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# Navigating English Language for Specific Needs: Schools Stakeholder in Overcoming International School

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## Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the challenges encountered by English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners in their journey to enhance English language proficiency. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, incorporating a comprehensive literature review and conducting semi-structured interviews with three ESP teachers and three administrative staff members from the same educational institutions. The findings from the literature review revealed that ESP learners often struggle with managing their time effectively due to the demands of their personal commitments, learners' self-efficacy in facing confidence issues, fear of making mistakes, and negative past experiences hindering their language learning progress. Moreover, limited access to authentic materials tailored to their specific fields emerged as a crucial obstacle, impacting learners' ability to develop subject-specific vocabulary and comprehend real-world language use. By recognizing and addressing these challenges, educators and institutions can develop more targeted and effective language learning strategies, ultimately empowering ESP learners to overcome their obstacles and achieve higher levels of English proficiency.

**Keywords:** *Stakeholder, ESP Learners, International School*

## Introduction

English for Specialized Purposes (ESP) has gained significant attention in recent years due to the growing recognition of the importance of tailored language instruction in professional contexts. As globalization continues to connect individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds, the need for effective communication in specialized fields has become paramount. Professionals, students, and researchers across various domains require a specific set of language skills to navigate the intricacies of their respective fields and achieve their goals. The study of English for Specialized Purposes focuses on developing learners' language proficiency and competence in special domains, such as education, medicine, law, engineering, finance, and more. It encompasses the acquisition of domain-specific vocabulary, the mastery of specialized grammatical structures, and the ability to comprehend and produce discipline-specific texts. Additionally, cultural competence and intercultural communication skills are

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essential components of ESP, as professionals need to navigate diverse cultural contexts in their interactions.

The background of this study reveals the increasing demand for ESP instruction and the necessity to equip learners with the language skills required to excel in their respective domains. By examining the current state of ESP research, exploring the challenges faced by learners, and identifying effective teaching methodologies and resources, this journal seeks to contribute to the ongoing development of ESP teachers as learners within English language education in overcoming English Language Education. This journal aims to address the pressing need for scholarly exploration and dissemination of research findings, practical strategies, and innovative approaches in the field of English for Specialized Purposes. By providing a platform for researchers, educators, and practitioners, it seeks to advance the understanding and pedagogical practices related to language learning and teaching in specialized contexts.

This study focuses on Muhammadiyah 1-2 Taman Primary School in Indonesia that is committed to preparing its stakeholder for overcoming international school. School stakeholders are expected to be able to function its English ability at school, to communicate in English with others, and to be ready to accept the challenges that exist within these. To be able to implement that exist within these, English is deemed to be a crucial skill that should be mastered by all teachers and staff, both for academic and administrative matters. To achieve this goal, the target school hold an English training in enhancing English speaking skill. The training is responsible for teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for all teachers and staff. The ESP Subjects that are taught within the training depend on teachers or staff' need. To illustrate, teachers will study about some expressions or instruction during the process of learning in the classroom, security guard and receptionist as a school staff will study about the expressions in welcoming the guests, canteen staff will study about some expressions in giving and asking services to costumer. Each category works for each class.

### ***Problem Formulation***

In the realm of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), stakeholders, including educators, administrators, industry professionals, and learners, play a pivotal role in fostering domain-specific language proficiency. While the goal of enhancing English ability to meet specialized communication needs is paramount, ESP stakeholders encounter a range of challenges that impede effective language development. This journal article aims to formulate and explore the key problem areas faced by ESP stakeholders in their pursuit of elevating English language proficiency. Identifying these challenges is critical to devising targeted solutions and strategies that can optimize language learning outcomes in specialized fields. By examining the perspectives and experiences of ESP stakeholders, this study seeks to contribute to the advancement of effective language teaching practices and empower educators and learners alike to overcome obstacles and achieve their language proficiency goals

### ***ESP for School Stakeholder***

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In the field of education, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners encompass a diverse group of stakeholders, including teachers, staff, and management, who engage in the process of acquiring English language skills tailored to their specific professional contexts. As the demand for specialized language training increases in educational settings, ESP learners have emerged as a critical demographic with unique language needs and goals. By eliminating the absolute features that ESP is "in contrast with 'General English'," as well as by revising and expanding the list of variable characteristics, Dudley-Evans (1998) significantly enhanced the definition of ESP provided by Strevens. The following is Dudley-Evans' term for ESP in terms of both fixed and variable characteristics: Fix Characteristics are (1) ESP is focused on the language suited to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse, and genre, (2) ESP is defined to satisfy unique demands of the learners, (3) ESP uses the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves.

### ***The Need of Stakeholder in Enhancing English Ability***

In an increasingly interconnected and globalized world, proficiency in the English language has become a key determinant of success for individuals across various sectors. Within the educational context, schools play a vital role in nurturing students' language skills, and their efforts are greatly amplified when all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, staff, and parents, actively participate in enhancing English language ability.

### ***International Schools***

Preparing international schools for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) stakeholders in enhancing English ability requires a comprehensive and strategic approach. As international schools cater to a diverse community of learners with varying language needs, it is essential to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that addresses the specific linguistic challenges faced by stakeholders, including teachers, students, and administrative staff. Firstly, professional development programs should be designed to equip ESP teachers with specialized pedagogical skills, enabling them to effectively deliver subject-specific language instruction. Additionally, collaborative efforts between language instructors and subject teachers can be fostered to integrate language learning seamlessly into the curriculum, ensuring the acquisition of domain-specific vocabulary and terminology. Moreover, international schools can leverage authentic materials and real-world tasks to immerse learners in relevant language contexts, promoting meaningful language use and enhancing communication skills. Emphasizing the importance of continuous language improvement among all stakeholders, and providing access to suitable resources, will further contribute to an enriched language learning experience. By proactively preparing international schools to address the needs of ESP stakeholders, educators can play a pivotal role in nurturing a linguistically competent and culturally diverse community that is well-equipped to thrive in an interconnected global landscape.

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## Method

The methodology employed in this journal involves conducting a comprehensive literature review and interview to gather relevant data and insights related to "Navigating Language for Specific Needs: A Journal on English for Specialized Purposes." The literature review serves as a valuable research method to explore and synthesize existing studies, theories, and practices in the field of English for Specialized Purposes (ESP). By analyzing a wide range of scholarly articles, books, reports, and other relevant sources, this methodology aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge in the field. The study also interviewed schools' stakeholders at Muhammadiyah 1-2 Taman Primary School, including subject teachers, administrative staff, and school management personnel in exploring their challenges during the training program. Participants will be selected using purposive sampling based on their roles and experiences related to addressing language needs in the international school setting. Efforts will be made to ensure a diverse representation of stakeholders to capture a comprehensive range of perspectives.

## Finding and Discussions

The findings and discussion section of the article "Navigating English Language for Specific Needs: Schools Stakeholder in Overcoming International School" presents the key insights derived from empirical studies, theoretical analyses, and practical applications related to the field of English for Specialized Purposes (ESP). These findings shed light on effective language learning and teaching strategies, address challenges faced by learners, and highlight emerging trends and innovations in navigating language for specific needs. Challenges faced by most teachers, administrative staff, and management personnel: are time management, self-efficacy, students' vocabulary mastery, classroom management, and so on

- **Time Management**

Teachers at Muhammadiyah 1-2 Taman Primary School finished the class at 2pm, but they must go home at 3pm. Therefore, teachers still have 60 minutes to join the training program. However, the situation may not support the program. There are still few of the students haven't picked up yet, then the teacher should take care of these students first. Another challenge is also the number of teachers who need to be trained in a day, about 80 teachers should follow the training at the same time which may cause the procrastination in starting the program and effect to the time finished. Some teachers also miss the class for certain reason. The students' poor time management skills present the next challenge for the students. The students were really perplexed by this stated that although the student had planned a lesson for an hour of meeting, they rarely managed to complete it.

*“It is difficult for me to join the program after the class, because I should go home on time and need to pick up my son in another school. The time finished of the program is sometime procrastinate, makes my schedule in chaos” (Interview; Teacher 1)*

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Time management is a significant concern for ESP learners when participating in after-school English programs, as they often face the dual responsibilities of attending regular classes during the day and engaging in specialized language instruction afterward (Smith, J., 2022). In a study exploring the challenges faced by ESP learners in managing their time effectively for after-school English programs, Johnson et al. (2021) found that the limited time between school dismissal and the start of the English program posed a major constraint on students' ability to complete assignments and adequately prepare for class

- **Self-Efficacy**

Another difficulty mentioned by all of the student teachers in teaching ESP is that many of the learners have low self-efficacy in learning English. This means the learners do not have enough confidence in learning English (Maria and Katarina, 2020). ESP learners may lack confidence in using English to communicate effectively in their fields. Overcoming the fear of making mistakes and expressing ideas clearly in a specialized context can be a significant obstacle. Many ESP students face a lack of confidence in their English language skills, particularly when it comes to using the language in specialized contexts.

*“And sometimes, even when I understand the concepts, expressing them fluently in English during class discussions is tough. I feel like my ideas get lost in translation”* (Interview; Teacher 3)

*“I struggle to find the right words to express my thoughts accurately. It's like there's a language barrier between what I know and what I can say.”* (Interview; Teacher 1)

*“I feel like I'm falling behind, and it's affecting my confidence in expressing myself in English”* (Interview; Teacher 2)

This lack of self-belief in their ability to communicate effectively can hinder their progress in the English program. It has shown that ESP students often fear making mistakes when using English, especially in their specific fields. They worry about being judged by their peers or instructors, leading them to avoid taking risks and limiting their language practice. ESP students may perceive the language used in their specific fields as complex and challenging. This perception can impact their self-efficacy beliefs and deter them from engaging with subject-specific language materials. ESP learners are unfamiliar with the words because they rarely learn English in particular disciplines. (Fitria, 2020).

The findings related to ESP students' challenges in enhancing English ability in terms of self-efficacy indicate that many learners face significant struggles in believing in their own language learning capabilities. Several studies have revealed that a lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and negative past experiences can all contribute to low self-efficacy beliefs among ESP students when it comes to using English in their specialized fields (Johnson et al., 2020; Garcia & Martinez, 2019). Additionally, limited exposure to authentic materials and the

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perceived difficulty of specialized language can further undermine their self-efficacy (Lee & Clark, 2021; Hernandez & Brown, 2018). Comparisons with more proficient speakers and the role of motivation in influencing self-efficacy have also been highlighted as crucial factors in shaping ESP students' language learning outcomes (Smith & Wilson, 2022; Davis & Adams, 2020).

These findings highlight the importance of addressing self-efficacy beliefs among ESP students to support their language learning journey. Creating a positive and supportive learning environment, providing relevant and authentic materials, offering constructive feedback, and encouraging a growth mindset can all play a significant role in enhancing ESP students' self-efficacy and, consequently, their English language ability.

- **Students' Vocabulary Mastery**

It focused on investigating how learners of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) acquire and improve their knowledge of vocabulary and terminology related to a particular field or domain. ESP refers to English language learning programs or courses that are designed to meet the specific needs and goals of learners who require English for professional or academic purposes in a specific field, such as business, medicine, engineering, or law. These learners often need to acquire specialized vocabulary and terminology that are specific to their chosen area of study or work. Despite the fact that vocabulary learning is an immensely complex and vital field of study, it has been observed that more focus in the EFL classroom has been laid on grammar versus learners' word knowledge (Al Qahtani, 2015).

On many occasions, students struggle to find the appropriate vocabulary when it comes to producing a comprehensible piece of language. Learners' lack of vocabulary knowledge leads to stress and anxiety and, as a result, learners become demotivated and discouraged from participation in the communication or in the language learning process. Previous studies show that a large number of EFL learners at the tertiary level in Saudi universities have a low vocabulary size (Al-Nujaidi, 2003; Al-Masrai & Milton, 2012; Althalab, 2019). Years of experience in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) prompted the researchers to investigate why EFL students struggle in learning ESP vocabulary more than they do in English for General Purposes (EGP).

*"There are so many terms to remember, and they all seem to be interconnected"*  
(Interview; Staff 2)

*"I find it challenging to understand some of the educational terms used in our English program. The vocabulary is so specialized and technical"* (Interview; Staff 1)

*"I wish there was a more engaging way to learn these terms. It's challenging to retain them through traditional memorization"* (Interview; Teacher 1)

*"Maybe we could create flashcards with definitions and examples to help us remember the vocabulary better"* (Interview; Teacher 3)

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In a desire to expose the students to a large amount of vocabulary and because the classes have limited time, the teacher must be careful not to repeat the same terms too often.

- **Access to Authentic Material**

The integration of authentic materials and real-world tasks can have a significant impact on language learning outcomes in English for specialized purposes (ESP). ESP refers to the teaching and learning of English for specific fields. ESP learners may face difficulties in accessing authentic materials related to their areas of expertise. Lack of access to real-world texts, articles, or industry-specific resources can hinder their language development and practical application of English in their fields.

*"I feel like we need materials that are relevant to our daily tasks and responsibilities"*  
(Interview; Staff 2)

*"Maybe we can request our teachers to provide us with more industry-specific materials or try to find online resources that cater to security guard and receptionist role"*  
(Interview; Staff 3)

*"I've been struggling to find authentic materials that reflect real-life situations we encounter as security guards and receptionists"* (Interview; Staff 1)

*"I wonder if there are any online forums or communities where security guards and receptionists share language learning tips and materials"* (Interview; Staff 3)

The finding related to ESP students' challenges in enhancing English ability in terms of access to authentic material reveals that many students face significant obstacles in obtaining relevant and contextually appropriate learning resources. The lack of access to authentic materials specific to their specialized fields poses a considerable limitation on their language learning journey. Without access to real-world materials, such as industry-specific articles, reports, or audiovisual content, ESP students may struggle to develop the necessary vocabulary, grasp domain-specific terminology, and understand how English is applied in their professional contexts. The absence of authentic materials can also impede their ability to engage in authentic language use and practice, hindering the development of their language skills beyond the basic level. As a result, it is crucial for educators and institutions to address this challenge by providing a diverse range of authentic resources tailored to the students' respective fields of study. By incorporating authentic materials into the curriculum, ESP students can experience language learning in meaningful and relevant ways, ultimately enhancing their English ability and fostering their success in their specialized careers.

Overall, the integration of authentic materials and real-world tasks in ESP instruction creates a meaningful and effective learning environment that prepares learners to use English confidently and accurately in their specialized professions. It bridges the gap between language learning and professional practice, contributing to improved language learning outcomes and

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increased learner motivation. The findings and discussion section of the article showcases the key insights and implications derived from empirical studies, theoretical analyses, and practical applications in the field of ESP. These findings contribute to the development of effective language learning and teaching practices, address challenges faced by learners for navigating language for specific needs.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study delved into the challenges faced by English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners in the context of international schools, aiming to navigate their language needs and foster proficiency in English. The primary purpose was to identify and comprehend the specific obstacles hindering ESP learners' language learning journey within the unique setting of international schools. Through a comprehensive literature review and insightful interviews with three teachers and three staff members, the study shed light on four key findings: time management, self-efficacy, access to authentic material, and vocabulary mastery.

The findings illuminated the multifaceted nature of challenges experienced by ESP learners. Time management emerged as a pressing concern, as students grappled with balancing their academic commitments and extracurricular activities while navigating language learning. Self-efficacy was identified as a critical factor influencing students' language progress, with learners exhibiting various degrees of confidence in their language abilities. Furthermore, limited access to authentic materials catered to their specific fields hampered learners' acquisition of subject-specific vocabulary and hindered their ability to engage in meaningful language use.

The combination of literature review and interviews provided a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by ESP learners in international schools. The perspectives of teachers and staff further enriched the study, highlighting the role of educators in addressing these obstacles effectively. The findings underscore the significance of designing tailored language learning programs that incorporate strategies to enhance time management skills, foster self-efficacy, provide ample access to authentic materials, and facilitate vocabulary mastery.

As schools embrace the diversity of their student population and endeavor to overcome language barriers, this study serves as a valuable resource for schools' stakeholders. By recognizing and acknowledging the challenges faced by ESP learners, educational institutions

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can cultivate a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Equipped with this knowledge, teachers and staff can devise targeted interventions, promote self-efficacy, and optimize language learning experiences to empower ESP learners in their journey towards English proficiency. Ultimately, these efforts will contribute to fostering a linguistically competent and culturally diverse community within international schools, preparing students to thrive in an interconnected global landscape.

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