

ESP Teachers' Perceptions of Pedagogical Challenges in Islamic Sciences Faculties: A Case Study at Batna 1 University

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Abstract:

Recent approaches have replaced classical English Language Teaching (ELT), promoting English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to address learners' academic needs. Teaching English in Islamic Sciences faculties is significant for accessing specialized terminology and research. However, pedagogical challenges in this context remain underexplored. This qualitative case study investigates ESP challenges at Batna 01 University. Data were collected through structured interviews with three English teachers. Findings reveal challenges related to learners, curricula, materials, and institutional support. The study offers recommendations to enhance ESP provision in Algerian Islamic Studies programs.

Key words: ESP, Teaching, ELT, Challenges, Islamic Sciences, pedagogy.

Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become a significant area within applied linguistics, responding to the need for higher education to develop greater communication skills that align with specific disciplines (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Basturkmen, 2010). Given the growing demand for English in global research, non-English institutions have adopted ESP courses to help students deal confidently with specialized resources in their fields (Hyland, 2002). Yet, ESP implementation in these contexts is regarded as a complex task, especially when students have limited access to the latest English-language academia in areas such as Islamic Sciences. Despite

the prominence of English in Algeria's higher education reform, ESP adoption in Islamic Studies environments remains limited and insufficiently explored. Most syllabi are not aligned with the field's specific discourse and terminology which restrict effective communicative competence.

This qualitative case study explores the pedagogical challenges of ESP teaching at Batna 1 University's Faculty of Islamic Sciences through structured interviews with three ESP teachers to highlight instructional, curricular, and learner-related issues. Based on previous studies, it is hypothesized that ESP teachers face challenges related to professional training, subject knowledge, students' low general English proficiency, issues with curricula and materials, and limited institutional support.

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The research gap emerged from the limited research on the pedagogical challenges of teaching ESP in Faculties of Islamic Sciences, a topic inadequately explored in Algerian ESP research, unlike the more studied scientific and technical fields.

This research gains its significance from the increasing demand for students of the Faculty of Islamic Sciences to fully understand and interpret current research publications, translated religious texts, and interdisciplinary academic work. Identifying the challenges that constrain ESP instruction within the context of Islamic Sciences plays a vital role in enhancing the pedagogical process, developing teacher competency, and establishing institutional support.

The aim of this study is to explore the major pedagogical challenges encountered in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the Faculty of Islamic Sciences at Batna 1 University, Algeria. The study is guided by these questions:

- What are the instructional, curricular, and learner-related issues that ESP teachers at Batna 1 University face?
- What are the views of ESP teachers at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences on the effectiveness of the current teaching materials and techniques?
- What are the proposed solutions to enhance ESP teaching in this context?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

ESP (English for Specific Purposes) emerged as a result of the increasing interest in language instruction that was discipline-based rather than general language skills, in both occupational and in academic environments. According to early influential works by Hutchinson & Waters (1987) and Dudley-Evans & St John (1998), ESP is a learner-centered approach tailored to specific contexts. Unlike General English, ESP prioritizes needs analysis, genre awareness and the integration of discourse within particular fields. Given the global use of English in educational institutions, ESP has become a fundamental component of higher education across the world.

2.2. ESP in EFL and Non-English-Speaking Contexts

The adoption of ESP in the EFL field includes a range of challenges. Research has revealed that ESP teachers often encounter difficulties related to a lack of professional training, limited exposure to English and weak institutional support (Belcher, 2006; Orr, 2002). ESP curricula in many EFL settings are designed without pedagogical guidelines, which often leads to courses that fail to meet the students' academic needs (Flowerdew, 2013). Furthermore, teachers are frequently tasked with handling particular domains in which they have insufficient subject-matter knowledge. (Basturkmen, 2010).

2.3. ESP in Islamic Sciences Contexts

Although ESP research has been considered a substantial component in many areas, including business, engineering, and medicine, the research concerned with Islamic studies remains highly limited (Madkur, 2018). According to Al-Attas (1991), Islamic sciences constitute an Arabic-centered knowledge characterized by specific conceptual structures and scholarly genres like fiqh writings, tafsir interpretation, and hadith, which gives rise to several pedagogical concerns uncommon in most ESP courses. Recent studies have emphasized that the students of the Islamic sciences faculty must gain English proficiency to engage with contemporary translated Islamic

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thought and interdisciplinary inquiries (Jande & Ibrahim, 2021). Despite this, ESP programs in these settings are not aligned with the area of Islamic sciences settings, thereby compelling teachers to adopt materials with little institutional guidance (Belcher, 2006).

2.4 ESP Challenges Reported in the Literature

Scholarly investigations in many academic contexts highlight a number of pedagogical challenges that continue to affect ESP implementation in particular contexts. These difficulties are classified into four main groups: **teacher-related challenges, learner-related challenges, curricular and material-related issues, and institutional barriers.**

• Teacher-Related Challenges

Scholarly works also indicate that most ESP instructors lack professional training in specific disciplinary contexts (Alsolami, 2014; Makhlouf & Arar, 2022; Soulimane Benhabib, 2024). Another key challenge is the knowledge gap that educators confront when starting to teach ESP after having experienced general English teaching (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021).

• Learner-Related Challenges

Another pedagogical challenge teachers frequently encounter is the students' low level of proficiency in General English. This, in turn, makes the instructors struggle to teach specific competencies that depend fundamentally on general English basis (Elimadi, 2022; Iswati & Triastuti, 2021). Additionally, many students are apparently demotivated to engage with English used mainly within academic contexts at the university (Alsolami, 2014; Soulimane-Benhabib, 2024).

• Curricular and Material-Related Challenges

Most ESP syllabi are not tailored to students' discipline-specific needs. In this regard, the learning objectives within these programs are poorly defined, which complicates the instructors' ability to enable their students to acquire the required linguistic skills (Elimadi, 2022; Lehalali & Dalila, 2023; Missoum, 2023). Moreover, educators often depend on General English (EGP) textbooks due to the lack of specialized teaching materials. (Makhlouf & Arar, 2022; Jande & Ibrahim, 2021).

• Institutional-Related Challenges

Instructors are often confronted with institutional challenges that play a negative role within the process of integrating ESP in the university context. Previous studies have highlighted some issues such as weak institutional support, lack of cooperation, and insufficient recognition of ESP pedagogical requirements (Makhlouf & Arar, 2022; Missoum, 2023; Cheraghi & Motaharnejad 2023).

Iswati and Triastuti (2021) postulated that the absence of clear policies leaves teachers without the structural support required to manage specialized instruction. Furthermore,

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neglecting ESP's distinct requirement undermines both teachers' performance and the proper ESP adoption within the university curriculum (Fitria ,2023).

3.Research Methodology

3.1 .Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative, interview-based case study approach to examine how ESP teachers perceive the pedagogical challenges encountered in Islamic Sciences faculties at Batna-1 University. This type of qualitative case study is suitable for discovering the challenging nature of the teaching process in a specific institutional environment, producing insights that may not be revealed by quantitative methods (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). Moreover, this design further provides a detailed explanation of how teachers engage with the linguistic and disciplinary challenges within this specific context (Stake, 1995).

3.2 .Research Site and Context

The study was conducted in the Faculty of Islamic Sciences at Batna-1 University. English instruction is required at all academic levels. It functions as an ESP module designed for Islamic Sciences students despite being named as an *English*. Although English is important for engaging with worldwide research, ESP instruction in this faculty is still underdeveloped, marked by oversized classes, limited teaching time, and weak institutional support. ESP practice in this particular context represents a gap in the current Algerian ESP literature, highlighting the need for deeper analysis.

3.3 .Participants and Sampling

The study employed purposive sampling to include individuals who possess direct engagement with the phenomenon being explored (Patton, 2015). Three English teachers from the Faculty of Islamic sciences formed the study sample. The teachers have between five and twenty years of teaching experience across different university levels. One participant had formal training in Islamic studies, while the others had academic backgrounds in the fields of translation and English studies. Such diversity provided multiple insights on the pedagogical challenges of ESP within this context.

3.4 .Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using structured interviews conducted digitally via a fillable interview form by participants. Each participant received the interview form consisting of open-ended questions that focus on eight key dimensions: teaching background, teaching challenges, content-related issues, materials, classroom practices, institutional support, training, and improvement suggestions. By completing this interview, data for thematic analysis are obtained from participants' carefully written responses (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.5 .Data Collection Procedures

The interview forms were given to the teachers, who completed them and later gave them back to the researcher via google forms. The researcher clarified the questions when needed but did not shape the content of the responses in any way.

This non-disruptive procedure helps the participants respond comfortably without the stress of face-to-face recorded interviews while ensuring anonymity. After collection, the forms were organized in a dataset for analysis (Creswell, 2013).

3.6 .Data Analysis

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six clear stages, a thematic analysis was employed. The analytical procedure consisted of these phases:

1-Reviewing the data many times to get closely familiarized with them.

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2-Highlighting key ideas and grouping them into emerging themes.

3-Identifying potential themes by organizing codes into structured groups.

4-Checking the themes and refining them to ensure coherence .

5-Defining and naming the themes.

6-Writing the final narrative summary using sample responses from the dataset.

Using a manual inductive approach, coded data was processed to facilitate the emergence of themes from participants' responses instead of being predefined (Thomas, 2006). To ensure dependability and transparency, every analytical process was documented. the researcher extensively interacted with the data set, used reflective notes, and carefully checked the alignment of the theme and the data to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings. This strategy is ideal for detecting persistent themes in qualitative data.

3.7 Ethical considerations

This study was conducted on a voluntary basis. The participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Furthermore, participants' identities were not collected and the data were also anonymized before analysis. As the study poses minimal risk and relied on digital self-reports, ethical guidelines for qualitative research were followed by the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

4 .Findings

Through thematic analysis, the digital structured interviews revealed four major themes, illustrating the pedagogical difficulties confronted by English teachers in the Faculty of Islamic Sciences at Batna-1 University, namely teacher-related, learner-related, curricular and material and institutional issues. The findings consistently highlight these themes, which reflect the complex nature of ESP instruction within a specialized setting.

4.1 .Teacher-Related Challenges

4.1.1 .Limited Specialized Training in ESP and Islamic Studies

Teachers reported a lack of background or formal training addressing ESP pedagogy in the area of Islamic sciences. Two instructors mentioned that they depend primarily on personal efforts in course preparation.

Teacher 1 stated:

“I do not have formal academic training in Islamic studies... I prepare my course content by studying the curriculum and doing independent research”.

This statement indicates a strong reliance on personal efforts rather than systematic professional training. Despite the fact that this way of teaching reflects flexibility and adaptability, the absence of formal preparation in Islamic studies may weaken the consistent integration of Islamic content and ESP pedagogy. As a result, inconsistencies in content and learner relevance can be created due to the dependency on individual perspectives.

Teacher 2 added:

“No training in ESP... It was a bit difficult at the beginning”.

This remark points to the obstacles experienced by teachers who begin ESP teaching without prior pedagogical training. Also, this challenge implies that teachers have limited knowledge related to needs analysis and course design. Such issues are clearly noticeable in academic areas like Islamic sciences because of the complexity of integrating language teaching with specialized content properly.

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The experiences of both instructors suggest that inadequate professional training creates a gap in preparation that leads to uncertainty when teachers deal with specialized religious concepts and topics.

4.1.2 .Heavy Workload and Managing Multiple Levels

Teachers reported that they are often required to teach multiple levels and different modules while managing large student groups.

As one instructor explained:

“The courses are sometimes intrinsic and need immense preparation—time consuming—with around 900 students”.

This statement underlines the demanding nature of ESP instruction regarding the complex content and teaching planning. Large student numbers also increase pressure on teachers, forcing them to balance lesson preparation with handling many students. Moreover, The task of teaching various courses to overcrowded classes contributes to teacher fatigue and decreased enthusiasm. As a result, learner-centered practices and effective assessment feedback may be restricted and undermined under these circumstances.

Another added:

“These sessions are meant to be taught in TD groups, but due to lack of teachers they are delivered as lecture-style classes instead”.

This observation reveals a gap between pedagogical intentions classroom practice. Teaching TD sessions as lectures also limits students' interaction and communicative practice. As a result, this limitation weakens learner-centered approaches and the development of communicative skills.

4.2 .Learner-Related Challenges

4.2.1 .Low Proficiency in General English

The participants agreed that the students lack general English proficiency. This low level, thus, hinders the success of ESP incorporation in this context. It was also reported that the students 'level generally range from A1 to B1 levels, with B2-level students represent a minority.

“They do not have the necessary basic tools of English”.

This remark underlines the fact that many students do not have basic language skills like grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Without these basic skills, learners find it difficult to engage with ESP content. As a result, teachers are forced to address these basics, thereby reducing the time for achieving ESP goals.

“Students' low proficiency makes teaching ESP content challenging”.

This observation also underscores the difficulties teachers face when students have limited language skills. A lack of English proficiency cause challenges related to comprehending complex texts, performing academic tasks, and participating in disciplinary activities. Additionally, according to the teachers, much time is spent simplifying grammar complexity and terminology to facilitate ESP understanding. Therefore, students' limited proficiency may make ESP teaching prioritize general English support, which diminishes learning outcomes.

4.2.2 .Limited Motivation and Engagement

Motivation is regarded as a crucial issue by the participants teachers.

“Lack of students' motivation to learn”.

This remark points to motivation as a key element that contributes in shaping students'

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involvement in ESP courses. Hence, low motivation negatively affects both classroom participation and commitment to language development. In ESP contexts, low motivation can seriously obstruct learning progress, as ESP requires continuous engagement with specific content.

“Students not only focus on Arabic, but also consider it as nonessential among their core modules.”

This observation suggests that Arabic is seen as central to students' studies, whereas English is viewed as marginal. Such views could be caused by the mismatch between English instruction and Islamic studies content. Therefore, the secondary status of English leads to reduce student participation in ESP classes.

“They think English doesn't matter, which is why I have huge numbers of unmotivated students”.

The statement supports the idea that motivation plays a central role in shaping students' desire to learn. As long as students do not value English's role in research, they will lose engagement with ESP courses. As a result, this view limits teachers' ability to encourage active learning, even when they attempt to use fun tasks and engaging activities to attract students' attention.

4.2.3 .Dealing with Mixed-Ability Classes

Differences in students' skill levels compel teachers to adjust their teaching approaches to maximize learning improvement.

“I try to adapt the course according to the middle students' abilities”.

The statement indicates that the teacher's strategy of managing mixed abilities is targeting the average-level students. Although this approach maintains course progress, it may neglect both weaker and more advanced learners. Therefore, concentrating on this level may reduce the overall impact of ESP instruction.

“I differentiate activities whenever possible... but the very large class size limits individualized support”.

The statement points to real classroom obstacles that weaken the implementation of differentiation in teaching. Although the teacher value the need to adapt tasks to learners' varying levels, large class size limit learner guidance and support. Thus, this situation may prevent students from developing ESP skills.

4.3.1 .Teaching Specialized Islamic Terminology in English

Despite the fact that teachers are gradually becoming aware of the Islamic sciences terminology, they still struggle with certain Islamic terms having no direct English translation “I am afraid of dealing with details beyond my knowledge”.

This remark reflects the instructor's limited confidence in dealing with highly specialized topics. Such concerns commonly result from limited interdisciplinary knowledge, especially in ESP settings that require integrating both language teaching and specialized content. As a result, this uncertainty may cause teachers to avoid in-depth discussion, thereby weakening learners' engagement with advanced concepts and topics.

“Students explain nuanced meanings in Arabic, and we build the English understanding together through a socio-constructivist approach”.

The comment emphasizes a method where students' understanding in Arabic utilized to support comprehension of English concepts. In other words, teachers often depend on the students' specialized knowledge to collaboratively simplify ESP content. In practice, the teacher reflects socio-constructivist approaches. Thus, this teaching method may increase students'

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interaction and engagement, however it proves teachers limited disciplinary knowledge as well as students' weak English proficiency.

4.3.2 .Explaining Complex Islamic Concepts to Low-Level Learners

Teachers highlight the difficulty of conveying abstract and complex ideas to students with limited English skills.

“The main challenge is simplifying complex Islamic concepts for students with low proficiency”.

This highlights that ESP teachers face a crucial difficulty in explaining specialized topics to learners with weak English proficiency. It is worth noting that explaining abstract concepts is not easy and requires step-by-step guidance and teacher support. In Islamic studies, this challenge is more evident because those disciplinary terms are hard to explain for students with limited language skills.

Another teacher emphasized the significance of examples:

“I have to use examples, especially when dealing with Sharia concepts that don't have equivalents in English”.

This comment stresses the value of examples to help students comprehend unfamiliar or abstract concepts. By using examples, students can also develop acquiring specialized English terminology. At the same time, the method reflects the difficulty of ESP instruction when concepts do not have clear linguistic equivalents. Thus, it illustrates the dual deficiency teachers experience in facilitating the learning process while maintaining conceptual precision.

4.4 .Curricular and Material-Related Issues

4.4.1 .Inadequate Curriculum Alignment

Two teachers viewed the syllabus as inadequate

“The syllabus does not help students or teachers”.

This comment reflects discontent with the present syllabus that fails to respond to both learners' and teachers' specific needs. That is to say, this situation results from a syllabus that lacks clear learning objectives and relevant content. Moreover, In ESP instruction, these shortcomings can cause a clear gap between what is taught and the students' target needs.

“The curriculum chosen by the ministry is not the most suitable”.

The remark suggests that the curriculum neglect both actual teaching contexts and learners' specific needs. Such curricula therefore make is challenging for teachers to adjust course content to meet their classes' demands, which may affect ESP instruction.

4.4.2 .Need for Adapted Teaching Materials

Some teachers benefit from the using official online platforms properly, while others prefer to rely on their own efforts to design their own resources.

“I rely on my own ESP materials, simplified texts, vocabulary lists, and activities”.

This statement suggests that the teachers have to fill gaps caused by the absence of appropriate institutional materials. By creating their own materials, they tend to adapt content to suit learners' language levels and academic fields. Although this approach shows creativity and flexibility, it may also affect the quality across courses.

“English is taught online; the platform has many tools”.

The remark indicates that the use of technological tools can enhance teaching and learning in ESP contexts. In addition, Teachers emphasized the extreme importance of context-relevant materials and resources. These tools can support learning by providing materials and encouraging learner autonomy. However, the success of using these tools depends on

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teachers' digital skills and students' actual engagement.

I wish we had ESP books about Sharia”.

The comment highlights the lack of ESP textbooks specifically designed for Islamic studies, especially in Sharia. Hence, teachers often rely on general English materials or create their own content, failing to address the field's depth. This gap indicates a demand for ESP textbooks that link authentic Sharia content with suitable language support.

4.5 .Institutional Constraints

4.5.1 .Lack of Institutional Support

Teachers reported insufficient institutional support for ESP instruction.

“No support at all from the institution”.

The statement stresses that ESP teaching frequently suffers from limited institutional support including guidance and recourse provision. Indeed, without institutional support, teachers have to do their efforts to manage classroom challenges. Thus, this situation may negatively affect the quality of teaching and learning environments.

“The administration said students should learn English in private schools”.

This remark points to a policy that the burden of English instruction should be placed on external institutions instead of integrating it within formal courses. In ESP settings, such a policy may create a gap between students' academic needs and institutional support. Furthermore, it also adds extra pressure on instructors and students because it cannot be possible for everyone.

According to teachers, this limited support can undermine both the quality of ESP incorporation in this environment and teachers' enthusiasm.

4.5.2 .Class Size and Limited Teaching Hours

The process of ESP instruction in this setting clearly becomes difficult owing to large class sizes (700 to 900 students) and limited weekly teaching time.

“Large classes and limited hours hinder individual support”.

This comment highlights that time and space barriers can reduce opportunities for personalized learning and feedback. In ESP courses, these issues can lower teaching effectiveness, as learners highly need guidance and unique support. As a result, students may struggle to get chances for sufficient engagement.

“Teaching ESP in Sharia is crucial, complex, and difficult compared to other fields”.

The statement emphasizes that ESP instruction in Islamic studies faces specific instructional difficulties. Additionally, Islamic sciences content is linguistically and culturally challenging as it involves abstract and religious ideas and concepts. Unlike other disciplines, this field's courses require careful handling to both appropriate language teaching and religious content. As a result, it is worth mentioning that addressing this difficulty requires suitable teaching approaches, appropriate materials and teacher training.

These institutional limitations contribute to feelings of frustration and discouragement among teachers.

4.6 .Suggested Improvements

To address these challenges, teachers recommended multiple solutions.

Facilitating the learning process mainly stems from small learning groups.

“Smaller groups with smaller number of students”.

This teacher's comment highlights the importance of small classes in enhancing ESP teaching quality. When classes are small, teachers find it easy to identify students' specific needs and

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support them when facing a particular difficulty. In ESP areas such as Islamic studies, small classes encourage flexible instruction that addresses weaker students.

Offering General English before ESP courses and adding more English teaching time.

“Students need more time and stronger basics before dealing with ESP”.

This remark points out that fundamental English competence is important for successful ESP learning. When students do not possess basic language skills, it becomes hard for them to engage with specialized content. Moreover, this teacher's comment reflects a mismatch between the current syllabus and learners' readiness. Therefore, providing pre-ESP language support may pave the way for meaningful learning achievement.

Implementing grammar lessons alongside ESP instruction

“I prefer to integrate grammar courses alongside ESP”.

This teacher's view highlights a preference for integrating general language learning with ESP courses. In other words, teaching grammar alongside ESP helps students acquire linguistic skills through content learning. This approach facilitates the natural treatment of language problems, which ensures ESP instruction remain more accessible to weaker learners.

Providing specialty-focused ESP requires curriculum adjustment and reform.

“More ESP lessons related to each specialty”.

This remark points to the necessity of increasing ESP instruction that addresses learners' academic contexts. When ESP lessons are tailored to each specialty, students' engagement can be enhanced. For disciplines like Islamic sciences, ESP instruction supports learners' understanding of texts and effective communication.

These suggestions indicate the faculty' institutional and pedagogical requirements.

5. Discussion

This work aims to explore the pedagogical difficulties that ESP teachers at the Islamic Sciences faculty at Batna 1 University face. The findings reveal a set of learner-related, curricular and material, teacher-related, and institutional issues that collectively shape the effectiveness of ESP instruction in this educational environment. These results mostly match the current ESP literature conducted in EFL and non-English-speaking contexts, while also shedding light on deficiencies that are specific to Islamic Sciences faculties settings.

The findings show that limited professional training is regarded as a key barrier for teachers. This result aligns with the previous studies which indicated that teachers often enter specialized teaching contexts with inadequate disciplinary backgrounds and pedagogical skills (Alsolami, 2014; Basturkmen, 2010; Iswati & Triastuti, 2021). In this study, teachers relied heavily on their own personal efforts with limited formal training, which may lead to much pressure as well as instructional workloads. Furthermore, the heavy workload and responsibility of teaching large classrooms deepen these problems. Similar challenges were reported by Makhoulouf and Arar (2022) and Missoum (2023), who assert that these conditions limit teachers' capacity to design ESP materials tailored to this environment. Conceptual precision is also significant in Islamic Sciences contexts. Therefore, these issues may undermine the effectiveness of ESP instruction.

The findings also show that the low level of learners' general English proficiency is a key challenge to successful ESP instruction. This result aligns with previous studies demonstrating that the limited general English proficiency undermines students' ability to handle disciplinary topics (Elimadi, 2022; Soulimane-Benhabib, 2024). Since teaching

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ESP depends mainly on fundamental language skills, most low-level students have restricted understanding of disciplinary concepts and terminology. Additionally, low student motivation is a consistent topic in the earlier literature. Similar findings assert that these students perceive English as unnecessary in their field of study (Alsolami, 2014). In faculties of Islamic Sciences, Arabic is the main language of teaching, which indicates that English is not essential and consequently reduces students' engagements.

Another important issue is the outdated curriculum and the lack of ESP materials tailored to the discipline. As a result, ESP teachers frequently plan lessons and develop materials, a recurrent problem emerges in ESP literature (Flowerdew, 2013; Missoum, 2023). In the context of Islamic sciences, this situation deepens the process of lesson planning, especially with terminology related to Sharia, fiqh, or tafsir discourse. The difficulty of translating and explaining Islamic terms in English is very high. This limitation was emphasized by Attas (1991), who considers the Islamic knowledge based on Arabic concepts, thereby necessitating adopting suitable approaches dealing with this situation. Large class sizes, limited teaching time, and weak administrative support are key institutional challenges. The present study corresponds with previous research which assert that these constraints negatively affect the ESP teaching process (Fitria, 2023; Makhoulouf & Arar, 2022). The findings also show that unclear institutional recognition of ESP as a specialized field weakens the sustainability of its successful implementation. At Batna 1 University, teaching ESP to large groups with not enough time reduces students' interest, motivation and engagement.

Generally speaking, the findings suggest that effective ESP instruction requires an appropriate approach that considers all contributing factors. In the context of Islamic science, developing ESP syllabi tailored to the discipline, providing formal training for teachers and enhancing institutional support can enhance the educational achievements.

6 .Limitations of the Study

Several important limitations characterize this research.

The results stem from a narrow and localized sample that limits its applicability in other contexts. Qualitative case studies focus on depth rather than scope, and this small sample requires careful analysis when generalizing the findings to other contexts .

Second, much reliance on self-reported data increases the potential of bias including social desirability effects. Despite measures taken to reduce response bias, the responses represent participants perceived experiences.

Conclusion

This study sheds lights on pedagogical challenges perceived by ESP teachers within the faculty of Islamic sciences at Batna-1 University. Through a qualitative case study, the research discovers context-specific challenges including students' linguistic proficiency, disciplinary standards and institutional resources. The resulting findings can guide institutional policymakers, ESP teachers and future research. Overall, enhancing ESP teaching in specific contexts demands both continuous teacher development and institutional support. Based on this research's results, several recommendations are outlined:

First, higher educational institutions must offer professional training to enhance ESP teachers' linguistic and disciplinary competences within faculty of Islamic sciences. Second, future studies should the widen research scope by integrating various institutions as well as

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classroom observation .Third, the process of combining research approaches would provide more insights into teaching challenges faced by ESP educators .

Appendix A. Structured Interview Guide

A. Opening / Background Questions

- 1 -How long y have you been teaching in Islamic studies faculty ?
- 2 -Do you have any formal training in this faculty ?
- 3 -Which English subjects do you currently teach ?
- 4- How would you see your students' level in English ?

B. Teaching Challenges

- 1 -What challenges do you usually face while teaching English here ?
- 2 -Do students' language backgrounds affect your teaching? How ?
- 3 -How do you manage mixed-ability classes?

C. Content-Related Issues

- 1 -How well do you know the Islamic Studies content?
- 2 -Do you find it easy to explain Islamic terminology in English?
- 3 -What challenges do you often encounter when explaining Islamic concepts in English?

D. Teaching Materials

- 1 -What kind of materials do you usually use?
- 2 -Do you need to adjust materials? Why?
- 3 -What resources do you think are missing?

E. Classroom Practices

- 1 -How would you describe your teaching approach?
- 2 - Do overcrowded classes or limited hours affect your teaching?
- 3 -How do you encourage students to participate and stay motivated?

F. Support and Training

- 1 -Has the institution provided you with any professional training?
- 2 -What kind of training is the most helpful for you?
- 3 -How does your institution support English teaching?

G. Improvement Suggestions

- 1 -What do you suggest to improve English teaching here?

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-2 What would you change if you had the chance to redesign the course?

H. Closing

1 -Do you have any suggestions you would like to add?

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