

**Using a Hybrid ESP Program for Enhancing University Students' Academic Achievement and Learning Satisfaction**

**By**

**Dr. Marwa Gamal Muhammad Shehata**

Associate Professor of TEFL at the Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction  
Faculty of Education - Minia University

**Abstract**

The aim of the study was to explore the use of a hybrid ESP program to enhance university students' academic achievement and learning satisfaction. Forty- seven third year students were enrolled in the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024 at Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom, Minia University participated in the study and acted as one study group. To achieve the purpose of the study an academic achievement test and a learning satisfaction scale were prepared by the researcher in addition to a hybrid ESP program. Having pretested students, they were taught via the hybrid ESP program. After that, they were post tested. The findings of the study showed a significant statistical improvement favoring the post administrations of the academic achievement test and the learning satisfaction scale. Recommendations and suggestions for further research were presented.

**Key Words:** *A Hybrid ESP Program- Academic Achievement –Learning Satisfaction*

استخدام برنامج في اللغة الانجليزية للأغراض الخاصة قائم علي التعلم الهجين لتعزيز  
التحصيل الأكاديمي والرضا عن التعلم لدي طلاب الجامعة

إعداد

أ.م.د مروة جمال محمد شحاته

أستاذ المناهج وطرق تدريس اللغة الانجليزية المساعد

كلية التربية – جامعة المنيا

مستخلص البحث

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلي استخدام برنامج في اللغة الإنجليزية للأغراض الخاصة قائم علي التعلم الهجين لتعزيز التحصيل الأكاديمي والرضا عن التعلم لدي طلاب الجامعة. شارك في الدراسة كمجموعة واحدة سبعة وأربعون طالب وطالبة مقيدین بالفرقة الثالثة في الفصل الدراسي الأول من من العام الأكاديمي 2023-2024م بكلية دار العلوم , جامعة المنيا. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم إعداد اختبار في التحصيل الأكاديمي ومقياس الرضا عن التعلم من قبل الباحثة بالإضافة إلي برنامج في اللغة الإنجليزية للأغراض الخاصة قائم علي التعلم الهجين. بعد إجراء الإختبار القبلي لأدوات الدراسة , تم تطبيق برنامج اللغة الإنجليزية القائم علي التعلم الهجين وبعد ذلك تم تطبيق الاختبار البعدي. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة وجود تحسن إحصائي كبير لصالح المقياس البعدي في كلا من اختبار التحصيل الأكاديمي ومقياس الرضا عن التعلم. أسفرت نتائج الدراسة عن مجموعة من التوصيات والمقترحات لأبحاث مستقبلية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** برنامج في اللغة الإنجليزية للأغراض الخاصة قائم علي التعلم الهجين, التحصيل الأكاديمي, الرضا عن التعلم

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### **Introduction**

English plays a crucial position in educational systems both nationally and internationally. Proficiency in English certainly provides students with access to massive amounts of information. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a branch of English as a foreign language that typically concentrates on teaching English to individuals who are either already employed or need to develop specific vocabulary and skills related to their field. Although ESP courses may appear to have a narrow focus, they can have a broad impact.

ESP is a division of language education that concentrates on teaching English tailored to specific professional, academic, or occupational needs. Unlike General English, which focuses on building overall language skills, ESP courses are tailored to address the specific linguistic and communication needs of learners in particular professional or specialized fields.

Agustina (2014) mentions that there are numerous definitions of ESP, some researchers define it broadly as teaching English for any clearly defined purpose. Others offer more specific descriptions, stating that ESP involves teaching English for academic purposes or professional use, or for nonnative speakers who are learning English for specific, targeted reasons.

According to Belcher (2012), the professional relevance of ESP cannot be overstated. In fields such as Arabic literature, law, and information technology, proficiency in English tailored to the field's specific requirements is essential. Arabic literature students, for instance, need to be adept at reading and writing research papers, understanding Arabic literature terminologies, and analyzing literary texts effectively. ESP courses equip them with these critical skills, improving their competence and confidence in professional settings.

The rise of online education has created a unique chance for flexible learning access. Numerous countries have started to implement online and distance learning (ODL) programs to improve educational opportunities for individuals who cannot afford conventional education or have additional responsibilities (Ghosh, 2012; Gaba & Li, 2015; Zuhairi, Raymundo & Mir, 2020). Arnó-Macià (2012) contends that the advent

of digital technology and the growing trend towards online education have further underscored the importance of ESP.

Online education offers several benefits compared to conventional learning, such as flexibility, convenience, the ability to control the learning pace, and cost-effectiveness. This approach allows students greater control over their learning environment, whether they prefer a quiet space free from distractions or a conventional classroom setting (Dumford & Miller, 2018; Mukhtar, Javed, Arooj & Sethi, 2020). Additionally, online learning can enhance motivation and satisfaction while providing a more personalized and customized educational experience (Chow & Chi, 2014; Al-Rahmi, Alias, Othman, Alzahrani, Alfarraj, Saged et al., 2018).

The ease of technological access through the utilization of various elements, including Web tools such as Blackboard, Moodle, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams, have implemented hybrid learning, increasing the need to investigate its effects within academic institutions. Abou Assali et al. (2021) define hybrid learning as an educational approach combining traditional face-to-face and online learning modes. Hybrid learning within the Ministry of Education improves the education standards and prepares the students for a future advanced workplace.

### **"Hybrid Learning Versus Blended Learning"**

To establish a basis for understanding the differences and applications of hybrid and blended learning, the following may make it clear.

#### **Hybrid learning**

Hybrid learning allows some students to attend class in person while others participate virtually from home. This real-time instruction offers flexibility and can accommodate different student needs. (University of Washington, 2021)

#### **Blended learning**

Blended learning combines online resources and digital tools with in-person teaching to produce a cohesive learning experience. It aims to enhance the classroom experience rather than replace any part of it. (Horn, and Staker, 2014)

Neelkandan (2021) highlights that the main distinction between the two learning styles lies in their structure; blended learning functions by merging e-learning with face-to-face learning. In contrast, hybrid learning offers students the choice to learn in person or engage online. Essentially, instead of attending class physically, some students, particularly those

residing far from the lecture location, can stay home and participate through the internet.

**To conclude, there are three key differences between hybrid and blended learning:**

**1. Integration Vs. Replacement**

- Hybrid learning focuses on flexibility, allowing for physical and online participation interchangeably.
- Blended learning focuses on enhancing the learning experience by integrating various modes of instruction.

**2. Simultaneity**

- In hybrid learning, there can be a simultaneous delivery where some students are online and others are in-person at the same time.
- Blended learning typically involves the same group of students participating in both online and in face-to-face activities, not necessarily simultaneously

**3. Focus**

- Hybrid learning focuses on flexibility, allowing for physical and online participation interchangeably.
- Blended learning focuses on enhancing the learning experience by integrating various modes of instruction.

While the use of blended learning in higher education and related research has grown in recent years, there is inadequate investigation into student engagement in hybrid learning experiences, indicating a need for further research (Halverson, Graham, Spring, Drysdale, & Henrie, 2014).

Success is defined as reaching a substantial outcome that ones aim to accomplish. Students on their journey to academic success prioritize their education, use their time effectively, maintain a clear schedule, and dedicate most of their time learning. (Suleiman , 2023).

Lampton and Hill (2012) point out that Hybrid online instruction combines conventional face-to-face classroom settings with online-only learning. The premise behind hybrid instruction is that it provides the benefits of personal interaction with the convenience and flexibility of online assignments and discussions. While there has been significant research on how students perceive this form of instruction, less exists on the impact of hybrid instruction on student achievement. The core concept of hybrid instruction is to combine the benefits of personal interaction with the convenience and flexibility of online activities and discussions. Although extensive research has focused on students'

perceptions of this instructional method, there is less available concerning its effect on student achievement.

Illahi and Khandai (2015) highlight that academic achievement holds significant importance very important in both education and the learning process. In today's vastly competitive world, it serves as an indicator of a learner's future. Academic achievement has become one of the main objectives of education. It is a crucial means by which adolescents discover their talents, abilities, and capabilities, which are vital for shaping their career targets. Eventually, one of the key outcomes of any educational system is the achievement of its students.

Satisfaction is a dynamic measure for evaluating the effectiveness of a course (Chen & Yao, 2016). Therefore, it is critical to comprehend the main factors influencing students' engagement and satisfaction in hybrid learning to design effective hybrid courses in the future (Graham, Henrie & Gibbson, 2013). According to Kang and Keinonen (2018) and other researchers, key elements such as motivation, time management, engagement, and satisfaction significantly impact students' academic success.

Students' satisfaction with the quality of the educational they receive is a crucial measure of the performance of higher education institutions in today's context (Butt & Rehman, 2010; Santini et al., 2017; Weingarten et al., 2018). It acts as one of the metrics for evaluating the overall student experience with educational services (Commonwealth of Australia, 2019).

### **Previous Studies**

Several studies have been carried out conducted to examine the impact of hybrid courses on students' academic achievement and learning satisfaction such as Sharif Nia et.al (2023); Hosseini and Amirkhani (2023); Al-Hosani (2022) ;Kazu and Yalçin (2022); Aleb and Labeled (2021); Kazemi and Soleimani (2016) ; Suhonen and Sutinen (2014) and El-Seoud., Taj-Eddin, Seddiek, El-Khouly and Nosseir,. (2014).

Sharif Nia et al. (2023) explored the connections among online course content, online interactions, student acceptance, and satisfaction with online learning, along with student self-efficacy and engagement. The study emphasized that student engagement plays a vital role as a mediator in attaining satisfaction and academic effectiveness in online learning settings.

Hosseini and Amirkhani (2023) conducted a study to assess the impact of synchronous and asynchronous learning methods on the academic performance of medical students specializing in English for

Specific Purposes (ESP). The study included 252 participants, consistently divided between male and female students aged 18 to 30. Results revealed that students in the synchronous learning group outperformed those in the asynchronous group, highlighting the advantages of real-time engagement and immediate feedback. Importantly, gender differences did not significantly affect student achievement in either learning mode. The findings are valuable for educators and instructional designers.

Al-Hosani (2022) accomplished a meta-analysis of existing research to evaluate the impact of hybrid learning on student academic success and achievement. The study utilized secondary data from 55 quantitative studies published between 2015 and 2021, analyzing findings from a selection of peer-reviewed scholarly articles. Main mediating variables included discipline, education level, and publication type. The results from the random effects model indicated a positive effect of hybrid learning on student academic success, with the sciences showing the greatest effect size on achievement. The analysis was limited to the fifty articles published during this period.

Other studies have investigated the effect of academic satisfaction on university students' academic achievement, including research by Mailk, Iqbal, and Sultan (2023). Their study employed a descriptive research approach, focusing on Bachelor of Science (BS) students at the University of Sargodha, with a sample of 313 undergraduate students from two faculties and eight departments selected using a multistage random sampling technique. They utilized an academic satisfaction scale to gather data, which was analyzed using frequencies, mean scores, independent sample t-tests, and Pearson correlation. The principal conclusion was that there was no significant relationship between academic satisfaction and academic achievement among BS students. However, a strong relationship was noted between academic satisfaction and academic achievement, leading to the recommendation that university administration and department heads implement measures to enhance facilities that could increase student satisfaction.

Kazu and Yalçın (2022) conducted a meta-analysis to assess the overall impact of hybrid learning on students' academic achievements, examining 45 findings from 44 quantitative studies published between 2010 and 2020. The analysis concluded that hybrid learning has a statistically significant positive effect on academic achievement, with biology demonstrating the largest effect size, followed by other science disciplines. The study highlights the potential of hybrid learning to improve academic performance across different fields of study.

Aleb and Labeled (2021) examined the impact of a blended teaching approach in ESP courses and found that it significantly improved students' achievement and attitudes. The treatment group showed distinguished positive differences in both areas compared to the control group. Students reported satisfaction with their educational experience in the blended learning environment, which contributed to better academic results. Furthermore, higher satisfaction levels correlated with improved grades in the ESP subject.

Kazemi and Soleimani (2016) explored the effect of hybrid ESP courses on Iranian medical students' academic performance and satisfaction. The results indicated that hybrid learning significantly enhanced students' academic achievements in medical English. Additionally, students expressed high levels of satisfaction with the course structure, citing the balance between online and face-to-face components as beneficial.

Suhonen and Sutinen (2014) conducted a study that examined the implementation of hybrid English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses within the engineering program at a Finnish university. The study reported improvements in students' academic performance and satisfaction levels. The hybrid model provided flexibility and a variety of learning resources, which students found highly beneficial for their learning process.

El-Seoud, Eddin, Seddiek, El-Khouly and Nosseir (2014) conducted a study to examine the effectiveness of hybrid learning in ESP courses at an Egyptian university. The findings indicated significant improvement in students' academic achievement and overall satisfaction with the hybrid model. Students reported that the hybrid approach helped them better comprehend the course content and relate it in real-world contexts.

### **Commentary**

The literature review on ESP courses, hybrid learning, academic achievement, and satisfaction provided the researcher with valuable insights and confidence to state the hypotheses for the current study. These studies demonstrate the positive effects of hybrid ESP courses on students' academic achievement and satisfaction, highlighting the benefits of combining online and face-to-face learning methods.

It also highlighted that there have been limited studies on the impact of hybrid learning ESP programs on university students' academic achievement and satisfaction, particularly within Egyptian contexts and for students whose major is not English. Thus, the current study aimed to

address this gap. While it shared similarities with previous studies by focusing on the same variables, it sought to explore them in a different context. Specifically, it aimed to examine the impact of a hybrid ESP program on enhancing the academic achievement and learning satisfaction of third-year EFL students at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom. Additionally, the study provided a hybrid ESP program for EFL instructors.

### **Context of the problem**

Students in their study at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom were required to study four English courses. They were required to study two courses in the first year and the other courses in the third and the fourth year. The researcher, who teaches English courses at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom, noticed that the majority of the students were reluctant to engage in learning English. In addition, students showed poor academic achievement in Arabic literature and Islamic terms.

Additionally, students were asked to memorize classical Arabic poetry or prose passage, which prevented them from being actively engaged. Also, classical Arabic could be challenging for students who need to be proficient in the language. Memorization-based approaches may focus more on rote learning than developing language proficiency or understanding complex literary concepts.

Furthermore, the researcher noticed that the students' learning satisfaction was low in studying English. They had the desire to study English related to their specialization. They needed to study meaningful content. Therefore, the researcher decided to design a hybrid ESP course to enhance their academic achievement and satisfaction for two reasons:

1. The study participants were non-majors who lacked specialization in English, leading to limited knowledge and familiarity with the language.
2. They study participants needed to study an ESP course that aimed to enhance their academic achievement and learning satisfaction.

Hybrid learning enhances learners' exposure to the English language by incorporating various features, as noted by Huang, Zhou, and Wang (2006) and Al Fiky (2011). These features comprise a student-centered approach, flexibility in providing learning resources, adaptation of diverse learning styles, proficiency, and abilities. It also fosters self-regulation among students, expands chances for learning, and supports effective course management activities such as communication, assessment, submission, grading, and feedback.

To more effectively illustrate the issue, the researcher conducted a pilot study where she tested 20 third year faculty of Dar Al-Uloom students. Students were given an academic achievement test and their performance was low. Only 33% of the students passed the test. The researcher also administered a learning satisfaction scale and the results indicated that most students' learning satisfaction was low as only 39% proved to have high learning satisfaction.

### **Statement of the problem**

Drawing on the results of the pilot study and the researcher's observations, it became evident that third-year students at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom needed to develop their academic achievement and learning satisfaction. The researcher assumed that using a hybrid ESP program could develop students' academic achievement and satisfaction. Therefore, this study sought to explore the following:

"Using a hybrid ESP program for Enhancing University Students' Academic Achievement and Learning Satisfaction".

### **Aim of the Study**

Using a Hybrid ESP Program for Enhancing University Students' Academic Achievement and Learning Satisfaction

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

**In the light of the literature review the following hypotheses were tested:**

1. There would be a statistically significant difference between the study group's mean scores of the academic achievement pre-posttest (favoring the post testing)
2. There would be a statistically significant difference between the study group's mean values of the learning satisfaction pre-posttest (favoring the post testing).

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the current study arose from the following points:

1. This study aimed to address a gap in the literature regarding research on hybrid ESP programs designed to improve university students' academic achievement and satisfaction.
2. It offered a hybrid ESP program for Third- Year Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom Students.
3. The study provided an academic achievement test.
4. The study provided a learning satisfaction scale.
5. The study emphasized the value of active learning strategies, such as workshops, brainstorming, discussions, and debates, in

enhancing students' academic achievement and learning satisfaction.

6. The study helped students improve their linguistic skills by positively influencing their learning attitudes, supporting the development of learning strategies, and increasing their self-confidence.
7. It utilized infographics and YouTube videos to provide students with clear and explicit explanations of the topics being presented. Additionally, an audio script was available for each reading text.
8. The program was carefully designed that it allowed learners to hear the Holy Quran with its translation. A number of activities were developed to make sure that students have fully comprehended the presented lessons.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

#### **The Study was delimited to:**

1. Third-year EFL students at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom were registered at the Blended Learning Center at Minia University. The researcher developed a hybrid ESP course in collaboration with the E-Learning Center.
2. The number of students was Forty seven acting as one study group.
3. They had to study the course for two hours a week; only four face-to-face sessions were provided each session lasted for two hours.
4. The study was conducted during the first term of the 2023-2024 academic year.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **English for Specific Purposes (ESP)**

According to Hassan et al. (2023), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a learner-centered method for teaching English as a foreign language, focusing on enhancing communicative proficiency in specific fields such as agronomy, commerce, academia, accountancy, education, engineering, and information technology.

In this study, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is defined as the instruction of English to students whose native language is not English but who require it for a specific purpose. Third-year EFL students at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom were exposed to an ESP hybrid program that demonstrated how the subject matter was conveyed in English. They were taught a number of topics related to Islamic issues, Islamic civilization, the most contemporary theories in modern Arabic literature and the dictionary skills in English.

#### **Hybrid Learning**

According to Camel (2006), hybrid learning combines traditional on-site campus instruction with online learning, designed for students who need flexible schedules. In a hybrid course, students participate in the first four hours and the last four hours of class in face-to-face sessions, while the remaining class sessions are conducted entirely online.

According to Raes et al., (2020) Hybrid learning is an education model that incorporates online and face-to face sessions. The model does not offer exclusive virtual learning to the students but requires in-person meetings between learners and instructors. However, it bridges in-person meetings with online learning to offer a complete and adequate education system by leveraging space and time.

In this study, hybrid learning is defined as a blend of carefully organized face-to-face and online sessions. During the first semester of the 2023-2024 academic years at the Faculty of Dar-Al-Uloom, students participated in four face-to-face sessions; each lasted for two hours, and had access to an online ESP course developed by the researcher in collaboration with the E-Learning Center and the University Information Center.

### **Academic Achievement**

According to Suleiman (2023), academic achievement refers to the performance results that reflect the extent to which an individual has advanced toward specific objectives within educational environments, such as schools, colleges, and universities.

Academic achievement refers to students' performance in their studies. It is measured through grades, tests, and evaluation that show what students have learned and how well they have mastered their school subjects (U.S. Department of Education, 2021).

American Psychological Association (2020) explains that academic achievement means how much students have learned and understood in school. It is shown by their performance in tests, assignments, and other activities that assess their knowledge and skills.

Peng and Kievit (2020) academic achievement refers to the student performance outcome or accomplishment of a specific educational goal. Academic achievement applies to many subjects and is considered a multifaceted approach combining various learning elements.

Steinmayr, Meiner, Weidinger, and Wirthwein (2014) define academic achievement as performance outcomes that reflect the degree to which an individual has met specific objectives emphasized in educational settings, particularly in schools, colleges, and universities.

Academic Achievement is operationally defined in this study as the extent to which third year EFL students at Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom have attained their short term and long term goals, materials, knowledge and skills provided by the ESP hybrid program.

### **Learning Satisfaction**

Learning satisfaction is students' subjective assessment of their education. It reflects how much they enjoy learning. Engage with their studies, and find value in their educational environment (Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, 2021).

Learning satisfaction is how satisfied students feel about their educational experiences. It includes their feelings about the course materials, teaching methods, and what they have learned overall. (Association for Psychological Science ,2020).

Learning satisfaction is operationally defined as the subjective evaluation of the research participants' educational experiences. It encompasses their perceptions of teaching effectiveness, course content relevance, and personal engagement in learning activities.

### **Method**

#### **Research Design**

The researcher employed a pre-experimental research design, which was appropriate for the current study's nature. Specifically, the one-group pretest-posttest design as it was selected to assess the impact of the treatment or the intervention on the study group.

#### **Participants**

Forty-seven third-year students enrolled in the blended learning program at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom, Minia University, took part in the study.

#### **Duration of the Study**

The study was carried out at the beginning of the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024 at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom, Minia University. Four face-to-face sessions were held at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom, with each session lasting two hours. The First in-person session was in 27 of October 2023 and the last one was in 8 of December. Additionally, students had to get access to the online ESP course during the whole semester. The last deadline to upload the course online general assignment was in 20 of Jan 2024.

#### **Instruments and Materials**

The researcher developed an academic achievement test, a learning satisfaction scale and a hybrid ESP program.

### **1. The Academic Achievement Test ( Prepared by the researcher):**

**A. Test Aim**

- The test was developed to assess students' initial levels prior to the experiment (as a pre-test) and to examine the impact of a hybrid ESP program on improving students' academic achievement (as a post-test).

**B. Test Construction**

- The test included of 50 questions; comprising 25 multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and 25 True or false items.
- The researcher developed a table of specifications to ensure that the test addressed the intended objectives.

**C. Piloting the test**

The test was piloted by administering it to 30 students who were not part of the intervention group. The purpose of the pilot was to evaluate its validity, reliability, suitability for the students' level, and timing. The timing was calculated by dividing the total time taken by each student by the number of students who took the test. The duration of the test was set at two hours.

**D. Validity of the Academic Achievement Test**

**• Content Validity**

The content validity of the academic achievement test was determined by presenting it to seven TEFL experts who evaluated the suitability of the test items for the target participants and the clarity of the language use in the light of the attached table of specifications.

**• Pearson Correlation formula**

The Pearson correlation formula was employed to assess the internal consistency of the test items. As seen in table (1), the results indicated that the values of these items were appropriate and demonstrated high consistency and validity for the study, with ranges between (0.4 to 0.8).

**Table (1)**

**The Internal Consistency of the Academic Achievement Test**

Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
Q1	0.4	Q14	0.7	Q27	0.5	Q40	0.5
Q2	0.5	Q15	0.4	Q28	0.4	Q41	0.4
Q3	0.6	Q16	0.5	Q29	0.7	Q42	0.7

Q4	0.8	Q17	0.7	Q30	0.5	Q43	0.4
Q5	0.4	Q18	0.7	Q31	0.4	Q44	0.5
Q6	0.8	Q19	0.4	Q32	0.8	Q45	0.7
Q7	0.5	Q20	0.5	Q33	0.6	Q46	0.5
Q8	0.4	Q21	0.6	Q34	0.4	Q47	0.5
Q9	0.7	Q22	0.4	Q35	0.5	Q48	0.4
Q10	0.6	Q23	0.5	Q36	0.8	Q49	0.6
Q11	0.4	Q24	0.5	Q37	0.5	Q50	0.6
Q12	0.7	Q25	0.5	Q38	0.5		
Q13	0.4	Q26	0.7	Q39	0.5		

**\* Significant at 0.05 and bound**

### **E. Reliability of the Academic Achievement Test**

To determine the reliability of the test, the researcher applied Alpha-Cronbach formula. As indicated in table (2), the reliability coefficient was (0.834), which was statistically significant and confirmed the test's reliability.

**Table (2)**  
**Alpha' Reliability coefficient**

N. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
50	0.834

**\* Significant at 0.05 and bound**

### **F. Scoring the test**

The total score for the test was fifty points, one point for each.

## **2. The Learning Satisfaction scale**

### **A. Scale Aim**

The scale was designed to assess students' learning satisfaction before and after their exposure to a hybrid ESP program.

### **B. Scale Construction**

The scale is a three lickert scale. It consisted of forty items distributed equally on four subdomains. They are as follow:

1. Students' Learning Experience.
2. Students' Engagement.
3. Ease of communication.
4. Students' Academic Achievement.

**C. Piloting the Scale**

The scale was piloted by giving it to 30 students who were not part of the intervention group. The purpose of the pilot was to evaluate its validity, reliability, suitability for the students' level, and timing. The timing of the scale was calculated by dividing the total time taken by each student by the number of students who completed it. The duration of the scale was set at one hour.

**D. Validity of the Learning Satisfaction Scale**

- **Content Validity**

The content validity of the learning satisfaction scale was established by presenting it to seven TEFL experts, who assessed the suitability of the scale for the target participants and the clarity of the language used in the scale items.

- **Pearson Correlation Formula**

The Pearson correlation formula was applied to assess the internal consistency of the scale items. As seen in table (3), the results indicated that the values of these items were appropriate, consistent and valid for the study, ranging from (0.4 to 0.8).

**Table (3)**

**The Internal Consistency of the Learning Satisfaction Scale**

Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
1	0.4	11	0.4	21	0.5	31	0.4
2	0.4	12	0.6	22	0.4	32	0.5
3	0.5	13	0.4	23	0.4	33	0.5
4	0.7	14	0.8	24	0.5	34	0.4
5	0.4	15	0.4	25	0.4	35	0.4
6	0.7	16	0.7	26	0.6	36	0.6
7	0.4	17	0.6	27	0.4	37	0.4
8	0.4	18	0.5	28	0.4	38	0.6
9	0.8	19	0.4	29	0.6	39	0.4
10	0.4	20	0.5	30	0.4	40	0.5

**E. Scale reliability**

To determine the reliability of the scale, the researcher employed the Alpha- Cronbach formula. As indicated in Table (4), the reliability coefficient was (0.860) , a statistically significant value that confirmed the reliability of the scale's reliability.

**Table (4)**

**Alpha' Reliability coefficient**

N. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
40	0.860

**\* Significant at 0.05 and bound**

**F. Scoring of the scale**

The maximum score for the scale was 120

**3. The Key Characteristics of the Hybrid ESP Program**

Participants of the current study were required to access an online ESP program meticulously developed by the researcher, which was available at:

<http://elearning.minia.edu.eg/moodle/course/view.php?id=22>

**Learning Objectives**

1. Acquaint students with an introduction to Islam.
2. Develop students' knowledge of some basic features of the glories Qur'an.
3. Develop students' knowledge of the importance of Hadith in Islam.
4. Develop students' knowledge of a short biography of Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him (PBUH).
5. Familiarize students with some main features of ' structuralism' theory.
6. Familiarize students with some main features of the ' reader-response' theory.
7. Familiarize students with some main features of 'postcolonial criticism'.
8. Familiarize students with some main features of 'feminist criticism'
9. Identify dictionary skills.
10. Identify some important spelling rules.
11. Identify derivational and inflectional morphemes of the stem of the word.

**Behavioral Objectives**

1. mention the meaning of Islam in English.
2. illustrate why Islam is unique?
3. clarify the oneness of Allah.
4. demonstrate the main sources of legislation in Islam.
5. illustrate the five pillars of Islam.
6. illustrate the six articles of Faith in Islam.
7. mention some scientific issues that were previously mentioned in the Holy Qura'an.
8. mention some benefits of reciting the Glorious Qur'an.

9. identify the sources of legislations in Islam.
- 10.illustrate the authenticity of the Glorious Qur'an.
- 11.mention some of the saying of Prophet's Muhammad.
- 12.illustrate the importance of Hadith in Islam.
- 13.mention why did the Lady Khadijah admire the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
- 14.describe the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
- 15..mention some features about the structuralism theory.
- 16..mention the advantages and disadvantages of the structuralism.
- 17..write about some notable characters of the structuralism theory.
- 18.provide clear description of the 'reader-response' criticism.
- 19..write about a notable character of the reader-response criticism.
- 20..mention the main features of the post-colonial criticism.
- 21.write about the notable characters of the post-colonial criticism.
- 22..mention the main features of the feminist criticism.
- 23.mention the advantages and disadvantage of the theory "feminist criticism".
- 24..write about the most notable theorists of the feminist criticism.
- 25.give the meaning of the term “guide words”
- 26.identify the meaning of words with multiple definitions.
27. choose the appropriate meaning of a given word as used in a certain context
- 28..identify some important spelling rules.
- 29.check out the derivational morphemes of the stem of a word in a dictionary.
- 30.check out the inflectional morphemes of the stem of a word in a dictionary.

### **Course Content**

The content of the hybrid ESP program consisted of three units. They are as follow:

#### **Unit One: Islamic Topics**

Lesson (1): Introduction to Islam

Lesson (2): The Glorious Qur'an

Lesson (3): The importance of Hadith in Islam

Lesson (4) : A short biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

#### **Unit Two : Contemporary Criticism Theories**

Lesson (1): Structuralism

Lesson (2): Reader-Response Criticism

Lesson (3) :Post –Colonial Criticism

Lesson (4): Feminist Criticism

### **Unit Three: Dictionary Skills**

Lesson (1): Guide-Words

Lesson (2): Words with Multiple Definitions

Lesson (3): Spelling Rules

#### **Instructor's Role**

##### **Online Sessions**

In an online session the instructor acts as a facilitator, responsible for monitoring students' learning process.

##### **In face-to -face session**

The primary role of the instructor is to facilitate in-class activities like group discussions, brainstorming, and debates. S/he is responsible for clarifying any unclear information and managing students' learning while providing sufficient constructive feedback.

#### **Learners' Roles**

##### **Online Sessions**

The primary responsibility of the students during online sessions is to work independently, navigate the content, engage in online activities, complete assigned tasks, and develop their self-directed learning skills.

##### **In face – to – face session**

The students' primary roles during in-class activities are to actively participate in the tasks, contribute their ideas positively to their peers, and take part in peer assessment.

##### **Pre-testing**

At the beginning of the course, the researcher noticed that participants were reluctant to participate in face-to-face sessions, and their academic achievement and learning satisfaction were low, which was clearly reflected in their performance on the pre-tests for both academic achievement and learning satisfaction (see Tables 5 and 6). Additionally, they encountered some challenges in accessing the online sessions. To tackle this, the E-learning center organized two orientation sessions to ensure all participants could log in with their username and password, as well as easily navigate the available content.

##### **Experimentation**

Participants were required to access the online sessions available at [elearning.minia.edu.eg](http://elearning.minia.edu.eg), which were precisely to enhance their academic achievement and learning satisfaction. The participants had to complete eleven online sessions focused on Islamic topics, contemporary criticism theories and dictionary skills. Each student was instructed to get access to the online sessions. During these sessions, participants had to navigate the content, do online activities and submit online assignments. Participants enjoyed the content as it is so closely to their main specialization. They

were amazed to hear the Holy Qur'an provided by the translation. They were pleased to watch videos related to the contemporary criticism theories. They thoroughly enjoyed the course, which was evident during the face-to-face sessions. The students actively participated in various in-class activities designed to enhance and reinforce their learning.

**Post-testing**

At the end of the experiment, students took a post-test consisting of the academic achievement test and the learning satisfaction scale. The data were then statistically analyzed, and the results are discussed in the following section.

**Results**

**Testing Hypothesis one**

**Hypothesis 1** predicted that There would be a statistically significant difference between the study group's mean scores of the academic achievement pre-posttest (favoring the post testing) .Statistical analysis shown in table (5) showed that this hypothesis was accepted as participants' post testing exceeded their pre testing and the 't' value was (51.423) and this value was significant at 0.01

**Table (5)**

**Means, Standard Deviation, t-Value of Difference between Mean Scores Obtained by the Study Group's Pre-Post Testing on the Academic Achievement Test**

Variable		Mean	No	Std. Deviation	't' value	D.F	Sig.(2-tailed)	Cohen's d
Academic Achievement	Post	45.68	47	3.251	**51.423	46	0.000	10.152
	Pre	15.77	47	2.606				

\*\*Significant at (0.01) level

**Testing Hypothesis Two**

**Hypothesis 2** predicted that there would be a statistically significant difference between the study group's mean values of the learning satisfaction pre-posttest (favoring the post testing). Statistical analysis shown in table (6) displayed that this hypothesis was acceptable as 't' value reached (198.785) and this value was significant at 0.01

**Table (6)**  
**Means, Standard Deviation, t-Value of Difference between Mean Scores Obtained by the Study Group's Pre-Post Testing on the Learning Satisfaction Scale**

Variable		Mean	No	Std. Deviation	t' value	D.F	Sig.(2-tailed)	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Learning Satisfaction	Post	114.32	47	2.378	**198.785	46	0.000	15.152
	Pre	40.21	47	0.508				

\*\*Significant at (0.01) level

### Discussion

This study was a pre-experimental field study. It aimed to explore the effectiveness of a hybrid ESP (English for Specific Purposes) program in fostering university students' academic achievement and learning satisfaction. The results indicated that the hybrid model, which combines face-to-face instruction with online learning, offers several advantages. However, certain challenges related to student engagement, technological infrastructure, and curriculum design must be addressed to optimize the outcomes of such programs. This discussion highlights key findings in the context of existing literature and suggests avenues for improvement.

The study found that students in the hybrid ESP program demonstrated significant improvement in their academic achievement. This is quite obvious from students' post performance on the academic achievement test. This aligns with research suggesting that hybrid learning models can foster deeper understanding by offering students flexible access to learning resources and diverse modes of instruction (Garrison , 2008). The flexibility provided by the hybrid model allowed students to learn at their own pace, revisiting materials and engaging thoroughly with content.

However, the attainment of the hybrid model is dependent upon the careful integration of online and faces-to- face components. Students reported that interactive tasks, such as discipline-specific case studies and simulations, were particularly effective in improving their comprehension and retention of ESP content. Nevertheless, the study also highlighted the need for continuous adaptation of ESP materials to suit the specific needs of different academic disciplines, reinforcing the importance of contextualized learning.

The study showed significant statistical results with regard to the impact of using the hybrid ESP program in enhancing participants' achievement. Students admired the carefully selected videos and the

content itself which is closely related to their specialization. They studied Islamic topics such as the five pillars in Islam, the six articles of faith, the two main sources of legislation in Islam, a short biography of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the contemporary criticism theories, ...etc. All of these topics gained students' interest and attention as students found them meaningful and beneficial.

The findings of the present study were found to be consistent with other studies that addressed the importance of using hybrid ESP programs for enhancing students' academic achievement such as the studies conducted by Sharif Nia et.al (2023); Hosseini and Amirkhani (2023); Al-Hosani (2022); Kazu and Yalçin (2022); Aleb& Labeled (2021); Kazemi and Soleimani (2016); Suhonen and Sutinen (2014).

Another key finding was the improvement in students' learning satisfaction in the hybrid program. The chance to interact with course materials both in-person and online provided students with greater control over their learning, resulting in increased satisfaction levels. This result is consistent with previous studies that suggest learner autonomy and self-directed learning play crucial roles in student satisfaction, particularly in hybrid and online environments (El-Seoud, Eddin, Seddiek, El-Khouly and Nosseir, 2014).

The success of the hybrid ESP program also depends heavily on technological infrastructure and the students' digital literacy. While the study showed that most students appreciated the flexibility of online learning, a subset faced challenges with technology, such as navigating online platforms or experiencing internet connectivity issues. This is in line with prior research indicating that unequal access to technology can create disparities in learning outcomes (Means et al., 2014).

To address these challenges, institutions must ensure that students have access to reliable technical support and provide training in digital literacy where necessary. In addition, course designers should aim for a user-friendly online interface and ensure that students are well-versed in the tools required for the course. These efforts can reduce barriers to engagement and foster a more comprehensive learning environment.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of instructional design in hybrid programs. The success of the ESP program relied on the integration of interactive, discipline-specific tasks that reflected real-world applications of language skills. This finding supports the argument that contextualized, task-based learning is essential in ESP programs, as it helps bridge the gap between language learning and professional practice (Long, 2015). Future hybrid ESP programs should continue to emphasize

the practical application of language skills, ensuring that materials are relevant to students' academic and career goals.

Finally, the study found that achieving the optimal balance between online and face-to-face learning remains a challenge. While the hybrid model offers flexibility, some students felt that the in-person interaction was more beneficial for language learning, especially for listening and speaking skills. This finding suggests that the face-to-face component of the hybrid model should not be minimized, especially in language courses where real-time interaction is crucial for developing fluency.

To strike the right balance, instructors should strategically design the course to influence the strengths of both online and in-person instruction. For example, content delivery and self-paced activities can be shifted online, while interactive and communicative tasks can be reserved for face-to-face sessions. This blended approach allows students to benefit from the flexibility of online learning while still receiving the personalized attention and peer interaction that in-person classes offer.

### **Students' Reflections on the Program**

The following are some of students' reflections that illustrate a range of positive experiences students might have with studying the hybrid ESP program, including enhanced academic achievement, increased autonomy, improved language skills, and overall satisfaction with the learning process:

- *"This program made learning more enjoyable. The blend of technology and traditional classroom interaction kept me motivated, and I felt more satisfied with my progress than in previous courses where we only had one method of learning".*
- *"The hybrid program not only improved my English skills but also taught me how to apply them in real academic settings. The focus on vocabulary, critical reading, and paraphrasing was particularly helpful for my studies, and I can now approach academic texts with more confidence."*
- *"The blend of online and face-to-face learning was perfect. The online sessions helped me build foundational knowledge, while the in-person discussions and activities gave me the chance to apply what I learned and ask questions directly to the instructor."*
- *"At first, I was nervous about using the online platform, but the orientation sessions helped a lot. By the end of the course, I felt more confident using digital tools and taking charge of my own learning. It helped me become more independent and responsible for my progress."*

## Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that hybrid ESP programs can effectively enhance both academic achievement and learning satisfaction when thoughtfully designed and implemented. However, challenges such as technological access, teacher preparedness, and the balance between online and in-person learning must be carefully managed. Overcoming these challenges will be essential to ensure that hybrid ESP programs continue to develop and cater to the varied needs of university students.

## Implications

The results of this study carry important implications for educational institutions, language instructors and curriculum designers in the context of hybrid ESP programs. By combining online and in-person learning methods, the hybrid model provides a flexible and adaptive approach to improve the academic achievements and learning satisfaction of third-year Dar Al- Uloom faculty students.

Institutions should recognize the crucial role of technology in hybrid ESP programs and guarantee that both students and faculty members have access to appropriate digital tools and platforms. Curriculum designers have to prioritize the integration of discipline – specific content and tailor learning activities to the students' areas of study. Educational institutions should inspire students to take greater responsibility for their learning by providing them with resources and guidance on time management and independent study strategies. Instructors should incorporate self- directed learning activities that allow students to personalize their learning paths.

## Challenges

1. Designing and implementing a hybrid ESP program may increase instructors' load as they have to prepare both face- to-face and online materials, provide continuous feedback to students and manage different modes of instruction.
2. Group activities may be harder to manage in a hybrid format, particularly when some students are online while others are attending face-to-face sessions.
3. Some students may not have reliable access to devices or a stable internet connection which in turn can hinder their participation in the online sessions.
4. Students' from different cultural backgrounds may have diverse learning styles, expectations, and needs, making it challenging to design a hybrid program that meets everyone's satisfaction.

### **Recommendations**

**In the light of the results obtained in the current study, a number of helpful recommendations can be drawn:**

1. EFL instructors have to tailor ESP materials to match Students' academic and professional needs. This will surely enhance students' engagement and make the learning process more relevant leading to higher satisfaction.
2. Providing EFL learners with continuous and constructive feedback through both online and face-to-face instruction. Well-timed feedback helps students understand their progress and areas of improvement, which can positively impact both their academic achievement and satisfaction.
3. Incorporating EFL materials that reflect students' social and academic backgrounds make learning experience more relatable and satisfying.
4. Incorporate task-based learning and problem solving activities in both online and in face-to-face settings. These strategies help students apply ESP skills in practical contexts, prompting better retention and achievement.
5. Encourage autonomous learning by giving students' some control over their learning paths. This can lead to greater motivation and improved outcomes.
6. Incorporate interactive tools like online forums, video lessons, quizzes to maintain students' learning satisfaction.

### **Suggestions for further Research**

1. The present study can be replicated on a larger sample of 3<sup>rd</sup> year Faculty of Dar Al- Uloom Students.
2. Explore how hybrid ESP programs affect students in specific disciplines.
3. Explore how hybrid ESP programs affect students' oral communication skills.
4. Explore how hybrid ESP programs affect students' oral written communication skills.
5. Investigate the relationship between student autonomy in a hybrid ESP program and learning satisfaction.
6. Investigate the role of AI and adaptive learning technologies in improving the personalization of ESP content in hybrid programs.
7. Explore how cultural and contextual factors influence the effectiveness of hybrid ESP programs.
8. Investigating English majors' perceptions of ELSA speak App.

9. Investigate other AI applications in enhancing English majors' pronunciation.
10. Investigate the effect of integrating varied oral communicative activities on developing the oral performance of EFL teachers.

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