
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Theoretical Merits and Practical Challenges of Adopting an ESAP Methodology in Teaching ESP, with an Emphasis on the Pragmatic Viability of an EGAP Approach

Bashayer Jassim Al Bloushi

English Language Unit, Kuwait University, Kuwait

Corresponding Author: Bashayer Jassim Al Bloushi, **E-mail:** Bashaier.albuloshi@ku.edu.kw

| ABSTRACT

This article vividly exhibits and distinguishes the distinctions between teaching ESAP and EGAP. It defines the two approaches and shows which teaching approach is the realistic option according to the author's point of view. The author hence proceeds with elucidations on why EGAP is the realistic option and elaborates on the five roles of an ESP teacher. In addition, the author mentions a study that was conducted in Vietnam. The study was based on a systematic literature review of current research on English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) and English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) teaching approaches, and 15 relevant studies were synthesized. Some of this research showed positive results, while others showed negative results of the approaches. The final results of this study show that ESAP learning was hard in practice. It shows how EGAP is considered a course to equip and prepare students for ESAP courses. It prompts EGAP through group work and suggests it will make students feel less intimidated. The weaker students will learn from the stronger students in an EGAP group working class. It shows one of the relevant study's responses and teachers who think EGAP is significant in teaching before students can enter ESAP courses. Scaffolding is considered a significant role teachers need to ensure learners have reached their needs in both approaches. In the latter part of the article, the author mentions her experience teaching ESAP at Kuwait University, specifically at the College of Engineering. The authors show what difficulties they have gone through and how they managed to teach at this college.

| KEYWORDS

ESAP, EGAP, ESP, Teaching Approaches, Teaching, Roles of Teachers.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Teaching English to students in universities is essential, but it varies when teaching English for general academic purposes (EGAP) or for specific academic purposes (ESAP). This article argues that EGAP is the only realistic option and ESAP is difficult in practice.

On the one hand, EGAP is English for general academic purposes. It is employed to teach general English, such as reading, writing, and speaking, which is the basic knowledge of the English language. EGAP teaches the four English skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In addition, it is general academic writing where students learn how to reference and support their arguments in essays. "EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes) is intended for general use in English but also refers to general English. Its teaching content asks the students to understand and master the basic knowledge and skills in the English language. The purpose is to develop students' English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating skills." (Jing, 2014, P.198). EGAP also focuses on the structure of the language and how to speak the English language properly. People "can hardly deny that English plays a very important role in this globalized era. It is the most widely spoken language in the world. A good mastery of English can be a prerequisite for the success of developing oneself." (p.53) Students need to master the language, and for them to master the language, they need good, well-trained teachers.

On the other hand, ESAP is English for specific academic purposes. ESAP is teaching English for a specific specialty in universities. For example, it is teaching English to medical students or engineering students. It is teaching English for professional purposes; as Anthony (1998 NP) described it, "Some described [ESAP] as simply being the teaching of English for any purpose that could be specified. Others were more precise, describing it as teaching English in academic studies or for vocational or professional purposes:" ESAP is considered a different type of teaching than EGAP. It requires trained teachers to teach ESAP because it teaches academic studies or subjects rather than general English. ESAP courses are courses to master students in a specified field and prepare them for them. "Advocates of ESAP, in contrast, promote a more specific, or narrow-angle, approach, taking into account the particular disciplines that their students will be studying in the future or are already studying and preparing them with the specific language and skills needed in those disciplines" (Flowerdew 2016. p.2).

2. Research Design

This study aims to systematically review and synthesize the current literature on English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) and English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) teaching approaches. The primary goal is to contribute valuable insights to the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) education. Through a comprehensive examination of existing research, the study seeks to identify trends, effectiveness, and practical considerations associated with ESAP and EGAP, ultimately informing educators, researchers, and policymakers in ESP teaching. It aims to answer the question of **the perceived effectiveness of ESAP and ESP teaching methods.**

The systematic literature review included peer-reviewed articles, conference papers, and academic publications focusing on ESAP and EGAP teaching approaches, comparisons, or insights. However, non-peer-reviewed sources, opinion pieces, and studies not directly related to ESAP or EGAP teaching were excluded. Databases such as PubMed, ERIC, and JSTOR) were identified and searched using keywords and controlled vocabulary related to ESAP, EGAP, teaching approaches, and roles of teachers. Initially, we screened based on titles and abstracts to identify potentially relevant studies, and 15 relevant studies were identified.

2.1 Systematic Literature Review

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in tertiary education faces challenges due to a lack of clarity on its definition and diverse local contexts. Anderson (2014) highlights the historical development of ESP, from its roots in general ESP to the emergence of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP). The author proposes a "parallel course approach" as a pragmatic solution for teaching ESAP, acknowledging the influence of various factors like students, institutions, and disciplines. Deng (2022) summarized the key points about the advantages and disadvantages of both ESAP and ESP as in Table 1 below.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
ESAP	Practical and directly relevant to students' specific academic fields and future careers.	Requires more specialized knowledge and skills from teachers.
	Improves skills needed for postgraduate studies and professional work.	Designing and implementing effective ESAP courses can be complex and time-consuming.
	Can be highly motivating for students due to its clear relevance	May not cater to the broader academic language skills needed beyond the specific discipline.
EGAP	Easier for teachers to implement as it focuses on general academic language skills.	May not directly address the specific needs of students' chosen fields.
	Provides a broader foundation for various academic settings.	Can lack real-world context and relevance for some students.
	Often aligns with standardized tests like IELTS/TOEFL.	May not adequately prepare students for the specialized language demands of their disciplines.

Overall, Deng (2022) highlights the trade-off between the two approaches. ESAP requires more effort from teachers but offers greater practical benefits for students. In contrast, the EGAP is easier to implement for teachers but may lack specific focus and real-world applicability—a relevant study (Deng, 2022) on the effectiveness of ESAP and EGAP in ESP teaching. The study compares the ESAP and the EGAP to explore the needs of the students. It aims to help teachers choose the proper learning and teaching strategies to improve English language learning and teaching. The study was conducted in the school of law. The participants of the study were graduates, undergraduates, and short-term teachers. As a result, it concludes "that both EGAP and ESAP contribute to the academic English learning, while EGAP focuses on academic language study for specific English proficiency tests like IELTS/TOFEL and ESAP focus on academic language study for postgraduate and professional work." (p.34)

Teachers who are subject specialists are not trained to teach the English language. They "lack both the expertise and desire to teach literacy skills" (Hyland 2002, p. 388). He argues that the subject specialists do not have the skill to teach the language. Other researchers (Braine 1988, Lea & Street 1999, Hyland 2002, 2006) argued that subject teachers do not focus on the language forms they assess without concentrating on the language conventions.

A study (Liyanage and Birch, 2001) was conducted on international students enrolled in EGAP courses to test whether EGAP is beneficial for preparing students for English-speaking constitutions. The study's findings "indicated that the students had a strong preference for discipline-specific tasks, and the discipline-specific approach successfully related the EGAP content to students' academic disciplines and in addressing their language difficulties." (p.48)

A study by Ostovar-Namaghi, Hosseini, and Iranmehr (2021) showed negative results. The study was on students' perspectives on teachers teaching ESAP. The study took place in Iran. Teachers in the study implemented English for Academic Purposes EAP in class. Students thought that the teaching needed improvements. As the researchers Ostovar-Namaghi, Hosseini, and Iranmehr (2021) of this study put it,

"Having interviewed university students, it was revealed that they were not satisfied with the techniques used in their ESP course. Problems such as ignorance in reading fluency, speaking and writing skills, lack of students' involvement in ESP classes, etc., lead students to the following suggestions for improving the course. Traditional methods of teaching ESP cannot meet the needs and objectives of the learners." (p.112)

Not all teachers can teach ESAP courses. It is considered a hard task for teachers. Students in Iran are L2 learners. One student claimed,

"Well, in my opinion, parts of a language should not be separated. Focusing on one aspect of reading (comprehension) and ignoring the other important dimension of it (fluency) causes nothing but inefficiency and failure. Reading fluency was an ignored precious skill in my ESP course albeit its importance and necessity. And I do suggest ESP teachers to add the ingredient of fluency in teaching reading to foster students' reading ability." (p.112)

The researchers claimed that teachers "were ignorant of techniques and principles of language teaching. In other words, instead of teaching English, they mainly taught subject matter. Participants believed that EAP teachers should systematically integrate techniques of language teaching with techniques of teaching different subject matters." (p.113) Teachers could not integrate language teaching with the subject matter and were not ready to teach ESAP as a course. There are prerequisites for teachers who are willing to teach ESAP. They have to be well-trained. ESAP teaching requires training and course planning. Teachers focused too much on the subject matter that they ignored the other skills. "Since the focus was on the subject matter, teachers did not have time to present grammar, and even when they presented it, they did not know how to present it systematically." (p.113). Ignoring other ESL teachings like grammar is perilous for students' proficiency level. One of the student participants explained.

"Our ESP teacher thought teaching grammar was totally useless, but how is it possible to learn a language without knowing its structure? As a postgraduate student, I think grammar cannot be acquired naturally. It needs to be taught. However, I was deprived of any grammar-teaching in my ESP course. I want to take a moment here and recommend ESP teachers that "we, students, DO need grammar, and this course would be more fruitful for us if it encompassed this component of the language." (p.113,114)

A study by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) clarified that teachers should focus on students' needs and goals. The researchers thought that this was the first step in designing materials. In addition, the researchers explained a four-element model for ESP materials consisting of input, content, language focus, and a task. Each one of these four different element models has a specific function. The input, as the researchers explained, is any kind of data like a text in an article, book, reading comprehension task, or video. It is any data that students utilize to extract information and learn from. The content conveys information to students, whereas the language focus is focusing on the language and studying it carefully. The fourth element is the task, the part where students are utilizing the language and the knowledge of that language. The fourth element also induces students to utilize the content given. These four elements are considered essential in the ESP approach. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) think these elements should be implemented in teachers' classes. The researchers also consider these elements a success in the ESP teaching approach.

A relevant study (Beshaj, 2015) stated that ESAP courses do not need teachers who only teach general English but teachers who also teach and have knowledge of other specific academic fields. In addition, (Popescue, 2012) showed clearly that students need

both ESAP and EAP to control and obtain knowledge in both English and the professional language. (Floris,2008) A study that was conducted in Indonesia also showed negative results. It stated that teachers must fix the curriculum to meet students' needs and requirements. As the researcher claimed, "Although most of the students thought they had fair proficiency in English, the teachers were still uncertain whether the students would be ready to enroll in subject classes conducted in English." (P.57). Since the subject classes differ from the general English classes teachers in the study thought that students were not ready to enter the ESAP courses. They were afraid that students could not master that course and believed that they needed more lecturing in general English courses.

A relevant study (Kojour and Heirati, 2015) was conducted at a university in Iran. The study was on the teachers' and students' beliefs on English for general academic purposes. The participants were both teachers and students. The study used a mixed method, which was based on both a questionnaire and an interview. It "was framed in the sociocultural theory to look into the evolution of L2 learners' beliefs about the general English course during a term. One hundred ninety-eight male and female university students and their general English course teacher were randomly selected as the study participants." (p.37) The students believed that the course paid attention to grammar and vocabulary, which they think is helpful for the course. Teachers and students had positive perceptions of the course, and both participants agreed that EGAP was needed to equip students throughout the course. As one of the teachers claimed, "I believe that learners should be taught reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, guessing meaning, etc., although it is difficult to change their high school beliefs, which mainly focused on the role of grammar and vocabulary similar to Grammar Translation Method." (p.45), and one of the students claimed, "It is better to concentrate on grammar. I am very weak in structure, and with this course, I guess I can learn a lot about language forms, leading to better learning...I expect our teacher to teach us grammar and nothing else." (p.44). The study showed that students' perception of EGAP was positive. They were happy to focus on general English at the beginning to strengthen each student's weak parts and fill in the missing gap rather than jumping to ESAP and torturing students with the subject matter and sailing through the content. In conclusion, the researcher states that "students' beliefs about general English at the beginning of the term and concluded that almost all the learners held simplistic beliefs about this course in that they paid much more attention to the role of vocabulary and grammar, which seems to spring from their high school period focusing on translation and language forms " (p.46)

2.2 EGAP is the only realistic option

English for general academic purposes is considered the only realistic option because English for specific academic purposes is difficult in practice. It is not easy in practice in many ways. First of all, the process of researching ESAP is a prerequisite. As Hyland (2002: 198) puts it, "importantly, [the quest for specificity] it has given [ESAP] its heavy dependence on a strong research orientation." Teachers have to enter this journey by searching through that field to explain it to the students. "[ESAP] is, in essence, research-based language education" (Hyland 2002: 386)

Searching through a specific field in ESAP is significant because teachers are trying to meet special requirements for learners. They are trying to relate the content of a specific subject. Therefore, teachers have to collaborate with a specialist to meet the needed requirement, "On another level, specialists may give their point of view concerning the teaching material the teacher has designed. The complete form of such collaboration will culminate in the emergence of team-teach classes in which both teachers and business trainers cooperate to teach the skills" (Chibi 2018: 201). Although both approaches have to serve the learners' needs, the ESAP requires heavy searching of the students' needs.

ESAP teachers are digging inside a field they have not encountered before, so they must search carefully. It demands teachers to search for pedagogical materials and different tasks in that field, properly convey the literature to the students, and conceptualize its content and tasks. "[ESAP] requires the careful research and design of pedagogical materials and activities for an identifiable group of adult learning within a specific learning context" (Dudley-Evans & Johns 1991: 298)

ESAP needs a higher degree of professionalism than EGAP. It is more like a professional learning situation because it is bestowed under one field. Teachers have to find a unique way to explain ESAP to students. They need to look for unique methodologies to do it; "we believe that [ESAP] requires methodologies that are specialized or unique" (Dudley-Evans & Johns 1991: 305).

Teaching ESAP is like teaching new material linked with English. It is like teaching science or medicine that is linked to English. Teachers may face difficulties in terms of time. They may not have time to search for the needs of their learners. As Anthony (2008: 25) explained, " [ESAP] practitioners no longer have the time or resources to research the needs of their learners or even design course materials to meet these needs." Teachers who adopt an ESAP approach will be exposed to new terminologies or new materials inside the text itself in ESAP, which is different from the general English text. According to Jing (2014: 200), " [ESAP] teaching concentrates not only on the recognition of particular structures of sentences or word combinations but also on the

choice of terms and meanings of words in different types of texts." Therefore, ESAP teachers cannot rely on their personal experiences in the English language when assessing the ESAP tasks because what they are exposed to is not general English. It is English for specific purposes. "[ESAP] teachers are usually unable to rely on personal experiences when evaluating materials and considering course goals." (Anthony 1998: NP).

The students are learners. They do not know where they are going. The teacher's role here is to design the material and go deep inside the field. They need to search for the topic and not depend on the learners. "At the university level in particular, they are also unable to rely on the views of the learners, who tend not to know what English abilities are required by profession they hope to enter" (Anthony 1998: NP). In addition, ESAP teachers become heavily dependent on this particular field and its textbooks. They feel that what they are doing in ESAP is not equivalent to their basic general English field. "The result is that many [ESAP] teachers become slaves to the published textbooks available, and worse, when there are no textbooks available for a particular discipline, resolve to teach from textbooks which may be quite unsuitable" (Anthony 1998: NP) teachers, as stated in the previous reference, are enslaved to their academic textbooks because they need to stick to the content. Teaching English for Specific Academic purposes has to be creative. In other words, teachers could not make ESAP a fun course to teach because students are studying subject matter with genuine facts and vast knowledge that is hard to manipulate. In contrast, the EGAP could be taught by providing fun readings and listening. Students could utilize the writing courses to write about a field trip they went on or a happy family holiday they did not forget. At this point, EGAP could teach students how to master the English language in a fun way. EGAP teachers could devise any notion to teach students how to improve in English. Teachers could be as creative as they want in class. Furthermore, books could be abandoned in some cases, like in writing courses, where students could be given any topic and could start to brainstorm as a first task. That does not mean that teachers could abandon books in all of their classes, but EGAP is considered a flexible course that could be twisted in many ways by the teachers to aid students in mastering the language.

2.3 Five Roles of an ESP teacher

The two approaches, ESAP and EGAP, go under five different roles, but the ESAP teachers exert more effort than those who teach EGAP. This is why EGAP is a realistic option. According to Dudley Evans and St. John (1998), they identified five roles for ESP practitioners. The practitioner's roles are being a teacher, a collaborator, a course designer, a researcher, and an evaluator. When the practitioner becomes a teacher, this "is a practical discipline with the most important objective of helping students to learn" (Bojovic 2006: 490). The teacher develops the student's knowledge and helps them write their assignments. The practitioner as a collaborator is when the teacher cooperates with the field specialist. It is more like a team teaching. "The role of the ESP practitioner as collaborator involves cooperating with the subject specialist...specialists may give their point of view concerning the teaching material the teacher has designed" (Chibi 2018: 201). When the practitioner is a course designer, he designs the course, including tasks and activities for the learner to achieve. "ESP practitioners sometimes deem it necessary to design their activities to attain their objectives" (Chibi 2018: 201). When the practitioner is a researcher, he/she searches through the field he is teaching, "matching research findings to the learning and teaching environment, i.e., by making needs of students the starting point of every ESP lesson" (Chibi 2018: 201) Finally when the practitioner is an evaluator he assesses students work. He tests the students on the teaching materials he has used in class. "Testing students evaluate their competence in the necessary language and skills to start a certain academic course or job. The second purpose is to have insights into how much they have learned from a course" (Chibi 2018: 201).

Going through all of these roles is exhausting. Being a collaborator, a course designer, a researcher, and an evaluator is not an easy task for a teacher to do. Imagine an ESAP teacher who goes through all these roles plus doing extra work to discover the meanings of terminologies and understand different texts in a specific field. It demands a lot of time and energy for an ESAP teacher. Some teachers find ESAP difficult to teach because they are not specialized ESAP teachers; as exemplified in Nguyen and Pham (2016), the study took place in Vietnam, specifically in Hanoi. The study was on both the teachers at the University of Vietnam and the students who taught ESAP. I will focus only on the teachers and their results in teaching ESAP because the goal is to show the teachers' results and how ESAP affected them. This empirical research study consists of a survey and a questionnaire. "We surveyed students and teachers in Vietnam universities (mostly in Hanoi). Thus, the data is accurate and up-to-date. We established a questionnaire of 12 difficulties involved in the literature review and information about students' and teachers' sexes and universities. Then, the questionnaires were handed to the students and teachers at universities, mainly in Hanoi, to collect their comments on teaching ESAP. The participants gave their comments on a scale of one to five for each question: 1-very difficult, 2-difficult, 3-normal, 4-favorable, 5-very favorable" (Nguyen & Pham 2016: 157). The teachers were not specialized in the ESAP approach; they were teachers who taught EGAP. The results of this study were that many teachers admitted having difficulty teaching ESAP. The table below shows the percentage of the teachers' questionnaire results. The table shows 37%, the highest percentage of difficulty in the quality of lectures and textbooks. It even shows a percentage of 46.6%, which is also the highest percentage in qualifications and teaching methods of teachers.

Table 2. Results of our empirical study

Difficulties	Very difficult	Difficult	No problem	Easy	Very easy
Differences between Vietnamese and English	35.91%	34.53%	17.40%	6.63%	5.52%
Lack of vocabulary	35.08%	24.86%	27.35%	11.05%	1.66%
Dependence on dictionary	29.01%	24.86%	36.19%	3.31%	6.63%
Listening skills	7.18%	25.97%	54.97%	11.33%	0.55%
Speaking skills	5.25%	14.64%	59.94%	18.78%	1.38%
Reading skills	6.98%	8.01%	54.70%	29.56%	1.66%
Writing skills	6.63%	9.39%	62.71%	19.89%	1.38%
Quality of lectures and textbooks	37.02%	17.68%	22.38%	14.92%	8.01%
Qualification and Teaching Methods of teachers	10.22%	46.69%	22.65%	16.85%	3.59%
Lack of Theoretical framework	3.04%	46.41%	27.07%	21.27%	2.21%
Lack of teaching materials	3.04%	25.14%	55.25%	11.33%	5.25%
Classes with too large student number	47.24%	10.50%	22.38%	16.85%	3.04%
Heavily focused examination	20.44%	33.43%	37.29%	6.91%	1.93%

"Teaching ESAP is still ineffective because teachers are not trained in specialized knowledge. Many general English teachers admit they cannot teach ESAP because they do not fully understand the specialized terminology. Even general English teachers at upper secondary schools do not meet the requirements for teaching qualification [i.e., have sufficient knowledge of ESAP]" (Nguyen & Pham 2016: 158).

Teachers are supposed to know the English language and be qualified and trained to teach a specific field. Moreover, each field is different from the others, so each field has specific training to go through, making ESAP too difficult to practice. It is easier for teachers to teach general English for academic purposes than ESAP because teachers could be good at the four language skills but still find it difficult to teach them for specific purposes. "Some teachers are good at four English Skills but lack specialized knowledge, so their lectures are not lively and attractive to students" (Nguyen & Pham 2016: 159). Some teachers thought that teaching English for specific academic purposes is challenging because it needs the effort to explain and clarify the theoretical framework of that specific field." Besides, the majority of respondents believe that teachers' qualifications and teaching methods are also big challenges for teaching ESAP, especially the theoretical framework to support teaching it" (Nguyen & Pham 2016: 159)

2.4 English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP)

We have seen, then, that ESAP is difficult in practice. Hence, an EGAP approach is more realistic because it demands less research than ESAP. EGAP focuses on common skills in the English language. "EGAP may focus on a set of common skills which are needed across all disciplines- note-taking, paraphrasing, plagiarism-avoidance skills, citation, etc., rather than discipline-specific language and skills." (Flowerdew 2016: 11). Teaching EGAP is more attainable for English teachers because they can flexibly deal with general principles in the English language rather than teaching unfamiliar topics. Teachers move through the content thoroughly, explaining general principles rather than deeply specialized terminology. "Language teachers are not qualified to deal with content; they are better off dealing with more popular subjects and with general principles of inquiry and rhetoric than engaging with disciplines with which they are not familiar" (Flowerdew 2016: 11)

English, for general academic purposes, comes first in teaching courses. Afterward, ESAP joins the syllabus when students have achieved EGAP successfully. In other words, EGAP is considered the students' preparation stage. It prepares and equips students to move on and study the ESAP course. EGAP is significant because it teaches English structures that ESAP cannot teach. Students are required to take an ESAP course at the beginning of their course. "While there are various models of EAP in use, a common one is for students to first take a course in EGAP, before moving on to one is ESP" (Flowerdew 2016: 8). EGAP is essential because it is considered a significant course for students to achieve. It prepares students for other English courses because it is considered a core course that teaches students the basic English language.

For general academic purposes, English teaches grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, which helps students write proper essay papers. As (Nam, H.T.P. p. 36) stated, the "EGAP" term covered simply necessary general "language skills" for learners." In EGAP classes (Nam H.T.P) showed that working in EGAP classes as a group is significant as he clarified that "Group-working designs (or Group-based learning) can help students' promote self-esteem', they also help students increase 'talking time'" (p.36) the significant role in a group talking that it helps to prompt weak students to talk in EGAP language using the target language this will strengthen their fluency and their vocabulary when they listen to other strong fluent students. Students in speaking classes will " 'argue' with others or try their best to protect their opinions. This is also a reason that might lead to the idea of "promoting self-esteem." Students might become more confident when trying to contribute to their group's work by sharing their ideas."

(Nam, p.37) Alison Burke claimed that "students who participate in collaborative learning...get better grades, (and) are more satisfied with their education..." (Burke, 2011, p.1). Group learning helps students understand the tasks better and makes them feel less intimidated than individual work. When they view other students talking and engaging through learning in the process of the EGAP course, they would feel encouraged and start to exert the language they had in their schema and learn new words from their colleagues. In an EGAP course, it is significant for teachers to provide scaffolding and stay around the students to check if everything is going as planned. As (Nam, p.38) mentioned, "The third step of teachers is "monitoring the group," teachers have to be certain that their students put everything in order. In this step, teachers are supporting actors or actresses. They must be beside their students during group-working time. While working in groups, teachers are expected to discover their weaknesses, encourage slower students, remind the dominant individuals, provide useful language items, and so on."

2.5 Teaching Experience

In the first part, we talked about how ESAP has difficult terminologies in its content. We also mentioned how heavily research is supposed to be done when teaching ESAP. Moreover, I also spoke about how difficult it is to grade an ESAP assignment or project, and now we will relate these things to my teaching experience. While teaching at Kuwait University, we used to teach EGAP, which was a satisfying and flexible course. We were given basic English to teach, and I did not need any help from specialists because what we taught was relevant to what I had studied in school and at the university during the bachelor's degree program. In EGAP, we taught basic grammar, like sentence structure and identifying verbs and nouns in a sentence. EGAP felt like teaching a course that you are used to. Normally, we design my tasks in EGAP classes, which is much more satisfying. We became creative in creating different kinds of tasks and activities in EGAP. Even when assessing projects and assignments, it felt like we were in the right place in the right teaching situation.

Then, we taught College of Petroleum Engineering students. It was my first time teaching ESAP. We faced several difficulties while trying to teach those students. We were using English for engineering textbooks that contain different kinds of terminologies. The text comprises paragraphs that speak about pipes and how they work through the refinery process, which I have no idea what that was. We started to sit with specialists in Petroleum Engineering, asking for help. We read the textbook before the course started, highlighting what I did not understand. Afterward, we left the English department and went to the petroleum engineering department, where teachers explained how those pipes work. The PhD holders of this field did not explain merely the text but also the terminologies in the book. At Kuwait University, students were supposed to hand in a specific project in that field. They were supposed to choose their topics and create a booklet explaining things like refinery or maintenance and electrical maintenance instruments. They should explain these processes in detail and then exemplify what will happen to them in different conditions. Ironically, we faced difficulties grading these projects because I did not know if the maintenance information was true.

Moreover, did they accurately write the process with the correct steps? This was something we had to find out. I know how to grade English composition; we can point out the grammar mistakes and fragment sentences, but marking Engineering Petroleum procedures was something we lacked. Doing this task was intimidating. We heavily researched the process and procedure of refinery and maintenance situations and asked specialists for help. It took me a while to go through their projects and grade them. It was a great experience, but it was not an easy ride.

3. Key Themes and Findings

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in tertiary education navigates a fascinating tightrope. Do we tailor language instruction to the precise demands of students' academic fields, immersing them in the terminology and practices of their chosen disciplines? Or do we focus on equipping them with broader academic language skills, laying a foundation applicable across various settings? This systematic literature review reveals a nuanced dance between these two approaches, each with its ardent supporters and practical challenges.

On the one hand, champions of English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) tout its undeniable relevance. Imagine engineering students deciphering research papers with technical jargon or medical students confidently navigating patient consultations. ESAP promises this level of real-world immersion, directly equipping students with the skills they need to thrive in their chosen fields. Not only does this boost their immediate employability, but it also fuels intrinsic motivation by demonstrating the tangible connection between language learning and their future careers. Studies suggest that students excel in postgraduate studies and professional settings when armed with discipline-specific language proficiency.

However, the path of ESAP is not without its thorns. Designing and implementing effective courses demands significant resources and expertise. Instructors grapple with the need to become subject-matter experts, delving deep into the intricacies of specific fields to curate relevant materials and craft meaningful tasks. This specialized knowledge is not readily available to every faculty, and the time commitment required can be daunting. Moreover, the laser focus on specific disciplines might inadvertently neglect the broader academic language skills crucial for navigating diverse academic contexts beyond the immediate field of study.

Enter English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP), offering a seemingly more practical solution. By equipping students with foundational academic literacy and communication skills applicable across various disciplines, EGAP provides a broader, transferable toolkit. This aligns well with standardized tests like IELTS and TOEFL, offering a familiar framework for assessment and progress tracking. Furthermore, EGAP's less demanding resource requirements make it a more feasible option for many institutions, particularly those lacking available subject-matter expertise among their language instructors. Nevertheless, EGAP is not without its detractors. Critics argue that its generalist approach lacks the real-world context and immediacy that resonate with students. Some students might struggle to find the intrinsic motivation to fully engage without a tangible connection to their fields. Additionally, concerns remain about whether EGAP adequately prepares students for the specialized language demands of their chosen disciplines, potentially hindering their success in the later stages of their academic journeys.

The review ultimately underscores the absence of a one-size-fits-all solution. The ideal approach likely lies somewhere between ESAP and EGAP, perhaps in a blended model that acknowledges the value of specificity and generalizability. EGAP is a crucial first step in laying the foundation for academic language proficiency. This foundation can be further strengthened through discipline-specific modules or electives, equipping students with the targeted skills they need to excel in their chosen fields.

Several key findings can be identified from the systematic literature review. These are summarized in the table below.

Effectiveness of ESAP and EGAP	Both ESAP and EGAP contribute to academic English learning. ESAP focuses on postgraduate and professional work, while EGAP concentrates on proficiency tests like IELTS/TOEFL.
Challenges in Teaching ESAP	Teachers who are subject specialists may lack the expertise and desire to teach literacy skills in English. Subject teachers often neglect language conventions, emphasizing content over language forms. Students in Iran expressed dissatisfaction with ESAP courses, citing issues with reading fluency, speaking, and writing skills.
Importance of Teacher Training in ESAP	Teachers of ESAP need specific training and course planning. Lack of teacher preparation can result in focusing on subject matter at the expense of language skills, including grammar.
Discipline-Specific Approach in EGAP	Liyanage and Birch's study indicates that international students prefer discipline-specific tasks in EGAP. EGAP helps relate content to students' academic disciplines and addresses language difficulties.
Teacher Roles in ESP Teaching	ESP practitioners are expected to fulfill various roles, including teacher, collaborator, course designer, researcher, and evaluator. ESAP teachers may face more challenges due to the need for specialized knowledge and research orientation.
EGAP as a Realistic Option	EGAP is considered a more realistic option due to its familiarity, flexibility, and lower demand for specialized research. It serves as a preparation stage for students before entering more specialized ESAP courses.

These key findings collectively suggest that while ESAP has its merits, significant challenges are associated with teaching and learning it, making EGAP a more practical and manageable option in many contexts. Teacher training and a disciplined-specific approach in EGAP are important factors in effective language teaching. Ultimately, ESP's success hinges on understanding each student's unique needs and learning goals. A nuanced approach that recognizes the strengths and limitations of both ESAP and EGAP, coupled with ongoing dialogue between educators, subject-matter experts, and students, holds the key to unlocking the full potential of ESP in tertiary education.

4. Conclusion

This paper explains English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) and English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP). It highlights that teaching English for General Academic Purposes is the most realistic option due to its ease of application, lack of heavy research on specific topics, ease of grading, and less training required than ESAP teaching. EGAP is more important than ESAP, as students must achieve it before moving on to other fields. EGAP focuses on improving students' communication, academic writing, note-taking, and reading skills. It trains students to listen to lectures, take notes, read professional documents, write academic papers, and participate in discussions in English. However, some teachers are not qualified to teach ESAP, and those with strong English skills like reading, writing, speaking, and listening can apply these skills easily for general academic purposes but find it challenging to apply in ESAP.

The debate surrounding ESP instruction in tertiary education reveals a complex labyrinth where specificity and generalizability intersect. While ESAP beckons with its alluring promise of real-world relevance and career-ready skills, its implementation demands extensive resources and specialized expertise. EGAP, on the other hand, offers a readily accessible path, equipping students with a broader academic skillset but potentially lacking the immediate contextual appeal. Therefore, the key lies not in choosing one path over the other but in charting a course that navigates the strengths and weaknesses. A blended model, where EGAP lays the essential foundation and discipline-specific modules build upon it, emerges as a promising solution. This approach acknowledges the need for both general academic proficiency and targeted field-specific skills, catering to the diverse needs of individual students and their chosen fields.

Ultimately, the success of ESP hinges on a collaborative effort. Educators, subject-matter experts, and students must engage in continuous dialogue, tailoring language instruction to meet the evolving demands of academic settings and professional landscapes. By embracing this collaborative spirit and acknowledging the multifaceted nature of ESP, we can unlock its true potential in empowering students to excel in their academic journeys and beyond. This conclusion summarizes the key takeaways from the review while emphasizing the importance of a blended approach and collaborative efforts in ESP teaching. It also injects a hopeful tone by highlighting the potential of ESP to empower students in their academic and professional pursuits. In conclusion, teaching English for General Academic Purposes is a more realistic option than ESAP, as it focuses on improving students' communication, academic writing, note-taking, and reading skills.

5. Theoretical Implications

The systematic literature review on English as a Second Language (ESP) teaching in tertiary education challenges the binary distinction between ESAP and EGAP, suggesting that the traditional approach may be outdated despite contemporary scholarship emphasizing interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. The review suggests that ESP should move beyond the binary and embrace a more fluid, integrative approach that acknowledges the interconnectedness of academic fields. The review also emphasizes the importance of learner agency in shaping effective ESP instruction, focusing on student preferences and learning goals. It suggests that curriculum development should involve students in identifying their learning needs and co-creating experiences that cater to their diverse aspirations and career paths. The review also suggests that the focus on specialized vocabulary and genre conventions traditionally associated with ESP might need to be expanded to encompass broader notions of language proficiency, such as developing critical thinking skills, argumentation, and the ability to analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources. These skills are crucial for navigating the complexities of interdisciplinary research and effectively communicating across disciplinary boundaries. Lastly, the review underscores the evolving role of ESP teachers, who must act as facilitators and mentors, guiding students in navigating the complexities of their chosen fields and developing critical thinking and communication skills necessary for success in an interdisciplinary world. This necessitates continuous professional development that fosters collaboration with subject-matter experts and equips teachers with the pedagogical tools to navigate the evolving landscape of knowledge production.

6. Practical Implications

Theoretical considerations surrounding ESP teaching should be translated into practical actions. Key ways to bridge the gap between theory and reality include a blended learning model, focusing on EGAP as the foundation, incorporating discipline-specific modules, and fostering interdisciplinary projects. The needs analysis should consider the broader context of a globalized knowledge economy and the transferable skills needed for future careers. A student-centered approach is essential, involving students in identifying their learning needs and career aspirations. Emphasizing adaptability is crucial, focusing on critical thinking, problem-solving, and research skills. ESP teachers should be equipped with professional development tools to navigate interdisciplinary contexts and collaborate with subject-matter experts. Regular dialogue and collaboration between teachers and faculty from different disciplines ensure curriculum relevance and effectiveness. Technology integration can create interactive learning environments that simulate real-world scenarios and promote authentic communication across disciplines. By implementing these strategies, ESP can prepare students for the complexities and interconnectedness of the 21st-century world. The key lies in continuous adaptation, collaboration, and a willingness to embrace the evolving nature of knowledge and communication in our increasingly interdisciplinary landscape.

7. Future Research

Studying English as a Second Language (ESP) teaching in higher education has yielded valuable insights, but many uncharted territories remain to explore. Some promising avenues include the interdisciplinary ESP landscape, learner agency and curriculum design, the evolving role of ESP teachers, the ESP assessment conundrum, and the impact of technological advancements. The interdisciplinary ESP landscape involves examining effective models for integrating ESP within interdisciplinary academic programs, analyzing language demands and communication practices in collaborative research across disciplines, and developing assessment

tools that capture the evolving nature of language proficiency in interdisciplinary contexts. Learner agency and curriculum design involve exploring student preferences and learning styles, fostering learner autonomy, and evaluating the impact of ESP programs on students' career preparedness and adaptability. The ESP assessment conundrum involves developing comprehensive assessment tools that capture broader communication skills needed in ESP contexts, examining the validity and reliability of assessment methods for interdisciplinary projects and collaborative learning activities, and exploring the potential of immersive technologies (VR, AR) in creating authentic learning environments for ESP students. Continuous exploration and innovation are crucial for ensuring that ESP remains relevant, responsive, and effective in the ever-evolving landscape of higher education.

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