


## Inclusion of English for specific purposes in high school tracks: A Saudi context



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### ABSTRACT

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curricula.

English for specific purposes was created to meet the needs of a language for the purpose of carrying out all growing businesses and occupational functions, as well as accessing all kinds of scientific knowledge. The current study looks at the possibility of including an English for Specific Purposes (henceforth ESP) course in high school tracks. It also looks into factors such as the outcomes of ESP-trained general English instructors, appropriate materials and skills for teaching ESP, the pedagogical environment and teaching approaches of ESP, as well as the future of general English as ESP becomes more common. Through an eleven-item Likert scale survey and structured interviews conducted with four English language teachers, 135 English foreign language teachers were surveyed, and quantitative and qualitative data were collected. According to most participants, the inclusion of ESP in high school tracks will provide students with the vocabulary and structure they need to succeed in college. While ESP is considered an extension of general English (henceforth GE), its pedagogical environment and teaching approach differ, which means teachers should be trained in science, medical terms, and pedagogical aspects of ESP instruction to motivate their students and make them more enthusiastic about the subjects they will study in professional colleges after they have completed high school.

**Contribution/ Originality:** This study identifies those factors that affect the teaching of ESP such as the outcomes of ESP-trained GE instructors, appropriate materials and skills for teaching ESP, the pedagogical environment and teaching approaches to ESP, as well as the future of GE as ESP becomes more widespread.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The current landscape of English language teaching (ELT) has given rise to two separate streams of instruction: EGP (English for General Purposes), which focuses on helping students improve their English in everyday situations, and ESP (English for Specific Purposes), which places more emphasis on language use in its natural environment. ESP is a broad area of applied linguistics (Maggie & Diane, 2016) that is subdivided into EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) define EAP as a method for situating instruction in an understanding of the cognitive, social, and linguistic demands of specific academic disciplines. This moves teachers from the stage of teaching General English (GE) to the step of establishing various types of literacy. This involves providing students with the communication skills necessary to engage in certain academic and cultural settings. Traditional methods of teaching GE are increasingly seen as inadequate for preparing students for higher education and the workplace. According to Maggie and Diane

(2016) “The field of ESP was developed in the period after the Second World War when English began to grow into a major global language as it is today” (p. 8). In the postmodern period, English is more than simply a lingua franca; it also greatly facilitates academic and occupational goals. Since not all students have the same educational requirements, education professionals have abandoned more conventional teaching approaches. As a result of this learner-centered approach, ESP saw tremendous growth around the world, necessitating a shift in language policy, curriculum, methodologies, and pedagogical goals. Maggie and Diane (2016) highlight three key areas—material creation, teaching, and research—that need everyone involved in ESP. Thus, ESP is seen as a broad term that includes but is not limited to engineering, medicine, science, the sciences, and the humanities.

### *1.1. Research Background*

ESP came into existence mainly to fulfill the need for a language to accomplish all growing businesses and occupational functions. It also accesses all kinds of knowledge, especially scientific advancements. In its early stages, it was largely used to communicate across languages for businesses and industries. As it developed and gained fame, it expanded into many branches and areas like medicine, paramedics, and computers. Instead of being a specialized variety of English, ESP is English integrated into the learner's world. English, for all purposes, makes up a large part of ESP. In a special context, however, English gives ESP its true color (Ahmed, 2014; Far, 2008; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Most often, it consists of a mix of specific content (relating to a specific job area or industry) and general content (relating to how to communicate more effectively, especially in business situations). A significant aspect of ESP is that language needs are continuously assessed, and the program is focused accordingly.

This study explores how ESP is essential for students studying engineering, medicine, science, the humanities, and other tracks in Saudi Arabia's high schools. This study highlights its importance for students studying tracks in Saudi Arabia's high schools. This research investigates whether or not ESP should be included in high school tracks. It also investigates the outcomes of ESP-trained GE instructors, the most effective materials and skills for instructing ESP, the pedagogical environment for instructing ESP, and the future of GE as ESP becomes more widespread. In other words, this study examines how teachers perceive ESP inclusion in high school tracks. It also examines factors such as the outcomes of ESP-trained GE instructors, appropriate materials and skills for teaching ESP, pedagogical environments and teaching approaches for teaching ESP, and GE's future as ESP becomes more common.

### *1.2. Research Questions*

The present study answers the following research questions:

1. Is it possible to include ESP in the newly created Saudi high school track?
2. Do existing English teachers need to be trained on how to teach ESP to achieve a significant learning outcome?
3. Are there any materials or skills that can be used to teach ESP?
4. How does the pedagogical environment affect ESP teaching?
5. Is General English diminishing as ESP's scope expands?

These research questions demanded qualitative and quantitative research tools to reach valid conclusions. Findings and recommendations on these issues were also included in this research study.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *2.1. The Newly Updated High School Track System in Saudi Arabia*

As part of Saudi Vision 2030, the Ministry of Education has established an updated high school system known as the track system. It consists of nine semesters taught over three years. The high school student is allowed to choose the path most suited to his interests and talents, enabling him to finish his postsecondary education.

Following two years of focused study, students spend their first year studying a variety of scientific and human disciplines. This approach tries to change the learner from an information seeker to a knowledge producer. As a way of preparing students for life and finishing their education beyond secondary school. In addition, it allows them to engage in the job market rather than just consume knowledge. The updated system has five main tracks: public health and life, religion, computer science, engineering, and business administration. These tracks offer a variety of ways to learn. Students are taught several topics connected to the humanities, Islamic religion, applied sciences, and humanities throughout their first year of high school. There are tracks in the second and third years of high school, as follows:

- Common subjects include Arabic language, Islamic studies, and ecology.
- Specialized courses are shared by two or more tracks, such as the law course in the Islamic studies track and the business administration track. In addition, the engineering design course is included in the health and life track, and computer science in the engineering track.
- Specialized courses for each track, such as cyber security are included in the computer science or engineering track and the human body systems course in the health and life track.
- Elective subjects are only for general track students to develop their skills in specific functional areas.

In the implementation of the updated education tracks for high school students, the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia seeks to achieve many strategic goals. These include:

- Achieving Saudi Arabia's 2030 Vision.
- Meeting national development needs.
- Graduating qualified individuals and completing their education.
- Incorporating labor market requirements into education.
- Follow up on the Saudi market's most significant developments.
- Anticipating local and global future jobs.
- Providing a private and effective learning environment for students.
- Improving the high school curriculum and developing it.
- Keeping up with global changes in secondary education.

## *2.2. ESP Definitions*

ESP can be defined as a method of language instruction designed to help students achieve their academic and/or professional goals by providing them with the linguistic and pedagogical tools they need to communicate effectively in their chosen fields (Anthony, 2015). According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) there are two types of ESP characteristics: absolute and variable. In absolute terms, characteristics like ESP are designed to meet the specific needs of learners. ESP uses the methodology and activities of the discipline it serves as its basis, and it emphasizes grammar, lexis, registers, study skills, discourses, and genres that are appropriate to these activities. For variables, characteristics like specific disciplines may be designed for ESP. Specialized English teachers may use approaches different from general English teachers in particular circumstances. In addition to adult learners at tertiary institutions, ESP can also be intended for adults at work; however, it may also be targeted at secondary school students. ESP is most likely to be beneficial to intermediate or advanced students. Students in ESP courses are assumed to be familiar with language systems.

## *2.3. EGP vs. ESP*

In many ways, EGP and ESP complement and support each other, but they are also different at the same time. Based on how we define and implement learning purposes, Widdoson (1983) distinguished ESP from EGP as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. EGP vs. ESP.

EGP	ESP
Attention is paid to learning.	Attention is paid to training.
Choosing course content can be difficult due to uncertainty surrounding students' future English needs.	Choosing course content can be easy because English is used in a specific professional context.
The syllabus aims for a high surrender value (This refers to the total usefulness of the English covered in a given course; the higher the surrender value, the more valuable the course's content).	The syllabus already has a high surrender value. The English linguistic content is expected to be particularly relevant to the occupational context. The primary objective may be to develop specific English language proficiency.

#### 2.4. The ESP Practitioner's Role

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) identifies five different roles for ESP practitioners namely: Teachers, Collaborators, Materials Providers, Researchers, and Evaluators.

- *Teachers*

ESP teachers teach language clearly since an ESP instructor is undoubtedly a language teacher. This contains language relevant to the primary genres that learners will need to employ. ESP education also focuses on how critical it is to listen or read for meaning, how critical it is to write for an audience, and how critical it is to make learners aware of the communication techniques they use in the tasks they do. ESP teachers should be competent communication trainers. We cannot assume that all teachers are expected to be ESP teachers in all of these areas. However, they must be interested in and ready to learn about how specialists interact and language is used.

- *Collaborators*

A collaboration between ESP practitioners and topic experts is a partnership that assists the ESP practitioner in assembling course content and resources, planning student assignments, and defining student-teacher interactions. Team teaching, in which an ESP teacher and a subject-matter expert work together in the same classroom at the same time, is another possible outcome of this collaboration.

Involvement in the learner's field or profession may be broken down into three distinct phases. The first is collaboration, which entails anticipating the types of knowledge and writing styles students will require in their courses and workplace activities. This is like a needs analysis. The second approach is collaborative preparation for ESP lessons. In this approach, both the ESP instructor and the subject matter expert work together to develop and refine lesson plans. Experts in the subject provide texts or guidance on questions and exercises. Both experts and teachers could collaborate in the classroom to guide students with their particular activities, such as comprehension of lectures and completing classroom homework and dissertations.

- *Material Providers*

An ESP teacher selects instructional materials for the class. This approach will include adapting existing textbooks or materials to make them relevant for a certain population. In addition, it will include producing content when no appropriate resources are available.

- *Researchers*

ESP professionals investigate students' specific requirements, objectives, and areas of interest. In addition, they should search for real resources suitable for students' needs.

- *Evaluators*

The ESP specialists are responsible for two types of evaluation: measuring the progress and eventual success of the student in the course and determining whether or not the student is prepared for further study or work in a

field that demands English proficiency. The ESP professional's ability to build an effective course depends on his or her ability to first assess student needs. He or she should assess how well the course is progressing overall, including the quality of instruction, course materials, and student participation. The evaluation of student learning outcomes takes place at the end of the course.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Design

Collecting valid and solid evidence requires a mixed-methods approach (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Torrance, 2012). As part of a mixed-methods approach, both qualitative and quantitative surveys were used. To obtain valid and reliable results, 11 items were designed for quantitative surveys and 5 items for qualitative study through structured interviews. To come to some valid conclusions and recommend some practical recommendations, this study investigated the possibility of the inclusion of ESP in the new high school tracks in the Saudi context. The research tools addressed issues such as how high school teachers perceived the addition of ESP to the newly introduced high school tracks, teacher training needs, materials used and needed, teaching methods, and pedagogical environments, among others.

#### 3.2. Instruments and Participants

For the quantitative survey, a questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale was designed in Google Forms and sent through WhatsApp to 200 EFL teachers from Buraydah schools, located in the Qassim area of Saudi Arabia. A total of 76 males and 59 females submitted their responses. For structured interviews, five EFL teachers were selected to participate in the study. A survey questionnaire and structured interviews were conducted to gather information on the introduction of ESP, the need for training, the nature of materials needed, the teaching approach, and its pedagogical significance (Appendix A and B). Participants' responses were collected using Google Forms, which provided charts with statistical analysis. A few teachers from the sample were selected and interviewed in Arabic, and their responses were transcribed in English for qualitative analysis.

### 4. RESULTS

Right at the outset, it was important to know how much time each EFL teachers had spent teaching English in schools in Qassim Province, Saudi Arabia. Figure 1 presents the findings, suggesting that 4.4% of EFL teachers had taught English for 1-5 years, 33.3% for 6-10 years, 34.1% for 11-15 years, 12.6% for 16-20 years, and 15.6% for 20 years or more.

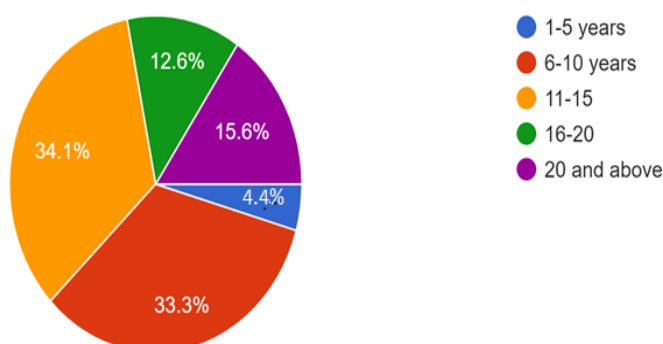


Figure 1. Duration of teaching English in schools (N=135).

The data collected on both research tools were presented and discussed under five (05) thematic headings that emerged as responses to each research question framed for the study, namely: possibility of including ESP in the new high school tracks; outcome of ESP training for the existing English teachers; preferred materials and skills for

teaching ESL; finding how pedagogical environment affects ESP teaching; and finding whether GE diminishing with the growth of ESP. Though there was full participation of all 135 EFL teachers, 01 participant did not answer question numbers 1, 4, 8, and 9 for reasons not known.

4.1. Research Question 1: Is it Possible to Include ESP in the Newly Created Saudi High School Track?

In this theme, there were four items (1, 2, 3, and 10) that were broken down into four sub-factors.

4.1.1. Possibility of Including ESP in the New High School Tracks

For the first statement, a total of 48.5% and 27.6% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that high schools should include teaching ESP to prepare students for college, whereas 15% disagreed and strongly disagreed, and 9% were undecided as shown in Figure 2. In accordance with these results, it was evident that a majority of teachers believed ESP should be incorporated into high school curricula.

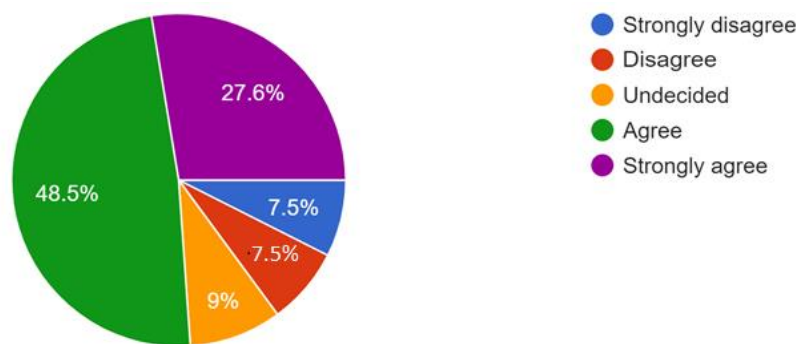


Figure 2. Track system in high schools should include ESP teaching (N=134).

4.1.2. Shifting from GE to ESP

The findings of item (2) clearly illustrate that the Ministry of Education should welcome a gradual transition from General English to English for Specific Purposes in several tracks, such as health, science, and engineering. A total of 48.1% instructors agreed and 23.7% strongly agreed. However, quite a few teachers (8.1% and 9.6%, respectively) had opposed to the transition from GE to ESP, while 10.4% were undecided, as shown in Figure 3.

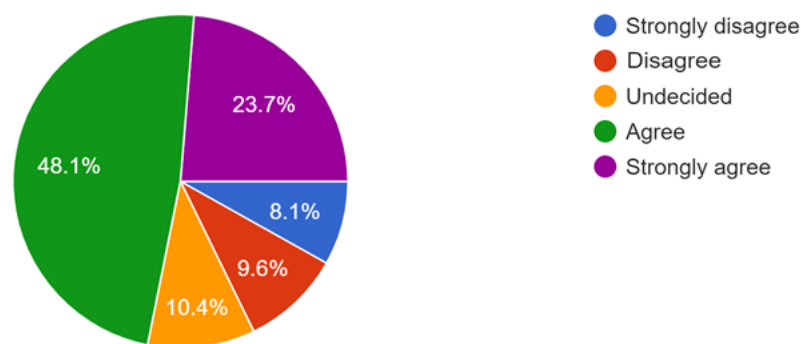


Figure 3. Shifting from general English to English for specific purposes (N=135).

4.1.3. Learning ESP Is Recommended for High School Students

Similar to item (1), item (3) also recommends that students should learn ESP in high school in order to prepare for university. 54.1% and 24.4% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively with the statement that high school students should learn ESP to prepare for university studies. In contrast, only 6.7% and 5.2% of respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement, and 9.6% were undecided, as shown in Figure 4.

This leads to conclude that ESP study in high school is essential to students' university preparation since a majority of participants in both item 1 and 3 recommended it.

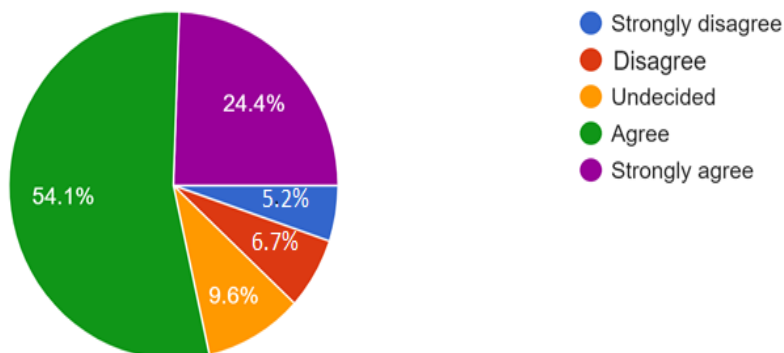


Figure 4. Learning ESP is recommended to prepare for university studies (N=135).

#### 4.1.4. Integrating ESP into EGP

According to item (10), a total of 58.5% and 14.8% agreed and strongly agreed respectively with the statement 'English for Specific Purposes can be included in a general English course'. In contrast, 11.1% disagreed with that, and 5.2% strongly disagreed, whereas 10.4% were undecided, as shown in Figure 5. As a result, a minority of teachers believe that ESP should be taught separately from general English. On the other hand, most teachers think ESP should be included in general English courses.

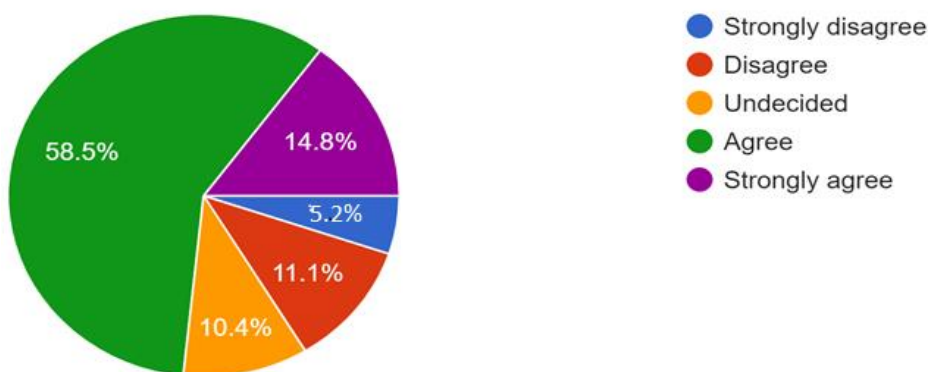


Figure 5. Integrating English for specific purposes into general English (N=135).

In addition to these quantitative results, the interviews taken from these data have confirmed these results. Teachers in the interview expressed their desire to include ESP in high school curricula. Teacher-1 said 'Teaching ESP will be valuable and interesting because it will give students a lot of extra knowledge and take them out of stagnation'. Teacher-2 mentioned that 'students will get an insight into subjects other than English'. Teacher-3 stated, "I think ESP will be needed today." It is a shift towards understanding science and technology. "ESP will enhance students' medical terminology knowledge," said the fourth teacher. They also thought that adding ESP to high schools would enable students to prepare for professional colleges such as medicine or engineering colleges. Teacher one added, "I think the ESP course will be an excellent addition (in high schools) because it will help students equip themselves with the vocabulary and structures they need in their majors."

#### 4.2. Research Question 2: Do Existing English Teachers Need to Be Trained on How to Teach ESP in Order to Achieve a Significant Learning Outcome?

This research question is addressed by two items (8 and 11), which may be broken down into two sub-factors:



4.2.1. Outcomes of Training English Instructors to Teach ESP

Teachers from the target population were aware of the changing academic environment in educational settings around the world, particularly in Saudi Arabia. As per 46.3% and 15.7% of respondents, teachers becoming ESP specialists in Saudi high schools will result in significant learning outcomes for their students. In response to training sessions and workshops conducted regularly for them, 23.1% of respondents indicated they had no idea, 6% disagreed strongly, and 9% disagreed as shown in Figure 6.

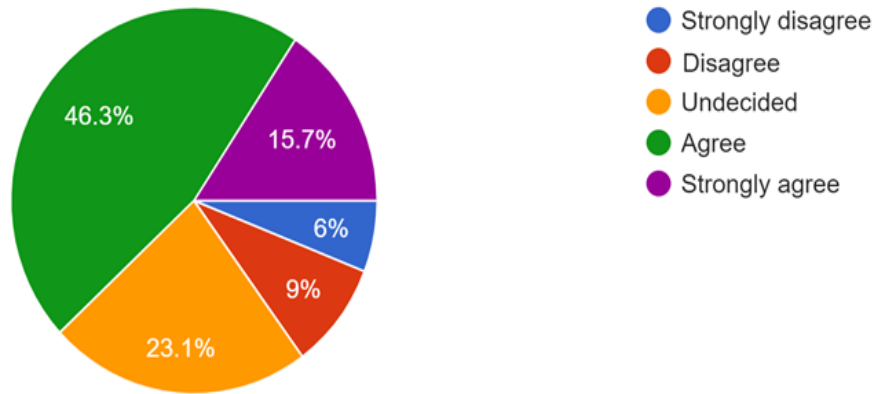


Figure 6. Training English instructors to teach ESP (N=134).

4.2.2. Training Existing English Teachers to Teach ESP

Item (11) discussed how ESP instruction necessitates subject-based training to make EFL instructors more dynamic to provide meaningful results. A sizable majority of the target group (42.2% agreed and 28.9% strongly agreed) felt that successful ESP instruction is impossible without instructors having training before sending them to classes. However, 9.6% of the teachers were undecided, and 19.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition. This indicates that they believe their working knowledge of the subject is adequate for effective ESP teaching, as shown in Figure 7.

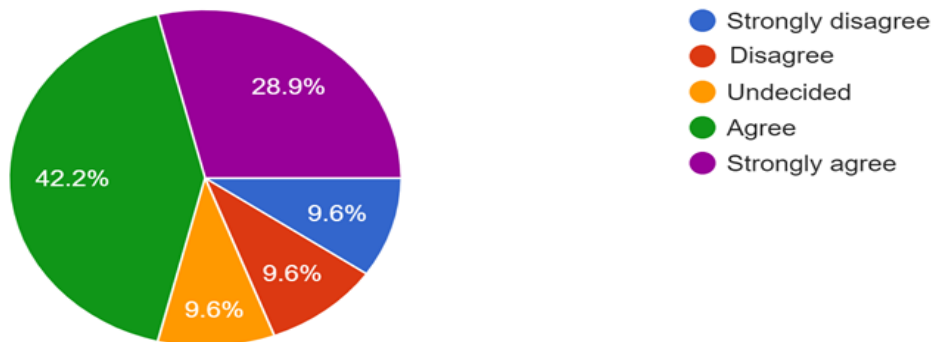


Figure 7. Training current English instructors to teach ESP (N=135).

The results from the quantitative research tool have been supported by interviews. Thus, the qualitative tool complements the quantitative tool. A number of teachers expressed a desire to receive training before teaching ESP. Because of their lack of knowledge of the jargon and how to make ESP classes interesting and lively, they were reluctant to teach ESP. As Teacher-1 pointed out, "it would be helpful to conduct some teacher training courses or workshops to help teachers learn how to introduce ESP into their classrooms". I also want to share with you Teacher-2's opinion, which was, "An ESP teacher does not necessarily have to be an expert in the field being taught in ESP, but rather they should have some familiarity with the field, which is why training of ESP teachers is essential." The third teacher said that despite the fact that teachers have some background in science and its fields,



they still need training in pedagogical aspects of ESP teaching in order to motivate and inspire their students and make them more enthusiastic about the subjects they will study in professional colleges after they are done with their high school education. Thus, the Ministry of Education should organize seminars, refresher courses, workshops, and tutorials on computer-assisted classroom teaching for ESP teachers to help them grow and develop as professionals.

4.3. Research Question 3: Are there Any Material or Skills that can be used to Teach ESP?

This research question is addressed in two items (4 and 9) and can be divided into two sub-factors as follows:

4.3.1. Preferred Materials and Skills for Teaching ESL

As shown in Figure 8, 46.3% of teachers' responses showed agreement, and 16.4% strongly agreed with item 4, 'Reading comprehension-based materials for teaching English for Specific Purposes is better for getting high school students ready academically for university studies'. In contrast, 24.6% of teachers' responses were undecided, 24.9% and 3.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, respectively. Based on their experiences teaching general English, the majority thought reading comprehension-focused materials would be the most effective choice for ESP.

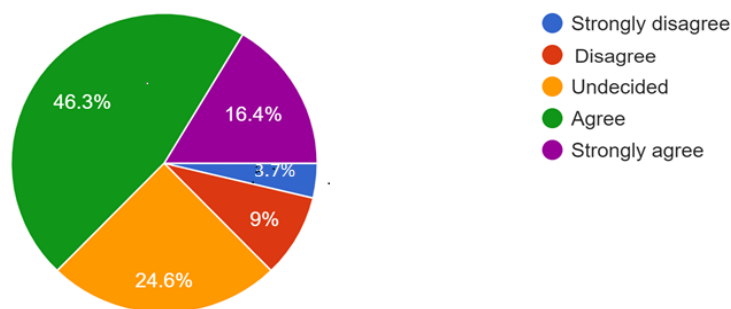


Figure 8. Materials and skills preferred for teaching ESL (N=134).

4.3.2. Annual Updates for English-Specific Materials

According to the target population who were asked verbally why they disagreed (31.1% disagree and 12.6% strongly disagree) or had no idea (16.3%), they strongly supported the use of a fixed course for ESP to bring academic discipline into the classroom, as shown in Figure 9. On the other hand, 23.7% + 16.3% favored the idea that ESP is a flexible course that shouldn't be a set course, teachers should use their academic imaginations and innovations, and the teaching materials should be updated annually.

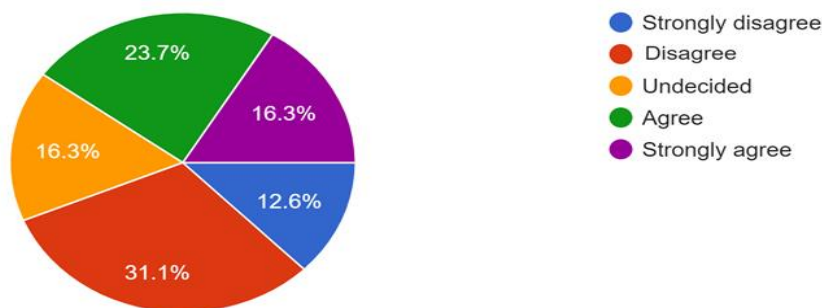


Figure 9. Updating English-specific materials annually (N=135).

In interviewing teachers, teacher 1 pointed out that there is a need for some flexibility in the course syllabus and materials so that the ESP course is engaging and beneficial to students of all backgrounds. Teacher 2 thought that teaching ESP might require them to fulfill all the roles and responsibilities associated with ESP teachers. They want to be teachers and need analysts, course designers, material providers, collaborators, researchers, and

evaluators. The task of fulfilling all these roles becomes challenging for them. Teachers in the interviews emphasized the importance of focusing ESP courses on language skills determined by need analysis. Teacher-2 says, "ESP uses a need analysis to identify which language skills are most required by students, and the syllabus is designed accordingly." ESP programs, for example, emphasize reading skills development among students preparing for graduate school in medicine. Reading skills are incredibly valuable because of their intellectual and academic value. According to the four interviewees, ESP students need to develop reading skills to study technical subjects in a professional college. Some teachers, however, believe that speaking skills are more critical for students to develop, so they arrange speaking activities in their ESP classes as well.

4.4. Research Question 4: How Does the Pedagogical Environment Affect ESP teaching?

This research question is addressed in two items (5 and 7) and can be divided into two sub-factors as follows:

4.4.1. The Pedagogical Environment's Effect on the Teaching of ESP

As in Figure 10, 46.7% of teachers' responses showed agreement, and 20.7% strongly agreed with item 5, 'The pedagogical environment for teaching English for Specific Purposes must be different from the prevalent pedagogical environment in teaching general English.' However, 8.1% disagreed, and 3.7% strongly disagreed and 20.7% undecided. Results showed that the pedagogical environment for ESP should be different from that for EGP.

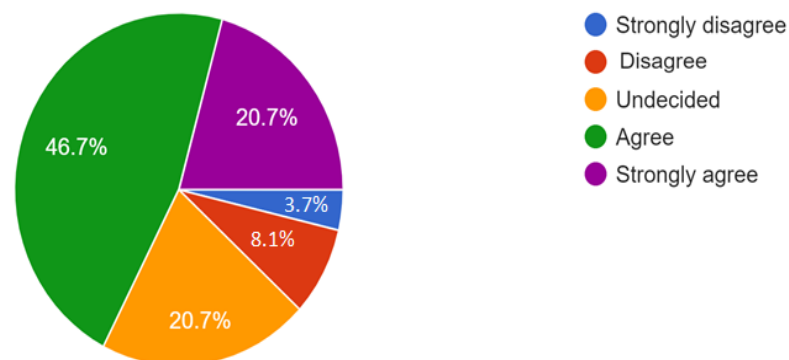


Figure 10. The pedagogical environment impact of ESP teaching (N=135).

4.4.2. Approaches to Teaching ESP and EGP

According to the majority of teachers, as shown in Figure 11 (53.3% and 11.9%), there should be a different approach to teaching ESP than general English. It highlights the importance of research and training for teaching ESP, aiming to improve ESP learners' knowledge of their own domains on the one hand and the language skills they will need in their professional lives on the other. In addition, 16.3% disagreed with the survey, 5.2% strongly disagreed and 13.3% had no idea. These teachers need to participate in research activities for reflective and planned teaching.

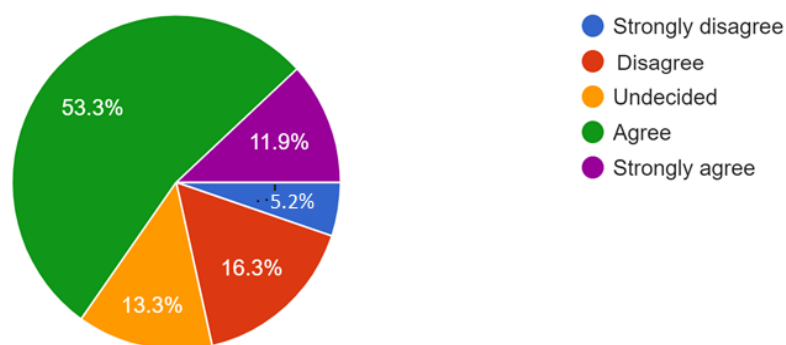


Figure 11. Approaches to teaching ESP and EGP (N=135).

According to the interview respondents, teaching ESP requires a different pedagogical environment than teaching general English. Teacher 1 said, ‘There was a need to realize that ESP teaching should differ from general English teaching in that it focuses on learners' educational and professional needs along with relevant teaching materials. Teacher 2 answered a question in the interview by saying, ‘The pedagogical environment should also be unique’. The technologically assisted and lab-assisted course is a significant step forward for ESP students, according to Teacher 3. Research opportunities are a particular need for improving the pedagogical environment for ESP teachers, according to Teacher 4.

As for teaching ESP and EGP, the teachers stressed that ESP teaching needs to be approached differently. ESP is designed to meet learners' specific educational and vocational needs. As Teacher-1 commented, "ESP requires learners to be provided with the necessary information and skills to succeed in their chosen subjects." According to Teacher-2, "Teaching ESP requires much more preparation on the part of the teacher since it involves not only the content that suits the students' future needs but also the techniques that make technical concepts easier to understand and involve the students as much as possible". Teachers' primary concern when teaching ESP is what learners need and gain, not what they intend to impart. Teacher-centered teaching must be transformed into learner-oriented teaching. Learner-centered teaching is the foundation of ESP. However, ESP teachers need to be very familiar with the ESP domains they are assigned.

4.5. Research Question 5: Is General English Diminishing as ESP's Scope Expands?

One item (6) addresses this factor, which can be further broken down into the following subfactor:

4.5.1. Future of EGP with the Growing Scope of ESP

In teaching ESP, general English provides the theoretical and philosophical foundation. 49.6% of teachers disagreed with statement 6 that 'As English for Specific Purposes grows, general English will become less important', and 11.1% strongly disagreed. It shows that they understand that GE will not diminish as ESP expands. In fact, GE should remain side-by-side with ESP to ensure effective ESP teaching. Combining GE with ESP will surely result in more dynamic outcomes in Saudi high schools with meaningful outputs. Among the teachers, 17% agreed with the points highlighted above, 5.2% strongly agreed, and 17% undecided, as shown in Figure 12.

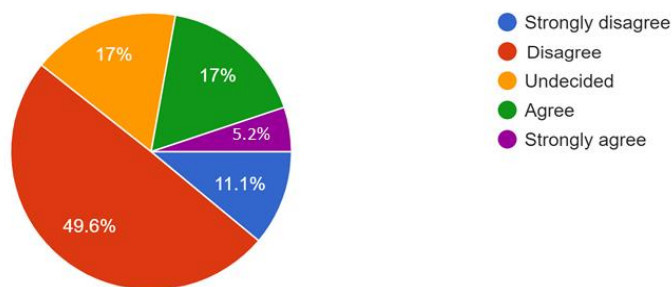


Figure 12. EGP future with expanding ESP scope (N=135).

Interview responses also confirm survey results regarding general English scope and status in the future. Teachers support ESP's emerging scope. However, they believe that general English teaching will remain a necessity along with ESP. In their view, ESP is basically English teaching with a different focus and approach. In fact, ESP is considered an extension of general English. ESP teachers should be English language teachers first, using all the time-tested and traditional tools and techniques of ELT.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The study explores the possibility of including ESP in the new high school tracks and how it can be used to get the best results. A mixed-methods approach was used to obtain valid and reliable results through 11 items designed for quantitative surveys and 5 items designed for qualitative structural interviews. The study findings highlighted the answers to the five research questions: (1) Is it possible to include ESP in the newly created Saudi high school track? (2) Do existing English teachers need to be trained on how to teach ESP to achieve a significant learning outcome? (3) Are there any materials or skills that can be used to teach ESP? (4) How does the pedagogical environment affect ESP teaching? (5) Is General English diminishing as ESP's scope expands?

### 5.1. Possibility of Including ESP in the Newly Created High School Track

According to [Figure 2](#), [3](#), [4](#), and [5](#), teachers showed a positive view of adding ESP to the existing high school tracks. A majority of teachers surveyed wanted ESP to be included in the tracks of high school curricula. For students to be prepared for university studies, 76.1 % believed that learning ESP was essential for ESL students. Further, 71.8% of respondents indicated that the GE to ESP transition was essential in some tracks such as health, science, and engineering. 78.5% of teachers were in favor of including ESP in General English classes. Interviews with teachers provided support and clarification for teachers' views on all four items. A discussion of the reasons behind the inclusion of ESP in high school curricula was presented. They believed that it will be valuable and interesting, giving students a lot of extra knowledge and taking them out of stagnation. There is a shift toward understanding science and technology differently. An ESP course will be an excellent addition to high schools since it provided students with the vocabulary and structure they needed to succeed in their majors. This study is consistent with the findings of [Hyland \(2006\)](#) and [Pennycook \(1997\)](#) who discovered that many people interested in ESP find it intriguing, cognitively stimulating, and emotionally and professionally fulfilling since it poses intellectual and social challenges.

### 5.2. Training Current English Instructors to Teach ESP

It is clear from [Figure 6](#) that 62% of teachers believed that ESP specialists would have a positive impact on student learning. As a result, 71.1% of respondents to item 11 agree that existing English teachers should be trained on how to teach ESP in Saudi secondary schools for specific purposes. During the interviews, instructors expressed a desire to be trained before sending them to classes. Their lack of knowledge of ESP jargon and how to make ESP classes engaging and interesting made them reluctant to teach it. Through training, teachers can become familiar with ESP and learn how to use it in their classrooms. As clearly stated by one of the interviewees, training is not only to be familiar with science and medical terms but also to understand the pedagogical aspects of ESP instruction to motivate their students and make them more enthusiastic about the subjects they will study in professional colleges after they have completed high school. The results of this study confirm those of [Alsolami \(2014\)](#) and [Chostelidou, Griva, and Tsakiridou \(2009\)](#) who believe that training ESP teachers is essential as it requires linguistic and content knowledge. According to [Bojovic \(2006\)](#) ESP instructors are not professionals in the area but rather in teaching English, so they must be supplied with the required information and tools to cope with the specialties of their students.

### 5.3. ESP Teaching Materials and Skills Preferences

[Figure 8](#) showed that 62.7% of the teachers' responses in item 4 agreed that reading comprehension-based materials for teaching ESP are better for getting high school students ready academically for university studies. All interviewees believed that students in ESP need to develop reading skills primarily to study technical subjects in a professional college. For item 9, [Figure 9](#) indicated that the teachers' survey did not give a clear opinion toward the statement that there shouldn't be a set course for ESP and the teaching materials should be updated every year.

However, the interview results gave some clarifications, such as that there shouldn't be a set course for ESP and that there should be specialists who can be analysts, course designers, material providers, collaborators, researchers, and evaluators who can use their academic imaginations and innovations. According to (cf. (Chantrupanth, 1993; Deutch, 2003; Nation, 2000)) when designing the materials and syllabi for ESP courses, many factors should be taken into consideration. Some of these factors include (1) the learning needs of the students; (2) learners' present knowledge and knowledge gaps; (3) the objectives of the course; (4) the resources available in terms of staff, materials, equipment, finance, and time constraints; and (5) teachers' skills and knowledge of the specific area. Therefore, having topic experts readily available to work side by side with EGP instructors will help them become effective ESP teachers (Savaş, 2009).

#### *5.4. ESP's Pedagogical Environment and Teaching Approach*

According to the survey respondents in Figure 10 and 11 and interviewees, teaching ESP requires a different pedagogical environment than teaching general English. In ESP teaching, learners' educational and professional needs are taken into account along with relevant teaching, which is different from general English teaching. For learners to succeed in their chosen subjects, ESP must provide them with the necessary information and skills. Learner-centered teaching must replace teacher-centered teaching. ESP is based on learner-centered teaching. This result is in line with Hutchinson and Waters (1987) who described ESP as a learning-centered approach. For teachers to teach ESP effectively, they must prepare not only content that meets students' future needs but also techniques that make technical concepts easier to understand and involve them as much as possible.

#### *5.5. The Future of EGP in the Light of the Expanding Scope of ESP*

According to Figure 12, 60.7% of teachers oppose the notion that GE will diminish with ESP growth. To make ESP more effective, GE should remain alongside ESP. In Saudi high schools, combining GE with ESP will certainly result in more dynamic outcomes. Interview responses also support the survey results. General English teaching will remain significant along with ESP, according to teachers. They say ESP is essentially English teaching with a different focus and approach. ESP is considered an extension of general English. First and foremost, ESP teachers should be English language teachers, using all the time-tested and traditional techniques of ELT.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This study highlights the importance of ESP for students studying tracks in Saudi Arabia's high schools such as engineering, medicine, science, the humanities, etc. It examines whether ESP should be included in new high school tracks, the outcomes of ESP-trained GE teachers, the preferred materials and skills for teaching ESL, the pedagogical environment of teaching ESP, and the future of GE as ESP becomes increasingly prevalent. There is no need for GE teachers to worry about their future as English language teachers. In ESP teaching practices, GE provides philosophical and conceptual support and strength.

#### *6.1. Implications and Recommendations*

The instructors at GE need to change with the times to keep up with the advancements in science and technology, which has emerged as a powerful to make instructional and training procedures simpler, more effective, and more empirical. A majority of ESP instructors have not received any kind of formal training. It is therefore necessary that teachers' training in ESP should be facilitated through workshops and seminars.

Moreover, course outlines and teaching materials shouldn't be set in stone and given to the instructors by the administration with the condition that they have to finish the classes within the specified period. This causes instructors to disengage from thinking or preparation according to students' requirements. It is therefore suggested that an authentic resource bank be made accessible to ESP teachers, along with the direction to upload more and

more items regularly to maintain enriching and updating the resource bank. This will also make ESP instruction more efficient. Additionally, for the convenience of all ESP professionals, a listing of ESL, ESP, EAP, EOP, and EGP publishers needs to be made accessible online. In addition, the pedagogical environment of ESP classrooms must be maintained in a manner that is distinct from that of General English lessons. To have a beneficial effect both visually and psychologically on students, they should be designed to seem more like a scientific laboratory and equipped with the most up-to-date technological teaching aids, instruments, models, wall charts, and diagrams. Students should be brought to local enterprises, technical institutes, and hospitals, among other places, to get them interested and motivated in the learning process. Additionally, students should be asked to meet with professional experts working in the area of ESP monthly. Last, but not the least, the approaches used to instruct students in ESP classes have to be distinct from those used to instruct students in general English. This will ensure that students learn material that is both more useful and more relevant. When it comes to teaching ESP, practitioners need to become more dynamic and adapt their teaching approaches and strategies. They need to keep themselves current on the needs of the world so that they can include them in ESP teaching techniques. Additionally, they need to understand how to make use of the internet to keep the students interested and motivated. They need to demonstrate the technological principles in real-life and genuine ways to teach them. The English as a Second Language instructors must be prepared to arrange the course materials, generate positive learning environments in the classrooms, define learning and teaching goals, and assess the student's progress.

The study is limited to Saudi teachers who teach EGP and ESP to Saudi students. It excludes the other stakeholders, namely the students, the instructors in the professional colleges who will teach these students in the future, and the potential future employers of these students on the job market. To validate the conclusions derived from this research, a future researcher may concentrate on the perspectives of other stakeholders.

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## APPENDIX

### Appendix A. Survey.

Dear Teachers,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to explore your views on including English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the new high school tracks in Saudi Arabian. Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

Regards,

#### Please encircle your choices

1.	The track system in high schools should include teaching English for specific purposes to prepare students for college.
2.	The Ministry of Education should welcome the gradual shift from general English to English for Specific Purposes in some tracks such as health, science, and engineering.
3.	To prepare for university studies, high school students should learn English for specific purposes.
4.	Reading comprehension-based materials for teaching English for Specific Purposes is better for getting high school students ready academically for university studies.
5.	The pedagogical environment for teaching English for Specific Purposes has to be different from the prevalent pedagogical environment in teaching general English.
6.	As English for Specific Purposes gets bigger, General English will become less important.
7.	The teaching approach applied to teach English for Specific Purposes must differ from those applied in teaching general English.
8.	If teachers become ESP specialists, there will be a significant learning outcome.
9.	To teach English for Specific Purposes, there shouldn't be a set course, and the teaching materials should be updated every year.
10.	English for Specific Purposes can be included in a general English course.
11.	Existing English teachers need to be trained on how to teach English for specific purposes in Saudi secondary schools.



**Appendix B.** Structured interview.

1. Would you like to see ESP included in high school curricula? Why?
2. Should English teachers be trained to teach ESP?
3. Is there a material or skill that can be used to teach ESP?
4. In Saudi high schools, how does the pedagogical environment affect the teaching of ESP?
5. Is general English becoming less important as the scope of ESP expands?

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