

1.8 English language teaching materials for adult courses: ESP approach or ESL approach?

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ABSTRACT

As English is taught as a compulsory subject in all the universities in Sri Lanka, attention is paid to the materials used in English courses. It is observed that some universities use general English language teaching materials (ESL materials) and some use specific English language teaching materials (ESP materials) which are produced based on different fields. Scholars such as Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters are strong believers of teaching ESP who suggest developing the English curriculum based on different fields of study.

The English language teaching materials used at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University are based on general English (ESL) not ESP. Hence this paper aims at discussing in detail the effectiveness, appropriateness and relevance of using general English language teaching materials for the Officer Cadets who are reading for degrees in various streams through the medium of English. The paper is based on a research carried out at the University in which students of all the streams participated in analysing the presently used English language teaching materials. The paper will further discuss the significance and sufficiency of these materials.