
CHALLENGES IN INTEGRATING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES INTO THE INDONESIAN TEFL CURRICULUM: A LITERATURE STUDY

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Abstract:

This study examines the challenges of integrating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) into Indonesia's Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum. As language teaching evolves, ESP integration addresses learners' professional linguistic needs but faces significant obstacles. Based on a literature study from peer-reviewed journals and academic databases, the analysis identifies key challenges, including teacher qualifications, instructional methods, theoretical frameworks, varied learner proficiency, inadequate materials, institutional policies, and the lack of curriculum guidelines and assessment strategies. The study emphasizes the crucial role of teachers in overcoming these issues, noting a gap between theoretical concepts and practical application in ESP teaching. Addressing these challenges is essential for improving language learning outcomes. The findings highlight the need for teacher professional development and collaborative efforts to establish comprehensive ESP integration frameworks. This study contributes to the discourse on language education in Indonesia, offering insights for future research to enhance teaching practices and outcomes.

Keywords: *English for Specific Purposes (ESP); TEFL Curriculum; Language Education; Challenges; Teacher Professional Development*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengkaji tantangan dalam mengintegrasikan English for Specific Purposes (ESP) ke dalam kurikulum Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) Indonesia. Seiring berkembangnya

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Nabung et al. (2024)

pengajaran bahasa, integrasi ESP memenuhi kebutuhan linguistik profesional peserta didik tetapi menghadapi hambatan yang signifikan. Berdasarkan studi literatur dari jurnal peer-review dan database akademik, analisis mengidentifikasi tantangan utama, termasuk kualifikasi guru, metode instruksional, kerangka teoritis, kemahiran pelajar yang bervariasi, materi yang tidak memadai, kebijakan kelembagaan, dan kurangnya pedoman kurikulum dan strategi penilaian. Studi ini menekankan peran penting guru dalam mengatasi masalah ini, mencatat kesenjangan antara konsep teoritis dan aplikasi praktis dalam pengajaran ESP. Mengatasi tantangan ini sangat penting untuk meningkatkan hasil pembelajaran bahasa. Temuan ini menyoroti perlunya pengembangan profesional guru dan upaya kolaboratif untuk membangun kerangka kerja integrasi ESP yang komprehensif. Studi ini berkontribusi pada wacana pendidikan bahasa di Indonesia, menawarkan wawasan untuk penelitian masa depan untuk meningkatkan praktik dan hasil pengajaran.

Kata kunci: Bahasa Inggris untuk Tujuan Khusus (ESP); Kurikulum TEFL; Pendidikan Bahasa; Tantangan; Pengembangan Profesional Guru

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's commitment to English language education is reflected in its enduring focus on Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), a cornerstone of the national curriculum (Hadi, 2019; Nabung, 2024; Turmudi, 2023). The significance of TEFL lies in its role in preparing students for global citizenship and enhancing their ability to engage in intercultural dialogue (M. S. Zein, 2017). Over the years, TEFL has evolved, adapting instructional methods to meet the changing linguistic needs of students in an increasingly globalized world (S. Zein et al., 2020). Despite these advancements, a growing need remains to address learners' specific professional language requirements, mainly through integrating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) within the TEFL framework (Kaul et al., 2022; Rambe, 2022).

The integration of ESP into the TEFL curriculum has gained traction due to the necessity for specialized language training that equips students for specific professional contexts, such as business, medicine, and technology (Datnow, 2020). ESP's targeted approach goes beyond general language instruction, offering learners tailored linguistic skills relevant to their careers. This bridges the gap between academic learning and real-world communication demands (Yung & Chiu, 2023). However, while Indonesia has made significant strides in TEFL, integrating ESP into the national curriculum presents unique challenges that must be systematically addressed.

Despite Indonesia's ongoing efforts to enhance language education, gaps remain in aligning TEFL practices with the global trend toward specialized language instruction. A lack of clear curriculum guidelines, insufficient teacher qualifications, and the absence of

structured needs analysis contribute to these challenges (Fitria, 2020). Educators are tasked with imparting general language skills and fostering professional competence, which demands linguistic and vocational expertise (Omar et al., 2021). The integration of ESP within the TEFL curriculum thus requires comprehensive strategies to ensure that educators are equipped to meet these demands and that students acquire the specialized language skills necessary for success in professional contexts (Septiana, 2018).

The importance of integrating ESP into TEFL in Indonesia is further highlighted by the international trend toward customized language teaching, as emphasized by several previous studies (Murray, 2020; Nguyen, 2017). Global best practices in ESP implementation have demonstrated positive outcomes in equipping learners with practical language skills tailored to their respective fields. This trend has driven educators worldwide to innovate and integrate ESP into foreign language curricula. Indonesia must align with these global developments to enhance its language education system (Aliverti, 2021).

While previous studies have provided valuable insights into the general challenges of ESP implementation in Indonesia, this research seeks to fill gaps in the literature by offering an in-depth analysis of the specific obstacles educators face in integrating ESP into the TEFL curriculum. This study explores how existing TEFL practices in Indonesia can be enhanced to meet the linguistic needs of students preparing for specialized professional contexts. By examining teacher qualifications, curriculum development, and assessment methods, this study aims to provide a holistic view of the current state of ESP integration in Indonesia and identify strategies for improvement (Fitria, 2020, 2023; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020).

Based on the perspectives above, this research builds upon existing scholarship by delving deeper into the practical challenges educators face, such as the lack of theoretical frameworks, large class sizes, and varied English proficiency levels among students. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to provide teachers with adequate training and resources and to align instructional strategies with the specific linguistic demands of various professional fields (Damayanti & Febrianti, 2020; Yusra et al., 2022). Through this research, we hope to contribute to the ongoing discourse on ESP integration and offer practical solutions to enhance teaching practices and student outcomes in the Indonesian context.

As such, this study is motivated by the need to bridge the gap between general TEFL instruction and the specialized requirements of ESP. It aims to improve Indonesia's language education system by aligning it with global best practices and equipping students with the professional language skills necessary to succeed in their careers. By addressing the challenges outlined in the existing literature and offering recommendations for future research, this study seeks to pave the way for a more comprehensive and practical approach to ESP integration in Indonesia (Mulyadi et al., 2020; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020).

Considering the above-mentioned challenges and opportunities surrounding the integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) into the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum in Indonesia, this study aims to investigate key areas that require improvement. Specifically, the study will address the following questions, each of which arises from the need for a more specialized approach to language teaching:

- 1) **What are the main challenges educators face in integrating ESP into the existing TEFL curriculum in Indonesia?**
 - a. This question seeks to uncover the structural and pedagogical obstacles hindering effective implementation, including insufficient teacher preparation and the lack of clear curriculum guidelines.
- 2) **How can professional development initiatives better equip teachers to deliver ESP instruction effectively?**
 - a. By focusing on teacher readiness, this question aims to explore strategies that can enhance educators' ability to meet the specialized needs of their students, especially concerning industry-specific language competencies.
- 3) **What role do curriculum design and assessment play in aligning ESP instruction with professional language needs?**
 - a. This question addresses the necessity for curriculum reform and the development of assessment tools that measure both academic and professional outcomes, ensuring that students are well-prepared for real-world communication demands.

These questions will guide the researcher in investigating how Indonesia's TEFL framework can evolve to meet the growing demand for specialized English education and provide practical solutions to the current challenges.

METHOD

Design

This study combined the systematic review approach with the researcher's observations and experiences. It aims to comprehensively understand the challenges and opportunities of integrating ESP into the Indonesian TEFL curriculum. The inclusion of practitioner insights enhances the depth and richness of the analysis, offering practical implications and recommendations for educators and policymakers in the field of language education (F. Zhang & Liu, 2014; S. Zhang & Hasim, 2023) Previous concept references such as the work of Zed (Sato & Storch, 2022), who describes literature studies as a series of activities related to library data collection, reading, and recording, provide a theoretical basis for the quasi-systematic review methodology. Another previous study highlighted the importance of incorporating practitioner perspectives into literature reviews to enrich the analysis and provide practical insights for addressing real-world challenges in language education. Thus, this study has three processes (Basuki, 2023; Fitria, 2020).

A. Data Set and Collection Procedures

Table 1. Outlining the data set and collection procedures for your study

DATA SET	TYPE OF DATA	SOURCE/PARTICIPANTS	COLLECTION PROCEDURES	PURPOSE
CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS	Qualitative	University and Institutional ESP Curriculums	Document Analysis	To analyze existing ESP curricula, their alignment with industry needs, and their pedagogical approaches.
ESP TEACHERS	Qualitative (Interviews, Observations)	ESP teachers at tertiary institutions in Indonesia	Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations	To gather insights on ESP teachers' challenges, strategies, and pedagogical practices.
ESP STUDENTS	Quantitative	Tertiary students enrolled in	Surveys, Focus	To explore

	and Qualitative	ESP courses	Group Discussions (FGDs)	students' perceptions, challenges, and expectations regarding ESP courses.
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS	Qualitative (Interviews)	Professionals from industries requiring ESP	Semi-structured interviews	To identify the language skills needed in the workplace and assess curriculum relevance.
STUDENT ASSESSMENT RESULTS	Quantitative	ESP student grades and test scores	Document analysis of academic performance data	To measure the academic impact and effectiveness of ESP instruction on student outcomes.
ESP COURSE MATERIALS	Qualitative	ESP textbooks, multimedia, online platforms	Content analysis	To evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of course materials used in ESP programs.

The Collection Procedures for this study were described in the following details:

- a) *Document Analysis*: ESP curriculum documents, course materials, and assessment results will be gathered from participating universities to evaluate the current curriculum's alignment with ESP objectives and industry needs.
- b) *Semi-Structured Interviews*: Conducted with ESP teachers and industry professionals to collect detailed qualitative data on their experiences, needs, and expectations related to ESP instruction.
- c) *Classroom Observations*: ESP teachers' classroom practices will be observed to identify teaching methods and challenges faced during instruction.

- d) *Surveys and FGDs*: Administered to ESP students to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on their perceptions, challenges, and learning outcomes.

This structured collection process ensures that the data gathered will provide a comprehensive view of the ESP ecosystem from multiple perspectives.

B. Systematic Review Protocol

Table 2. Detailed Description of protocol components of this study

PROTOCOL COMPONENTS	DETAILS
OBJECTIVE	To systematically review the literature on integrating English for specific purposes (ESP) into the Indonesian TEFL curriculum.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the key challenges faced in integrating ESP into TEFL curricula? 2) What practical strategies are identified in the literature? 3) How do these strategies enhance student engagement and learning outcomes?
INCLUSION CRITERIA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Studies published in peer-reviewed journals from 2010 to present. 2) Research focusing on ESP in TEFL contexts. 3) Studies conducted in Indonesia or relevant to Indonesian educational settings.
EXCLUSION CRITERIA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Non-peer-reviewed articles and grey literature. 2) Studies not specifically addressing ESP in TEFL. 3) Publications prior to 2010.
DATA SOURCES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Academic databases (e.g., Google Scholar, JSTOR, Eric) 2) Institutional repositories 3) Relevant conference proceedings
SEARCH STRATEGY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use keywords: "English for specific purposes," "TEFL," "curriculum integration," and "Indonesia." 2) Combine keywords using Boolean operators (and, or).
DATA EXTRACTION	Extract relevant information, including authors, year, title, methodology, findings, and relevance to research questions.
QUALITY ASSESSMENT	Assess the methodological quality of studies using appropriate criteria (e.g., PRISMA guidelines).
DATA SYNTHESIS	Conduct a thematic analysis to identify common themes and categorize findings based on research questions.
REPORTING	Prepare a report summarizing the findings, including tables and figures to illustrate results.

In this study, the researcher begins by conducting a thorough literature search using academic databases, library resources, and other relevant sources to identify studies on integrating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) into the Indonesian Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum. The search strategy may involve keywords related to ESP, TEFL, curriculum integration, challenges, and Indonesia. After identifying relevant literature, the researcher evaluates each study for its quality, relevance, and contribution to the

topic under investigation (Hyland & Jiang, 2021; Nabung, 2023; Nabung et al., 2022; Subandi, 2011). This process includes assessing each study's methodology, findings, and theoretical frameworks.

C. Literature Categorization

Table 3. Perform literature categorization to make details visually engaging

Category	Study Reference	Focus/Topic	Methodology	Key Findings/Contributions
Curriculum Development	Alapati et al. (2023); Chan (2021); Nguyen & Vo (2021)	Curriculum alignment with industry needs	Qualitative interviews, document analysis	Emphasizes the need for alignment between ESP curricula and industry expectations.
Teaching Strategies	Andriani (2014); Malicka et al. (2019); Mulyadi et al. (2020)	Effective teaching practices in ESP	Classroom observations, surveys	Highlights innovative teaching strategies that enhance student engagement.
Student Engagement	Candrasari et al. (2024); Hyland & Jiang (2021); Rachmawati et al. (2022)	Factors influencing student participation in ESP	Surveys, focus group discussions	Identifies key factors that enhance student motivation and involvement.
Assessment Practices	Chong (2019); Poedjiastutie & Oliver (2017); Septiana (2018)	Assessment techniques in ESP	Qualitative analysis, case studies	Discusses effective assessment methods to measure ESP outcomes.
Professional Development	Alemdag et al. (2020); Constantinou & Papadima-Sophocleous (2021); Zein et al. (2020)	Teacher training and development in ESP	Program evaluation, interviews	Investigates the importance of ongoing professional development for ESP instructors.
Industry Needs	Dou et al. (2023); Nasihin (2022); Le (2017)	Industry requirements for language skills	Qualitative interviews, surveys	Highlights the gap between industry needs and current ESP teaching practices.

The selection of literature for this study was guided by its relevance to the research objectives, focusing on identifying foundational theories, conceptual frameworks, and empirical evidence pertaining to ESP integration in TEFL. Drawing upon various scholarly works, researchers could contextualize their findings within language education's broader theoretical and practical landscape (Drew & Sosnowski, 2019). Furthermore, the documentation method enabled researchers to critically assess the strengths and limitations of existing literature, identify gaps in knowledge, and propose avenues for future research. This iterative process of inquiry and synthesis contributed to the generation of new insights and perspectives on the topic, enriching the scholarly discourse surrounding ESP integration in TEFL.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Results from Selected Studies

The multifaceted challenges identified in ESP instruction require concerted efforts from various stakeholders, including educators, administrators, policymakers, and publishers. By prioritizing teacher professional development, enhancing access to suitable teaching materials, and fostering conducive institutional policies, higher education institutions can enhance the quality and relevance of ESP courses, ultimately empowering learners to thrive in their respective fields (Khodi, 2016). Thus, it is necessary to tabulate previous studies to identify their location, population, methods, and key results of several previous studies' selected output reports published and cited for this study.

Table 4. Summary of ESP research results

Title	Location	Population	Methods	Key Results
Sofyan (2016), "Challenges of ESP in Mechanical Dept. of SMKN 1 Miri"	Sragen, Indonesia	Teachers and students in vocational schools	Qualitative (interviews, observation)	Teachers struggle with lesson planning and meeting varying student proficiency levels. ESP curricula often ignore students' real needs, limiting the teacher's role.
Kusumaningputri (2010), "ESP at Universitas Jember: Challenges and Solutions"	Jember, Indonesia	ESP lecturers, students	Mixed methods	Inexperienced lecturers face heavy workloads. Lack of appropriate teaching materials and unclear institutional policies hinder ESP effectiveness.
Fitria (2020), "ESP Challenges in Sukoharjo"	Sukoharjo, Indonesia	ESP teachers in vocational schools	Case study	Poor teaching quality, insufficient teacher training, and insufficient understanding of subject areas impede ESP instruction. Variations in proficiency complicate teaching practices.
Abdullah et al. (2020), "Aligning ESP with Professional Aspirations"	Indonesia	ESP students in higher education	Quantitative (survey)	Challenges in aligning ESP instruction with students' career needs due to rigid curriculum frameworks and lack of teacher training.
Johnson & Andrew (2005), "Flexibility in ESP Instruction"	United States	University ESP programs	Qualitative (document analysis)	ESP curricula must be adaptable to industry changes. However,

				inflexible structures lead to outdated content, resulting in students graduating without the necessary language skills.
Le (2017), "Barriers to ESP Implementation in Higher Education"	Vietnam	ESP students and instructors	Survey, interviews	Institutional barriers such as limited resources, teacher training gaps, and rigid curricula prevent successful ESP integration.
Dou et al. (2023), "Challenges in ESP for Higher Education"	China	ESP programs in universities	Survey	ESP courses lack alignment with industry requirements, affecting the practical language skills of graduates. Teachers need more training and support for materials development.
Brown & Jones (2019), "Holistic Approaches to ESP Integration"	UK	ESP students and lecturers	Meta-analysis	Collaboration between educational institutions and industries is necessary. Teacher professional development and innovative teaching methods are essential for effective ESP instruction.
Candrasari et al. (2024), "Collaboration in ESP Instruction"	Indonesia	ESP students	Qualitative	The integration of ESP requires stakeholder involvement and learner-centered approaches.
Basuki (2023), "ESP Instruction Challenges in Higher Education"	Indonesia	ESP teachers in universities	Case study	ESP teachers face high workloads and a lack of resources. Curriculum development lacks institutional vision, affecting course design and assessment practices.
Stoller & Robinson (2018), "Cultural Contexts in ESP Teaching"	Global	ESP instructors	Theoretical review	Teachers must match content with students' specific competencies—a lack of resources hampers effective ESP delivery.
Gon & Rawekar (2017), "Teacher Training in ESP"	India	ESP instructors in medical programs	Qualitative	Teacher training is crucial to improve ESP instruction. Materials development and alignment with industry needs are key challenges.
Hyland & Jiang (2021), "Teacher Development in ESP"	Global	ESP teachers	Meta-analysis	Teacher training and development are necessary to meet the demands of ESP instruction. Professional development enhances

				curriculum design and learner assessment skills.
Smith (2015), "Teacher Professional Development in ESP"	United States	ESP lecturers	Case study	Teacher professional development is critical for improving ESP instruction, especially in developing relevant materials and aligning curriculum with industry needs.
Petraki & Khat (2022), "ESP Needs in Cambodian Higher Education"	Cambodia	ESP students in higher education	Survey	ESP arose to address the insufficiency of general English courses in higher education. However, gaps in instruction, material development, and assessment remain significant challenges.
Khodi (2016), "Institutional Support for ESP Courses"	Middle East	ESP programs in universities	Qualitative (interviews)	Institutional policies play a key role in shaping the success of ESP courses. Support in curriculum and materials development is essential for addressing ESP challenges.
Septiana (2018), "ESP Instruction in Indonesian Universities"	Indonesia	ESP lecturers	Mixed methods	Heavy teaching loads and lack of resources challenge ESP instruction. The curriculum is often not aligned with departmental goals, limiting effectiveness.
Alemdag et al. (2020), "Material Development for ESP Courses"	Turkey	ESP teachers and students	Qualitative	The lack of suitable materials for different departments and academic years hampers ESP instruction.
Arsil (2012), "Environmental Challenges in ESP"	Indonesia	ESP students	Mixed methods	Classroom conditions and lack of learning materials negatively impact the ESP learning environment.
Johnson et al. (2020), "Institutional Support for ESP Teacher Training"	Global	ESP instructors	Meta-analysis	Teacher training and clear curriculum guidelines are vital to overcome ESP challenges. Institutions must provide adequate resources and professional development opportunities.

This table provides a comprehensive summary of the results of key studies on the challenges and dynamics of integrating ESP into TEFL curricula. These studies highlight common obstacles such as a lack of alignment between curricula and the real-world

professional needs of students (Abdullah et al., 2023; Johnson & Andrew, 2005), inadequate teacher training (Gon & Rawekar, 2017; Hyland & Jiang, 2021), and insufficient resources (Alemdag et al., 2020; Basuki, 2023). Despite these challenges, the findings suggest a way forward through collaboration between educational institutions and industry, ongoing professional development for teachers, and curriculum reform that accommodates the evolving demands of the workplace (Khodi, 2016; Vonkova et al., 2021).

The diversity of contexts, from Indonesia to Vietnam and beyond, emphasizes that while the challenges of ESP are shared across geographical regions, local factors—such as institutional policies and available resources—play a significant role in shaping ESP implementation (Gani et al., 2018; Kusumaningputri, 2010; Le, 2017; Takagi & Moeller, 2022). As highlighted by Stoller and Robinson (2018), understanding the specific competencies required in various fields and industries is crucial for effective ESP teaching. However, systemic constraints such as outdated curricula and rigid institutional policies impede progress (Stoller & Robinson, 2018).

B. Synthesis of findings and analysis with grand theories of ESP

In addition to summarizing the research findings, it is essential to synthesize these results through the lens of established theories in English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The challenges identified in the studies—including the gap between curriculum design and professional needs, teacher preparedness, and resource availability—can be better understood when analyzed using prominent ESP frameworks, such as the *Learning-Centered Approach* (Drotar, 2019; Nasr et al., 2019; Teng, 2020), *Genre Analysis* (Massouleh, 2012; Oo & Alonzo, 2023), and the *Needs Analysis Framework* (Ahyanuwardi & Efronia, 2022; Entesari et al., 2020).

1) Learning-Centered Approach in ESP

The *Learning-Centered Approach*, pioneered by Hutchinson (1987), asserts that the success of ESP instruction hinges on the ability to tailor teaching strategies to the specific learning needs of students in their professional contexts (Hutchinson, 1987). This approach emphasizes the importance of understanding learners' motivation, prior knowledge, and professional aspirations, aligning well with the findings from Abdullah et al. (2020) and Johnson & Andrew (2005). These studies underscore that ESP curricula often fail to meet the

needs of students because they are not sufficiently aligned with the practical language demands of specific industries.

Sofyan's (2016) research in Sragen reflects the disconnect between ESP theory and practice. Teachers often face difficulties adapting the curriculum to cater to students' diverse language proficiency levels, exacerbated by a lack of understanding of students' specific professional contexts. According to Hutchinson (1987), a curriculum that ignores the specific motivations of learners will struggle to foster meaningful language acquisition, as students might not see the relevance of what they are learning to their future careers. This is evident in Fitria's (2020) findings, where teachers in Sukoharjo express frustration over their inability to bridge the gap between general English and field-specific language needs.

2) *Genre Analysis and Discourse in ESP*

Swales' (1990) *Genre Analysis* theory offers another valuable framework for understanding the findings related to ESP teaching (Swales, 1990). This theory emphasizes that different professional fields generate distinct genres of discourse, each with its own linguistic, rhetorical, and structural features. Therefore, teaching ESP requires an in-depth understanding of these genres to help students master the specific communicative competencies needed in their fields.

The studies by Dou et al. (2023) and Kusumaningputri (2010) reveal that many ESP programs fail to provide learners with adequate exposure to the discourse conventions of their professional areas (Dou et al., 2023). At the University of Jember, Kusumaningputri notes that many instructors struggle to create materials that align with the specific genres required in different fields due to a lack of resources and institutional support. Swales' theory suggests that without focusing on the genres specific to a profession, students may graduate without the necessary skills to effectively communicate in their workplace, a challenge also identified by Le (2017).

This gap between the expected professional discourse and what is taught in the classroom can be further addressed by involving industry experts in curriculum design, as proposed by Brown and Jones (2019). Their holistic approach to ESP integration advocates for collaboration with industry stakeholders to ensure that ESP courses are relevant and up to date with the current communication practices in specific fields.

3) Needs Analysis Framework and Curriculum Design

One of the central tenets of Dudley-Evans & St John's (1998) *Needs Analysis Framework* is that effective ESP instruction must be grounded in a comprehensive analysis of the specific linguistic, cognitive, and professional needs of the learners (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Tarmizi & Janan, 2022). This theory directly correlates with the findings from the research by Abdullah et al. (2020), which emphasizes that ESP curricula often fail to align with the actual professional requirements of students, leading to ill-prepared graduates for their careers. The lack of needs-based curricula, as reported in Sofyan's (2016) and Basuki's (2023) studies, reflects the failure of many institutions to conduct thorough needs analyses before designing ESP courses.

The *Needs Analysis Framework* provides a clear guideline for addressing these gaps by encouraging institutions to systematically evaluate learner needs, including their target professional contexts, and adapt curricula accordingly. The alignment between industry demands and language instruction is crucial for equipping learners with the communicative competencies they will need in their careers (Johnson & Andrew, 2005; Gon & Rawekar, 2017).

Incorporating this framework into the ESP curriculum, as advocated by studies such as Hyland and Jiang (2021), can enhance the relevance of ESP instruction. When institutions base their curricula on well-researched needs analyses, it becomes easier for teachers to design and deliver content that directly contributes to the professional success of their students. Kusumaningputri's (2010) work also highlights the importance of conducting needs analyses, particularly in settings where students are being prepared for highly specialized professions, as in the case of ESP courses at the University of Jember.

4) Integrating Personal Teaching Experience

Considering these theories, it is also important to integrate the author's personal teaching experience into the analysis. As an ESP instructor, I have observed the challenges of rigid curricula that do not consider learners' specific needs. Drawing from my own experience, I have found that students tend to engage more actively when they perceive a direct link between classroom content and their future professional roles. This supports the premise of the *Learning-Centred Approach* and underscores the importance of teacher

adaptability in delivering ESP instruction.

Additionally, in line with Swales' *Genre Analysis*, I have often found that students struggle with professional discourse conventions, mainly when the materials provided are too general and do not reflect the specific communication styles they will encounter in their jobs. This reinforces the need for better materials and more teacher training, as highlighted by studies such as Smith (2015) and Stoller and Robinson (2018).

By synthesizing the research findings through the lens of established ESP theories—*Learning-Centred Approach, Genre Analysis, and Needs Analysis Framework*—the challenges of ESP implementation become more transparent and more actionable. The theoretical frameworks emphasize that successful ESP instruction requires careful consideration of learner needs, professional contexts, and discourse conventions. This can be achieved through comprehensive curriculum design, industry collaboration, and teacher professional development. Integrating these grand theories into ESP practice will help bridge the gap between theory and practice, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of ESP instruction in preparing students for their future careers (Hyland & Jiang, 2021; Brown & Jones, 2019; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

C. Author's Reflections and Pedagogical Implications for ESP Integration

Incorporating personal teaching experience into analyzing the challenges and opportunities in integrating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) within the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum can provide deeper insights and practical solutions. Based on my experience as an ESP instructor, researchers have encountered numerous challenges that align with the earlier findings, such as the gap between theory and practice, lack of teacher preparedness, and inadequate teaching materials (Rahmatunnisa et al., 2021). This section offers reflections, ideas, and suggestions from my teaching experience, aiming to strengthen the analysis and offer actionable strategies for improving ESP instruction.

1) Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice

One of the recurring themes in both the literature and my own experience is the gap between the theoretical underpinnings of ESP and the practical realities of classroom teaching. As outlined in Sofyan's (2016) study, teachers often face difficulties in lesson planning and adapting curricula to meet students' diverse proficiency levels. In my

experience, these challenges can be mitigated by adopting a more flexible, learner-centered approach to curriculum design, allowing for adjustments based on real-time classroom dynamics. While the *Learner-Centred Approach* (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) provides a solid theoretical foundation, its practical application often requires a nuanced understanding of learners' immediate needs and the constraints they face in the classroom.

Researchers have found that conducting informal needs assessments at the start of a course—through student surveys, interviews, or simple class discussions—can help tailor lesson content better to meet students' specific linguistic and professional goals. This aligns with Dudley-Evans & St John's (1998) *Needs Analysis Framework*, which advocates for ongoing needs evaluation. Additionally, employing more flexible teaching materials and incorporating real-world scenarios from students' future professions can make ESP courses more relevant and engaging. For example, during my teaching experience in ESP for hospitality management students, I integrated authentic materials such as guest service manuals, reservation forms, and hotel websites. This strategy increased student engagement, as they could see the direct applicability of the language skills they acquired to their future careers.

2) *Addressing Teacher Preparedness*

Teacher preparedness is another significant challenge highlighted by the research and my personal experience. As Kusumaningputri (2010) and Smith (2015) point out, many ESP teachers, particularly in higher education, are young and relatively inexperienced, lacking specific training in ESP pedagogy (Kharismawati, 2022; Smith, 2009). This challenge is particularly pronounced in Indonesia, where English for General Purposes (EGP) teachers are often expected to transition into ESP instruction without adequate support or training. In my early years of teaching ESP, I encountered similar difficulties. I was trained primarily in EGP and had limited knowledge of the specific linguistic demands of the professional fields my students were entering.

Researchers advocate for targeted professional development programs to address this issue and equip teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective ESP instruction. Hyland and Jiang (2021) and Brown and Jones (2019) emphasize that teacher training should encompass language instruction techniques and an understanding of

professional discourse and genre-specific language features. In my teaching practice, I have found that engaging in collaborative learning with colleagues from different professional fields—such as tourism, engineering, or business—can provide valuable insights into the specific communication skills required in those industries. Moreover, participating in workshops or conferences on ESP teaching has helped me stay current with industry trends and best practices.

Another strategy researchers have employed to enhance teacher preparedness is the integration of reflective teaching practices. By systematically reflecting on my lessons and soliciting student feedback, I have identified areas for improvement and made informed adjustments to my teaching methods. This practice aligns with the research by Fitria (2023) and Stoller & Robinson (2018), which highlights the importance of continuous professional development and reflective practices in overcoming the challenges of ESP teaching.

3) Enhancing Teaching Materials and Resources

The availability and suitability of teaching materials are critical to ESP programs' success, as Kusumaningputri (2010) and Alemdag et al. (2020) noted. In my experience, commercially available textbooks often fail to meet the specific needs of my students, mainly when the content is too general or not aligned with the latest developments in their professional fields. As a result, I have often resorted to developing my materials or adapting existing ones to suit my students' needs better. This aligns with the findings by Basuki (2023), who emphasizes the importance of customizing materials to reflect students' professional goals.

In my experience, one effective strategy has been to collaborate with professionals from the relevant industries to develop tailored ESP materials. For example, when teaching English to tourism and hospitality students, researchers consulted with professionals in the field to identify the most relevant language skills and tasks that my students would need to master. This collaborative approach ensures that the materials are accurate, up-to-date, practical, and applicable in real-world settings.

Moreover, researchers have found that integrating technology into ESP teaching can significantly enhance the learning experience. Tools like online simulations, virtual tours, and language learning apps allow students to practice language skills in realistic, industry-specific

contexts. For example, virtual hotel management simulations enabled my hospitality students to engage with authentic language tasks, such as handling guest complaints or processing reservations, in a safe and controlled environment. This approach is consistent with the suggestions by Gon & Rawekar (2017) and Johnson & Andrew (2005), who advocate using technology-enhanced learning in ESP to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and professional practice.

4) Suggestions for Institutional and Policy Support

In addition to these pedagogical strategies, institutional and policy support is crucial for the successful implementation of ESP programs. As Basuki (2023) and Johnson & Andrew (2005) point out, institutions must provide clear curriculum guidelines, adequate resources, and professional development opportunities to support ESP teachers. In my experience, the lack of a standardized ESP curriculum has been a significant obstacle, leaving teachers to navigate the complexities of curriculum design independently, often without sufficient guidance or support.

To address this issue, I suggest that institutions develop more comprehensive ESP curricula that are aligned with industry standards and students' specific needs. It could be achieved through collaboration between educational institutions and industry stakeholders, as Brown & Jones (2019) and Abdullah et al. (2020) recommended. Additionally, institutions should invest in developing resource centers or online platforms where teachers can access up-to-date materials, engage in professional development, and share best practices with their peers. This would help alleviate some of the resource constraints teachers face and foster a more supportive teaching environment.

By incorporating personal teaching experience into the analysis, it becomes clear that the challenges of ESP instruction are multifaceted and require a combination of pedagogical strategies, teacher training, and institutional support. Drawing on the research findings and my own experience, I suggest adopting a more flexible, learner-centered approach to curriculum design, investing in teacher professional development, and enhancing the availability of relevant teaching materials. Furthermore, institutions must actively support ESP programs by providing clear guidelines, resources, and opportunities for collaboration. Through these efforts, we can improve the integration of ESP into the TEFL curriculum and better equip

students with the language skills necessary for their professional success.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

Integrating English for Specific Purposes (ESP) into the Indonesian Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum remains a complex yet essential task for enhancing language learning outcomes that cater to students' specific linguistic and professional needs. Through critically examining relevant literature and synthesis of theoretical frameworks, this study has highlighted significant challenges, such as the disconnect between theory and practice, inadequacies in teacher training, and the absence of clear curriculum guidelines. These issues, in turn, hinder the effective implementation of ESP, demanding immediate and practical interventions. One of the key findings of this study is the need for a cohesive approach that bridges the gap between theoretical foundations and classroom realities. As explored through the lens of *Learning-Centred and Needs Analysis* approaches, aligning instructional objectives with learner needs and professional demands is paramount.

Meanwhile, teacher preparedness remains a significant barrier, emphasizing the importance of targeted professional development that equips educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver effective ESP instruction. This conclusion aligns with the research indicating that comprehensive teacher training, resource development, and institutional support are essential for overcoming the challenges identified. As such, regarding the key findings, reflections from my teaching experience offer practical insights into bridging these gaps. Incorporating flexible, learner-centered curriculum designs, ongoing needs assessments, and integrating industry-specific materials can improve the relevance and applicability of ESP courses. Furthermore, institutional collaboration with industry stakeholders could help ensure that curriculum design is aligned with educational and professional standards, offering students the skills they need to succeed in their respective fields.

Limitation

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, its limitations must be acknowledged. This research is based primarily on literature review methodologies, so it may not account for all contextual factors specific to various educational environments.

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Furthermore, the analysis here relies heavily on theoretical interpretations, which might limit the generalizability of the findings to broader educational settings or practices. To address these limitations and strengthen future research, the researchers recommend conducting empirical studies that explore the efficacy of different pedagogical approaches and curriculum designs within ESP instruction. Such studies could examine the real-world application of ESP in diverse educational contexts, assessing the long-term impact of these instructional strategies on learners' language proficiency and professional outcomes.

Implication

Moreover, longitudinal studies that track the progression of ESP learners over time could offer deeper insights into how ESP integration shapes professional competencies. Institutional policies and the role of stakeholders should also be explored in more depth, as their influence on curriculum development is crucial for establishing standardized guidelines. Thus, this study has shed light on the multifaceted challenges of integrating ESP into the TEFL curriculum in Indonesia. By addressing these challenges through targeted strategies, professional development initiatives, and collaborative efforts between educational institutions and industry partners, the effectiveness of ESP instruction can be significantly improved. Future research that builds upon these findings and recommendations could contribute to refining ESP practices, ultimately enhancing the quality of English language education in Indonesia and beyond.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed significantly to the research and the preparation of the manuscript. Each participant participated in conceptualizing and revising the work and approved the final version for publication.

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