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Effectiveness of a Simplified ESP Curriculum for Adult Learners^(*)

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Effectiveness of a Simplified ESP Curriculum for Adult Learners

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Abstract

This research investigates the effectiveness of a simplified English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum tailored for male learners aged 35-55. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative proficiency assessments with qualitative insights from interviews and classroom observations. Sixty participants engaged in a 12-week program that focused on essential grammar, vocabulary building, and interactive tasks aligned with their professional needs. The curriculum was designed to address the specific linguistic and communicative demands of workplace scenarios, ensuring immediate applicability of the skills learned. The results indicate significant improvements in speaking, listening, and reading skills, with mean scores increasing by (30%), (24.1%), and (25.9%), respectively. Participants reported enhanced confidence in using English in professional settings, attributing this improvement to the curriculum's practical focus and opportunities for real-time practice during interactive tasks. Qualitative data from interviews revealed that learners found the curriculum highly relevant to their workplace needs, with many participants applying newly acquired vocabulary and expressions directly in their jobs. The study highlights the potential of minimalist curriculum design in adult ESP education, demonstrating that streamlined, context-specific approaches can effectively address the unique challenges faced by adult learners. By focusing on essential language skills and reducing cognitive load, the simplified curriculum not only improved language proficiency but also boosted learner motivation and engagement. These findings have important implications for ESP educators and curriculum designers, suggesting that simplified, goal-oriented programs can yield superior outcomes for adult learners.

Keywords: ESP, Adult learning, curriculum design, simplified learning

Introduction:

Adult learners bring unique challenges to language acquisition. Unlike children and young adults, their learning is influenced by factors such as cognitive rigidity, professional obligations, and reduced time for study. ESP programs address specific language needs in vocational and professional contexts, but traditional approaches often overwhelm learners with excessive and unfocused content. The need for a more streamlined and focused curriculum is evident, particularly for adult learners who require immediate applicability of language skills in their professional environments. This study builds on the growing body of research that emphasizes the importance of relevance and practicality in ESP education, particularly for adult learners who face time constraints and cognitive challenges.

Statement of the Problem:

Traditional ESP curricula often fail to address the specific needs of adult learners, particularly those who are balancing professional and personal responsibilities. These learners require a curriculum that is both efficient and directly applicable to their workplace contexts. However, many existing ESP programs are overly complex and fail to provide the focused, practical training that adult learners need. This study seeks to address this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of a simplified ESP curriculum tailored to the needs of adult learners aged 35-55.

Rationale:

Simplifying ESP curricula by focusing on essential language skills may overcome these barriers, enabling learners to build proficiency more effectively. This study evaluates a simplified ESP curriculum tailored to male learners aged 35-55, examining its impact on language acquisition and practical application.

Research Questions:

- 1- How effective is a simplified ESP curriculum in improving language proficiency among adult learners?
- 2- What are the perceived benefits and challenges of using a simplified curriculum from the learners' perspective?

This study is particularly relevant for adult learners who are seeking to improve their English language skills for professional purposes. It also provides valuable insights for ESP educators, curriculum designers, and

policymakers who are interested in developing more effective and efficient language programs for adult learners. By focusing on the specific needs of adult learners, this study contributes to the broader field of adult education and language learning.

Objective:

The study aims to provide insights into the applicability of streamlined ESP curricula for adult learners, offering evidence-based recommendations for educators and curriculum designers.

This study aims at:

- Exploring how effective a simplified ESP curriculum is in improving language proficiency among adult learners.
- Investigating the perceived benefits and challenges of using a simplified curriculum from the learners' perspective.

Hypotheses:

The study is guided by the following hypotheses:

- H1: A simplified ESP curriculum will significantly improve language proficiency among adult learners.
- H2: Adult learners will perceive a simplified ESP curriculum as more relevant and practical compared to traditional ESP programs.

Literature Review:

The growing demand for English language skills in professional and academic contexts has driven the development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programs. Unlike general English language courses, ESP is tailored to meet the precise needs of learners within specific fields, such as healthcare, business, or engineering. These programs focus on equipping learners with practical language skills relevant to their professional or academic environments. Adult learners, a significant demographic in ESP, bring unique challenges and strengths to the language learning process. They require curricula that address their specific goals, accommodate their cognitive and situational constraints, and provide immediate applicability. Simplified curricula have emerged as a solution to these challenges, offering targeted, streamlined instruction designed to optimize learning outcomes while reducing cognitive overload.

This section explores three interconnected areas of research that underpin the study: the theoretical foundations and practical applications of ESP, the

challenges adult learners face in acquiring new language skills, and the role of simplified curricula in overcoming these barriers. Together, these areas provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the design and impact of effective ESP programs.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP):

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has long been recognized as a distinct and practical branch of English language teaching. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) defined ESP as an approach to language learning that meets the specific needs of learners, utilizing methods and content tailored to their professional or academic contexts. Unlike general English courses, ESP is goal-oriented and focuses on equipping learners with the linguistic tools required for specific tasks in particular settings (Robinson, 1991). The field of ESP has evolved significantly over the past few decades, with a growing emphasis on the importance of tailoring language instruction to the specific needs of learners. This study builds on the foundational work of Hutchinson and Waters (1987), who defined ESP as an approach to language learning that meets the specific needs of learners, utilizing methods and content tailored to their professional or academic contexts. Recent research has further emphasized the importance of relevance and authenticity in ESP programs, with studies showing that learners engaged in ESP programs often demonstrate higher motivation and retention rates due to the immediate applicability of the language skills they acquire (Hyland, 2007; Basturkmen, 2010).

One of the foundational principles of ESP is relevance. Strevens (1988) emphasized that ESP programs must be designed with a clear understanding of the learners' target environments, whether academic, vocational, or professional. This principle ensures that learners acquire skills that are directly applicable to their real-world contexts. Recent research underscores this point, showing that learners engaged in ESP programs often demonstrate higher motivation and retention rates due to the immediate applicability of the language skills they acquire (Hyland, 2007; Basturkmen, 2010).

Needs analysis is central to ESP curriculum design. Munby's (1978) Communicative Needs Processor (CNP) was a pioneering model that identified the language demands of specific contexts, forming the basis for curriculum development. West (1994) argued that needs analysis is a dynamic process, requiring regular updates to align with evolving workplace demands

and learner expectations. Advances in technology have further refined needs analysis methods, enabling educators to gather data more efficiently and tailor curricula to precise learner requirements (Long, 2005).

ESP programs also prioritize authenticity. Authentic materials, such as workplace documents, manuals, and emails, are essential in helping learners bridge the gap between the classroom and their professional environments (Gilmore, 2007). These materials provide learners with exposure to the vocabulary, syntax, and discourse patterns of their target fields, fostering both linguistic and cultural competence. However, Widdowson (1998) cautioned that authentic materials must be carefully selected and adapted to balance complexity with accessibility, ensuring that learners are neither overwhelmed nor under-challenged.

Recent studies highlight the adaptability of ESP to diverse fields, including healthcare, engineering, business, and academia (Bhatia & Candlin, (2001); Hyland, 2011). The integration of task-based learning, where learners engage in real-world tasks such as writing reports or conducting meetings, has proven particularly effective in ESP contexts (Willis & Willis, 2007). Such tasks not only develop language proficiency but also equip learners with transferable skills, enhancing their overall workplace performance.

Challenges in Adult Learning:

Adult learners face a variety of challenges when engaging in language learning, stemming from cognitive, emotional, and situational factors. Cognitively, adults experience reduced neuroplasticity, which affects their ability to acquire new language structures and retain vocabulary efficiently (Ellis, 2012). Compared to children or adolescents, adults often take longer to process new grammatical forms and struggle with mastering pronunciation patterns that differ significantly from their native language (Harmer, 2007). This reduced adaptability necessitates instructional approaches that are both simplified and focused on high-impact language skills.

Moreover, adults often approach learning with established cognitive schemas based on prior knowledge and experiences, which can be both an asset and a hindrance (Knowles, 1998). While these schemas help contextualize new information, they can also create resistance to unlearning ingrained habits or adapting to novel linguistic norms (Dornyei, 2005). For

example, adult learners may overapply rules from their native language, resulting in fossilized errors that are challenging to correct.

Emotional factors further complicate language acquisition for adults. Many adult learners experience language anxiety, especially in professional settings where errors could impact their credibility or job performance (Brown & Larson, 2023). This anxiety often leads to avoidance behaviors, such as reluctance to speak or engage in class discussions, limiting opportunities for practice. Dornyei (2009) emphasized the importance of creating a low-stress, supportive learning environment to counteract these challenges. Building learner confidence through achievable tasks and constructive feedback can significantly improve engagement and outcomes.

Situational constraints also present major obstacles for adult learners. Unlike younger students, adults often juggle multiple responsibilities, including work, family, and social obligations, leaving limited time and energy for consistent study (O'Neil, 2022). Flexible scheduling and modular programs can partially address this issue, allowing learners to progress at their own pace. However, the competing demands of daily life often mean that adult learners require highly efficient curricula that deliver results within short timeframes. Motivation is a key driver of success in adult education, but it is also fragile.

Adults are typically motivated by clear, practical goals, such as improving communication for work or passing an exam. However, this motivation can wane if the curriculum fails to meet their expectations or is perceived as irrelevant (Merriam & Bierema, 2013). Research has shown that aligning course content with learners' professional and personal aspirations significantly boosts persistence and satisfaction (Nguyen, 2023).

Social dynamics in the classroom also influence adult learning. Adult learners often compare themselves to their peers, which can either motivate or discourage them depending on the perceived gap in abilities (Dornyei, 2009). Group activities that promote collaboration and shared success are particularly effective in fostering a positive learning environment. Additionally, integrating real-world tasks, such as role-playing professional scenarios, helps learners see immediate applications of their skills, reinforcing their motivation and confidence (Gilmore, 2007).

Simplified Curricula:

Simplified curricula address many of the challenges faced by adult learners by focusing on essential language elements and reducing cognitive load. Sweller's (1988) Cognitive Load Theory argues that excessive information can overwhelm working memory, impeding learning. Simplified curricula minimize extraneous content, allowing learners to concentrate on core vocabulary, grammar, and communication strategies. Chandler and Sweller (1991) demonstrated that instructional designs that reduce complexity lead to better retention and application of knowledge, particularly among older learners.

In the context of language learning, simplification involves prioritizing high-frequency vocabulary and practical grammatical structures that learners are most likely to encounter in real-world settings (Nguyen, 2023). For instance, ESP programs often focus on domain-specific terminology and sentence patterns, enabling learners to perform job-related tasks effectively. Foster and Kaplan (2024) observed that adult learners in ESP programs showed marked improvements in proficiency when the curriculum emphasized immediately applicable language skills.

Simplified curricula also align with the principles of adult learning theory, which prioritize relevance, practicality, and learner autonomy (Knowles, 1998). By eliminating unnecessary content, these programs respect learners' time constraints and provide clear pathways to achieving their goals. For example, programs designed around workplace communication often focus on essential skills such as writing emails, making presentations, and participating in meetings. This targeted approach not only enhances language proficiency but also boosts learners' confidence by equipping them with tools they can use immediately (Willis & Willis, 2007).

The motivational benefits of simplified curricula are well-documented. Dornyei (2005) noted that clear, attainable goals are critical for maintaining engagement, particularly for adult learners who may feel intimidated by the scope of traditional language programs. Simplified curricula break down learning into manageable steps, enabling learners to track their progress and build confidence incrementally. This approach is especially effective for learners who have had negative prior experiences with language learning or who are returning to education after a long hiatus.

Task-based learning (TBL) is a key component of many simplified curricula, focusing on practical, goal-oriented activities that simulate real-world interactions. In ESP contexts, TBL might include tasks such as drafting business emails, conducting negotiations, or troubleshooting technical issues (Nunan, 2004). Such tasks are inherently minimalist, requiring learners to focus on the language needed to achieve specific outcomes. Studies have shown that TBL not only enhances linguistic accuracy but also improves learners' ability to apply language skills in unpredictable scenarios (Skehan, 1996).

Critics of simplification argue that it may limit learners' exposure to more complex linguistic forms, potentially hindering long-term language development (Widdowson, 1998). However, proponents counter that simplified curricula are not an end but a means to build foundational competence. Once learners master the basics, they are better equipped to tackle more advanced language forms. Ellis (2012) argued that foundational skills serve as scaffolding for more complex language acquisition, making simplification a necessary starting point for adult learners with limited time and resources.

The adaptability of simplified curricula is another advantage. In ESP programs, educators can customize content to suit specific industries or job roles, ensuring that learners acquire the precise language skills they need. For example, a program for healthcare professionals might focus on patient communication and medical terminology, while a curriculum for engineers might emphasize technical vocabulary and problem-solving discussions. This customization enhances the relevance of the program and ensures that learners are equipped to handle the unique linguistic demands of their fields (Basturkmen, 2010).

Methodology:

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from proficiency assessments with qualitative insights from interviews and classroom observations. The mixed-methods approach was chosen because it provided a holistic understanding of the effectiveness of the simplified ESP curriculum. By combining objective measurements of language proficiency with subjective insights into learner experiences, the study was able to draw robust conclusions about the curriculum's impact. This

approach not only strengthened the validity of the findings but also provided practical recommendations for educators and curriculum designers.

Participants:

The study involved 60 male professionals aged 35-55 from various industries, including hospitality, manufacturing, and retail. Participants were recruited through professional networks and workplace partnerships. Inclusion criteria required participants to have intermediate English proficiency, as determined by a standardized placement test, and limited prior exposure to ESP programs. This ensured a relatively homogeneous baseline in language skills and learning needs. Participants represented a diverse range of job roles, including managers, supervisors, and technical staff, ensuring the applicability of findings across professional contexts.

Curriculum Design:

The 12-week ESP curriculum was specifically developed to address the linguistic and communicative demands of workplace scenarios commonly encountered by participants. The curriculum focused on three core components:

- 1- **Essential Grammar:** Instruction centered on high-utility structures such as conditionals for problem-solving, modal verbs for expressing necessity and advice, and passive constructions for reporting processes.
- 2- **Vocabulary Building:** Emphasis was placed on high-frequency industry-specific terms, derived from a needs analysis conducted through interviews with industry professionals.
- 3- **Interactive Tasks:** Activities included role-playing workplace scenarios, drafting emails, conducting presentations, and participating in group discussions. These tasks simulated real-world interactions to ensure practical application of language skills.

Each session was structured to integrate explicit instruction with interactive practice. Learners were provided with feedback during tasks to refine their language use and build confidence.

Data Collection:

Three methods were used to collect data, ensuring a triangulated approach that captured both quantitative and qualitative dimensions:

- 1- **Proficiency Tests:** Standardized pre- and post-tests were administered to measure changes in speaking, listening, and reading skills. The tests

included workplace-specific scenarios, such as answering customer inquiries or preparing reports, to align with the curriculum's focus.

- 2- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Conducted at the end of the program, these interviews explored participants' perceptions of the curriculum's relevance, practicality, and overall effectiveness. Open-ended questions allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and provide nuanced feedback.
- 3- **Classroom Observations:** Observers documented engagement levels, participation in interactive tasks, and the practical application of language skills. Observations were conducted using a structured checklist to ensure consistency and reliability.

Instructional Approach:

The program utilized a communicative language teaching (CLT) framework, emphasizing interaction and real-world language use. Teachers were trained to facilitate discussions, provide corrective feedback, and encourage active participation. Lessons were designed to be learner-centered, with flexibility to address individual needs and adapt to the group's progress.

Data Analysis:

Quantitative data from pre- and post-tests were analyzed using paired-sample t-tests to assess statistical significance in language proficiency improvements. This analysis included mean scores, standard deviations, and p-values for each language skill.

Qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed thematically. Responses were coded to identify recurring themes, such as confidence gains, perceived relevance of the curriculum, and engagement during lessons. Observational data were cross-referenced with interview findings to validate patterns and insights.

Ethical Considerations:

The study adhered to ethical research guidelines, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Participants were briefed on the study's objectives, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Data were anonymized during analysis to protect participants' identities, and findings were shared in aggregate form.

Limitations of Methodology:

While the methodology provided a robust framework for evaluating the curriculum, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The sample was limited to male participants, which may reduce the generalizability of findings to mixed-gender or female groups. Additionally, the study's 12-week duration does not account for long-term retention of language skills or sustained application in workplace settings. Future studies should address these limitations by incorporating more diverse participant groups and conducting longitudinal follow-ups.

Results:

The findings of this study are presented in two primary categories: quantitative results from proficiency tests and qualitative insights derived from interviews and classroom observations. Together, these data provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the simplified ESP curriculum in improving language proficiency, learner confidence, and engagement.

Quantitative Results:

The pre- and post-intervention proficiency tests revealed significant improvements across all assessed language skills: speaking, listening, and reading. These results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Pre- and Post-Test Results

Metric	Pre-Test Mean (SD)	Post-Test Mean (SD)	t	P
Speaking Proficiency	55.2 (7.1)	71.8 (6.2)	12.56	< 0.001
Listening Proficiency	58.4 (6.8)	72.5 (5.9)	10.34	< 0.001
Reading Comprehension	59.0 (7.0)	74.3 (6.5)	11.22	< 0.001

- **Speaking Proficiency:** The mean score increased by 16.6 points, representing a 30% improvement. This significant gain suggests that the curriculum's emphasis on interactive tasks, such as role-playing and group discussions, effectively enhanced participants' spoken communication skills.
- **Listening Proficiency:** Participants showed a (24.1%) improvement in listening scores. The curriculum's use of workplace-specific audio materials and scenario-based exercises likely contributed to this result.

- **Reading Comprehension:** The 25.9% increase in reading comprehension scores indicates that participants benefitted from the targeted vocabulary-building exercises and exposure to authentic workplace texts.

The statistical significance of these results ($p < 0.001$ for all metrics) confirms the effectiveness of the simplified curriculum in improving core language skills within a short period.

Qualitative Results:

The qualitative data, derived from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, provided additional insights into the participants' experiences with the curriculum. Thematic analysis identified three recurring themes: confidence, relevance, and engagement.

1- Improved Confidence

Participants consistently reported feeling more confident in their ability to communicate in English, particularly in professional contexts. Many credited this to the curriculum's practical focus and opportunities for real-time practice during interactive tasks. One participant stated: *"I feel much more comfortable speaking in meetings now. The role-playing exercises helped me prepare for real situations at work."*

Observational data supported these findings, with learners displaying increased willingness to participate in discussions and take on leadership roles in group activities as the program progressed.

2- Relevance of Content

The curriculum's emphasis on workplace-specific scenarios was widely appreciated. Participants highlighted the immediate applicability of the skills they learned, with many reporting that they were able to use new vocabulary and expressions directly in their jobs. For example, a participant in the manufacturing sector noted:

"The vocabulary lessons were very relevant to my job. I've already started using some of the phrases we practiced in emails and conversations."

This perceived relevance likely contributed to the high levels of engagement and motivation observed throughout the program.

3- Engagement and Interaction

The curriculum's interactive design was a key factor in maintaining learner engagement. Observers noted that participants were highly active during role-playing sessions, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks.

The use of authentic materials, such as emails, reports, and audio recordings, further enhanced engagement by providing learners with realistic and meaningful content.

One observer commented:

“The learners were particularly enthusiastic during the role-playing tasks. They seemed to enjoy practicing real-world scenarios, such as presenting ideas in a meeting or handling a customer inquiry.”

Additional Observations:

- **Diverse Improvement Across Skills:** While all participants showed improvement, the extent varied by skill. Speaking scores saw the greatest variability, with some learners improving by over 40% while others showed more modest gains. This suggests that prior experience and individual differences, such as confidence levels and workplace exposure, may influence outcomes.
- **Collaborative Learning Benefits:** Group activities were noted as a significant driver of progress. Participants often reported learning not only from the instructor but also from their peers, particularly during discussions and feedback exchanges.

Participant Feedback on Simplified Curriculum:

In addition to improved proficiency, participants expressed strong satisfaction with the curriculum’s design. Commonly mentioned advantages included:

- **Focused Learning:** Learners appreciated the exclusion of unnecessary content, which allowed them to concentrate on skills they found most relevant.
- **Real-World Alignment:** Authentic tasks and materials made the lessons feel practical and immediately applicable.
- **Manageable Pace:** The step-by-step progression of topics helped learners build confidence and retain information more effectively.

However, a few participants suggested incorporating more advanced content toward the end of the program to prepare them for complex workplace scenarios.

Summary of Results:

The results of this study clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of a simplified ESP curriculum in enhancing language proficiency, confidence,

and engagement among adult learners. The curriculum's relevance to workplace needs was a recurring theme in the qualitative data. Participants highlighted the immediate applicability of the skills they learned, with many reporting that they were able to use new vocabulary and expressions directly in their jobs. For example, a participant from the manufacturing sector stated, "The vocabulary lessons were very relevant to my job. I've already started using some of the phrases we practiced in emails and conversations." This perceived relevance likely contributed to the high levels of engagement and motivation observed throughout the program. While all participants showed improvement, the extent of progress varied by skill and individual. Speaking proficiency saw the greatest variability, with some learners improving by over 40%, while others showed more modest gains. This suggests that factors such as prior experience, confidence levels, and workplace exposure may influence outcomes. Additionally, collaborative learning emerged as a key driver of progress, with participants often reporting that they learned not only from the instructor but also from their peers during group activities and feedback exchanges.

In summary, the results of this study provide strong evidence for the effectiveness of a simplified ESP curriculum in improving language proficiency, confidence, and engagement among adult learners. The quantitative data highlight substantial gains in speaking, listening, and reading skills, while the qualitative findings offer valuable insights into the curriculum's practical and motivational benefits. These results support the adoption of minimalist, context-specific approaches in ESP program design, particularly for adult learners who face unique challenges in language acquisition.

Discussion:

Interpretation of Results

The findings from this study provide robust evidence for the effectiveness of a simplified ESP curriculum in addressing the specific language needs of adult learners aged 35-55. The significant improvements in proficiency scores across speaking, listening, and reading metrics demonstrate that focusing on essential language skills and real-world applications can enhance learning outcomes. The learners' self-reported confidence gains and positive feedback on the curriculum's relevance indicate that a simplified approach not only facilitates skill acquisition but also promotes learner satisfaction.

The qualitative data, particularly the learners' perceptions of the program's practical focus, underscore the importance of aligning curriculum content with real-world demands. This is consistent with Hyland (2007) and Gilmore (2007), who argued that task-based, authentic learning experiences significantly improve engagement and motivation. Participants highlighted the curriculum's immediate applicability to workplace interactions, which likely contributed to their increased confidence and willingness to use English in professional settings.

Alignment with Existing Literature:

The results align with existing research on the benefits of minimalism in language education. Sweller's (1988) Cognitive Load Theory provides a strong theoretical framework for these findings, suggesting that reducing extraneous content allows learners to focus on essential elements. Similar studies, such as Nguyen (2023) and Foster & Kaplan (2024), have demonstrated that simplified curricula can enhance proficiency by prioritizing high-frequency vocabulary and critical grammatical structures.

The observed improvements in learner confidence also align with Dornyei's (2005) research on motivation, which emphasized the role of achievable goals and positive reinforcement in sustaining learner engagement. By designing the curriculum around workplace-specific tasks, the program addressed both linguistic and psychological barriers, enabling learners to see immediate, tangible benefits.

Relevance to ESP Pedagogy:

These findings have significant implications for ESP pedagogy, particularly in adult education. Traditional ESP programs often include a wide range of content, much of which may not be immediately relevant to learners' professional needs. This study demonstrates that a streamlined, goal-oriented approach can yield superior results. By focusing on essential skills and incorporating authentic materials, educators can create curricula that are both efficient and effective.

Moreover, the high levels of engagement observed during interactive tasks, such as role-playing and group discussions, highlight the value of experiential learning in ESP. This aligns with the principles of task-based learning (Willis & Willis, 2007), which prioritize real-world applications over rote memorization.

Implications for Curriculum Design:

- 1- **Customization and Flexibility:** ESP curricula should be tailored to the specific needs of learners, with regular updates to ensure relevance. Modular program designs can provide flexibility, allowing learners to progress at their own pace while balancing work and family commitments.
- 2- **Focus on Core Skills:** Simplified curricula should emphasize high-frequency vocabulary, essential grammatical structures, and context-specific communication tasks. This not only enhances proficiency but also builds the confidence necessary for learners to use English in professional settings.
- 3- **Integration of Authentic Materials:** Incorporating workplace documents, emails, and simulated scenarios can bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application, fostering both linguistic competence and cultural awareness.
- 4- **Supportive Learning Environments:** Strategies that reduce anxiety and build confidence, such as collaborative tasks and constructive feedback, are critical for adult learners, particularly those with limited prior exposure to English.

Broader Educational Implications:

The findings of this study extend beyond ESP to adult language education more broadly. Simplified curricula could be particularly beneficial for learners in other specialized contexts, such as vocational training or community education programs. Furthermore, the emphasis on authentic materials and task-based learning could inform the design of programs for diverse learner groups, including younger professionals or non-native speakers in multilingual workplaces.

Study Limitations and Future Research:

While the study provides valuable insights, several limitations must be addressed. The sample consisted exclusively of male learners from specific professional fields, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other demographics or industries. Future research should explore the impact of simplified ESP curricula on female learners, younger adults, and professionals in other sectors.

Additionally, the 12-week duration of the program does not allow for an assessment of long-term skill retention or the sustained application of learned

skills in workplace settings. Longitudinal studies could provide a deeper understanding of how simplified curricula influence learners' ability to adapt to evolving professional demands.

Integration with Technology:

Future studies could also investigate the role of technology in delivering simplified ESP curricula. Online learning platforms and digital simulations offer opportunities to enhance engagement and accessibility, particularly for learners with demanding schedules. Integrating technology into ESP programs could further streamline content delivery while maintaining a focus on core skills.

Conclusion:

This study highlights the effectiveness of a simplified English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum in enhancing language proficiency, confidence, and engagement among adult learners aged 35-55. By focusing on essential grammar, high-frequency vocabulary, and workplace-specific communication tasks, the curriculum successfully addressed the unique challenges faced by adult learners, such as limited time, cognitive constraints, and the need for immediate application of language skills. Quantitative results revealed significant improvements in speaking, listening, and reading proficiency, with learners demonstrating statistically significant gains in their ability to use English in professional contexts. Qualitative findings supported these outcomes, with participants reporting increased confidence and high levels of satisfaction with the curriculum's relevance and practicality. Observational data further confirmed the positive impact of interactive tasks and authentic materials on learner engagement and skill development. The study underscores the importance of minimalist approaches in ESP curriculum design. Simplified curricula not only reduce cognitive load but also align closely with adult learning principles by providing targeted, goal-oriented instruction. These findings have practical implications for educators and curriculum developers, emphasizing the need for context-specific content, flexible program structures, and real-world applications in ESP programs. While the study offers valuable insights, its limitations must be acknowledged. The homogeneity of the participant group and the short duration of the program restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research should explore the long-term impact of simplified curricula and their

applicability across diverse learner demographics and industries. Additionally, integrating technology into ESP programs could further enhance accessibility and engagement, offering learners innovative ways to practice and apply their skills.

In conclusion, this research demonstrates that a simplified ESP curriculum is a viable and effective approach to addressing the specific language needs of adult learners. By fostering confidence, improving proficiency, and maintaining engagement, such curricula have the potential to transform language education in professional contexts, equipping learners with the skills they need to succeed in their careers.

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