

A Controversial Issue: Who is More Entitled to Teach Language Skills and ESP Courses?

Adel I. El-Banna¹ Marwa A. Naeem^{1,*} and Mazen F. Badawy²

¹ Faculty of Education, Kafr El-Sheikh University, Kafr El-Sheikh, Egypt.

² Higher Institute of Engineering, Kafr El-Sheikh, Egypt.

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Abstract: The entitlement to teach English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and language skill courses has long been a controversial issue in Egyptian higher education. Recent bylaws issued by the Supreme Council of Universities have reignited debates between Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) specialists in faculties of education and linguistics/literature specialists in faculties of arts. This study investigates which group is more qualified to teach ESP and general language skills, drawing upon a cross-national sample of ($n=170$) participants representing diverse academic and professional backgrounds across eight countries. Data were collected through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, supplemented by open-ended responses. Results indicate that the majority of respondents rated TEFL specialists as more pedagogically competent, better trained in curriculum adaptation, and more effective in meeting learners' needs in both general language and ESP contexts, particularly in human as well as natural sciences. Conversely, linguistics and literature specialists were recognized for their depth in theoretical and structural knowledge but perceived as less suited to the practical and applied demands of ESP and language skills instruction. The findings reinforce international scholarship that positions TEFL as an applied discipline central to ESP pedagogy, and they highlight the importance of aligning instruction with professional preparation rather than institutional politics or personal interests. The study recommends policy reforms in Egyptian universities to prioritize TEFL specialists in teaching ESP courses and language skills, ensuring both academic integrity and learner success.

Keywords: ESP, TEFL, applied linguistics, language skills, higher education policy.

1. Introduction

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and language skill courses have been a highly complicated and controversial issue among Egyptian academia. Although TEFL pundits specialize in teaching language skills and ESP, their right to teach the courses related to these areas is denied. Both authorities' lack of knowledge about the nature of TEFL specialization and the arts sector personal interests contribute to the controversy. The Supreme Council of Universities in Egypt issued a totally new bylaw on March 27, 2023 (Decision No. 1993) to be immediately adopted by the Egyptian faculties of education in the first semester of the academic year 2023/ 2024. This bylaw ignored taking into considerations professionals' viewpoints, suggestions and even qualifications in teaching language skills and ESP courses to EFL learners. As a consequence, the new bylaw fueled conflicts between TEFL specialists and arts sector staff members. Every faculty of education applied the bylaw in its own way; some faculties tried hard to stick to qualifications, others depended on nonacademic criteria, personal interests, and most of the time, unawareness of the nature of EFL specific qualifications. However, the trespassed specialization of TEFL is not that underestimated internationally.

To better understand the basics, it is important to differentiate between applied linguistics and linguistics. Linguistics is concerned with the idealization of language. More clearly, it deals with theories of linguistic components in general rather than skills, specific usages and jargons of language. Applied linguistics, on the contrary, deals with language skills that learners need to practice daily. Besides, it develops linguistic themes to serve English for Specific Purposes (Alhaj, 2015). TEFL is a branch of applied linguistics, consequently, language skills and ESP are its main focus. In the Egyptian context, an English language prospective teacher in the faculty of education studies both linguistic and literary courses (i.e. phonetics, grammar, novel, drama, poetry, language history ... etc) beside educational and professional courses. It is unfair to consider such a graduate to be "nonspecialist" in English.

Meyer, Volkmann and Grimm (2022) illustrated that TEFL compines both educational aspects with English linguistics, literature and cultural studies. Consequently, a TEFL specialist is qualified in English language as well as its education. The claim that Art sector specialists have a better knowledge of English is a mere lie.

*Corresponding author e-mail: marwa.naem@edu.kfs.edu.eg

Raftari, Khabir and Rohanzadeh (2021) investigated the conflict between English language teachers and content specialists who are familiar with literary and linguistic aspects of language as both teams claim their right to teach ESP and language skill courses. After reviewing many studies in this regard, it was clearly concluded that the English language teachers best fit teaching such courses. Both ESP and language skill courses are practical in nature. They have nothing to do with neither pure linguistics nor literary aspects of language.

On the same track, Metzler (2018) illustrated that foreign language education is an independent academic discipline that encompasses the content, the method and the persons in charge of teaching language to foreign learners. This type of education is an applied science. That is why English language teaching is different from teaching English literature and linguistics.

Comparing TEFL teachers with specific content instructors, Rahimi and Shakarami (2017) selected ninety-two undergraduates, ten TEFL instructors and ten subject matter instructors to participate in their study. The study instruments included a pre-test, a post-test, a questionnaire and interviews. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to analyze data. The main purpose was to investigate to what extent subject matter instructors' pedagogical perceptions differ from TEFL instructors' about ESP. Findings revealed that TEFL instructors were more qualified to teach ESP courses compared with subject matter instructors. As for students' achievement and satisfaction, being taught by TEFL specialists gained higher score than subject matter instructors. Students were more satisfied with TEFL instructors.

Rahimy and Delvand (2015) conducted a study on ninety students in Islamic Azad University of Rasht and Lahidjan and University of Guilan in which they elicited their responses about their preferences of who should teach them ESP courses. General language teachers (those who did not receive a professional preparation in the faculties of education) and professional ESP teachers (who graduated from faculties of education) were compared in organization and communication skills. Results revealed that both teachers were entitled to teach ESP courses. There were no differences between both parties.

Probing into the important skills that teachers need to possess so as to be qualified for teaching ESP courses, Adnan (2014) asserted the importance of the professional preparation and good training of ESP teachers. Understanding the nature of such courses and holding a specialization relevant to this nature is a must.

Ahmadi (2008) raised a direct question on who should teach ESP courses. At first, faculty administrations were asked about their preferences. Most vice-deans in such faculties tended to assign ESP classes to TEFL specialists. However, 50% of discipline-specialist departments believed that teaching such courses should be assigned to subject-specialists (staff members whose specialization is not English). Moreover, one hundred and seventy-six participants from the medical sector students at Iranian universities took part in a questionnaire about the entitlement to teach ESP courses. They definitely favoured TEFL specialists and praised their professionalism.

Reviewing literature and related studies, the researchers found much debate and controversy among academia on who should teach ESP and language skill courses. The issue remained vague and undecisive. Thus, the current piece of research attempted to fill in a gap among its predecessors and present an answer to the confusing question on well-grounded academic basis. Hence, the problem of this research work is deciding which specialization is more entitled and qualified to teach ESP and language skill courses. A main question can sum up this problem:

- Who is more entitled to teach ESP and language skill courses?

Four sub-questions branched of the main question:

- To what extent are TEFL specialists' (of the Faculty of Education) qualified to teach ESP and language skill courses?
- To what extent are linguistic and literature specialists' (of the Faculty of Arts) qualified to teach ESP and language skill courses?
- What are the preferred qualifications for teaching ESP in different contexts?
- What are the preferred qualifications for teaching general language skills in different contexts?

2. Participants

To avoid bias and personal interests, the researchers invited a hundred and seventy participants ($n=170$) who belonged to different countries, cultures and work environments to take part in the current research work through an online link to a questionnaire on a Google Form. Table (1) provides detailed description of the participants' nationalities and Table (2) points out their ranks:

Table 1: Description of Participants' Nationalities

Nationalities	Category	Number of Participants
	Egyptian	90
	Pakistani	20
	Argentinian	10
	Canadian	10
	British	10
	Indian	10
	Algerian	10
	Uzbekistani	10

Table (1) points out that participants carried different eight nationalities (almost a representative sample of all continents). This international sample had diverse cultural as well as educational backgrounds.

Table 2: Description of Participants' Ranks

Ranks	Category	Number of Participants
	University Professors	40
	Assistant Lecturers	10
	Researchers	30
	Supervisors	10
	Expert Teachers	20
	Teachers	50
	Educational Institution Founders	10

Table (2) illustrates participants that held different titles ranged from university professors to educational institution founders. The researchers intentionally involved academics as well as stakeholders so as to attain realistic results that are not only based on sound academic criteria, but take work market interests into account as well.

Besides, participants were associated with various affiliations. In the Egyptian context, participants belonged to four universities: Kafr El-Sheikh, Damnhur, Mansoura and Portsaid. In addition, Egyptian teachers from both governmental and Azhari schools were included. Moreover, British participants from the University of Glasgow and University of Limerick took part in this study. Furthermore, Argentinian researchers at the Association of Translators at Rosario kindly responded to the questionnaire. On another track, Pakistani participants were affiliated to two universities: Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University Lyari Karachi Sindh and National University of Modern Languages at Islamabad. As for Indian participants, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMUA) was represented. In addition, Algerian, Canadian and Uzbekistani founders at English for Positive Change Program took part in this study.

3. Instruments

The researchers prepared an online Five-point Likert Scale Questionnaire so as to collect data for the current study. A preliminary form of the questionnaire was submitted to a number of local and international reviewers in TEFL, literature, general linguistics and applied linguistics. The comments and modifications those reviewers provided were taken into consideration. Accordingly, a final form of the questionnaire was prepared and published online.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections. The first section identified the aim of the questionnaire to participants. It pointed out that the questionnaire aimed at collecting expert view points on the qualifications of two groups of instructors for ESP and language skill courses: TEFL specialists from the Faculty of Education and specialists in linguistics and literature from the Faculty of Arts. Participants were told that their response was invaluable in helping us identify the ideal instructors for these courses.

The second section contained personal and demographic information. Participants were asked to record their names, nationalities, titles / positions and academic affiliations. The third section was concerned with qualifications. It included ten items and started with instructing participants to rate the given factors on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Not Qualified" and 5 being "Highly Qualified," for both TEFL specialists (from the Faculty of Education) and specialists in linguistics and literature (from the Faculty of Arts). For each party, qualifications, expertise, and relevance to ESP and language skill courses were considered.

In addition, the fourth section covered the preferred qualifications. Participants were asked to indicate their preferences for instructors in different scenarios or contexts. Three items were given to elicit participants' preferences of instructors' qualifications for teaching ESP courses in human and natural sciences beside general language skills: listening, speaking,

reading, writing and translation. The last section allowed participants to provide their open-ended comments sharing any additional ideas, insights, or considerations they believe essential for determining the qualifications of instructors for ESP and English language skill courses.

4. Results and Discussion

The first section of the *Comparative Qualification Questionnaire: Teaching ESP and Language Skill Courses* included ten items. The first item required respondents to determine to what extent TEFL specialists at the Faculty of Education have the pedagogical expertise necessary to teach ESP and English language skill courses. Figure (1) displays participants' responses:

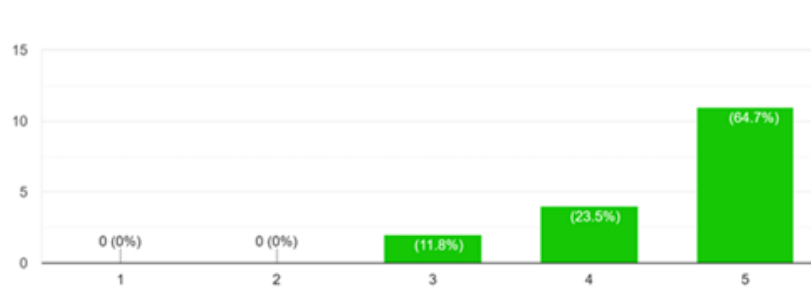


Fig. 1: TEFL Specialists' Pedagogical Expertise

As Figure (1) indicates, most participants (64.7%) rated the TEFL specialists as "5," indicating a strong belief in their pedagogical expertise. This majority suggested a high level of confidence in the specialists' abilities to teach effectively, employing appropriate strategies and methodologies for English language learners. The additional (23.5%) who chose "4" further strengthens the overall positive sentiment, as these respondents agreed with the statement, albeit with slightly less enthusiasm than those selecting "5." The (11.8%) selecting "3" represents a neutral position. This indicates that a small segment of respondents neither strongly agrees nor disagrees with the assertion about the specialists' expertise. While this percentage is relatively low, it suggests that there may be some respondents who feel ambivalent or may have had mixed experiences regarding the pedagogical skills of TEFL specialists.

The overwhelming majority of positive ratings (88.2% choosing 4 or 5) reflects a generally favorable perception of TEFL specialists' pedagogical expertise. This could imply that respondents have confidence in the training, qualifications, and instructional methods employed by these specialists. The presence of neutral responses indicates that there may be a room for growth. It could be valuable for TEFL specialists to seek feedback from this subset of respondents to understand their reservations or uncertainties. This could guide professional development efforts and enhance teaching practices. It is essential to consider the context in which these results were gathered. Factors such as the respondents' backgrounds, experiences with TEFL specialists, and specific teaching contexts may influence perceptions. For instance, respondents who have had limited interaction with TEFL specialists might be more likely to choose a neutral option. In a nutshell, the results from the Likert scale survey suggest a predominantly positive perception of TEFL specialists' pedagogical expertise, with a notable majority expressing strong agreement. While the data are encouraging, the presence of neutral responses highlights the need for ongoing assessment and professional development to ensure that all stakeholders, including those who are unsure, feel confident in the expertise of TEFL educators. Understanding the reasons behind the neutral responses could provide insights into areas for improvement and further enhance the effectiveness of TEFL instruction.

The second item elicited responses about TEFL specialists' experience in teaching ESP courses. Figure (2) provides how participants responded to the item:

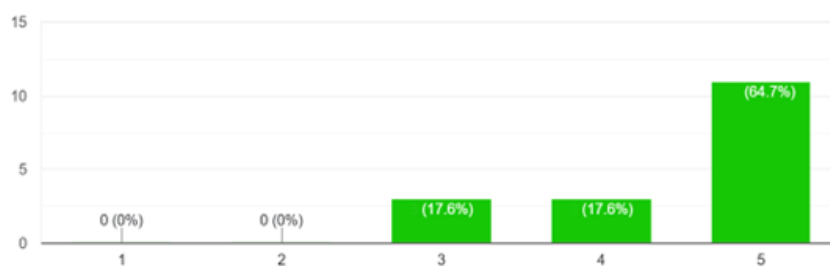


Fig. 2: TEFL Specialists' Experience in Teaching ESP Courses

Similar to the results of the first item, Figure (2) illustrates that participants' estimation of TEFL specialists' experience in teaching ESP courses is high. Most participants (64.7%) believed that TEFL specialists are highly qualified to teach ESP courses. Trusting TEFL specialists as teachers of ESP courses, (17.6%) of participants decided they are qualified enough to teach such courses. An equal proportion of participants (17.6%) was neutral – not decisive whether TEFL specialists are qualified to teach ESP courses or not. No votes went to lower degrees on the scale.

The agreement of TEFL specialists' right to teach ESP courses as they are qualified to do coincides with and justified by Rahimy and Delvand (2015) as they pointed out that TEFL specialists possess the same mastery of English language, organization communication and socioaffective skills necessary to teach ESP courses as specialists of linguistics and literature.

Asking about TEFL specialists' understanding of language acquisition theory, the third item in section one rendered various responses. Figure (3) sums up the results:

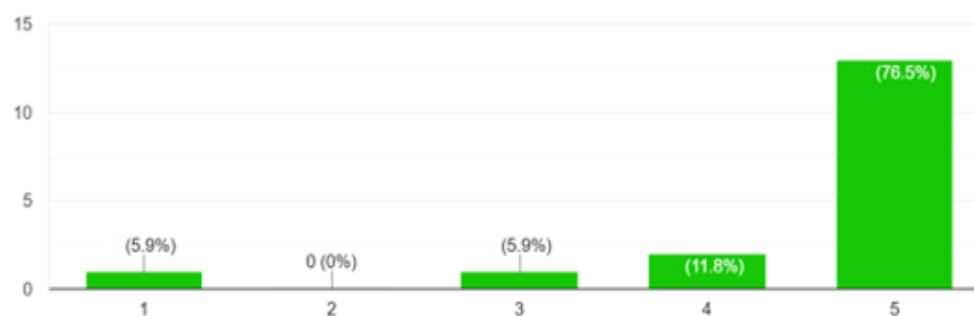


Fig. 3: TEFL Specialists' Understanding of Language Acquisition Theory

Figure (3) points out that the majority of participants (76.5%) believe that TEFL specialists have a thorough understanding of language acquisition theory. A relatively small proportion of participants (11.8%) vote for TEFL specialists' familiarity with the theory. Only (5.9%) of the respondents suppose that TEFL specialists have no knowledge of language acquisition! Logically, TEFL specialists who studied and taught educational theories must have profound understanding and application of language acquisition theory. They are not only familiar with language acquisition theory, but they are supposed to master it as well. This result coincides with Rahimi and Shakarami's (2017) findings that TEFL specialists have extended pedagogical perceptions that make them work according to sound educational rules.

TEFL specialists' professional development related to ESP was the focus of item four in section one of the questionnaire. The following figure depicts the attained findings:

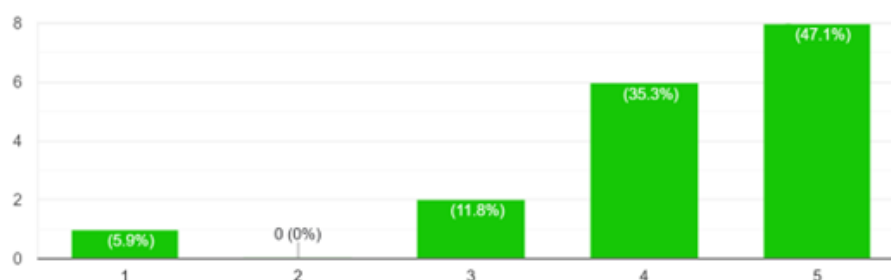


Fig. 4: TEFL Specialists' Professional Development Related to ESP

In Figure (4), a proportion of (47.1%) of the participants trust TEFL specialists' professional development that entitles them to teach ESP courses. A smaller percentage of (35.3%) believe that those specialists are entitled to teach these courses. Eleven point eight percent (11.8%) of respondents stay indecisive about the item. They are not sure whether TEFL specialists have adequate professional development to teach ESP courses or not. However, (5.9%) of participants claim that TEFL specialists are not professionally developed to teach ESP courses.

There is a widely-spread misunderstanding of the nature of ESP courses and the requirements for their teaching. ESP courses require specifying English to serve certain fields. The content of such courses should be tailored to the jargon and the language skills needed for a specific field. Consequently, ESP teachers need not to hold high academic degrees in analysing Shakespearean works nor delving into English pure linguistics! Rather those who teach ESP should possess the main four language skills.

In respect of TEFL Specialists' ability to adapt curriculum to industry needs, the fifth item in section one of the questionnaire elicited the following responses:

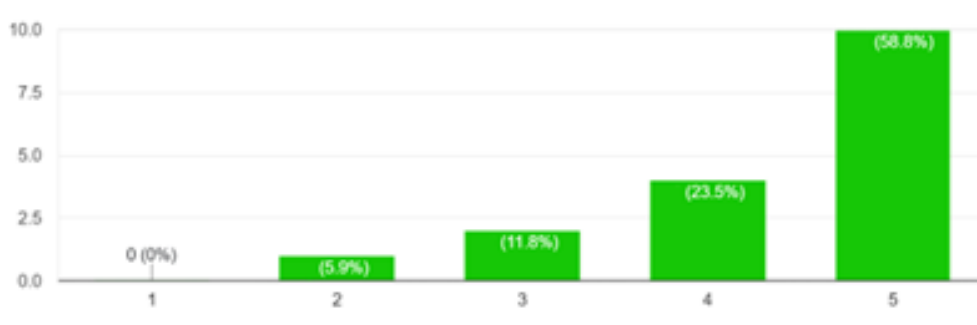


Fig. 5: TEFL Specialists' Ability to Adapt Curriculum to Industry Needs

In Figure (5), (58.8%) of participants strongly believe that TEFL specialists are completely capable of adapting EFL curriculum to the specific needs of the target field of study. Almost (23.5%) think that TEFL specialists are able to adapt curricula for the same purpose. Only (11.8%) are not sure of TEFL specialists' ability to adapt curricula to fit industry needs. A marginal proportion of (5.9%) of respondents reckon that TEFL specialists lack the ability to adapt curricula for specific purposes. No participants totally negates TEFL specialists' ability.

During their study in the faculties of education – Egyptian faculties of education is no exception – TEFL prospective teachers are taught courses on curriculum and how to design, instruct, develop and evaluate it. This exclusive, educational preparation gives the faculty of education graduate an advantage to adapt curricula for industry needs. This finding accords with Valdelamar and Luzkarime (2023) who reported how TEFL teachers adapted the Colombian English Suggested Curriculum for High School. They praised the work of those teachers as they followed theoretical models and provided their own dimension to adapt the target curriculum.

The sixth item in Section One asked participants to evaluate Faculty of Arts linguistics and literature specialists' in-depth knowledge of language structure and linguistics. Figure (6) summarizes the attained results:

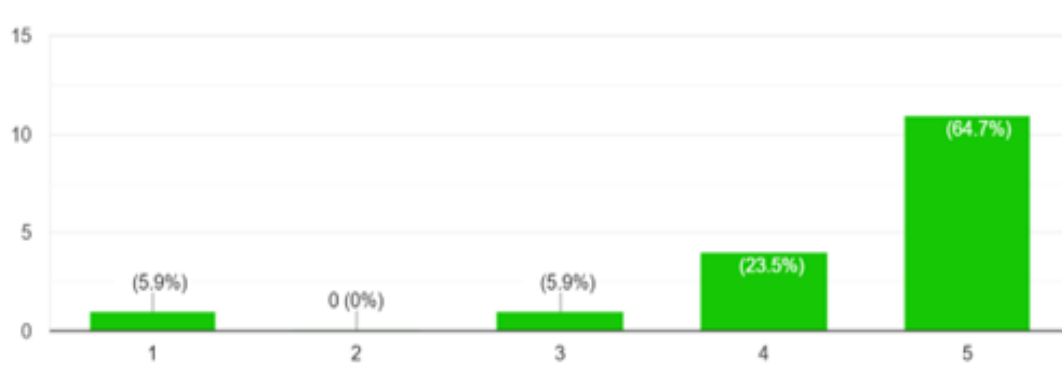


Fig. 6: Linguistics and Literature Specialists' In-Depth Knowledge of Language Structure and Linguistics

As depicted in Figure (6), the majority of participants (64.7%) trust linguistics and literature specialists' deep knowledge of language structure and linguistics. Fewer percentage of participants (23.5%) agree on the premise with a little reservation. Almost (5.9%) of participants are not sure of linguistics and literature specialists' deep knowledge of structure and linguistics. An equal proportion of participants (5.9%) regard those specialists lacking in-depth knowledge of English structure and linguistics.

It is logical for specialists in linguistics and literature to possess deep knowledge of language structure and literature. The courses those specialists studied during their undergraduate and postgraduate studies suppose that. However, this result contradicts with Mudhsh and Laskar's (2021) who found that the English department graduates of the faculty of arts suffer obvious problems in using various English structures. They attributed this to Arabic influences that negatively affect the process of structure learning and comprehension.

Eliciting responses on linguistics and literature specialists' expertise in literary analysis and cultural context, the seventh item in section one of the questionnaire was posed. Participants' responses to the item are illustrated in Figure (7):

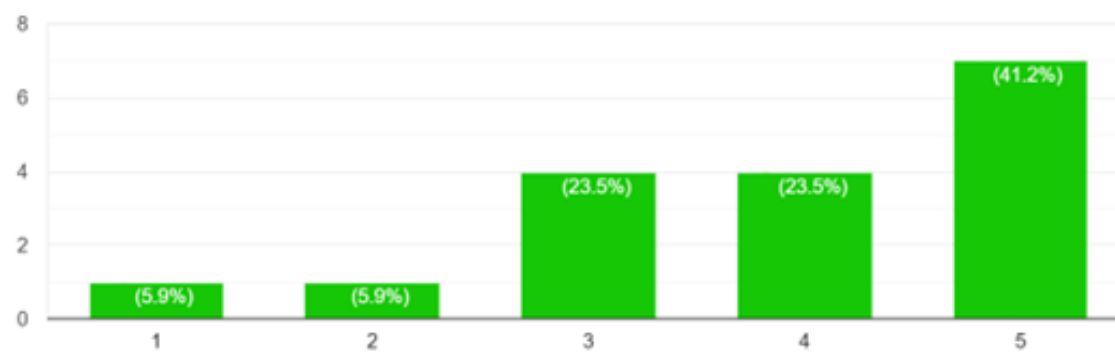


Fig. 7: Linguistics and Literature Specialists' Expertise In Literary Analysis And Cultural Context

Almost (41.2%) of participants reckon that linguistics and literature specialists are extremely experienced in literary analysis and English cultural context. Whereas, (23.5%) of participants believe in those specialists' expertise in literary analysis and cultural context experience, but not with much trust. An equal proportion of (23.5%) remained indecisive towards the item. Small equal responses – (5.9%) each see that specialists in linguistics and literature are either completely inexperienced in literary analysis and cultural context or are not experienced at all.

The above percentages indicate a lot of doubt about linguistics and literature specialists' experience in their own field of specialization. Many reasons may be involved. One of these reasons is the inefficient preparation of faculty of arts graduates. Moreover, faculties of arts in Egypt, for instance, accept relatively-low achievers from High School. When those students graduate and some of them become linguistics and literature specialists, they fail to compensate for their modest linguistic competence. Moorhouse and Wan (2023) agreed with this result asserting the need for a sustainable linguistic support to arts postgraduate students.

Investigating linguistics and literature specialists' ability to relate language skills to literature, item eight in section one of the questionnaire was posed. Participants' responses to this item are pointed out in Figure (8):

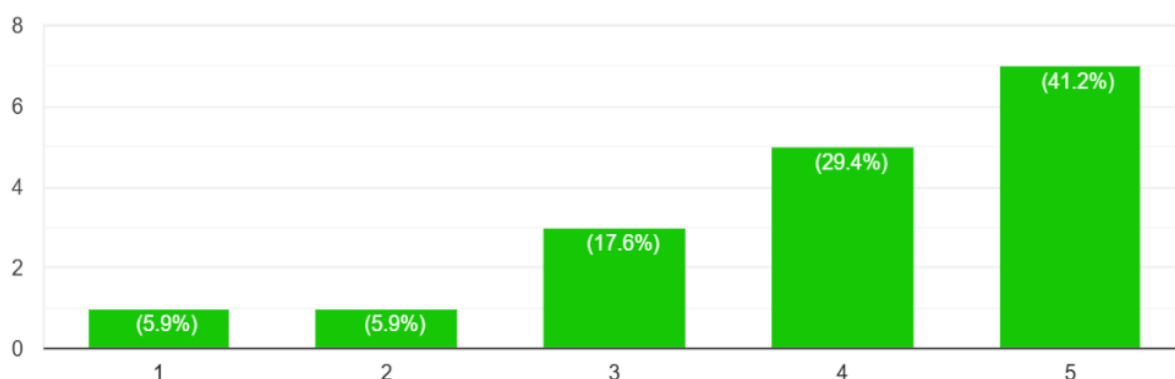


Fig. 8: Linguistics and Literature Specialists' Ability to Relate Language Skills to Literature

The majority of participants (41.2%) strongly agreed that Faculty of Arts specialists are able to relate language skills to literature. A smaller proportion of (29.4%) just agreed on the same premise. Being neutral, (17.6%) of participants gave no vantage to any choice. Two small equal percentages of (5.9%) of participants either disagree or strongly disagree on linguistics and literature specialists' ability to relate language skills to literature.

Literature is usually taught for its own sake, or for illustrating the aesthetic purposes of language. It is not common to relate literature to language skills. Consequently, researchers believe that specialists in linguistics and literature do not pragmatically teach literature. This contradicts the findings provided by Susiati (2025) in which she asserted that reading literary works has a significant effect on students' vocabulary, grammar and the main language skills. She advocated an eclectic approach to integrate literature with various learning methods so as to create a more holistic approach to language acquisition.

The ninth item of the first section of the questionnaire probed Faculty of Arts specialists' pedagogical expertise in teaching English language skills. Figure (9) unfolds the obtained results:

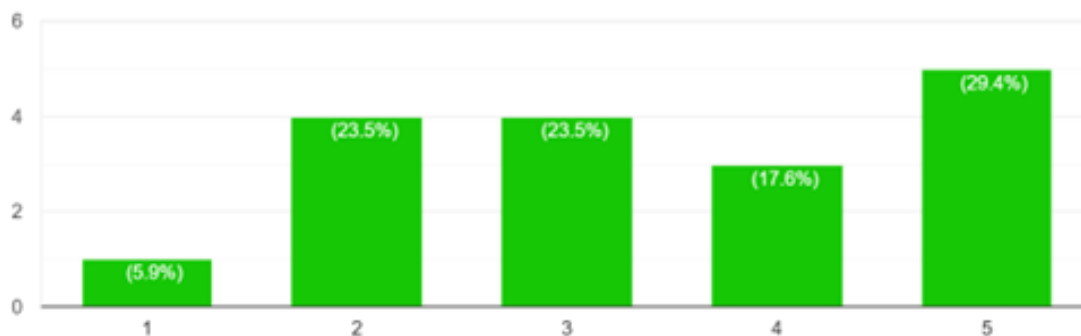


Fig. 9: Linguistics and Literature Specialists' Pedagogical Expertise in Teaching Language Skills

A relatively low percentage of (29.4%) of respondents enthusiastically confirmed linguistics and literature specialists' pedagogical expertise in teaching language skills. Few participants (17.6%) agreed on their pedagogical expertise to teach such skills. Equal percentages of respondents – (23.5%) each – either remained neutral or denied this expertise. The lowest percentage of participants (5.9%) denied the existence of such an expertise at all.

It is obvious that English language skills have their own nature and components. Being a specialist in English linguistics and literature does not necessarily mean that a person can teach general language skills. Linguists dwell in linguistic theories, whereas literature specialists surf novels, plays and poems. Their interests are mainly theoretical. However, English language skills are almost practical. Cochran (1997) supports this idea elaborating the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). This type of content knowledge is what makes up the curriculum of English. This content needs EFL teachers rather than scientists. Teachers differ from scientists, not necessarily in the quality or quantity of their subject matter knowledge, but in how that knowledge is organized and used.

Concerning item ten in section one, participants were asked to respond to a question about linguistics and literature specialists' understanding of specific language needs in various fields. Figure (10) presents the results:

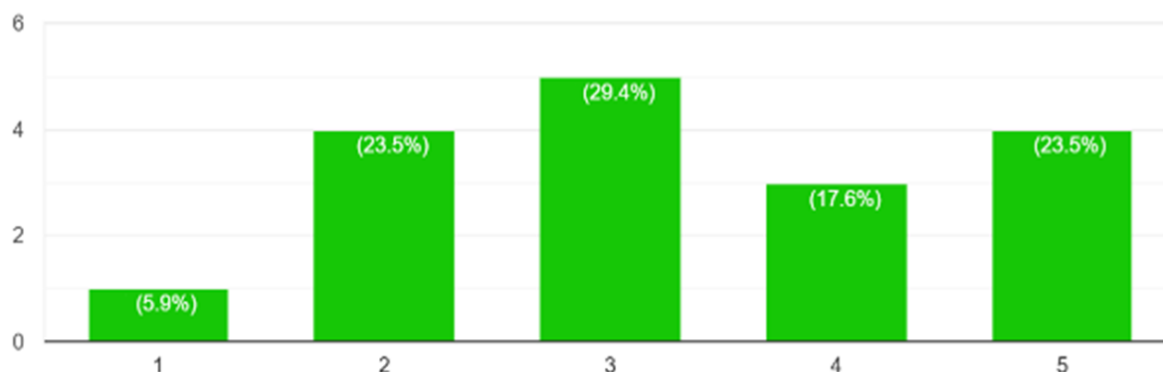


Fig. 10: Linguistics and Literature Specialists' Understanding of Specific Language Needs in Various Industries

Only (23.5%) of participants strongly agreed on this premise. Whereas, a small proportion of (17.6%) agreed that those specialists have such understanding. Being indecisive, (29.4%) of participants selected the neutral option. Almost (23.5%) of participants disagreed on the item, and (5.9%) strongly disagreed on it.

Although the majority of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that linguistics and literature specialists understand specific language needs in various fields, the percentage of this majority is nearly 50%. This indicates that there is no complete confirmation of the premise. The researchers believe that linguistics and literature specialists' understanding of specific language needs in various industries is limited due to the fact that ESP is not among those specialists' professional preparation nor interests. This belief coincides with what Wiastuti, Ruminda and Juhana (2020) concluded: general linguistics-based teaching did not meet actual industry communication demands.

Section Two in the questionnaire dealt with the preferred qualifications in participants' opinions to teach English language skill and ESP courses. Preference was based on participants' expertise or direct experience. In this concern, item eleven asked about the preferred instructor to teach ESP courses in human sciences. The following figure points out the results:

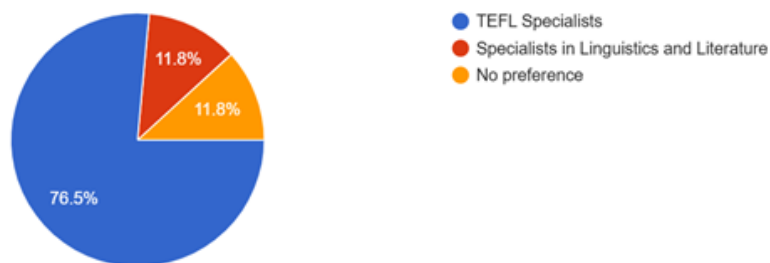


Fig. 11: Preferred Instructor for Teaching ESP in Human Sciences

The majority of respondents (76.5%) preferred TEFL specialists to teach ESP human science courses. Two equal proportions (11.8% each) were either neutral or preferred specialists in linguistics and literature to teach such courses. This result coincides with what Sukying, Supunya and Phusawisot (2023) advocated. They believed that teaching ESP is a complex and challenging task that requires professional training and special understanding. ESP courses are not pure language courses. A thorough knowledge of the specific field they serve is a must for the instructor.

Item twelve – the second item of Section Two in the questionnaire – elicited participants' responses about the preferred instructor's specialization for teaching ESP natural science courses. The following figure summarises the results in a nutshell:

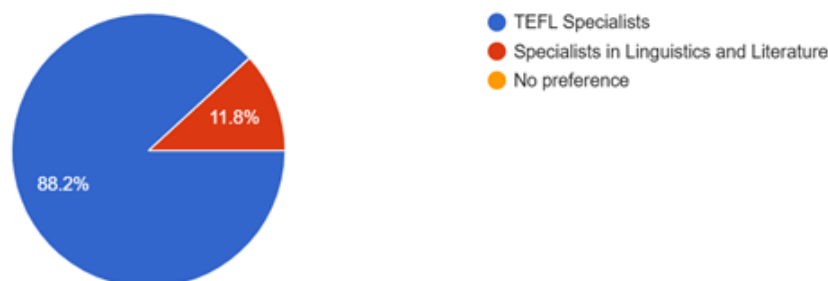


Fig. 12: Preferred Instructor for Teaching ESP in Natural Sciences

As Figure (12) illustrates, (88.2%) of the participants selected TEFL specialists as preferred instructors to teach ESP courses in natural sciences. The minority – (11.8%) of the participants – voted for specialists in linguistics and literature.

This result accords with what Drozdová (2019) concluded. In her study, ESP professionals in medical contexts were asked who should teach ESP: trained TEFL language teachers or linguistics and literature specialists. The vast majority preferred TEFL language teachers. They argued linguistics and literature specialists often use jargon without pedagogical clarity, while TEFL specialists can explain terminology and linguistic skills, even if they are not healthcare professionals themselves. The segments of language to be taught need a TEFL instructor not a specialist in linguistics and literature.

In respect of item thirteen, it required participants to select the preferred instructor for teaching such general language skills as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and translation. Figure (13) sums up the findings:

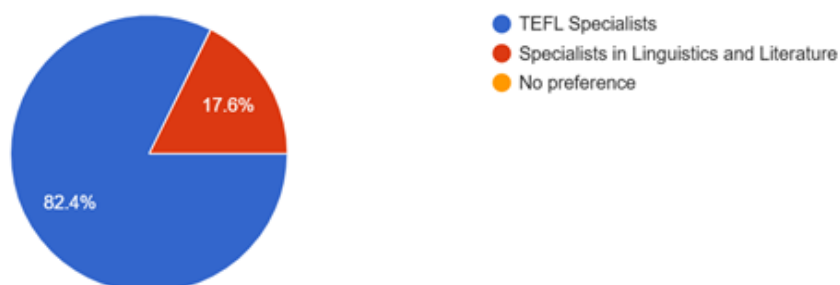


Fig. 13: Preferred Instructor for Teaching General Language Skills

Figure (13) indicates that (82.4%) of participants recommended TEFL specialists to teach general language skills, whereas only (17.6%) of participants believed that specialists in linguistics and literature were more suitable for the job. This result

differs from most related studies. Gao et al. (2021), for instance, believed that teaching language general skills should not be confined to specialized language teacher. However, they highlighted the importance of instructors' adequate preparation before teaching such skills.

The last item in the questionnaire – item fourteen that stands alone as a separate section – aimed to elicit open-ended comments on the controversial issue of teaching ESP and language skill courses. Respondents provided unique justifications of their beliefs among which was TEFL staff members are experienced in designing curricula due to their professional preparation. That is why they are more aware of the nature of language skills, their sub-skills, how they are taught and how they are tested.

Other significant comments highlighted the fact that TEFL is integrated into and intertwined with applied linguistics. The four language skills are the core of TEFL specialization at the faculties of education. Although this fact is settled worldwide, there are always nonacademic debates and intentional obliteration of it in the Egyptian context. Faculties of Arts and Alsun staff in Egypt always claim that language teaching is exclusively confined to them as they are the only “specialists” in English language!

Many comments advocated the importance of assigning teaching ESP and English language skill courses to TEFL specialists as a teaching axiom. These comments drew attention to the fact that this issue should be bereft of personal interests and nonacademic conflicts.

5. Conclusion

TEFL specialists, by virtue of their professional preparation, pedagogical expertise, and applied orientation, are more qualified to teach English for Specific Purposes and general language skills than their counterparts in linguistics and literature. While arts-based specialists possess commendable theoretical knowledge of language and literature, their expertise does not adequately address the practical, skill-based, and learner-centered demands of ESP and language skills instruction. This study underscores the necessity of aligning teaching practice with professional training rather than institutional politics or personal preferences, a principle that resonates with international scholarship on applied linguistics and foreign language education. To safeguard the quality of English language teaching and ensure learner achievement, educational policymakers—particularly in the Egyptian context—must recognize TEFL as the rightful specialization for these courses. Ultimately, privileging TEFL specialists in such dedications represents not only an academic imperative but also an ethical obligation to uphold the integrity and effectiveness of language education.

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