TAMADDUNLIFE
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ESP Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in Fostering Autonomous Learning: A Study on Motivation among Non-English Major Students

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Abstract

This study aims to explore ESP teachers' beliefs and practices in fostering autonomous learning through assessing students' motivation in non-English majors. The sampling method used convenience sampling. One lecturer at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendari who teaches at the Faculty of Agriculture was recruited as a participant. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews, which were adapted from Yang and Wyatt (2021) and focused on understanding student motivation as well as the practices implemented. Data analysis was conducted using qualitative and evaluative approaches. The results showed that the implementation of project-based learning (PBL) was very effective in motivating students to learn Autonomously. Although initially students had limitations in English speaking ability, structured support and practical activities helped them feel more confident. Future research is recommended to explore other learning methods that can increase students' motivation and engagement, such as collaboration-based learning and the use of digital technology.

Keywords: Teacher's Beliefs and Practices, teaching ESP, Student Motivation, Autonomous Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Learning English for specific purposes (ESP) has become an integral part of the educational curriculum in many countries around the world. In this context, autonomous learning is increasingly recognized as a goal that students must achieve to acquire the language proficiency necessary for success in various professional fields. Autonomous learning allows students to develop independent learning abilities, take initiative in the learning process, and utilize available resources effectively.

Therefore, Beliefs or perceptions are defined as 'propositions that a person holds to be true, often tacitly, that have strong evaluative and affective components, provide a basis for action, and

are resistant to change.' In second or first language (L2) education, the beliefs of teachers and students play an important role in the learning process and outcomes (Borg, 2015; Ellis, 2008). Ha and Nguyen (2021) stated that harmony between student and teacher beliefs can facilitate the teaching and learning process, while differences in beliefs can have a negative impact on classroom behavior, student satisfaction, teaching practices, and academic achievement (Bell, 2016; Levine, 2003). Therefore, it is important for teachers to explicitly state their beliefs about language learning, understand students' beliefs, help students realize and share their own beliefs, and resolve differences between their beliefs and students' beliefs (Ellis, 2008). Although there is a growing research agenda regarding teachers' and students' beliefs in language education, further study of their beliefs concerning the teaching and learning of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is still needed.

Furthermore, to the researcher's knowledge, previous research on ESP teaching has mainly focused on discourse analysis, curriculum development, and student needs analysis. Given the importance of ESP teaching and the existing literature on beliefs, the current study aims to explore how college students and teachers perceive effective ESP teaching. Such understanding can be used to provide implications for ESP teaching practices in the classroom, according to (Nguyen & Hung, 2021; Borg, 2015; Ellis, 2008) and curriculum design (Macalister & Nation, 2020). The fact that learners need to use ESP effectively in the workplace and for academic purposes and that the results of the investigation into teachers' and students' beliefs can be used to improve classroom practice provide a strong rationale for the current study.

In addition, the existing literature on EFL teachers' beliefs is roughly related to the content, influencing factors of teachers' beliefs, and the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices (Maoying & Yiping, 2016). In addition, (Stergipoulou, 2012) states that there are several factors that influence how teachers develop their abilities and beliefs about their profession and practice in the classroom. The first is that the teacher's learning experience from the first school to the newest one has a very strong influence on the teacher's positive or negative beliefs. The second factor is knowledge and educational development.

Although there has been much attention paid to second language comprehension and learner motivation in English language teaching (ELT) in recent decades (Lamb, 2017), there has been less attention paid to this in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Barzegar and Sadr (2013) have examined how awareness of emotional intelligence influences students' motivation in ESP, supported by teachers' motivational strategies. However, both in this research and in the field of ELT or ESP in general, there has been little attention to teachers' beliefs about motivation and practices.

Teachers are expected to be facilitators who create a learning environment where students can take control of their learning. Students are expected to play an active role in obtaining and making decisions for their own learning. Previous research carried out autonomy by, for example, developing the learning skills they may need to control their learning (Na Chiangmai, 2016) or giving students the freedom to make decisions for their learning (Tapinta, 2016). However, teachers' roles and responsibilities are not limited to their classrooms. Teachers have to deal not only with students in the classroom but also with curriculum planning, testing, and evaluation. If

teachers have the power to make such decisions, then they can teach or manage the classroom according to what they believe is best for their students. This state leads to the recent study that examines teachers' beliefs in terms of ESP context.

The following research questions are asked to achieve the present research objectives.

1. What are ESP teacher Beliefs and strategies for motivating and overcoming challenges related to developing students' Autonomous learning in non-English classes?

Theorizing of Learner Autonomous

Learner autonomy is defined as the learner" willingness and ability to take responsibility, to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate his/her learning with tasks that are constructed in negotiation with and support from the teacher (Nguyen, 2012). Meanwhile, (Benson, 2001) found that "autonomy can be defined as the capacity to take charge of one "s own learning and the ability of learners to control their own learning". Besides, (Zhuang, 2010) argued that learner autonomy is the learner's ability to control his/her own learning and make use of appropriate learning strategies for setting objectives, choosing the content of learning, finding methods, monitoring the process of learning, and self-evaluating.

Teacher's Beliefs and Practices

All teachers hold beliefs that can be defined by their work, their students, their subject matter, and their roles and responsibilities. Beliefs guide teachers" behavior and inform teachers" practice where they make sense of what they do in their classrooms. Teacher Beliefs and Practices Fang (1996) suggested that teacher beliefs influence classroom practices in consistent and inconsistent ways. Kagan (1992) noted, "a teacher's beliefs tend to be associated with a congruent style of teaching that is often evident across different classes and grade level".

Additionally, ESP teachers need to be aware of the learning strategies used by primary students who are non-English speakers so they can adapt the teaching strategies they can use to help students successfully learn English in higher education. Currently, English Learning aims to be more self-directed and learner-centered. To meet the new demands of the curriculum, students at the tertiary level need to have an adequate learning awareness strategy. According to Ilma (2014), students' language learning techniques have a significant influence affect their level of English proficiency. From the explanation above, this research is mainly focused on non-English language analysis of students' main needs, attitudes, and English learning strategies. The result of This research can be a reference for ESP teachers to design ESP courses that are relevant to ESP learning student needs. Teachers are also encouraged to provide opportunities for students to have a positive attitude towards learning English and progress effectively in teaching practices to accommodate students to maximize their language learning strategy. Therefore, ESP learning in higher education can welcome students' future professional needs.

Motivation

Motivation is an intentional attempt to influence, maintain, and guide a person's behavior so that he is encouraged to act in a way that will help him reach specific outcomes or goals. A

personal change in energy known as motivation is characterized by the emergence of emotions and reactions to pursue goals. H. Nashar cites Frederick J. Mc Donald (2004:39). However, learning motivation is the propensity of students to engage in learning activities that are motivated by the desire to achieve the best potential performance or learning outcomes, according to Clayton Alderfer in Nashar (2004, p.42).

METHOD

This research was conducted using qualitative methods. This research is included in the descriptive design. Descriptive design is used to describe or elaborate the characteristics, beliefs, or practices that exist in a particular population or group. In this case, the research aimed to uncover ESP teachers' beliefs and practices in fostering autonomous learning in non-English learners by examining students' motivation. One of the English language education lecturers at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendari was recruited as a research participant. The participant in this research was a 35 year old English education lecturer with a Doctoral educational background who had dedicated herself for approximately eight years as an English teacher and for teaching English Special Purposes (ESP) in non-English departments. Recently the teacher teaching ESP in the Faculty of Agriculture. the sample determination method uses convenience sampling. The researcher selected ESP lecturers at the Muhammadiyah University of Kendari from various levels of teaching experience and educational backgrounds, including those who have experience teaching non-major English students and those who have a deep understanding of autonomous learning. However, only this lecturer has the opportunity to collaborate. By conducting convenience sampling, researchers can collect data on a broad and in-depth understanding of ESP teachers' beliefs and practices in encouraging independent learning and their impact on the motivation of non-English major students.

Two instruments were used to collect the data: questionnaires and interviews. The (open-ended) questionnaire was distributed using Google Forms. This instrument focused on the participants' general understanding of ESP students' motivation and their own motivational practices. The questionnaire was adapted from Yang and Wyatt (2021) and consisted of eight open-ended questions about Student Motivation, Initial observation, Structured support, Student understanding, Enthusiasm, and Engagement. identifying intrinsic motivation because within the individual, there is a drive to do something, or what is commonly referred to as learning Autonomously (Appendix A). The second instrument was the interview guide. The interview guide contained questions extracted from Yang and Wyatt (2021) questionnaire. Interviews are an alternative way of obtaining findings from participants' questionnaires. The purpose of the interview was to investigate the statements in the questionnaire. After the data was collected, it was analyzed. The analysis used includes qualitative analysis and evaluative analysis. In this case, qualitative analysis was conducted to understand the strategies used in ESP teaching, such as providing concrete examples and integrating game elements. Evaluative analysis was conducted

to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in improving students' motivation and comprehension. (Appendix B). This analysis will be used to obtain data from these questions as well as to see the general pattern of strategies implemented and the expected results. And evaluate the effectiveness of each step in increasing student motivation and understanding in ESP learning, see whether there are differences between expectations and reality in learning outcomes, and identify areas that may require improvement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS
FINDINGS

In the context of teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) among non-English major students, this study aims to explore teachers' beliefs and practices in student motivation. After analyzing the data obtained from questionnaires and interviews, the researcher found several important aspects related to teachers' beliefs and their practices in fostering students' independent learning and motivation. This research is based on Yang and Wyatt's (2021) theory, which emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role in motivating students, although this is still relatively under-researched, especially in the Asian context. For each section, we combined data from questionnaires and interviews. The narrative for each section follows:

1. Teacher Belief's

Teachers' beliefs refer to the views, values, and beliefs that teachers hold about teaching and learning. This includes their understanding of effective teaching methods, expectations of students, and how they interpret their experiences and knowledge in an educational context. Teachers' beliefs can influence the way they teach, their interactions with students, and the success of classroom learning.

"I started teaching a year ago, English for Agriculture, I feel excited and challenged to teach because I have no experience teaching ESP before. I attended a webinar on ESP teaching theories, and I was very curious to apply those theories to an actual ESP class in the Faculty of Agriculture. In the first meeting why we had to go in together with my partner because we saw that it was still very low, There were only one or two people who could, but they could only speak a little, the others were very low, but through this PBL (project-based learning) learning model, they could independently besides us guiding, they could also independently, indeed at the beginning it was still low, but you see for yourself the progress until the end".

Data from the questionnaire showed that teachers often approached their role with enthusiasm, stating, *"I started teaching a year ago, English for Agriculture, and I feel excited and challenged.... I really want to apply (ESP teaching theory) in a real classroom."* This enthusiasm reflects a belief in the importance of the practical application of theoretical knowledge. In the interview, the teacher observed differences in ability levels among students, which emphasized the need for differentiated instruction. The teacher said, *"At the first meeting, we saw that only one or two students could speak a little, while most were very low."* This recognition of variations in

students' abilities illustrates the belief that understanding individual differences is essential for effective teaching.

2. Motivational Practices

Motivational practices refer to the strategies and methods used by teachers to increase student motivation in the learning process. This includes creating an engaging learning environment, using relevant and contextualized methods, and providing appropriate support to help students actively engage in learning. These practices aim to make students feel more motivated, excited and confident in learning.

"Yes, my students are generally motivated to learn ESP, especially through the use of the project-based learning (PBL) model. In our first meeting, my co-teacher and I introduced the language focus and content, specifically relating to agriculture and seeds. This contextualized approach helps students see the relevance of English in their field. To support students' autonomous learning, the agriculture class uses a project-based learning model. The aim is to motivate students through individual and group projects. For example, in the middle of the semester, students go on a field trip to report their findings. At the end of the semester, they conduct an experiment to grow bean sprouts, from buying seeds at the market to the planting process. With the right guidance, the students feel more confident and able to speak in English. The project not only improved language skills but also provided learning meaning that can be applied in daily life. Despite the challenges, the students remain highly motivated to learn autonomously".

Both data sources highlighted the use of Project Based Learning (PBL) as a key strategy to increase student motivation. From the questionnaire, one teacher mentioned, *"Yes, my students are generally motivated to learn ESP, especially through the use of the PBL model."* Contextualizing lessons in agriculture attracts students and demonstrates the relevance of English in their field. Interview data supported this, where a teacher explained, *"To support students' independent learning, we use a project-based learning model. For example, students go to the field to report their findings."* This practical approach not only encourages motivation but also helps students see the real application of their learning. In addition, the emphasis on structured scaffolding was considered very important, with the teacher saying, *"There is a long process...* the vocabulary about grains is very much... many activities are done until *finally they have to speak."* This suggests a methodical approach to gradually building students' confidence.

3. Challenges in Teaching ESP

Challenges teaching ESP refer to the various obstacles faced by teachers when teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). These include difficulties in understanding students' specific needs, lack of experience or knowledge in a particular area, limitations of resources or relevant teaching materials, as well as challenges in adapting teaching methods to suit specific contexts and learning objectives. These challenges can affect teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes, making it important for educators to seek appropriate solutions and support to overcome them.

"To assess students' understanding after implementing the strategy, I use two types of assessment in project-based learning of planting sprouts. First, process assessment which includes evaluating the growth of the sprouts and students' writing ability in describing the project process, including vocabulary and grammar. Second, outcome assessment which assesses students' oral ability in presenting the project, including fluency, comprehension, as well as task completion. These two types of assessment are combined into the student's final grade." When students are out of class, we use a WhatsApp group to maintain our relationships. In this group, I communicate in English - writing and recording audio - to get them used to it. This way, they stay connected and motivated to speak in English".

Despite their effective practices, teachers face challenges in ESP teaching. The questionnaire highlighted concerns regarding the need for structured assessment. The teacher revealed, "To assess students' understanding, I use two types of assessment." This indicates the difficulty in ensuring that assessments accurately reflect student learning and understanding. While Interviews provided further insight into this challenge, revealing that teachers often faced varying levels of student engagement and motivation, teachers noted, "In the beginning it was low, but after seeing progress until the end." Although progress was seen, the initial low engagement was a challenge requiring constant teaching strategies adjustments. Finally, maintaining ongoing communication outside of class emerged as a challenge. The teacher explained, "When students are outside of class, we use WhatsApp group for intensive communication." This highlights the importance of keeping students engaged outside of class to reinforce their learning.

DISCUSSION

The researcher concludes that there are some important things to know about teachers' beliefs and practices in the context of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) among non-English major students. By looking at teachers' perspectives, we can better understand how these beliefs shape their teaching methods, influence students' motivation, and deal with challenges in the educational environment.

1. Teachers' Beliefs

The enthusiasm with which teachers carry out their roles demonstrates a belief in the importance of the practical application of teaching theories. This enthusiasm, especially shared by teachers committed to teaching ESP, demonstrates a commitment to engaging students through relevant content. The recognition of students' varying abilities also demonstrates an important belief that effective teaching should take individual differences into account. This is in line with Yang and Wyatt's (2021) statement on the importance of teacher encouragement in fostering student engagement. Teachers who actively recognize and address these differences will be better equipped to create inclusive learning environments that support independent learning.

Based on emotion awareness information, teachers can provide effective feedback to ensure students' emotional safety and their engagement or perseverance in the learning experience (Feidakis et al., 2014). Adequate effective feedback (timely, appropriate to the situation, and personalized) can lead to changes in students' emotional states, which can redirect their focus of

attention and promote changes in the way they learn. Can redirect the focus of their attention and promote changes in the way they think, act and interact with others. Having a motivation is a key to be engaged in learning activities. Gorman (2004) states, "motivation is a complex process or driving force of everyone to reach the goal or target through actions" (p.2). Through motivation, a person creates the energy to act in order to produce a goal-oriented result actively. In teaching-learning activities, motivation is considered one of the important aspects that can engage a student to pay attention to the subject taught in class. Initially, motivation is considered as the desire to achieve goals through effort and the performance of specific tasks. In terms of learning, it is perceived in the form of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (M. Ajmal, M.S.Keezhata, G.M.Yasir & S.Alam, 2021, np. 534).

2. Motivational Practices

The use of project-based Learning (PBL) has emerged as a key strategy for increasing student motivation. Teachers noted that contextualizing lessons - such as linking English language skills to agricultural practices - helped students understand the relevance of what they were learning. This approach not only made learning more interesting but also demonstrated the practical application of language skills in students' future self-development and careers. The emphasis on structured scaffolding further supports students' confidence, illustrating the progression of learning tailored to diverse ability levels. As explained earlier, activities such as field trips and practical projects play an important role in maintaining motivation and providing meaningful learning experiences. This suggests that well-implemented motivational practices can significantly improve student engagement and learning outcomes. Learning strategies, which consist of behavioral and mental steps taken by the learner (Oxford, 1990), have been recognized as an important part of L2 learning in general and L2 vocabulary learning in particular (Gu & Johnson, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990). defines individual motivation as the level of autonomy that individuals show during learning activities and divides it into two motivational orientations

3. Challenges in Teaching ESP

Despite the existence of effective motivational strategies, this research revealed several challenges that teachers face in the context of ESP. The need for structured assessments that accurately reflect student understanding is a recurring theme. teachers expressed difficulty in ensuring that their assessment methods captured the complexity of student learning and progress. This reflects broader challenges in ESP teaching, where aligning assessment with specific learning objectives and student needs can be very difficult.

Additionally, low levels of student engagement initially pose ongoing challenges. Teachers report that although students show progress, the early stages of learning often require significant adjustments to teaching strategies. This requires continuous adaptation and flexibility in teaching practices to meet students' dynamic needs. Lastly, maintaining communication outside the classroom, such as through WhatsApp groups, highlights innovative approaches to keeping students engaged and motivated. This strategy reflects recognition of the importance of ongoing interactions in supporting student learning outside the classroom environment.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the complex interplay between teacher beliefs, motivational practices, and the challenges encountered in teaching ESP to non-English major students. The findings suggest that while teachers exhibit enthusiasm and employ effective motivational strategies, they also face significant challenges that require ongoing reflection and adaptation. Addressing these challenges through structured assessments and enhanced communication can further improve the effectiveness of ESP instruction. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics, particularly within diverse educational contexts, to better understand how teachers can be supported in fostering effective learning environments for their students

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Appendix (1)

This questionnaire was adopted from Yang and Wyatt's (2021) research. This questionnaire consists of eight questions.

No.	Questionnarie	Answer

1.	How did you feel when you first taught students in an ESP context especially in a non-English major?	*"I started teaching a year ago, English for Agriculture, I felt excited and challenged to teach as I had no previous practical experience teaching ESP. I had attended a webinar about ESP teaching theories and I was very curious to implement those theories into a real ESP class in the Faculty of Agriculture".*
2.	Are your students generally motivated to learn ESP?	*"Yes, my students are generally motivated to learn ESP, especially through the use of the project-based learning (PBL) model. In our first meeting, my co-teacher and I introduced the language focus and content, specifically relating to agriculture and seeds. This contextualized approach helps students see the relevance of English in their field."*
3.	How do you enjoy teaching ESP? Why?	*"I enjoyed teaching ESP last semester because every student was so engaged in group and individual project based learning."*
4.	What strategies do you use to provide structured motivation during ESP learning?	*"The strategies I used to provide structured motivation during ESP learning involved several stages. First, I implement a Project-Based Learning (PBL) approach, where students are not immediately given a task to complete, but rather go through a gradual process. This allows them to understand the material in depth before starting to work on the project."*
5.	How to build your students' motivation in ESP class?	*"Providing comprehensive and structured scaffolding by giving examples to do activities is also not too demanding for them to do what is expected. In addition, exciting and fun learning activities, good classroom management, interactive learning materials and media are also very important for learners to be motivated in the classroom."*

6.	Can you give examples of activities you do to motivate students in class?	*"Examples of activities to motivate students in class include explaining the language and content focus, then implementing project-based learning. Students went on a field trip to report findings and did an experiment on planting sprouts."*
7.	What methods do you apply to maintain student enthusiasm during ESP learning?	*"One of the learning methods we use is PBL which is a teaching method that involves students in real-world projects to learn knowledge according to their major."*
8.	How do you assess students' understanding of the material after implementing certain strategies?	*"To assess students' understanding after implementing the strategies, I use two types of assessment in the project-based learning of planting sprouts. First, process assessment which includes evaluating the growth of the sprouts and students' writing skills in describing the project process, including vocabulary and grammar. Second, outcome assesses students' oral skills when presenting the project, including fluency, comprehension, as well as task accomplishment. These two types of assessment are combined into the student's final grade".*

Appendix (2)

This interview guide included the same questions as the Yang and Wyatt (2020) questionnaire guide. The purpose of this interview is to investigate the questions in the questionnaire.

No	Interview	Answer

1.	How do you get students motivated in class for Autonomous ESP learning, please give an example of what you do?	*" at the first meeting my teaching partner and I both entered because we would explain about the language, what the language focus was, we were basic or advanced, then what the content was because that day in agriculture the content was about seeds, because it was about cultivating rice, soil, planting to harvesting, so that was the topic of the English content. To support students' independent learning, the agriculture class uses a project-based learning model. The aim is to motivate students through individual and group projects. For example, in the middle of the semester students go on a field trip to report their findings. At the end of the semester, they conduct an experiment to plant bean sprouts, starting from buying seeds at the market to the planting process. With the right guidance students feel more confident and able to speak English. This project not only improves language skills, but also gives meaning to learning that can be applied in everyday life. Despite the challenges, students remain highly motivated to learn independently".*
2.	What do you notice from your study at the first time you teaching them?	*"Earlier I said, at the beginning that in the first meeting why we had to enter together with my partner because we saw that it was still very low, they were only one or two people who could, but could only speak a little, the others were very low, but through this PBL (project-based learning) learning model, they could independently besides us guiding them, they could also independently, it was still low at the beginning, but you see the progress until the end"*
3.	What strategies do you employ to provide comprehensive and structured support by providing examples of how to carry out activities, while not being too demanding that they do what you expect?	*"Well there is a predoom, freedom there is a PBL strategy that does have examples, scafoolding, stages until they can do it themselves so it's not necessarily and directly in the first meeting directly told to make this make this, find or develop this last Bean sprouts you submit the task. There is a long process and the strategy is to include vocabulary that is seen by later at least a lot about the topic at that time, for example the topic at that time was grains, well the topic of grains, vocabulary about grains is a lot, it's just that they will use information about grains later when the project*

		develops into Bean sprouts, well one of the strategies is that. Then there are examples, there are exercises, not only presentations but also in class, in class answering questions, discussing in groups, reading, writing many activities are carried out until the last one must speak".
4.	After carrying out strategies and practices in ESP teaching, are students able to understand the teaching?	*"Of course, of course they can with examples, it must be with examples, they don't necessarily understand, there must be examples, for example making projects such as grains so that they don't abstract the information, there are examples shown in class, through videos, there are short videos and long videos, they just choose freely, there are examples, all have examples either from us teachers who provide examples or we find them from internet sources, and they can practice. Of course that can motivate them, because they are guided, so they don't feel abandoned. It's like being guided".*
5.	How do you build and maintain students' enthusiasm to follow, participate and be actively involved in learning in the ESP class? Give just one example that you gave?	"*when students are out of class, and to keep the connection, we use a WhatsApp group for intensive communication. In this group, I communicate in English-writing and recording audio-to get them used to it. This way, they stay connected and motivated to speak English. If there is no interaction like this, they might forget the lesson when they leave the classroom. Social media helps maintain the learning atmosphere, so students feel comfortable using English. They can use Google Translate to improve their vocabulary and follow the examples I give. With this project, they not only learn English, but also understand agricultural concepts first-hand, which is easier to remember than just taking notes in class".*