

# English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Vocational Education under New Education Policy (NEP) 2020

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## ABSTRACT

A paradigm change has occurred in India as a result of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which incorporates vocational education into both traditional schooling and higher education in order to cultivate a workforce that is both skilled and prepared for employment. Additionally, the demand for communication skills that are relevant to the industry has expanded, which has resulted in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) becoming an essential educational tool. This is because vocational training is becoming an essential component. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the incorporation of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), more specifically English for Vocational Purposes (EVP), into the National English Language Plan 2020 (NEP 2020) framework. The paper focuses on the role that ESP plays in bridging the gap between general English proficiency and the specialized discourse, vocabulary, and practical communication tasks that are required in industries such as healthcare, technology, hospitality, and engineering. Under NEP 2020, vocational education emphasizes experiential learning, including "bagless" days, internships with local industry, and alignment with the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF). As a consequence of this, the design of ESP curricula is moving away from the old, grammar-centered methodology and toward methodological approaches that are task-oriented and need-based. The most important findings suggest that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) enhances the employability of students by providing them with the skills to read technical manuals, participate in client service simulations, and comprehend workplace jargon.

## Introduction

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a transformative shift in India's educational landscape by integrating vocational education into mainstream learning from an early age to boost employability, life skills, and industry readiness. A crucial but often overlooked dimension of this transformation is the role of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) — tailored English language instruction designed to meet learners' specific professional communication needs. It is a radical movement in the Indian education system that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents. The goal of this policy is to move away from rote learning and toward skill-based, holistic education. The integration of vocational education with mainstream education is one of the primary objectives of this strategy. The policy aims to ensure that by the year 2025, at least fifty percent of students enrolled in the school and higher education systems will have the opportunity to participate in vocational training. Within the context of this framework, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has emerged as an essential component to improve the employability and functional communication skills of students, particularly in an economy that is becoming increasingly international.

A dearth of trained English as a Second Language (ESP) teachers, a scarcity of domain-specific teaching resources, and the requirement to align language training with regional language policy are some of the hurdles that must be overcome in order to put effective implementation into action. This article suggests that in order to make the most of potential, there should be strong collaboration between the industry and academia, constant professional development for educators, and the implementation of digital tools and artificial intelligence to give context-specific language training. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) has highlighted ESP as a crucial enabler in achieving its

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objective of developing a workforce that is globally competitive and self-sufficient. This will be accomplished by changing vocational education from a secondary option into a mainstream one.

### ESP Matters in Vocational Education:

It is generally acknowledged that English is the lingua franca of the world when it comes to professional communication, technology, and commercial negotiations. One of the most important employability skills is the ability to utilize English successfully for specific activities in a variety of vocational contexts, including tourism, healthcare, engineering, hospitality, customer service, and digital industries. Writing reports, communicating with clients, and interpreting technical manuals are all examples of work that require English proficiency. By concentrating on language that is utilized in real-world professional circumstances that are relevant to the learner's vocation, as opposed to focusing on abstract grammar and literature, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is distinct from general English.

- **Contextualized Learning:** The curriculum for English for certain Purposes (ESP) is supposed to be tailored to certain professions, such as healthcare, tourism, and manufacturing, with an emphasis on practical and communication skills rather than general proficiency competency.
- **Employability Enhancement:** Because the National Employment Policy 2020 places an emphasis on integrating vocational skills with industry needs, specialized English is essential for working in situations that are increasingly globalized.
- **Teacher Training Challenges:** One of the most significant challenges is the lack of educators who are prepared to teach technical English. This has resulted in the requirement for improved capacity building as well as specific assessments that are based on performance.
- **Methodological Shift:** The instruction makes use of authentic materials such as technical manuals, workplace scenarios, and simulations, which leads to an increase in the level of involvement and practical skills among the students.

### NEP 2020: A Pro-Vocational Shift:

For the purpose of skill development in India, NEP 2020 places vocational education at the center of the process. Through the seamless integration of secondary education and higher education, it is envisioned that by the year 2025, at least fifty percent of students will have had the opportunity to participate in vocational training. Elective courses in vocational subjects will be made available, and the emphasis will be placed on experiential, hands-on learning opportunities, such as internships and partnerships with other industries.

The policy proposes incorporating employability skills into vocational programs, including communication, self-management, information and communication technology (ICT), and entrepreneurial abilities. This is the most essential recommendation for language education. Communicating abilities in this context automatically include the ability to communicate in English professionally.

### ESP in the NEP 2020 Context

1. **From General English to ESP:** In Indian education, the traditional method of teaching English places a significant emphasis on general grammar, reading, and literature, but it does not clearly link language instruction with specific occupational requirements. ESP, on the other hand, offers contextualized English training for learners who are transitioning into skill-oriented areas. For example, English for tourism guides, English for healthcare workers, and English for IT professionals are all examples of contextualized English training. Learners are not only prepared to pass tests, but also to perform effectively in workplace communication as a result of this preparation.
2. **Alignment with Employability Skills Mandate:** Communication proficiency is emphasized as a major outcome in the employability skills modules that are introduced via vocational education in the National Employment Program (NEP). ESP courses are perfectly aligned with this objective, providing students with the language tools that are required for the following: writing emails, reports, and documentation that is specific to their profession; conversational skills for customer interactions and client engagements; comprehension of technical texts, manuals, and safety instructions; oral presentations, negotiations, and workplace collaborations; and by aligning vocational training with ESP instruction, learners are able to bridge the gap between technical skills and professional communication.

### Curriculum Design: Integrating ESP

In order for ESP in vocational education to be effective, it should be purpose-driven and modular, with components in the following categories: Assessing the individual language requirements of each occupation is part of the needs analysis. Real activities, such as creating a service invoice in the hospitality industry or participating in role-plays for customer service, are examples of task-based units. Terminology that is common to particular sectors is referred to as industry vocabulary and registers. Both face-to-face and telephonic communication tactics are discussed in this section of "Listening and Speaking for the Workplace." Understanding standard operating procedures (SOPs), safety standards, and technical documentation by reading and writing for professional contexts. Various Methods of Evaluation: Presentations and simulated interviews are examples of performance-based evaluations. By incorporating ESP into practical curriculum in such a way, it is ensured that it is not an additional component but rather a seamless whole.

### Implementation Challenges and Strategies:

#### Challenges:

For English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in vocational education to be effective, it should be purpose-driven and modular, with components falling into the following categories: As part of the needs analysis, it is necessary to evaluate the specific language requirements that are associated with each occupation. Task-based units are exemplified by real-world tasks, such as the creation of a service invoice in the hospitality industry or the participation in role-playing exercises for customer service. Industry vocabulary and registers are terms that are used to describe various types of terminology that are utilized in specific industries. One of the topics covered in this section of "Listening and Speaking for the Workplace" is the use of communication strategies that use both face-to-face and telephone interactions. By reading and writing for professional contexts, one can acquire an understanding of standard operating procedures (SOPs), safety regulations, and technical documents. Several Different Approaches to Evaluation: It is possible to conduct performance-based evaluations through activities such as presentations and simulated interviews. The incorporation of ESP into practical curriculum in such a manner ensures that it is not a separate component but rather a seamless totality. This is accomplished by ensuring that it is seamless.

#### Strategies:

A partnership with the business sector to establish communication standards and provide students with opportunities to experience real-world job situations. The utilization of technology and blended learning in order to deliver ESP education that is both adaptable and interesting (for example, language laboratories and online simulations). Continuous professional development for vocational trainers and English for Speakers of Other Languages instructors in order to keep up with the ever-changing discourse in the workplace.

In the National Education Policy 2020, the faults of the current education system are acknowledged, and the goal is to make the system more inclusive and aspirational. With the goal of lowering the percentage of students who drop out of school, it proposes the incorporation of vocational education within the structure of the current school and higher education system. Putting more of a focus on vocational education is a step in the right direction. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential to close the skills gap. Nevertheless, this should not be restricted to the official sector, which accounts for fewer than nine percent of the people who are employed. It is imperative that the mission of skilling be expanded to include the enormous informal sector as well. With the inclusion of vocational education in mainstream schooling systems, the National Education Program (NEP) intends to provide vocational education to at least fifty percent of the students who are enrolled in classes six and higher. The need to raise awareness and alter people's perceptions toward vocational education is another barrier that must be overcome. The incorporation of this into the standard educational system will help instill in young students the importance of values such as the ethics of caring and the dignity of labor. It is necessary for this to be accompanied by changes in the labor market that are conducive to the creation of employment possibilities in the fields that are associated with these professions. In addition, the pandemic has made it necessary for services related to healthcare to have a workforce that is highly skilled. In a similar vein, India's aim of becoming self-sufficient can be aided by the presence of a skilled labor force. Consequently, in order to realize the benefits of our demographic dividend over the long term, it is essential to implement policies such as universal vocational education and skill development.

### Conclusion:

With the implementation of NEP 2020, vocational education is no longer considered a supplementary component; rather, it is incorporated into both traditional schools and higher education with the specific intention of preparing students for the workforce. Because it enables learners to communicate within specific professional contexts, ESP plays a significant role in this change. This is a skill that is just as important as technical proficiency itself. Indian

vocational education has the potential to really prepare students for the global workplace of the 21st century if it rethinks language teaching through the perspective of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESP). For the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) to achieve its goal of developing a competent workforce, it is vital that ESP be incorporated into vocational education. It is possible for India to restructure its vocational sector, improve employability, and align itself with the requirements of the 21st-century labor market if it moves away from a "one-size-fits-all" style of English instruction and instead adopts a domain-specific approach. According to the findings of this study, the National instruction Policy 2020 offers a promising foundation for enhancing the quality of technical English instruction currently available in India. However, there are significant challenges that must be overcome in order to successfully implement this policy. This is especially true in government polytechnics that are situated in areas such as the North Coastal Districts of Andhra Pradesh. Currently, there is a lack of synchronization between the curriculum that is being used and the multidisciplinary and practical learning goals that have been established by the National Education Policy (NEP). This is evidence that there is a notable gap between the policy objectives and the actual situation on the ground. In response to the growing demand for efficient communication in the global technical workforce, the findings highlight the significance of a curriculum that integrates practical language skills and applications that are relevant to the real world. In addition, the report highlights crucial areas that require attention, such as improving teacher training, boosting the availability of digital resources, and developing instructional materials that are targeted to certain locations in order to address inequalities that are peculiar to those regions. In order to overcome these challenges, it is necessary for all of the relevant stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, and institutions, to work together in order to devise a system of teaching technical English that is both more complete and more effective. It is possible for educational institutions to improve students' language abilities by placing an emphasis on these areas, thereby preparing students for employment opportunities on a national and international scale. This corresponds with the purpose of the National Education Policy 2020, which is to provide education that is both comprehensive and career-oriented.

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