Challenges in Teaching ESP at Medical Universities of Iran from ESP Stakeholders' Perspectives

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Abstract

The main objective of the present study was to explore the main challenges of teaching ESP in medical universities of Iran. Due to the nature of the study, a qualitative research design (Phenomenological) was used. The data were gathered through interviewing 25 ESP stakeholders from two universities of medical sciences in Tehran. The data were analyzed through content analysis techniques. The results showed that the challenges are classified into three main themes: institution challenges, learner related challenges, and teacher related challenges. Institution related challenges consisted of undetermined aims, structure of the curricula, and content of syllabus, evaluation, time limitation and classroom size. The learner related challenges included lack of motivation, poor general English background, and learners' focus on test, and learners' inappropriate needs' analysis. ESP teachers' related challenges included teacher's language proficiency, teachers' content knowledge, teachers' perception of ESP, teachers' teaching method, teachers' familiarity with material development, and testing skills. The findings of the study can be used to promote the status of teaching ESP in medical universities.

Keywords: ESP, Teaching ESP, Challenges of Teaching ESP, Medical Universities of Iran

1. Introduction

English for specific purposes (ESP) deals with the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or second language where the main goal of the learners is to use English in particular domains. The teaching of ESP, in its onset, was greatly motivated by the necessity to communicate across languages in areas such as technology and commerce. As Belcher(2009) argues, ESP has now expanded to include other branches such as English for academic purposes (EAP), English for vocational purposes (EVP), English for occupational purposes (EOP), English for business purposes (EBP), English for medical purposes (EMP), English for legal purposes (ELP), and English for sociocultural purposes (ESCP).

As Vičič (2011) put it general English (GE) was taught to students for a wide range of professions for a long time which was not always of any help when applied in real-life situations of various areas of specialism such as engineering, tourism, science and technology, medicine, etc. Gradually, more attention was directed towards individual learners as a result of the developments in language theory. According to Hutchinson & Waters (1994), ESP emerged as a result of such a realization along with students' specific needs for English courses in the late 1960s.

In Iranian universities (both State and Open Universities), like the other universities in different parts of the world, ESP is taught to undergraduate and graduate students (Mazdayasna & Tahririyan, 2008). At Iranian universities ESP courses are also taught to almost all majors by both technical (content teachers) and non-technical teachers (English majors). ESP is also taught to students of medical sciences at all Iranian universities of medical sciences. ESP is also assessed as a part of entrance examination to postgraduate programs.

Regardless of what ESP is, its teaching and curriculum should be designed and evaluated on the basis of certain principles of learning, teaching, and evaluation. However, despite the great emphasis laid on teaching ESP as a separate branch of English language teaching (ELT) (Robinson, Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), and the existence of related studies on teaching ESP at Iranian universities, to our best of knowledge no one has appropriately investigated whether teaching ESP to students of medical sciences meets the requirements of principles of teaching ESP or not. That is, whether while teaching ESP to the students, their objectives, needs, motivation, levels of proficiency, interests, backgrounds, etc. are taken in to account or not. Therefore, this study was an attempt to investigate challenges of teaching ESP to medical students from stakeholders' perspectives. More specifically, the following research question was raised:

What are the main challenges of teaching ESP to students at universities of medical sciences in Iran?

2. Review of Literature

Teaching ESP in universities of medical sciences has its own challenges. For instance, teachers have to cope with different issues such as students' low learning motivation (Kubanyiova, 2006; Netiksiene, 2006) and the high stake curriculum (Kitkauskiene, 2006). In Netiksiene's view, learners who study GE, learners in the English Department, tend to have greater rate of learning motivation than those who study ESP, learners in the science department who study English for the sciences. This might happen due to the fact that the EG learners as Donna (2005) believes, are often exposed to a more fun learning context than the ESP learner are. Regarding curriculum expectations, it is believed the ESP curriculum poses greater expectations on learners than the

GE curriculum. That is, learners of ESP are not only required to be able to demonstrate their proficiency in the language within the specific areas, but must also get familiarized with general English vocabulary (Kitkauskiene, 2006). While the aforementioned challenges are seen as unique within the ESP context, there are also other challenges which seem to be shared between GE and ESP. These challenges include but not limited to teachers' and students' use of technology or the internet in the teaching and learning process (Liu, 2005; Thomson, 2008), large class size and limited resources (Donna, 2005).

In addition to the above mentioned studies, several studies have been carried out to study how ESP should be taught, what the characteristics of ESP teachers are, who should teach ESP, etc. For example, Rajabi, Kiani, and Maftoon (2012) investigated the underlying effects of an ESP in-service teacher training program on the beliefs and instructional practices of Iranian ESP teachers as well as students' achievements. They concluded that there was a significant difference between the achievements of students who enjoyed trained ESP instructors in comparison to those who received untrained ESP instructors.

In the same vein, Ahmadi (2012) argued that although most of the vice-deans and almost all the heads of language departments had tendency to assign the teaching of ESP courses to the teachers with language teaching majors, the majority of the heads of specific departments believed that these courses should be taught by discipline-specific teachers. He argued that in teaching ESP courses at all levels, discipline-specialist teachers with an adequate mastery on English are more competent than teachers with ELT majors since they are much more familiar with the technical terms and topics of the students' field of study. He also added, the most important aim of ESP courses is to help students understand the specialized texts of their ESP textbooks, and

as there are many technical terms, notions and topics in these texts, they should be taught by the teachers of the same specialty and not by ELT majors who are not sufficiently familiar with those terms and topics.

Alibakhshi, Ghandali, and Padiz (2011) argued that comparing general English teaching with ESP teaching, we certainly notice both similarities and differences. The difference is that many general English language teachers are trained to become teachers of English while the great majority of ESP teachers are not trained as such. ESP teachers need, therefore, to orientate themselves to a new environment for which they have not generally been prepared.

Basturkmen (2010) argued that teachers may find themselves dealing with content in an occupation or subject of study which they themselves have no or little prior knowledge. Some teachers may find themselves working alone in an on-site environment. They may also find they have far less knowledge and experience in the subject than their learners.

Master (2005) listed a number of questions dealing with the accountability of ESP including:

- Do ESP/EST (English for Science and Technology) programs work?
- Are they more effective than previous programs aimed at general language proficiency?
- If so, in what ways are they more effective?
- Can the expense be justified? and
- Are there any unintended or unforeseen outcomes resulting from the use of any given ESP program? (p.109)

In an attempt to clarify factors influencing ESP instruction in Iranian academic settings, Farhady (2007) refers to the important role of teacher variable. He believes that teachers should be equipped with the trends and developments of ESP. In other words, there should be a sense of uniformity

among the ESP teachers' attitudes, beliefs, methods, techniques, and classroom activities.

3. Research Method

3.1. Participants

Participants of this study consisted of Iranian medical students (20) physicians (10), and ESP teachers (11) at medical universities and organizations affiliated to Shahid Behshti and Tehran universities of medical sciences in Tehran Iran. Medical students were selected from among those who took all English courses including general English course and English for specific course. The data saturation occurred when the 20th student, the 10th physician, and the 11th ESP teacher were interviewed. One of the reasons for including such a wide selection of medical students, physicians, and ESP teachers was to be able to generate a wide range of perceptions, insights and experiences of the stakeholders about teaching ESP. All participants were selected through purposive sampling. They were all informed about the objective of the study.

3.2. The Research Methodology

To understand and interpret participants' own descriptions of the phenomenon which they individually and directly experience, a phenomenological approach was used. Phenomenology is a strategy of enquiry which examines "how human beings construct and give meaning to their actions in concrete social situations" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 204). It focuses on understanding the meaning events have for people being studied (Patton, 1990). In phenomenological study, the researchers try to first understand how people within a context collectively and individually understand and interpret phenomena. They also

aim to record, interpret and explain the meanings which these individuals make of their experiences. This study required qualitative instruments which would deeply explore the perspectives of ESP stakeholders about challenges of teaching ESP, their justifications for difficulties and problems of teaching ESP within their context. Hence, data collection was initiated with the intent of conducting semi-structured face to face individual interviews. The initial questions addressed the participants' experiences of teaching ESP as instructors and learning ESP as students. They were also asked to mention whether there was anything wrong while teaching/learning ESP. Interviewing was stopped when no new theme (code) was extracted through the last three interviews with students of medical sciences, physicians, and ESP teachers, respectively.

3.3. Data Analysis

Radnor's (2001) step by step guide to qualitative data analysis was followed. Interviews were first transcribed and multiple copies of the transcripts were printed. The transcripts for topic ordering to draw out and list topics that are linked to original research questions were then read. These were listed on an A4 sheet of paper and color coded for use as a reference guide for subsequent readings of the transcripts. The themes which were extracted from the interviews were coded using colors that corresponded to colors of the topic that they are part of. In case of more than one category in a topic, we used numeric coding. A third reading for content helps to identify quotes that are aligned with each category within the topics. We labeled the quotes according to the category they represented. Keeping the master copy intact, we then used the word processor to copy and paste the categories and quotes on separate Microsoft Word documents representing each topic. These were printed and

read again to look for subtitles of the themes, in order to understand, interpret, and write down the interpretation of the extracted themes and subthemes.

3.4. Research Validity

The conversations were recorded for accurate interpretations, while participants were engaged in discussions notes were taken, and member checking was incorporated by returning transcripts to participants for respondents' verification. Data were collected at the onset of each term of the academic year to guarantee a high degree of participants' involvement. Hence, bearing in mind a researcher's status can impact on participants' responses, the researchers tried to establish a trusting professional relationship with the participants.

3.5. Dependability (Trustworthiness)

Dependability of the research was increased in three different ways. Firstly, all participants were provided with the same standardized questions which were carefully worded after piloting. Secondly, interviews were transcribed as accurately as possible and returned to participants for verification. Finally, all procedures of the research including transcripts, drafts and final reviews of data were documented, according to which the study could be replicated or reconstructed.

3.6. Objectivity

Trustworthiness in interpretive research is extremely valuable to assess the research quality. Hence, while the subjective nature of this research is acknowledged, the researchers attempted to the best of their capability to

present an accurate, complete, detailed, and bias free account of participants' views, perceptions, and feelings they were revealed to researchers and as they were experienced by participants.

4. Results of the Study

Three groups of the participants were interviewed. While interviewing the participants, the researcher stopped interviewing when the data saturation point was obtained. The data were content analyzed and the findings which were common among the 80 percent of the participants were kept, content analyzed step by step and finally labeled as themes. In the present study, three themes were extracted which are detailed in the following parts.

1. Institution (higher education) Related Challenges

The majority of the participants argued that some challenges of teaching ESP to students at medical universities are related to higher education policy makers. These challenges included unrealistic and undermined aims, time limitation, structure and content of Language curricula, syllabus related challenges, evaluation, and classroom size. Each is explained and exemplified in details in the following parts.

a. Unrealistic and Undetermined Aims

The majority of the participants argued that at the beginning of each university course it is necessary to formulate its actual and realistic aims and tasks. They also argued that students must know from the beginning what variety of the foreign language, and to what extent, they are going to master, and how long it takes to master. In ESP courses taught to medical universities the educational objectives are not well defined. The following quotations exemplify the theme.

"*The aim is not clear, it is not known what language skills should be emphasized*" *(P1).*

"*the instructional objectives of ESP are not well defined by ESP and education policy makers, for example I don't know what kind of language proficiency is expected when the ESP course is over*" *(P. 9).*

b. Time limitation

Majority of the participants argued that the time allocated to ESP courses is not enough for the ESP students to master language skills.

"*I am sure that many students get disappointed and lose their interest in foreign language studies because it is not possible to, in the limited period of learning 2-3 hours for week for 2-3 semesters – to master a foreign language, to acquire all the various skills: reading special journals, texts, writing scientific papers, understanding the everyday speech, etc. (P. 20).*

c. Structure and content of language curricula

Some of the participants stated that the language curricula of ESP courses are dominated by the systematic study of grammar and the regular carrying out of translation exercises into and out of Persian, the first language of the students. They also believed that in ESP courses reading and learning technical vocabularies are emphasized but the ability to write and speak language is not emphasized.

"*I remember our teacher distributed a pamphlet consisting of some chapters in which some technical terms were given followed by reading passages and some translation exercises, I expected the teacher to teach listening, speaking, etc.(p21).*

They also argued that the main emphasis is laid on professional vocabulary and the general vocabulary is ignored. However, without general vocabulary repertoire it is not possible to learn professional vocabulary.

d. Syllabus related Challenges

Majority of the participants argued that the materials used in the ESP courses are not language materials but subject materials (contents are adapted from technical subjects). They believed that whatever is taken in ESP courses has been practiced in other subject courses and the syllabus seems to be the content of the medicine rather than English language.

"*In ESP classes, the same materials we studied are in basic courses such as anatomy, physiology, etc. are repeated in English, no language skills are practiced*" (*p.3*).

The ESP textbooks I used to teach have been developed based on the principles of material development, no enough exercises, no self-assessment activities, etc." (p22).

The participants also argued that the content of ESP syllabus should cover learners' target language use situations tasks, the tasks they do through the language after graduating from the universities. They also argued that there is no alignment between the pedagogical syllabus and real life tasks.

"*The language syllabus we learned in our ESP classes was not representative of the tasks we do through English in our work settings*"

e. Evaluation

Participants of the study argued that ESP tests do not look like language tests but they look like medicine knowledge tests which are in English. They also argued that most ESP tests evaluate the students' translation proficiency and the other language skills such as reading comprehension, writing, and speaking

proficiency are not evaluated at all. Therefore, learners' topical background (familiarity with medicine content) influences their true score rather than their language knowledge.

"The ESP test I took was not an English test but an anatomy test in English" (p.23).

f. Classroom size

Almost all participants stated that the size of language classes at medical universities is not normal. There are at least 30 students in each class. Therefore, such large numbers of students in language classes is not appropriate and causes severe problems.

"Sometimes in my ESP classes I have no chance to ask all the students questions. No time for giving feedback to learners equally".

2 .Learner-related challenges

Majority of the participants argued that some of challenges of teaching ESP courses at medical universities of Iran are related to the ESP learners. This theme is further classified into several subthemes which are explained as follows.

a. Learners' heterogeneity

Majority of the participants argued that in Iran an ESP class comprises students of different demographics, that is, different educational, socio linguistic and socio economic backgrounds. The ESP practitioner faces several issues due to the reason that the ESP courses are developed for students having a common objective, no matter what their demography is.

"Students in my ESP classes are not homogenous, they have different aims, and needs and it really leads to many problems" (p. 16).

"There are some students with a good language proficiency in my class; teachers teach us in the same way, my low language proficiency causes me to lose my interest" (p. 2).

b. Lack of motivation

Participants of the study argued that some of the medical students are not very motivated to learn ESP while taking the courses. They might think that medicine is the best course and they have no further instrumental motivation to learn language.

"When I was student I was not interested in learning language, I didn't know that even the physicians need a particular language (P. 23).

c. Learners' poor general English

Majority of the participants argued that also the main difficulty while teaching ESP at university level is that that the students do not understand the basic sentence structures and parts of speech. This brings a sort of double challenge for the ESP teacher; first to build an EGP foundation and then to work on the skills.

"Students in ESP classes are not the same; some are very weak in general English but some are good" (p. 14).

d. Inappropriate needs analysis

Majority of the participants argued that ESP is concerned, first and foremost, with satisfying the real needs of the students and not with revealing the knowledge of the teacher. The intensive and efficient teaching of grammar, vocabulary, translation, etc. must be scientifically grounded and concentrate

only on those items which students actually need for the purposes specified at the beginning of the university course. This is an important statement which in theory is universally accepted but in practice is hardly ever followed particularly at the universities in our country. The following extracts illustrate the theme.

"We were not involved in making decision about the content of the course, how it should be taught and evaluated; we didn't like what our teacher prescribed to us"

"It is not possible for me to analyze the learners' needs and if so, it is not possible to meet their needs within such a short time" (p. 24).

e. Learners' focus on test results

Some of the participants argued that the main purpose of students taking ESP courses is to pass the test with a good score. Therefore, instead of learning language for communicative purposes, the learners' lay great emphasis on the result of the test.

"Students always ask for sample final ESP tests. They just attempt to study hard so that they can pass the test. That is why; we do not have the chance to provide exercises on different language skills".

"I remember when I was a student I always tried to pass ESP with a good score. Gaining score in ESP was easier for me than gaining score in my technical courses".

3. Teacher related challenges

The third extracted challenge of teaching ESP at medical universities of Iran is labeled teacher-related challenges. It consists of different sub-categories which are explained and exemplified in the following parts.

a. Unfamiliarity with the genre of medical subjects

Some of the participants argued that some of the teachers teaching ESP to medical students are not familiar with medical terms, expressions, and genre. They translate the terms literally which do not make sense at all. They also believed that only those who are well aware of the genre of medical courses and are proficient in language skills and teaching methods are qualified to teach ESP.

"Those who taught technical English to us knew nothing about medicine and its basic concepts, superficial translation of medical collocation word by word is not accepted"(p.1).

"Familiarity with the genre of medical texts is necessary for ESP teachers; our teacher was not able to explain some technical words (p.16).

b. Teachers' language proficiency

Some of the participants argued that some ESP teachers we observed or heard about are not proficient in English language skills, but they are familiar with the technical jargon of medicine. They also argued that a combination of language proficiency and familiarity of genre of medical texts is probably a good solution.

"My ESP teacher does not pronounce the words correctly" (P.9).

"I remember my ESP teacher was not able to speak English well, he only spoke Persian".

"Although I have been teaching ESP to students, I am not able to write my papers in English".

c. Teachers' Language teaching Skills

The next teacher related challenge is teachers' unfamiliarity with language teaching skills. The participants argued that some of the ESP teachers teaching

at medical universities of Iran lack certain language teaching skills. They argued that language teaching strategies are not the same as teaching strategies used in teaching the other courses.

"*Teaching language requires certain teaching skills, familiarity with learning theories, knowing how to teach*".

d. Teachers' unfamiliarity with Psychological issues

Learning a foreign language, like no other subject, requires a special psychological approach, the atmosphere of relaxation, trust even love and faith. Indeed, learning a strange language, a strange world picture, strange (often – alien) mentality is a difficult psychological barrier for many learners. Teaching foreign languages to university students of non-philological specialties is complicated by the fact that for these students a foreign language is not a part of the special, professional education, which may result in a lack of motivation. The following quotation exemplifies the theme:

"*The teachers do not pay attention to the learners' emotions, personality types, tiredness, anxiety, stress, etc. The students' feelings and learning strategies, and preferences are not taken into account*"(p. 11).

e. Teachers' unfamiliarity with material development

Majority of the ESP participants argued that they lack the knowledge of material development and preparation. They argued that they need to take at least a course on material development. They argued that they usually copy some passages from Latin medical textbooks or download passages from the internet websites. These materials are suitable for teaching language because they were not developed by experts of textbook development centers.

"*The objectives of each lesson are not clear; we just follow our teachers' commands, we do not do exercises and self-assessment activities*".

f. Teachers' unfamiliarity with testing methods

Some participants argued that ESP teachers are not fully familiar with the principles of language testing. All most all ESP tests consist of translation tasks. ESP Teachers also argued that they did not take any course on language testing. One of the participants argued:

"I know nothing about testing methods. I just follow the other ESP teachers particularly my own teacher who taught ESP courses at the university from which I graduated".

4. Discussion

The main objective of the present study was to explore the main challenges of teaching ESP at medical universities of Iran. 25 ESP stake holders were interviewed. The content analysis of the interviewees' responses showed that the challenges of teaching ESP are: Education policy makers' related, teacher related, and learner related. The first challenge consisted of several subthemes. One of the challenges was that aims of medical ESP courses are not determined. The second related problem was the structure of ESP courses at medical universities which was grammar oriented. Therefore, it could be argued that in addition to grammar and technical vocabulary, language skills which are needed by physicians, medical staff, residents, and students of medical sciences should be taught to the stakeholder in ESP courses.

The findings of the present study are in line Riabtseva and Arestova (2006) who argued that another problem of teaching ESP is vocabulary from the general and professional points of view. They argue that that vocabulary plays an important role in teaching foreign languages in general and in professional courses in particular. ESP teaching requires teaching the vocabulary of special

texts. In ESP courses, the focus, therefore, is on the scientific vocabulary, the skeleton of every special text but the general vocabulary is rarely taught properly at school and has to be acquired at the tertiary level. This is one more challenge to think about. Therefore, as Farhadi (2007) argues, the most commonly used words by students of each field should be identified through appropriate corpus analysis studies and they should be taught and evaluated as the prerequisite to ESP courses.

Another extracted theme was psychological related issues. This finding is also consistent with Riabtseva and Arestova (2006) who argue that learning a foreign language, requires a special psychological approach, the atmosphere of relaxation, trust even love and faith. Indeed, learning a strange language, a strange world picture, strange mentality is a difficult psychological problem for many learners. Teaching foreign languages to university students of non-philological specialties is complicated by the fact that for these students a foreign language is not a part of the special, professional education, which may result in a lack of motivation.

The next challenge regarding ESP teaching which emerged from the results of this study is that of finding appropriate and relevant course contents. The contents of the textbooks are either irrelevant to the culture of the learners and/or are not in line with the students' needs. The question as to why the selected contents turn out to be irrelevant while being implemented in the class has more than one answers: unavailability of standardized outlines, lack of the ESP practitioner' freedom/ interest, lack of authentic material, inappropriate system of conducting needs analysis, outdated libraries, and ESP practitioners' lack of awareness regarding the use of internet. In line with Abdulaziz, et al. (2012) it could be strongly argued that inappropriate content of syllabus leaves some effects and results in more issues like lack of student motivation,

disciplinary problems, ineffective teaching and the ESP practitioner's inability to achieve the desired results.

Moreover, evaluating the students has always been an issue for the ESP practitioners. Majority of the ESP practitioners claimed that they face difficulty in evaluating the students of their respective ESP classes. There might be some reasons as to why they face such difficulty, e.g., unavailability of proper guidelines for evaluation, large classroom size, and the students' ignorance in the evaluation criteria.

The next extracted problem in teaching ESP is class time limitation. Such class time limitation sometimes creates issues for ESP practitioners. This might result in teachers' inability to provide the learners of ESP with evaluation and feedback on individual level, ineffective teaching, and their inability to carry out needs analysis projects. The results of the study also showed that some of the challenges are related to the learners. One of these challenges was lack of appropriate needs analysis. As Abdulaziz, Shah, Mahmood, and Fazel e Hagh (2012) argue a key point to remember is that, while teaching ESP, it is necessary to take into account changes in the nature of students' need and the context in which they live, study and work. The syllabus of ESP, in any case, must improve the students' skills in all aspects of language activities. To make good progress, a student must practice different language activities, related to reception, interaction, and production, each of these types of activities is possible in oral or written form, or both.

Lack of students' motivation in ESP classrooms was another learner related problem. Almost all ESP practitioners complained about a lack of student motivation in their classrooms and believe the main e reasons for this include bad physical classroom condition, attendance systems, inappropriate syllabus designs, misdirected objectives of the students, and students' shyness in

learning English. The next challenge that majority of the ESP practitioners came across was that of class heterogeneity. In Iran, as in any other country of the world, an ESP class comprises of students of different demographics, that is, different educational, socio linguistic and socio economic backgrounds. The ESP teachers face several challenges because ESP courses are developed for students with a common academic and/or professional objective, no matter what their language level is. This leads to an increase in classroom heterogeneity, a need for thorough needs analysis and different evaluation criteria for different learners.

Participants also argued that majority of the ESP students have a very poor general English background. This finding is consistent with the results of the study by Zohrabi (2005). He argues that there are obvious shortcomings in the General English courses in Iran due to which most of the university students cannot comprehend specialist texts. The problem of poor general English background of ESP students is not only limited to Iran settings.

Abdulaziz, et al. (2012) also argued that ESP students in Pakistan are heterogeneous and have different general English backgrounds. The European scenario is not different either. The situation of poor general English background of students persists in countries like Spain too. According to Palacios (2007) one way of resolving this issue is to encourage communication between the secondary school teachers and the tertiary (ESP) level teachers.

In addition, the ESP teachers face certain issues regarding teaching because of several reasons such as lack of knowledge of language teaching, large classroom size, heterogeneous classes, etc. This has a direct impact on classroom management, teaching efficiency, students' responsive attitude, their level of shyness, and conducting classroom activities.

5. Conclusions

In line with the findings of this study, it could be concluded that in order to motivate the students of medical sciences to learn ESP, teachers should involve them in designing material and ask for their learning preferences. Also, through in-service training programs or workshops, they need to learn about a variety of assessment techniques. ESP teachers should also attend teaching, testing, and material development workshops or conferences to sharpen their knowledge about the requirements of teaching ESP and get familiar with the latest innovations in teaching ESP, testing ESP, and material development and adaptation. In terms of the institution related challenges, it could be concluded that universities and institutions are required to determine the aims of teaching ESP and determine the language skills which ESP students should master. They should also provide ESP practitioners with a manual consisting of the aims of the course, syllabus, teaching strategies, and guidelines for evaluations. Institutions are also required to check both general language knowledge and content knowledge of the ESP teachers and select those with abilities in language skills and content of medicine.

Furthermore, in order to minimize the effects of irrelevant course content selection, the ESP practitioners are strongly required to conduct proper needs analysis. Moreover, students' lack of interest in learning English language can be managed with perseverance and patience on part of the ESP teachers. To solve the diversity in the learners' proficiency level, in line with related it could be concluded well-made comprehensive objective tests and direct-proficiency performance tests are indispensable in bringing about homogeneity in an English language classroom.

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