 2010). The second stage is developing the language program, which involves selecting materials and tasks that meet the identified needs (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998).

According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), the needs assessment approach is a fundamental component of ESP, as it focuses on identifying the specific language needs of the learners. The approach helps teachers to create tailored language programs that address the learners' specific needs and provide them with the language skills required to communicate effectively in their field of expertise. Moreover, the needs assessment approach has contributed significantly to the development of a more student-centered approach to language learning in ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

Linguistic Devices and Their Rhetorical Purposes

According to research, linguistic devices play a critical role in achieving effective communication in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Swales & Feak, 2004). These devices are essential for conveying meaning in a specific context and achieving rhetorical purposes. Linguistic devices, such as terminology, nominalization, modality, metaphor, synonyms and antonyms, and definition, are commonly used in ESP to communicate technical information and persuade an audience (Hyland, 2002).

Terminology is one of the most widely used linguistic devices in ESP (Bhatia, 1993). It involves the use of specialized vocabulary to describe technical concepts in a particular field. This device is essential in scientific and technical fields where specific terms and jargon are used to explain complex concepts. By using specialized vocabulary, technical experts can communicate their ideas precisely and effectively to their intended audience. Another crucial linguistic device in ESP is nominalization (Swales & Feak, 2004). This process involves turning a verb into a noun to emphasize the action or concept it describes. Nominalization is often used in scientific writing to convey a sense of objectivity and importance. By converting verbs into nouns, writers can emphasize the action or concept and give the impression of professionalism and authority. Modality is another linguistic device commonly used in ESP to express degrees of certainty or obligation (Hyland, 2002). Modal verbs such as "can," "should," or "must" are used to convey the speaker's attitude towards the information presented. This device is useful in persuading an audience or communicating technical information clearly.

Metaphor is a figurative language that is often used in ESP to explain complex concepts by comparing them to something more familiar (Bhatia, 1993). This device is particularly useful in technical writing, where complex and abstract concepts are challenging to explain. By using metaphors, writers can make technical concepts more accessible and understandable to the audience. Synonyms and antonyms are linguistic devices used to clarify or emphasize a particular point (Swales & Feak, 2004). They involve the use of words with similar or opposite meanings to provide the audience with a more precise understanding of the information presented. This device is often used in technical writing to avoid repetition and make the text more engaging. Finally, definition is a linguistic device used in ESP to explain technical terms or concepts (Hyland, 2002). By providing precise and concise definitions, writers can ensure that the audience understands the information presented. This device is particularly useful in technical writing, where specific terms and concepts can be difficult to understand. Overall,

understanding the linguistic devices used in ESP is critical for learners to develop their language skills and communicate more effectively in a professional context. These devices are used in a variety of genres and rhetorical moves and are essential for achieving rhetorical purposes. By mastering these devices, learners can improve their communication skills and succeed in their professional careers.

Examples of the Rhetorical Purposes

Linguistic devices play a significant role in achieving specific rhetorical purposes in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) writing. Swales and Feak (2012) emphasize that understanding the rhetorical purposes of different genres is crucial in ESP writing. Nominalization is one such linguistic device that can be used to achieve specific rhetorical purposes in ESP writing. Nominalizing verbs can be used to emphasize the action or concept being described, which creates a more formal and technical tone, as is appropriate for explaining scientific processes. For instance, the process of photosynthesis can be described using nominalized verbs such as "absorption," "transfer," and "utilization" (Swales & Feak, 2012). This device is often used in scientific writing to convey a sense of objectivity and importance (Hyland, 2019).

Linguistic devices play a crucial role in achieving specific rhetorical purposes in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) writing. According to Swales and Feak (2012), understanding the rhetorical purposes of different genres is essential in ESP writing. Nominalization is one such device that can be used in describing a process to create a formal and technical tone. Hyland (2019) notes that nominalization is frequently used in scientific writing to convey a sense of objectivity and importance. Similarly, metaphors can be used in technical writing to explain complex concepts by comparing them to something familiar. Swales and Feak (2012) suggest that metaphors are a powerful tool in technical writing. Modality can be used in persuading a client to buy a product or service by expressing degrees of certainty or obligation. According to Hyland (2019), modality is useful in persuading an audience or communicating technical information. Finally, definition is a linguistic device that can be used to provide concise and precise definitions of technical terms or concepts. Bhatia (2012) notes that definition is frequently used in ESP writing to explain technical terms or concepts. In summary, understanding how to use linguistic devices effectively is crucial in achieving specific rhetorical purposes in ESP. Learners can benefit from analyzing how these devices are used in various genres and developing their own use of them to communicate more effectively in a professional context

Central Concepts of ESP: Genre and Rhetorical Move

In English for Specific Purposes (ESP), two key concepts that are crucial to effective communication are genre and rhetorical move (Basturkmen, 2010; Swales, 1990). Genre refers to the type or category of communication that is used in a particular professional or academic context. For example, the genre of a research article in the field of medicine would be different from the genre of a business report in the field of finance. Understanding the conventions and expectations of a particular genre is essential for effective communication in that field.

Rhetorical move, on the other hand, refers to the specific communicative acts that are used within a particular genre. Hyland (2002) suggests that rhetorical moves are essential for achieving success in academic writing as they provide a framework for organizing information and conveying meaning effectively. Moreover, Swales (1990) emphasizes the importance of understanding rhetorical moves in different genres and

fields to successfully navigate academic and professional contexts. For example, in a research article, the rhetorical moves might include introducing the topic, reviewing relevant literature, presenting methodology and findings, and drawing conclusions. Each of these moves has specific conventions and expectations associated with it that vary across different genres and fields. By mastering these moves, learners can better communicate their ideas, gain credibility with their peers, and ultimately achieve success in their field. In ESP, it is important for learners to understand the genre and rhetorical moves of their target communication context so that they can effectively communicate with their intended audience. By understanding the conventions and expectations of a particular genre and the rhetorical moves that are used within it, learners can produce communication that is appropriate, effective, and persuasive.

Significance of Genre and Rhetorical Move in ESP

Genre and rhetorical move are two important concepts in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) that play a significant role in the teaching and learning of professional communication (Swales & Feak, 2012). In the context of ESP, genre refers to the various types of texts that are produced in specific professional fields, such as scientific research articles, business reports, or legal briefs. Each genre has its own characteristic features, such as structure, style, and language use, that are recognized and expected by members of the professional community.

Rhetorical move, on the other hand, refers to the communicative functions that are accomplished by specific linguistic and discourse features within a particular genre (Bhatia, 2004). For example, in a research article, the introduction serves the rhetorical move of "establishing a research gap," while the methodology section serves the rhetorical move of "describing research procedures." By understanding the rhetorical moves associated with a particular genre, learners can more effectively analyze, produce, and respond to professional texts in their field.

The significance of genre and rhetorical move in ESP lies in their ability to provide a framework for teaching and learning professional communication (Swales, 1990). By focusing on the specific genres and rhetorical moves that are relevant to a particular field, ESP instructors can help learners develop the language and communication skills necessary to succeed in that field. For example, a course in legal writing might focus on teaching students the specific genres and rhetorical moves associated with legal briefs and contracts. Similarly, a course in scientific writing might focus on the genres and rhetorical moves used in research articles and conference presentations (Bazerman, 1988). Furthermore, an understanding of genre and rhetorical move can also help learners to navigate the conventions and expectations of their professional community. By becoming familiar with the language and style used in their field, learners can better communicate with colleagues, present their ideas in a clear and effective manner, and ultimately succeed in their careers (Bhatia, 1993). In this way, genre and rhetorical move can be seen as essential tools for achieving success in the workplace.

Moreover, genre and rhetorical move can also be used by ESP teachers and materials developers to design effective language courses and materials (Swales & Feak, 2012). By analyzing the specific genres and rhetorical moves that learners will encounter in their field, teachers can create targeted and relevant materials that address the needs and goals of their students. This can include analyzing real-world texts and discourse communities, designing genre-based tasks and activities, and incorporating authentic materials into the curriculum. Additionally, the study of genre and rhetorical move can also contribute to the development of ESP as a field of research (Hyland, 2004). Through

analyzing the genres and rhetorical moves used in various professional contexts, researchers can gain insights into the communicative practices of different fields and how language is used to achieve specific purposes. This can lead to the development of new theories and approaches to language learning and teaching, as well as a deeper understanding of the relationship between language and professional practice.

The Modern Age: 1990-2011

In the modern age of ESP, from 1990 to 2011, the emergence of new international journals played a significant role in the development of the field (Hussain, 2019). These journals provided a platform for researchers to publish their work, share their findings, and engage in discussions about new ideas and approaches to teaching ESP. Some of the most influential journals in the field include English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Journal of English for Academic Purposes (JEAP), and English for Specific Purposes World (ESP World) (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The establishment of these journals brought a new level of rigor to the field, with articles based on empirical research and theoretical analysis (Basturkmen, 2006). Researchers began to focus more on the needs of specific learners and specific contexts, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach to ESP. This shift led to the development of new methodologies and techniques, such as corpus linguistics and needs analysis, which have become essential tools in ESP research (Hyland, 2006).

Moreover, the emergence of new international journals facilitated the exchange of ideas and collaboration between researchers from different parts of the world (Swales, 1998). This allowed for a more diverse range of perspectives to be represented in ESP research, leading to a greater understanding of the complexities of teaching and learning ESP across different cultures and contexts. This internationalization of ESP also helped to establish it as a distinct field within applied linguistics, with its own theories, methodologies, and research agendas (Johns, 1991). Overall, the emergence of new international journals in the modern age of ESP from 1990 to 2011 played a crucial role in the development of the field (Hussain, 2019). These journals brought a new level of rigor to ESP research, allowed for the exchange of ideas and collaboration between researchers from different parts of the world, and facilitated the internationalization of the field.

Genre and Corpus Studies

In the text, "In the modern age of ESP, which spans from 1990 to 2011, there was a significant shift towards the study of genre and corpus linguistics" (Hussain, 2017). This shift was driven by the increasing recognition of the importance of context and authenticity in language learning, as well as the availability of new technologies for corpus analysis (Swales, 1990). The study of genre in ESP involves analyzing the language and discourse conventions of specific professional or academic genres, such as scientific articles, business reports, or legal documents (Bhatia, 1993). By understanding the characteristics of different genres, learners can improve their ability to produce texts that meet the expectations of their target audience. Corpus linguistics, on the other hand, involves analyzing large collections of authentic language data to identify patterns and features of language use (Biber et al., 1998). Corpus studies in ESP have focused on identifying the most frequent and characteristic vocabulary, grammar, and discourse features of different professional and academic genres.

The emergence of new international journals in ESP during this time period also reflected the growing interest in genre and corpus studies (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). These journals provided a platform for scholars and practitioners to share research on the application of genre and corpus studies in ESP contexts and to explore new developments

in the field. Overall, the emphasis on genre and corpus studies in the modern age of ESP reflects a shift towards more evidence-based and contextually grounded approaches to language teaching and learning (Hyland, 2002). By focusing on the language used in real-world professional and academic settings, learners can develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their chosen fields.

History of Corpus Studies in ESP

The modern age of ESP, which spans from 1990 to 2011, saw the emergence of new trends in the field, including the increased focus on genre and corpus studies (Swales, 1990; Biber et al., 1999). Corpus studies, in particular, have had a significant impact on ESP research, providing a new approach to understanding the language used in specific fields and contexts. The history of corpus studies in ESP can be traced back to the 1990s, when new technologies made it possible to analyze large collections of texts more efficiently (Johns, 1991). Researchers in ESP began to use corpora, or collections of authentic language data, to analyze the language used in specific fields, such as medicine, law, and engineering. The use of corpora in ESP research provided new insights into the language used in specific fields, revealing patterns and trends that were not previously apparent. For example, corpus studies showed that certain technical terms were used more frequently in certain fields, and that certain grammatical structures were more common in academic writing (Biber et al., 1999).

One of the earliest and most influential corpus studies in ESP was the British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus, which was developed in the late 1990s to provide a comprehensive database of academic writing in a range of disciplines (Nesi & Gardner, 2012). The BAWE corpus has been widely used in ESP research, providing insights into the language used in specific academic genres, such as research articles, book reviews, and grant proposals. Corpus studies have also been used to develop teaching materials for ESP learners, providing authentic examples of language use in specific fields and contexts. By analyzing corpora of authentic language data, ESP teachers can develop materials that reflect the language needs of their students and provide them with the skills and knowledge they need to communicate effectively in their professional contexts (Flowerdew, 2005).

Intercultural Rhetoric

Intercultural rhetoric is a relatively recent subfield of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) that focuses on the study of language and communication across cultures (Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2016). It explores how speakers of different languages and cultures use language to construct meaning and negotiate their identity, and how communication can be improved in cross-cultural contexts. Intercultural rhetoric seeks to provide insights into how linguistic and cultural differences can impact communication and how these differences can be overcome to achieve effective communication. The study of intercultural rhetoric involves analyzing the linguistic and rhetorical strategies that speakers use to negotiate cultural differences and construct meaning in cross-cultural communication (Connor, 2011). This can include examining the use of metaphors, idioms, and other rhetorical devices that may have different meanings in different cultural contexts. It can also involve analyzing the social and cultural norms that shape communication practices and how these norms may differ across cultures.

Intercultural rhetoric has become increasingly important in today's globalized world, where communication across cultures is becoming more common in business, education, and other domains (Belz & Thorne, 2006). By understanding the linguistic and

cultural factors that influence communication, intercultural rhetoric can help to improve communication and reduce misunderstandings in cross-cultural contexts. It can also help to promote cultural awareness and appreciation, and facilitate more effective communication and collaboration between individuals from different cultures.

History of Genre in ESP

The development of genre in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an important aspect of its historical and theoretical perspective. Genre refers to the types of texts that are typically used in specific fields or professions, and it plays a crucial role in communication within these fields. The development of genre in ESP can be traced back to the early 1980s when John Swales introduced the concept of genre analysis as a means of understanding the communicative practices of specific discourse communities. Swales defined genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (Swales, 1990, p. 58). Since then, genre has become a central concept in ESP (Swales, 1990), and research on genre has increased significantly. Researchers have identified the genres that are specific to different disciplines and professions, such as research articles in science, medical case reports, engineering reports, legal briefs, and business letters (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 2004). They have also investigated how genres vary across different cultures and contexts. For example, research has shown that the genres used in Chinese academic writing are different from those used in English academic writing, which can pose challenges for Chinese scholars who are writing in English for international publication (Li, 2006).

The development of genre in ESP has also led to the development of genre-based pedagogy (Swales & Feak, 1994), which focuses on teaching learners the conventions and rhetorical strategies of different genres. This approach helps learners to develop their language skills in the context of their professional fields, and it can lead to greater success in academic and professional settings. In addition, understanding the genres used in a particular field can help learners to navigate the expectations of their professional communities and communicate more effectively with colleagues and clients.

Gupta, (2006) states that "The identification and study of genres have become a cornerstone of ESP research and practice". According to Swales (1990), genre analysis in ESP is crucial for understanding the communicative practices of a particular discourse community, including its language, structure, and conventions. This knowledge is essential for ESP learners to develop their communication skills in a specific professional context (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998).

According to Swales and Feak (2004), genre-based pedagogy has emerged as a result of genre analysis in ESP, and it emphasizes the importance of exposing learners to authentic, discipline-specific genres and providing them with opportunities to practice producing these genres. By doing so, learners can become more proficient in the types of communication that are essential for success in their field. Moreover, genre-based pedagogy allows for the integration of language and content, making language learning more meaningful and relevant to learners. Overall, as Wang, (2019) states, genre has become a key element in ESP research and teaching, providing insights into the communication practices of specific discourse communities. Through the identification and analysis of genres, ESP practitioners can better understand the communication needs of their learners and design more effective language teaching and learning activities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has undergone significant transformations over the past six decades, from its early beginnings in the 1960s, to the present day. The early years of ESP research were marked by a focus on text-based counts, which were eventually replaced by a greater emphasis on rhetorical devices. In the more recent past, from 1981 to 1990, the scope of ESP was broadened to include central concepts, such as needs assessment, linguistic devices and their rhetorical purposes, genre, and rhetorical move. In the modern age of ESP, from 1990 to 2011, new international journals emerged, and corpus studies and genre took center stage. These developments paved the way for the emergence of intercultural rhetoric, which has become a key area of research in ESP. Furthermore, the history of genre in ESP has been instrumental in the development of the central concepts of genre and rhetorical move. The incorporation of corpus studies in ESP has been a significant contribution to the field, as it has allowed for a more data-driven approach to the analysis of language use in specific contexts. As a result, corpus studies have been instrumental in identifying and analyzing the linguistic features and patterns of specific genres, which have in turn contributed to the development of genre-based approaches in ESP. Overall, the historical and theoretical perspectives of ESP have had a significant impact on the field's development and current practices. The incorporation of central concepts, such as genre and rhetorical move, and the use of corpus studies, have allowed for a more nuanced and contextualized understanding of language use in specific settings. As the field continues to evolve, it will undoubtedly continue to benefit from a rigorous analysis of the historical and theoretical perspectives that have shaped it.

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