

Strategies for Motivating ESP Learners: Best Practices of an 'English Communication Skills' Course

Motivációs stratégiák ESP nyelvoktatásban:

A 'Kommunikációs készségfejlesztés angol nyelven' tárgy gyakorlati módszerei

A megfelelő motivációs stratégia és a legalkalmasabbnak ítélt oktatási módszertan kiválasztása folyamatos kihívás elé állítja az angol nyelvet felsőoktatásban tanító oktatót, mivel az ESP (English for Specific Purposes) keretein belül számos tárgyat oktatunk a hallgatóknak attól függően, hogy mely szak vagy szakirány hallgatói, de függetlenül attól, hogy milyen nyelvi kompetenciával rendelkeznek. Mivel az ESP-kurzusokat folytató hallgatói csoportok és a csoportokon belül a hallgatók is eltérő motivációs és nyelvtudásbeli háttérrel, valamint előképzettséggel rendelkeznek, a kurzusok elindítása a hallgatói és az oktatói preferenciák és elvárások egyeztetésével és közös célok kitűzésével kezdődik.

Jelen tanulmány azokat a kihívásokat és a kihívásokra adott megoldásokat ismerteti, amelyek a 'Kommunikációs készségfejlesztés angol nyelven' tárgy oktatása során merültek fel. Ez a tanulmány a BGF KKK-n levelező képzésben részt vevő Nemzetközi tanulmányok szakos hallgatók harmadik féléves ESP oktatására koncentrál. A tárgy oktatása számos kihívást jelentett módszertani szempontból, kezdve azzal, hogy kötelező tárgy lévén mind a tárgy iránt elkötelezett, mind a kevésbé motivált hallgatók is részt vettek a képzésben. A hallgatók motiváltsága szoros összefüggésben állt azzal, hogy milyen céllal indultak neki a Nemzetközi tanulmányok szak teljesítésének, valamint hogy milyen előzetes tudással rendelkeztek az adott ESP témáról. További nehézséget jelentett az is, hogy nyelvi kompetencia szempontjából összetett csoportnak számított, hiszen A2 és C1 szintű nyelvtudással rendelkező hallgatók is a csoport tagjai voltak.

Ebben a tanulmányban azokat a gyakorlati megoldásokat mutatom be, amelyek hasznosnak bizonyultak a hallgatók motivációs szintjének növelésében és nyelvi kompetenciájuk fejlesztésében. A fő célom az volt, hogy olyan oktatási és tanulási környezetet teremtsék, mely a hallgatóközpontú szemléletmódon alapul és megfelelően illeszkedik a 21. századi hallgatói igényekhez. A megoldásokhoz az elméleti kiindulópontot a Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) programban meghatározott készségfejlesztés, a számítógéppel támogatott nyelvtanulás és a célkitűzés-elmélet nyújtotta.

Kulcsszavak: ESP, 4C skills, self-directed learner, blended learning, flipped teaching, Web 2.0, goal-setting model

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Introduction

The recent paper deals with the challenges the ‘English Communication Skills’ course provided that was offered for correspondence course students with International Studies major². This is an obligatory course for BA correspondence course students through four semesters. The first two semesters concentrate on developing major soft skills in communication (presentation techniques and skills; negotiation techniques and skills), while the second two semesters focus on teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) since English proficiency is developed using the vocabulary and themes of international diplomacy. This choice of ESP is grounded in the fact that the aim of the International Studies BA course is to educate experts who can later in their career handle the challenges that the European integration offers either in Hungary or abroad. This paper shows the difficulties that I faced while teaching the first semester of this ESP course and the solutions that I used to overcome the obstacles. My aim at the beginning of the course was to create group cohesion which entailed selecting a common denominator for the group, i.e. a common goal to be reached, and a common need of the learners to be satisfied, which could contribute to the students’ active participation in the course. Although the group contained only a small number of students (11 students), it turned out to be difficult to identify a common denominator.

Challenges in Group Cohesion

Besides dealing with the difficulty that this course is mandatory – since a voluntary course per se weeds out the demotivated students –, other hindrances were caused by the mere fact that it was a multilevel class. The language proficiency of the students ranged from A2 to C1, i.e. from elementary to upper-intermediate. It meant that the students needed different speeds to acquire the same content knowledge and it was also evident that C1 students were more prone to speak, while the other students with a lower level of English language knowledge subsided into silence. Another obstacle in identifying a common goal for the students was caused by the fact that the students had diverse prior knowledge of the subjects to be discussed concerning global political, economic and military issues. This difference is related to their principal motivation in applying for the International Relations BA course, which ranges from the mere need to acquire a degree to working in the field of international diplomacy.

2 I regard it essential to mention that only the course offered to correspondence course students is examined since there can be basic differences identified between full-time and correspondence course students in many areas (language knowledge, motivation, world-view, time span, etc.) and my research did not include full-time students.

For an ESP teacher working in Hungarian higher education, it is also important to bear in mind the language exam requirements that the students have to comply with in order to gain their degree. A major dilemma for Hungarian higher education policymakers is how to help students to acquire their degrees who could not pass the relevant language exams by the due date. Therefore Hungarian ESP teachers should also concentrate on preparing their students for the relevant language exam. Concerning the language exam requirement, I encountered some other challenges during the course, namely that half of the group was eager to prepare for the language exam since they still lacked the general English language exam certificate meanwhile the other half was far from being interested in it since they had already passed this language exam. Preparing for the language exam was a crucial issue since the course aimed at deepening the knowledge in ESP, i.e. the English of International Diplomacy, but the language exam requirement was a B2 general English language exam.

In this paper my intention is to reveal the best practices that have proven to be useful during this challenging course and that are linked to enhancing the motivation of the students in order that they participate actively in the course. As for motivation, I agree with Csizér (2009) that the efficiency of acquiring a second language depends on the level of students' motivation and how much effort they put into acquiring a second language.

Theoretical background

The choice of methodology used in the college classrooms to teach ESP offers a never-ending challenge to teachers since both the subjects offered to students with different majors and the language knowledge of the students in the given class confine the possibilities available. Moreover, the expectations of the students and the teacher might diverge, i.e. how both sides anticipate the progress from class to class and what they regard to be the final outcome of the course.

In finding the best method of teaching, my intention was to use a learner-centred approach. As Hutchinson (1987: 3) claims ESP should fundamentally be based on designing courses to meet the needs of the learners. At the onset of ESP courses in the 1970s the underlying idea was to create courses “in which relevance to the learners’ needs and interests was paramount” since learners had different needs and interests “which would have an important influence on their motivation to learn and therefore on the effectiveness of their learning” (Hutchinson 1987: 8). Klímová (2007: 976) also claims that focusing on learners’ needs and offering the students material that is relevant to them are the main factors that motivate students in ESP learning.

Since my aim was to focus on the needs of all learners in the group although these needs were quite diverse, and to motivate the students to participate actively in the course in order that their individual needs be satisfied, first

I had to identify the major needs of the students in the 21st century. On the basis of recent trends in education and ESP teaching, I decided to concentrate on developing the 4C skills of the students and also to put the emphasis on computer-based tasks.

As for the 4C skills, it is the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Program (P21³) that has identified the most important skills for 21st century students and educators alike. Beside the basic 3Rs that education has commonly focused on (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic), research has called the attention for developing the 4C skills: critical thinking and problem-solving; communication and collaboration; and creativity and innovation. The findings were published in the book entitled *21st Century Skills*, in which Trilling and Fadel grouped the skills into three categories: learning and innovation skills (including the 4Cs), life and career skills and digital literacy skills. On the basis of the P21 research findings, Barack Obama emphasised the importance of the development of the 4C skills at schools:

You'll need the knowledge and *problem-solving skills* you learn in science and math to cure diseases like cancer and AIDS, and to develop new energy technologies and protect our environment. You'll need the insights and *critical thinking skills* you gain in history and social studies to fight poverty and homelessness, crime and discrimination, and make our nation more fair and more free. You'll need the *creativity* and ingenuity you develop in all your classes to build new companies that will create new jobs and boost our economy.⁴

In this speech Obama emphasised that one of the main tasks of educators is equipping students with real-life skills such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills and creativity.

The aim of enhancing the role of teachers in preparing the students for the 4C skills has later trickled down into ESP teaching. During a 2014 Iatefl BESIG event John Hughes, ESP teacher trainer and course book writer remarked that there is a “demand for job applicants with critical thinking skills” and this demand “is also reflected in the course descriptions of many MBA and university-based business programmes which list the development of critical thinking as a core objective”⁵. It is therefore essential for educators in the 21st century to get acquainted

3 www.p21.org.

4 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/MediaResources/PreparedSchoolRemarks/>.

5 <http://elteachertrainer.com/2014/12/16/practical-ideas-for-the-business-english-classroom-part-one-developing-critical-thinking/>.

with the notion of critical thinking and how to apply it in the classroom and in their career and life as well.

Similarly to enhancing the 4C skills, it is also of major importance to develop the digital literacy skills of students. This general educational purpose of the P21 Program almost simultaneously appeared in ESP teaching. Chapelle (2001:2, quoted in Thomas 2010: 22) argued that “anyone concerned with second language teaching and learning in the 21st century needs to grasp the nature of the unique technology-mediated tasks learners can engage in for language acquisition”. Chapelle called for the importance to merge computer assisted-language learning (CALL) and task-based learning (TBL) in second language (L2) acquisition.

Beside concentrating on teaching the relevant 21st century skills to the students with the help of computer-based tasks, research also revealed the importance of setting a common goal for the students as a group. According to Locke and Latham (Bakacsi 1998: 102–104; Fodor 2007: 247–250), there is a positive relationship between clearly identified goals and performance since people who pursue specific goals outperform people without any goals to achieve. This goal-setting model of motivation proved to be effective for at least four reasons:

1. *Choice*: goals narrow our attention and direct efforts to goal-relevant activities
2. *Effort*: one may work more intensely towards the goal
3. *Persistence*: someone becomes more likely to work through setbacks if pursuing a goal
4. *Cognition*: goals can lead individuals to develop and change their behavior

Beside the fact that goals enhance the performance of either the students or the employees in a work setting, another important element of the goal-setting model is that these goals can either be created by the individual or the goals can be set by others and accepted by the individual. Therefore the goal-setting model incorporates both intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors, the synergy of which could lead to high performance.

The extrinsic motivating factor for the group could have been the need to pass the ESP language exam in International Relations, but the requirement being only a general language exam, this potential common goal had to be scrapped. The other possibility was to enhance the intrinsic motivation of the students by allowing them to practice the 21st century skills that are likely to be useful for them all through their lives. My aim was to facilitate the students to become self-directed learners, individual learners who can pick from the course what is relevant to their own needs and improve their knowledge in the area where they have deficiencies.

Finally, I have settled upon using the following learner-centred methods to strengthen the intrinsic motivation in each of the students in this diverse group and to offer a course that satisfies the needs of the students and

provide them with relevant material: self-study, blended learning, flipped teaching, Web 2.0 tools and content-based teaching. In the following sections of this paper I will elaborate on each of these methods and explain the reasons why I have found them useful in motivating ESP students.

Method

In order to analyse the students' needs and to compare these needs to the requirements of the course, I have created an online questionnaire that each of the students was asked to fill in. Although the number of the respondents was fewer than the number of the students in the class, I could embark upon identifying the methodology that would probably best suit the needs of this group of students.

The first group of questions inquired about the language knowledge of the students. It turned out that 50% of the respondents had been studying English for more than 10 years, while 33% between 8-10 years and 17% between 1-3 years. The respondents believed that the level of their language knowledge was C1 (33,33%), B2 (33,33%) and B1(33,33%) respectively. These answers clearly showed that there was a dividing line between elementary and upper-intermediate students and also that there was an intention on the part of the students to assess their language proficiency to be around B2 level, which was the benchmark level, although during the course it became evident that only a couple of years of English language studies resulted in rather an A2 knowledge. As for the question concerning what fields the students thought they needed further practice in, most of them (60%) opted for vocabulary building to enhance their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Interestingly, practising specifically grammar exercises was far less favoured (20%) by the students.

The second group of questions inquired about the language exam certificates of the students. It was revealed that 50% of the students already passed the required language exam and it was the other 50% of the students that needed further help in order that they acquire the language knowledge and the relevant practice in the exact exam task types to be able to pass the B2 general language exam. During the course it became evident that selecting the exact language exam was also of crucial importance since the successful preparation to any of the language exams requires gaining a hands-on knowledge in the exam tasks specific to that language exam. Since Budapest Business School (BBS) offers business language exams and is not specialised in general language exams, we had to choose a language exam that fits the needs of the students in question.

The students who had already passed a B2 language exam all stated that they had passed the general language exam. None of the students had a language exam in international relations that the course intended to prepare

them for. Still, 50% of the students were interested in taking a language exam in international relations and they (33,33%) were ready to take this exam at BBS if the language exam center offered this opportunity. This was the first instance that I could spot a common denominator for the group since an interest in taking the ESP language exam in international relations could have been aroused because most of the students were not averse to learning about world politics and none of the students had this type of language exam certificate. The one and only factor that hindered us was the requirement that stipulated that students had to possess a general language exam to acquire their degree and no other type of language exam was acceptable.

The online questionnaire was later followed by an in-class, off-line one in which I inquired about the students' choice of studying at this BA programme. I was interested in their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to study International Relations, therefore, I asked them to write down the main reasons for studying at BBS. On the basis of their answers, I could identify three more or less separate motivating factors. For some students the main motivation was to obtain a degree and the International Relations programme seemed the most appropriate one for their purposes since it was not as subjective as a humanity course and not as abstract as studying economics. For other students the main motivating factor was to be generally better acquainted with world affairs, to learn about recent trends in and the hot issues of world politics. Finally, there were some students who were considering working in the field of international relations or international diplomacy, let it be sports diplomacy, military diplomacy or working for EU institutions.

As a result, this needs analysis was really useful because it clearly demonstrated the complexity of the students' needs: they had diverse language knowledge, diverse language exam needs, diverse knowledge in world politics, and diverse motivating factors in taking the course. My aim was to offer a learning environment for the students in which each of them could improve their language and content knowledge and find the course useful and relevant for their individual purposes.

Results and Discussions

Self-study

Self-study is identified by Klímová (2007: 978, quoted Badger) as one of the most important learning methods. Besides being a type of learning, more importantly it is identified as being a major life and career skill for 21st century learners by the P21 project. According to the P21 project, being a self-directed learner means that the student can:

- go beyond the basic mastery of curriculum to explore and expand his or her own learning and opportunities to gain expertise
- demonstrate initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level
- demonstrate commitment to learning as a lifelong process (LLL)
- reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress.

Self-study is, therefore, essential for the students to master the skills and knowledge in which they already have a certain level of knowledge and it allows the students to pick from the course offered whatever interests them and contributes to the improvement of their own knowledge.

Self-study is also part of the lifelong learning process that the ever-changing, globalised world forces upon us. The students that participate in the correspondence course of BBS CIMB have already taken the first steps in the LLL process since they have decided to continue their studies beside working. It is for them a self-motivated and voluntary decision for personal or professional reasons to acquire further knowledge, which is the essence of LLL.

Self-study is supported by the emergence of ICT technology that facilitates the expansion of the learning environment, which means that most of the learning process can be realized outside the classroom with the help of the teachers who rather take up the role of tutors. Virtual learning environments and Web 2.0 tools allow the students to take part in an informal, just-in-time and day-to-day learning process. In the following parts of the paper I will demonstrate how the improvement of ICT technology and the appearance of new teaching methods linked to it enable self-study.

Blended Learning

Blended learning can be defined as a course that combines traditional face-to-face learning and online learning. According to more precise definitions, blended learning means that 30–80% of the course content is delivered online (Bart 2014: 2). A blended course entails regular meetings between the teacher and the students in a classroom setting but preparation for the class activities and after-class practice of the material is done individually by the students with the help of online material.

The goal of blended learning is to facilitate the individual learning of the students who can therefore deepen their previous knowledge of the subject and acquire new material that they can build into their own worldview. Blended learning is also useful because the students can spend as much time as they really need for preparation depending on their level of expertise, and they can use up time whenever it is suitable for them, which means that

the students can proceed with their studies at their own pace. Blended learning therefore makes it possible for the students to use in-class time for speaking activities, to discuss the topic in question, to share their opinions with the others and generate more thought on the topic and it also makes it possible for the teacher to concentrate on practising with the students the 21st century skills: communication skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills.

During the Communication Skills course we used the Coospace virtual learning environment for the purpose of blended learning. The prescribed material was uploaded at least a week before the class, e. g. video extracts with tasksheets, content-based and language-based questions concerning the main topic to be discussed, and vocabulary-building exercises for authentic news pieces, and the students were asked to prepare for the class by doing the exercises and collecting more material on the topic to be discussed. In-class time was devoted to P2P (peer-to-peer) discussion of the topic and to manage the difficulties the students had come across during preparation. Since the topic and material was not new for the students during the classes and they had the possibility to prepare beforehand, they could participate more actively during the class.

Flipped Teaching

Flipped teaching is in close connection with blended learning and some scholars even identify flipped teaching as a part of blended learning. The flipped or inverted classroom primarily means that the traditional in-class and out-of-class activities are reversed, i.e. what traditionally happened within the classroom turns to be an out-of-class activity and what used to be an out-of-class activity becomes the major part of the classroom activities. In practice it means that students are not exposed to the new material within the classroom with the teacher being the frontal instructor but they need to read, listen to or gather the required information about the topic before the class as an out-of-class activity. So direct instruction takes place outside the classroom with the teacher being only the facilitator who also leaves ample room for the students to add any further material or previous knowledge to the topic in question.

The aim of flipped teaching is to move from the teacher-centred realm of the classroom towards a more learner-centred direction. The students will be more confident in the way how they approach the study material since they have also taken part in 'creating' the material to be studied. Flipped teaching is also an adequate pedagogical model for multilevel classes because it allows for differentiated learning in classes of all sizes because students can preview and review the study material at their own pace and at the time that is most suitable for them. Class time then can be used to engage the students in skill-developing activities, like problem-solving, critical thinking and debating.

In my class flipped teaching was implemented in the way that the prescribed material (prescribed coursebook material, relevant articles and videos) were uploaded onto Coospace and after reading, listening to and watching these materials the students had to fill out tasksheets prepared in advance. Moreover, students were asked to collect any further material on the topic and form their own opinion on the subject matter based on factual evidence.

Web 2.0

The emergence of ICT tools made it possible that the world wide web is not only used in the 21st century to gather static information about a certain topic but it also allows interactivity in the form of various platforms where collaboration of the internet users is made possible. The younger generation (Generation Z) that was born into the world of internet might find Web 2.0 tools the prime means for building rapport, networking and collaborating with the peers, therefore the teachers who might belong to an earlier generation (mainly Generation X) have to adapt to the new opportunities to serve the needs of the students.

During the class we used mainly two Web 2.0 tools: Google Drive and Quizlet. Both of these tools proved to be useful since they eased communication and collaboration between the teacher and the students and also between the students who rarely met one another face-to-face and who worked far from one another during the weekdays. These Web 2.0 tools allowed for the students and the teacher to be in the same virtual classroom although they were many miles apart in reality.

Google Drive was basically used for the presentation assignment. I uploaded a table onto Google Drive and shared it with the students informing them about the possible presentation topics and the possible dates for the presentation. The students had freedom in choosing the topic that best fit their interest and they could also decide on the time of the presentation. They could write their names and the date next to the presentation topic in the table, which made it evident which topics were still available for the other students. The students had the possibility to hold the presentations in pairs and collaboration between the students was made much easier with the help of Google Drive where they could brainstorm together, prepare their notes together and share their slides.

Quizlet is a Web 2.0 application that was designed to help the memorisation of the newly-learned vocabulary. Since the needs analysis revealed that the students were mainly interested in learning new vocabulary, I uploaded the English-Hungarian pairs of the words for each topic, as well as the expressions and common collocations that were to be studied. The students themselves could add new pairs to this list by writing them up and sending them to me through Coospace. Quizlet allows the memorisation of the vocabulary through various tasks and it is even

possible for the students to compete with one another. It turned out that the students performed much better in acquiring the new vocabulary through Quizlet.

Content-based Teaching

ESP was primarily devised to teach the relevant content to the students through the medium of English. In ESP the subject matter is the vehicle for second language learning. Content-based teaching was mainly promoted by the research of Brinton and Snow (2003) who identified various benefits for the students: the learners are exposed to a large amount of language through the content material; the language is straightaway provided in a context; the content concerns real-life events; and the learners gain hands-on knowledge and experience.

Content-based teaching is also a major element of the communicative classroom since talking about the content inspires the students to use the language to convey their message to their peers.

The use of content-based teaching and learning permeated my whole English Communication Skills course since the majority of the activities circled around the content to be discussed. Besides the above mentioned tasks of the students' preparing before the class from the topic, through the in-class activities of problem-solving and critical thinking to holding presentations on various subtopics, a longer written task also fostered content-based learning. All of these tasks were helped by the vocabulary-building exercises that were based on authentic news pieces and that could be memorised by using Quizlet.

The longer written assignment of the students was linked to their presentations and entailed writing a two-page essay about the international relations of Hungary to any country that is of major importance nowadays concerning world issues.

Language Exam Requirements

Although the above solutions to enhance intrinsic motivation proved to be of immense value, my conviction is that identifying a common goal in the form of preparing for an ESP language exam, could also have been a successful motivating factor. Creating group cohesion is probably best achieved with the combination of enhancing intrinsic motivation (with the help of the above mentioned methodological tools) and offering extrinsic motivating factors in the form of setting up goals that can be accepted by all members of the group. In line with the goal-setting model of motivation, this externally-formulated goal might be modifying the language certificate requirements from a general towards an ESP one, which for students of International Relations major could be the International Relations language exam.

It was an interesting coincidence in time that while I was writing this paper, a new regulation came into force at the college which modified the earlier language exam requirements. This new regulation eliminated the general language exam requirement and provided the students the possibility to take instead a business, a legal or an international relations language exam. However justifiable this change may be, I dared to compare the requirements of these three ESP language exams types to see the challenges the future courses might bring if students opted for taking different language exams.

On comparing the topics these ESP language exams covered, it turned out that the number and theme of the topics was far from being common. Students are required to prepare from 25 various topics for the Legal English exam, from 20 topics for the International Relations exam and from 10 topics for the Business English exam. Among these topics only one was included in all of them: the role of the European Union. Another topic was similar in only two of the exams: Environment protection. Besides these two topics, the others were undoubtedly exam-specific, like Marketing, Commerce and Financial services (for Business English exam); Constitutional law, Criminal law and Procedural law (for Legal English exam); and Human Rights, Migration and International terrorism (for International Relations exam).

The *following table* shows the places where these exams can be taken:

Table 1: *Language exam centres that offer ESP language exams in International Relations, Legal English or Business English*

The English of International Relations	Legal English	Business English	
Corvinus Nyelvvizsgaközpont	PROFEX Szaknyelvi Nyelvvizsgaközpont	BGF	üzleti szaknyelv
		Euro Nyelvvizsga Központ	
		GB Resources Oktatási és Tanácsadó Kft.	
		BME Nyelvvizsgaközpont	gazdasági szaknyelv
		KJF Nyelvvizsgaközpont	
		Szent István Egyetem	gazdálkodási menedzsment szaknyelv

The table demonstrates that the traditional profile of the college (International Management and Business) made it relevant primarily for the college to function as a language exam centre where Business English language exams can be taken. Although this choice is well-grounded, changes in the profile of the college necessitate changes in the range of language exams the college offers. Since students could only start their studies at the International Relations major first in 2012 and the language exam requirement for these students have so far been a general language exam, there seemed to be no urgent need to modify the range of exams offered by the college. By 2015, however, it became evident that revision was also necessary in this area as well. The needs analysis that my correspondence course students with International Relations major filled in showed that 50% of the students would take an International Relations language exam even at the time when this type of language exam is not obligatory for them at all. Most of them would even take the International Relations language exam at BBS if they had this possibility. As for Legal English, I would argue that this ESP type and this type of language exam is not profile-specific to the college, since no major in Legal Studies is planned to be offered in the future by the college.

Conclusion

Our ever-changing, globalised world forces us to encounter new challenges on a regular basis. Colleges, educators and language exam centres alike have to think critically and on the basis of factual evidence collected from various sources make the necessary modifications as a response to the new demands. At the college level these challenges might appear in the type of majors that the college offers for its students, at the level of ESP education these challenges might imply searching for new methodologies, and at the level of the language exam centres it might involve revising the range of language exams offered.

The globalised world has led to significant changes in the needs of the learners and educators in the 21st century should adapt to satisfying these new needs. The aim of this essay was to provide solutions to counter these new challenges in ESP education. Firstly, concentrating on improving the skills that research proved to be essential for success in today's world (critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity) besides the core material is a basic element even of ESP teaching. Secondly, the use of ICT tools in the teaching and learning process is as rudimentary for Generation Z students as the use of printed books was for Generation X learners. Thirdly, any educational method selected should lead in the direction of creating self-directed learners who will be prepared – since they gain hands-on knowledge in the methods of and clear insight into the benefits of self-study that is the basic element of lifelong learning - to adapt to the volatile economic and work environment they are

supposed to live in. Fourthly, educators need to reconsider the types of intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors they intend to use and set specific goals for the students that will make them thrive towards success. Fifth, ESP educators working in Hungarian higher education should take into consideration - in the light of recent surveys revealing a high number of degrees not awarded due to the students' lack of the relevant language exam certificates - assisting the students so that they be able to pass the relevant and major-specific language exams.

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