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## ESP TEAM TEACHING BETWEEN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC TEACHERS

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### ABSTRACT

*Team teaching is an innovative approach where English language teachers and specialist teachers collaborate to design, deliver, and evaluate lessons. This study explores the experiences and perceptions of English language teachers, discipline-specific teachers, and students about ESP team teaching during the preparatory year at IAU, Saudi Arabia. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. The findings demonstrated the efficiency of team teaching in enhancing students' language proficiency, academic performance, engagement, motivation, and teachers' professional development. While many students and teachers favored team teaching and renouncing the traditional approach to teaching ESP. Nevertheless, teachers stressed the importance of teamwork to overcome challenges, including maintaining communication, coping with diverse teaching styles, and managing workload. Eventually, the study suggested some pedagogical implications to meet the needs of the students and prepare them for their prospective specialisms.*

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KEYWORDS: ESP, Team Teaching, Lecturers, Students, Perceptions.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Before the 2022-2023 academic year in Saudi Arabia, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was taught by English language teachers (ELTs) in the Deanship of the Preparatory Year at Imam Abdulrahman University. In response to complaints from discipline-specific teachers (DSTs) about students' poor language proficiency, the Deanship implemented a team-teaching approach. In this approach, ELTs and DSTs collaborate to teach ESP, aiming to improve students' language skills and their academic performance.

Both General English and ESP are mandatory courses for all students in the Preparatory Year. In this study, students received two hours per week from ELTs and two hours per week from DSTs. This allows students to connect language skills with specific professional knowledge. ELTs and DSTs scheduled meetings at least once a fortnight to plan lessons, exchange ideas, discuss progress, and survey students' engagement and understanding of the materials. Teachers can co-deliver instruction in the same classroom.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the 1960s, ESP has been a program of instruction in English Language Teaching that caters to students' needs (Richards and Schmidt, 2010). Implementing the ESP course for first-year students would support them in their respective disciplines. By this, Herridge et al. (1980) asserted, "specific language teaching can help students master their chosen subjects, vocational, academic or preparatory, where a general language course may fail" (p. 49).

As a remedy to students' problems, numerous researchers highlighted the relevance of teaching ESP to allow students to overcome their hurdles (Ahmad, 2012; Ghezali, 2021; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). When students were oriented to specialize in their fields of study, many moans and groans about their low language standards vehemently arose from the DSTs. As ESP alone was not enough, the Deanship of the Preparatory Year decided to introduce the team-teaching approach to allow students to overcome their problems in language proficiency and academic performance.

Team teaching, also known as co-teaching, is a collaborative approach where DSTs and ELTs work together to design and deliver interdisciplinary courses to meet students' needs in various streams. According to Crawford & Jenkins (2017), team teaching is also referred to in research literature as "cooperative teaching", "collaborative teaching",

and "co-teaching" (p. 53). This approach is a departure from the conventional approach, where language teachers are solely responsible for teaching ESP. Indeed, Team teaching is an innovative pedagogical approach that has several potential benefits for both teachers and students.

Teachers can share their expertise and enhance their collaboration and professional development. Students benefit from a dynamic learning environment, assistance, and lifelong learning opportunities. Students may struggle with academic subjects until their English proficiency improves. Certainly, poor English results in severe academic problems. Students cannot do well in their specializations unless they achieve an appropriate English level.

Team teaching has been on the scene for several decades. Herridge et al. (1980) traced its origins to "the Language across the Curriculum Project of the Department of English Education at the University of London and has been supported by the recommendations of the Bullock Report "A Language for Life" (p. 48).

According to Buckley (2000), "Team teaching involves a group of instructors working purposefully, regularly, and cooperatively to help a group of students learn" (p. 4). Drawing on several references, Crawford & Jenkins (2017) detailed that team teaching is "a collaborative teaching approach in which two or more teachers share the planning, curriculum, and content development, delivery or presentation of teaching and learning materials and assessment." (p. 53). So, in team teaching, DSTs and ELTs plan and deliver lessons jointly to enable students to learn language and subject skills.

Accordingly, Sandholtz (2000) unveiled three paradigms of team teaching: 1) two or more teachers sharing minor responsibilities; 2) cooperative planning, but separate instruction, and 3) joint planning, instruction, and evaluation. More elaborately, Cook & Friend (1995) enumerated six models as follows: 1) One Teach-One Assist; 2) One Teach-One Observe; 3) Station Teaching; 4) Parallel Teaching; 5) Alternative Teaching, and 6) Team Teaching. Accordingly, team teaching is not a unique approach followed by all academics.

Likewise, Murawski (2010) described co-teaching as "two or more educators who co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess a group of students with diverse needs in the same general education room" (p. 11). Swiegart & Landrum (2015) reported that most studies on team teaching underscored some rudiments of co-teachers' shared responsibility: student assessment, planning, instruction, and managing student

behavior. Holding another view, Strohschen & Heaney (2000) explained that teachers do not have to be in the same classroom for team teaching. Overall, several models have been cited to yield positive results. Consequently, it is our vision that ELTs and DSTs should work hand in hand for the sake of allowing students to make a smooth transition to subject-language integration skills.

Team teaching has several benefits for students. A team-teaching approach to ESP enhanced students' proficiency in English. It offers them a dynamic and supportive learning environment as well as personalized attention and feedback from two teachers. Specifically, Lee *et al.* (2020) uncovered that it improves their academic performance and makes them feel quite supported and motivated. Also, Little & Hoel (2011) demonstrated that this approach heightens student attitudes and satisfaction. In the same vein, Gladman (2015) stressed that it enhances student collaboration, understanding, and good relationships.

The advantages of team teaching seem to be immeasurable. Importantly, Kursch & Veteška (2021) explored nineteen co-teaching studies and unveiled several advantages, such as easy transmission of information, heightening problem-solving, strengthening teacher cooperation, enhancing teaching efficiency, warranting a relaxed classroom atmosphere, triggering student motivation, and varying teaching methods.

Equally important, Ricci & Fingon (2018) found that co-teaching allows students to have more opportunities to observe, reflect, and build relationships of trust and respect with their teachers. In another study, Latorre-Navarro (2022) explored a co-teaching model where one teacher plays the role of an instructor, and another one helps hesitant students with their work and concluded that this approach enhanced classroom engagement, academic achievement, and motivation among students.

Brown *et al.* (2023) reported that it can enhance student interaction and engagement. Other researchers reveal that it can trigger students' active learning, interest, and achievement (Lasagabaster, 2018; Maija *et al.*, 2023; Wullschleger *et al.*, 2023). Still, some investigators found that team teaching led to considerable student experiences and satisfaction (Latorre-Navarro, 2022; Ricci & Fingon, 2018; Sanchez *et al.*, 2019). In sum, team teaching seems to improve student engagement, motivation, and ultimately academic performance.

Moreover, team teaching procures many returns for teachers. Some academics showed that

interdisciplinary team teaching may serve as a prospective model for teacher development via adjusting teaching styles, student needs, and curriculum requirements (Ho, 2022; Stewart & Perry, 2005).

Team teaching is also said to enhance teachers' experience and motivation (Gladman, 2015; Lasagabaster, 2018). Toeing the line, Mandel & Eiserman (2015) showed that it allows teachers to cease working in isolation and to benefit from other practitioners' experience, and hence promotes their professional growth, risk-taking, and emotional support.

Additionally, Aliakbari & Valizadeh (2023) revealed that team teaching played a great role in teacher professional development, self-regulation, and satisfaction. In support of this view, Stepić *et al.* (2022) unveiled that the benefits of team-teaching lie in potential professional development, efficient design, and student proficiency. Likewise, Guffey *et al.* (2021) showed that the benefits of team learning include increased achievement, prompt motivation, and greater retention of concepts. Team teaching is neither a vagary of fashion nor a quirk endeavor but an innovative process to be practiced if the conditions of any institution allow so.

Roberts *et al.* (2023) regarded team teaching as a revitalizing method that endowed teachers with more confidence and students with multiple role models. Further investigations disclosed that team teaching spawned effective teacher professional development and yielded positive classroom quality (Canaran & Hakki, 2020; Roberts *et al.*, 2023; Weisenfeld *et al.*, 2023).

Teachers' intrinsic collaboration seems to be a sine qua non for the success of practicing team teaching. Plank (2013) showed that most teachers confessed that collaboration in team teaching allowed them to generate discussions, explanations, reflections, and better faculty development. Decuyper *et al.* (2023) concluded that the success of team teaching depends on the practice of teachers' collaboration and shared responsibility.

Accordingly, Sukying *et al.* (2023) explored teachers' perceptions of ESP teaching and underscored the indispensability of effective collaboration among teachers. Overall, abundant research studies underline the importance of collaboration between teachers (Decuyper, 2023; Ghezali, 2021; Herridge *et al.*, 1980). It becomes evident from the research literature that ELTs should work in tandem with DSTs for their benefit of their students.

Despite the benefits of team teaching reported in

the studies mentioned above, some researchers do not fail to allude to some challenges that students and teachers alike in real classroom practices.

As far as students are concerned, some students expressed some concerns with adjusting to the different teaching styles and expectations of each teacher (Murawski, 2010; Sukying et al., 2023). As for teachers, one determining factor of success in team teaching resides in building a good relationship between partners. On this issue, Stewart & Perry (2005) reported that the failure of developing partnerships is due to incompatible personalities and the great amount of time required for planning, teaching, evaluating, and collaborating.

Likewise, Stepić et al. (2022) found that the limitations of team teaching reside in the efforts deployed to ensure effective planning and preparation of the courses and called for the creation of necessary conditions for achieving this goal. From the same perspective, Kursch & Veteška (2021) cited some hindrances such as joint preparation, coordination, and financial costs. In sum, these are the main challenges that students and teachers may encounter, yet team teaching remains a valuable alternative that should, in no way, be estranged from pedagogical practice.

### 2.1. Purpose of the Study

Instead of sticking to the solo traditional language teaching approach for teaching ESP that has been practiced for years, we believe that moving toward subject-language integration seems to be a promising undertaking that conforms to recent trends in teaching medical, scientific, and technical English.

Due to the scarcity of research studies on the experiences and perceptions of teachers and students about team teaching in diverse educational settings, this study aims to explore the views of ELTs and DSTs of the university colleges as well as their students about the feasibility of maintaining a continuity approach to ESP or shifting toward a team-teaching approach to education where ELTs and DSTs collaborate to dispense the course.

### 2.2. Research Questions

1. How do teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of team teaching in promoting learning outcomes in ESP courses?
2. What are the challenges of team teaching encountered by teachers and students in the preparatory year?

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1. Instruments

Four research instruments were used to diagnose the experiences and expectations of students and lecturers about using team teaching as follows: 1) lecturers' questionnaire; 2) students' questionnaire; 3) lecturers' interviews, and 4) students' interviews. A five-point Likert questionnaire was distributed to 70 ELTs and DSTs through Question Pro to gauge the efficiency of team teaching.

Another five-point Likert questionnaire was administered via Question Pro to 6104 students in the preparatory year for the eight tracks: Health, Science, Engineering, Business, Architecture, Design, Computer Sciences, and Humanities. An interview was also used to further explore 32 teachers and 40 students to investigate the perceptions and challenges of the participants in ESP team teaching. As for the sake of validity and consistency, the research instruments were reviewed by three professors in Applied Linguistics.

To gauge the internal consistency of the questionnaires, we made use of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The reliability and validity of the research instruments were established before embarking on the experiment. Some statistical procedures were applied to analyze the questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations.

#### 3.2. Participants

The participants in the questionnaire were 70 lecturers, including 43 females and 27 males. 97% of them had more than 5 years of English language teaching. All of them had experience in ESP teaching for at least 5 years. 24% of them have practiced team teaching before, but 76% of them avowed that they received no training in team teaching at all. The 70 lecturers who were teaching ESP during 2023 participated in filling in the questionnaire.

Also, 32 of them took part in the interview. Regarding students, a sample of 1141 from the whole population (N. 6104) answered the questionnaire, and 40 students participated in the interview.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1. Lecturers' Questionnaire

Question 1: To what extent do you agree with the following 22 statements about the relevance of team teaching to students?

The five-point Likert scale ratings were used to measure the perceptions of lecturers on 22 discrete items in quantifiable answer options.

**Table 1: Title Caption.**

Questions Team teaching	Mean	Degree	Sd	Rank	Note
1. deepens students' knowledge about the subject matter.	3.671	Agree	0.793	16	Above Average
2. helps students learn the English language effectively.	3.786	Agree	0.883	8	Above Average
3. promotes students' discipline terminology.	3.871	Agree	0.833	3	Above Average
4. enhances students' communicative skills.	3.800	Agree	0.894	7	Above Average
5. takes into consideration students' needs.	3.729	Agree	0.833	11	Above Average
6. promotes students' engagement and motivation.	3.714	Agree	0.903	13	Above Average
7. strengthens students' autonomy.	3.457	Agree	0.774	18	Below average
8. encourages student-teacher contact.	3.700	Agree	0.874	15	Above Average
9. triggers students' higher-order thinking skills.	3.843	Agree	0.828	6	Above Average
10. provides prompt feedback and expert opinions.	3.857	Agree	0.804	5	Above Average
11. develops students' critical thinking.	3.771	Agree	0.871	9	Above Average
12. promotes active collaborative learning.	3.857	Agree	0.804	4	Above Average
13. exposes students to different accents.	3.986	Agree	0.807	1	Above Average
14. builds up students' confidence.	3.743	Agree	0.774	10	Above Average
15. creates students' general satisfaction.	3.543	Agree	0.755	17	Below Average
16. requires extra work.	3.714	Agree	0.919	14	Above Average
17. imposes an additional content load on students.	3.329	Neutral	1.018	20	Below Average
18. assumes students to present research projects in ESP.	3.100	Neutral	0.801	21	Below Average
19. requires high student language proficiency.	3.429	Agree	0.809	19	Below Average
20. requires students' engagement and motivation.	3.957	Agree	0.647	2	Above Average
21. focuses assessments both on language features and content.	3.714	Agree	0.764	12	Above Average
22. leads to students' confusion when learning with two teachers.	3.100	Neutral	1.024	22	Below Average
Average	3.667	Agree			

Note: Likert Scale: (1.00-1.80) Strongly Disagree, (1.81-2.60) Disagree, (2.61-3.40) Neutral, (3.41-4.20) Agree, (4.21-5.00) Strongly Agree.

Table 1 reflects that the opinions of lecturers about the relevance of team teaching to students tend to agree on all the items, with an arithmetic average of 3.67 (ranging between 3.10-3.98). The items in this table are divided into three categories: (1) above average agreement for 16 items, accounting for 72%, (2) below average agreement for 3 items, accounting for 14%, and neutral rating for 3 items, accounting for 14%. Regarding the first category, the averages ranged between (3.67-3.98) indicating that the lecturers agree with the above average that team teaching has many benefits for students in helping them to learn the English language, deepen their subject knowledge, acquire discipline terminology, enhance communicative skills, consider students' needs, promote engagement, motivation, and autonomy. The table also reveals that team teaching encourages student-teacher contact, triggers students' higher-order thinking skills, provides prompt feedback, develops students' critical thinking, promotes active collaboration, exposes students to different accents, builds up their

confidence, and triggers their engagement and motivation. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that team teaching requires extra work. The second category of the table includes 3 items in which the opinions of lecturers reflected an agreement degree less than the average, ranging between 3.43-3.54. Among these, item 7, which stipulates that team teaching strengthens students' autonomy, got an arithmetic average of 3.457. Item 15, which specifies that it creates students' general satisfaction, received an arithmetic mean of 3.543. Finally, item 19, which mentions that it requires high student language proficiency, attained an arithmetic average of 3.429. The third category consists of three items in which the opinions of lecturers tended to be neutral, ranging between (3.10-3.23) on average. These come in order as follows: item 18, which indicates that team teaching assumes students present research projects in ESP, item 22, which signposts that it leads to students' confusion when learning with two teachers, and finally item 17, which expresses that it imposes an additional content load on students.

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Question 2: To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the relevance of team teaching to lecturers?

**Table 2: Title Caption.**

Question: Team teaching ...	Mean	Degree	Sd	Rank	Note
1. provides prompt feedback.	3.551	Agree	0.850	20	Below average
2. presents authentic teaching materials.	3.536	Agree	0.884	21	Below average
3. enhances experience-sharing.	3.812	Agree	0.809	7	Above Average
4. promotes active collaborative learning.	3.768	Agree	0.860	11	Above Average
5. heightens peer emotional support.	3.478	Agree	0.815	24	Below average
6. yields better evaluation.	3.507	Agree	0.868	22	Below average
7. exposes teachers to different teaching styles.	3.797	Agree	0.867	10	Above Average
8. provides opportunities to hear different varieties of English.	3.841	Agree	0.868	6	Above Average
9. builds a positive partnership.	3.812	Agree	0.912	8	Above Average
10. builds up teachers' confidence.	3.638	Agree	0.923	17	Above Average
11. improves teaching methodology due to teachers' interaction.	3.652	Agree	0.837	16	Above Average
12. provides opportunities for teachers to learn from each other.	3.768	Agree	0.910	14	Above Average
13. helps new teachers become more oriented.	3.797	Agree	0.833	9	Above Average
14. promotes teacher professional development.	3.667	Agree	0.852	15	Above Average
15. improves teaching and learning in the classroom.	3.768	Agree	0.860	12	Above Average
16. is difficult to implement.	3.014	Neutral	0.993	32	Below average
17. requires extra time.	3.449	Agree	1.037	25	Below average
18. requires more mutually agreeable meetings.	3.884	Agree	0.832	3	Above Average
19. increases the burden on teachers.	3.348	Neutral	0.968	27	Below average
20. envisages unmotivated students.	3.275	Neutral	0.745	29	Below average
21. involves extensive collaboration among all participants.	3.623	Agree	0.806	18	Above Average
22. needs to maintain good interpersonal relations.	3.855	Agree	0.733	5	Above Average
23. presumes participants to know their roles.	3.870	Agree	0.684	4	Above Average
24. needs intimate professional compromise.	3.580	Agree	0.775	19	Below average
25. requires administrative management and support.	3.768	Agree	0.894	13	Above Average
26. raises conflicts between teachers due to a lack of communication.	3.275	Neutral	1.187	30	Below average
27. needs awareness of the need to work together.	3.884	Agree	0.832	2	Above Average
28. requires teachers to be receptive to one another.	3.957	Agree	0.756	1	Above Average
29. exposes inexperienced teachers to meticulous critique.	3.406	Agree	0.828	26	Below average
30. affects teacher autonomy.	3.232	Neutral	0.843	31	Below average
31. requires special training for English language teachers.	3.290	Neutral	0.941	28	Below average
32. requires special training for discipline-specific teachers.	3.493	Agree	0.901	23	Below average
Average	3.612	Agree			

Note: Likert Scale: (1.00-1.80) Strongly Disagree, (1.81-2.60) Disagree, (2.61-3.40) Neutral, (3.41-4.20) Agree, (4.21-5.00) Strongly Agree.

Table 2 demonstrates that most lecturers generally agree on all 32 items with an arithmetic average of 3.61, ranging between 3.01-3.95. The items here can be divided into three categories: (1) above average agreement on 18 items, culminating at 56%, (2) below average agreement on 8 items, forming 25%, and neutral rating on 6 items attaining 19%. The first category reflects a high degree of lecturers' approval of the relevance of team teaching to teachers. The approach promotes active collaboration and positive partnership, reinforcing the need to work together. Nevertheless, it requires extra time to manage mutually agreeable meetings for planning and preparing teaching materials. The lecturers

acknowledge that they need to maintain good interpersonal relations, know their roles, and respond to one another. They also emphasize that team teaching promotes teacher professional development and builds up their confidence. Yet, it requires efficient administrative management and support. The second category of lecturers also manifested their agreement on eight items related to team teaching, with a degree ranging between 3.40-3.58. This tendency demonstrates that lecturers agree that team teaching provides prompt feedback, authentic teaching materials, peer emotional support, and better evaluation. Nevertheless, lecturers believe that this approach requires extra

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time, special training, and intimate professional compromise. Finally, the third category displayed six items on which the lecturers' opinions were neutral, ranging between 3.01-3.48 on average. Respondents firmly expressed their opinion that team teaching is difficult to implement. Lecturers also expressed reservations about the idea that it increases the burden on teachers, raises conflicts between them, requires special training, or envisages unmotivated students.

Concerning the question of whether the lecturers prefer to teach ESP courses alone or jointly, 39 prefer jointly, 27 prefer alone, and 4 provided no answer. This indicates that most lecturers favor joint instruction for the benefit of the students and teachers. As L27 advanced, "Teaching in collaboration is more effective for both teachers and students." Correspondingly, L64 alleged, "Joint instruction is good so that students learn different accents and gain deep knowledge." Similarly, L54 said, "I prefer joint classes to enhance experience-sharing and professional development". For those who prefer separate instruction, several arguments were offered. For illustration, L61 believed that "joint instruction leads to student confusion due to the different ways of teaching and to probable content repetition." Unambiguously, L07 stated, "I prefer to teach alone because every teacher has a different teaching style." L37 stated, "cooperation with teachers of other departments is not always feasible".

The questionnaire also requested lecturers to provide some suggestions for improving teaching ESP. In this context, four issues were raised: coordination, cooperation, time, and training. Most comments emphasized the need for communication and coordination in team teaching. L74 stated, "Better communication and coordination among English and Health Profession teachers should be accentuated." Another factor that is highly deplored by respondents is the lack of time that is mandatory for the success of team teaching. In this context, L83 conveyed that "time must be allocated to meetings between teachers. L25, for instance, proposed "reducing the teaching load of ESP teachers to allow them to prepare and plan well their ESP course." Lastly, some teachers expressed that prompt training represents a prerequisite to being aware of the foundations of this approach. As L54 succinctly put it, "We need professional training sessions to know more about the latest techniques of this field." Overall, these are the main issues leveled by the practitioners of team teaching.

Concerning the last question related to inviting lecturers to describe their experiences and

perceptions about team teaching, some thematic issues arise. Most respondents displayed positive reactions, but some of them mentioned some shortcomings in the application of this approach. L54 echoed the belief that "It was a new experience, and it was amazing." Similarly, L27 articulated, "It has been a good experience, and the students became more receptive to the information." The only impediment mentioned by some teachers was the lack of time, which did not allow them to be fully involved in this endeavor. Specifically, L40 declared, "It's a new experience; unfortunately, we couldn't organize a meeting due to the busy schedule." To solve the problem of time, L16 suggested, "First discuss the teaching timing with other faculty members and then make a timetable after their confirmation." In the same line, L12 confirmed, "Administrative management of the course was relatively poor." So, the solution to this issue seems to be in the hands of the university decision makers.

#### 4.2. *Lecturers' Semi-Structured Interview*

The interview strived to scrutinize the experiences and challenges of the 32 instructors who taught different tracks and who wanted to participate in this interview of their own volition. In the Health track, 11 teachers participated in the audio-recorded interview and strongly recommended the use of team teaching for its positive impacts on both students and lecturers. They agreed that it helped students' assimilation and teacher professional development. Yet, coordination represents a great challenge for them due to the high teaching load and parallel schedules.

In the other tracks, 21 teachers volunteered to take part in this interview. They largely appreciated this approach for its beneficial impacts on students and teachers. They avowed that team teaching assisted students in enhancing their language skills and terminology. They also alleged that it assisted them in promoting active learning, critical thinking, and communication skills. It also introduced teachers to interdisciplinary teaching and developed their professional development. Nevertheless, all lecturers underscored the necessity for more collaborative work. The challenges to this endeavor lie in the lack of time due to the high teaching load. Five lecturers reported their readiness to teach simultaneously in the same classroom, yet 13 lecturers showed reluctance to joint teaching, fearing conflicts in front of the students due to teachers' various degrees and experiences, different teaching styles, constant communication, and workload distribution.

#### 4.3. *Classroom Observation*

The lecturers' practices in team teaching were measured according to the following scales: Poor, 2: Fair, 3: Good, 4: Very good, 5: Excellent

Table 3: Title Caption.		Scale of frequency
N	Item: Team teaching helps in:	
1	Promoting student communication skills	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
2	Developing student content knowledge	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
3	Highlighting subject matter terminology	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
4	Providing specialized vocabulary handouts	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
5	Cultivating critical thinking skills	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
6	Involving an active-learning experience	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
7	Supplying appropriate academic feedback	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
8	boosting student general satisfaction	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
9	Showing evidence of co-planning and collaboration	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
10	Performing clear roles and responsibilities	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
11	Establishing soft links between language and content	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
12	Realizing an effective partnership	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
13	Developing professional development	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□
14	Teaching jointly in the same classroom	1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ 5□

#### 4.4. Further Comments

The four researchers of this study conducted classroom observations based on a checklist including 14 items to track the practices of 23 instructors. From the Health track, 15 teachers, including 8 ELTS and 7 health specialists, were observed. The findings revealed that 7 health specialists favored team teaching. They rated all the items as excellent except for joint teaching in the same classroom, where 5 out of 7 strongly embraced the idea, but 2 of them were not in favor of this practice. All agreed that team teaching allowed them to perform clear roles and responsibilities in teaching and to develop their collaboration, effective partnership, and professional development. In addition, teachers provided students with specialized vocabulary handouts and appropriate academic feedback to establish soft links between language and content. All of them strongly believed that team teaching assists students in promoting active learning, content knowledge, subject matter terminology, critical thinking, communication skills, and subsequent general satisfaction. Additionally, the 8 language teachers in Health also concluded that team teaching is very beneficial for students at many levels.

Regarding the other tracks: Architecture, Business, Computer, Engineering and Science, 8

lecturers were observed. The findings range between very good and excellent for all the items concerning the benefits of team teaching for students and teachers. However, 7 out of 8 teachers were not in favor of teaching together in the same classroom. Overall, the findings revealed that team teaching has several benefits for teachers and students alike. There seems to be an overall satisfaction with team teaching as students are likely to appreciate a variety of teaching styles and diversified content. Still, some students may favor the traditional continuity approach to escape the extra work imposed upon them by two teachers. Some teachers raised several challenges, such as managing different teaching styles, maintaining consistent communication, and workload distribution. Other teachers, however, expressed deep concerns about potential conflicts between team members due to a lack of trust and miscommunication. Despite these challenges, the great majority of teachers and students alleged that team teaching is an effective approach to improve student academic performance and teacher professional development.

#### 4.4. Students' Questionnaire

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statements about team teaching?

Commented [M3]: Provide title Caption.

**Table 4: Title Caption.**

Items: Team teaching ...	Mean	Degree	Sd	Rank	Note
1. develops my language standard.	3.58	Agree	0.947	4	Above Average
2. develops my communicative skills.	3.42	Agree	1.032	7	Above Average
3. broadens my knowledge about ESP.	3.77	Agree	0.970	3	Above Average
4. increases my stock of ESP terminology.	3.94	Agree	0.959	2	Above Average
5. strengthens my responsibility for learning.	3.39	Neutral	1.005	9	Above Average
6. helps provide prompt teacher feedback.	3.36	Neutral	1.056	12	Above Average
7. provides me with a variety of resources from two teachers.	3.18	Neutral	1.151	18	Below average
8. develops my critical thinking.	3.13	Neutral	1.124	20	Below average
9. considers my immediate and future career needs.	3.48	Agree	1.018	6	Above Average
10. yields better results in ESP exams.	3.34	Neutral	1.112	13	Below average
11. promotes my motivation.	3.23	Neutral	1.057	15	Below average
12. boosts my general satisfaction.	3.32	Neutral	1.015	14	Below average
13. increases the curriculum burden on me.	3.41	Agree	1.164	8	Above Average
14. requires high language proficiency to understand.	3.20	Neutral	1.109	16	Below average
15. needs adjustment for the teacher's different teaching styles.	3.52	Agree	0.950	5	Above Average
16. requires fulfilment of the requirements of each teacher.	3.37	Neutral	0.864	10	Above Average
17. exposes me to complex terminology.	3.14	Neutral	1.041	19	Below average
18. creates an overlap of teachers' roles.	3.19	Neutral	0.993	17	Below average
19. results in repetitive content.	3.37	Neutral	0.973	11	Above Average
20. needs more time.	3.97	Agree	1.102	1	Above Average
21. is not an efficient approach for me.	2.94	Neutral	1.071	21	Below average
Average	3.35	Neutral			

Note: Likert Scale: (1.00-1.80) Strongly Disagree, (1.81-2.60) Disagree, (2.61-3.40) Neutral, (3.41-4.20) Agree, (4.21-5.00) Strongly Agree.

**Commented [M4]:** Provide title Caption.

The five-point Likert scale was used to measure student perceptions across 22 discrete items, with results indicating generally neutral satisfaction (mean = 3.35). Regarding instructional preferences, 251 students (22%) favored English language teachers, 503 (44%) preferred specialist teachers, and 386 (34%) chose joint instruction. Each group provided distinct rationales: language-focused students emphasized foundational skills (e.g., S36: "We need language teachers because they always check our grammar, writing, and pronunciation"), while specialist-oriented students valued discipline-specific knowledge. Those preferring joint instruction highlighted complementary expertise, as one student noted, "Two teachers are ideal because each masters their area." According to the 44% of students who opted to study ESP with a specialist, their main argument was to gain a deep assimilation of their specialism and its related terminology. S22 pointed out, "I gained better knowledge in terminology." Toeing the line, S19 stressed, "A specialist teacher will facilitate access to information". Thus, these students believed that specialist teachers possess not only subject knowledge but also appropriate terminology. The students who opted for joint instruction presented sound arguments. In line with this, S03 contended, "The teacher from my specialized college has a broader knowledge of the terminology, and the English language teacher helps me more in language skills". Still, S47 wanted "to acquire experience from two persons rather than one". Conversely, S66 reported, "We prefer joint instruction to avoid boredom from one teacher". These are the main reasons advanced by these students.

#### 4.4. Students' Semi-Structured Interview

The interview aimed to explore the perceptions and challenges of 40 students who were following ESP team teaching courses. From the male Health track, 15 students, including 5 from each level: beginners, intermediate, and advanced, participated in the interview. 4 female students from the health track were also interviewed. As for the Health track, five beginners prefer to study with two teachers. They avow that it is an interesting experience that should be maintained for future students because it enhances language proficiency and academic performance. Yet, they underline that their main challenge is language, including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

Intermediate and advanced students prefer team teaching thanks to its potential benefits. They believe that this method not only promotes their language

but also broadens their knowledge about the content of the subject matter. Most of them prefer two teachers, but the others favor the specialist teacher. All advanced students state that they do not have any problems with the general English language at all, but they want to learn more about terminology from specialists.

Concerning other tracks, 5 students from each track were interviewed; that is, a total of 25 students participated, including beginners, intermediate, and advanced. For beginners, they believe that team teaching is a good method where they learn general and technical vocabulary. Most of them attribute their problem to language issues such as academic writing, speaking, and pronunciation. Most of them prefer to have two teachers, but two of them favor the specialist teacher. As for intermediate and advanced students, team teaching represents an exhilarating experience. All of them strongly opt for having two teachers because they help them to learn not only the intricacies of the English language but also to acquire knowledge and terminology of their specialization. Exceptionally, one student stressed the need to study with the English language teacher. Advanced students prefer team teaching because it procures valuable returns in terms of language, knowledge, and prompt response to students' needs. Yet, two of them prefer the English language teacher, and three of them opt for one teacher who is the specialist to avoid repetitions due to teachers' miscoordination. Advanced students prefer team teaching and consider it active learning. However, two of them want to be taught by the specialist because of his broad knowledge in this specialty. Advanced students unanimously describe team teaching as a positive experience, but they want to give more time to the specialist.

#### 5. DISCUSSION

Team teaching offers many advantages to preparatory-year students as well as ELTs and DSTs. The expected academic information transmitted to the students by these teachers enhanced the quality of the course and met the students' needs. What can be presented by two teachers working together generates more meaningful impacts on students' knowledge and aptitude. Team teaching generated a trusting relationship between teachers and students. An integration was established between all the stakeholders and resulting in students' language proficiency and academic performance.

First, the teaching of ESP has been largely welcomed by all the students and teachers as it introduces students to their respective specialisms

and prepares them to overcome academic hindrances. Teaching general English alone is not enough to enhance students' proficiency, as advanced by Herridge *et al.* (1980). The results of this study revealed that lecturers and students believed that team teaching had positive impacts on student language proficiency and academic performance. All researchers referred have pinpointed these merits and proposed team teaching as an alternative to traditional solo teaching (Maija *et al.* 2023; Stepić *et al.* 2022; Wullschleger *et al.* 2023). The findings of the study also confirmed that team teaching boosted student motivation and general satisfaction in corroboration with the results of many researchers (Latorre-Navarro, 2022; Ricci and Fingon, 2018; Sanchez *et al.*, 2019). The findings also indicated that this method heightened teacher professional development in symbiosis with the conclusions drawn by many researchers (Canaran and Hakki, 2020; Robertsa *et al.*, 2023; Weisenfeld *et al.*, 2023).

Team teaching enhanced collaboration among lecturers through intensive cooperation. These results substantiated the findings of many researchers (Decuyper *et al.* 2023; Lasagabaster, 2018; Sukying *et al.* 2023). The findings also showed that students felt quite supported and motivated as they had two lecturers who provided them with ample information and prompt feedback. These concorded with previous studies (Gladman, 2015; Lee *et al.*, 2020). As the results showed, the advantage of having two teachers allows students to reflect and develop their critical thinking, as demonstrated through the questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. These outcomes were in symbiosis with the findings of the studies mentioned above (Kursch and Veteška, 2021; Ricci and Fingon, 2018).

Students in this study developed positive attitudes towards team teaching as it triggered their motivation. Similar outcomes were echoed by many academics (Kursch and Veteška, 2021; Latorre-Navarro, 2022; Ricci and Fingon, 2018; Sanchez *et al.*, 2019). Significantly enough, our statistical measures demonstrated student satisfaction very well, as revealed by many researchers such as Little and Hoel (2011). Moreover, students testified that they benefited a lot from this approach due to the availability of two teachers who offered ample explanation, stimulated communication, invigorated problem-solving, and provided consequent swift feedback on all their questions in a relaxed classroom atmosphere. These results corresponded to researchers in previous studies such as Kursch and Veteška (2021), Ricci and Fingon (2018).

As far as lecturers are concerned, they held very positive attitudes towards team teaching due to its positive impacts on students. Additionally, the great majority of lecturers pinpointed that this approach contributed largely to teacher professional development with an above average of 3.67 as seen in Table 2. It provided opportunities for teachers to learn from each other and adjust their teaching styles (3.76). The approach is also said to promote active collaborative learning (3.76) and to enhance experience-sharing (3.81). Nevertheless, the lecturers insisted on the awareness to work together (3.88) and to be receptive to one another (3.95). The findings of this study are compatible with the conclusions drawn by numerous scholars (Gladman, 2015; Plank, 2013; Stepić *et al.*, 2022; Stewart and Perry, 2005). The results of this study also evoked the importance of building relationships of trust and respect to strengthen teacher cooperation and partnership between language teachers and content specialists. These findings conformed with those achieved by Kursch and Veteška (2021), Ricci and Fingon (2018), and Sukying *et al.* (2023).

One of the impediments hampering the seamless realization of team teaching is the workload put on the lecturers. Some participants declared that team teaching increased the burden on teachers as it required extra time for organizing more mutually agreeable meetings (Sanchez *et al.*, 2019). Other teachers also expressed positive attitudes but called for the necessity of special training. This tendency was also voiced by some researchers (Stepić *et al.* 2022).

Overall, the success of team teaching is influenced by several factors such as the quality of communication and collaboration among team members, the level of support from administrators, and the alignment of team teaching with the department's vision. In this perspective, all lecturers emphasized the importance of planning and preparation, including defining roles and responsibilities, setting clear expectations, and establishing a common understanding of the curriculum and assessment. These findings corroborated those concluded by numerous studies that emphasized joint preparation, coordination, and financial costs (Kursch and Veteška, 2021; Stepić *et al.*, 2022; Sukying *et al.*, 2023). Team teaching presented several challenges for teachers that affected its effectiveness. As for lecturers, these included managing different teaching styles and approaches, maintaining consistent coordination, and workload distribution. These are regarded as prerequisites that are not only laborious but also

time-consuming. Similarly, several factors have been identified as critical to the success of team teaching. These include the quality of communication and collaboration among team members, the level of support from administrators, and the alignment of team teaching with the Deanship vision and goals.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Team teaching enhances student learning outcomes and teacher professional development, although it requires careful coordination to address workload challenges. Team teaching was characterized as a rewarding endeavor that lets them expand their horizons and deepen learners' understanding. Most students anticipated DSTs to be quite knowledgeable on the subject. They also thought that, in comparison to other language lectures, they were better at teaching scientific and medical language. Even more, most students across all disciplines declared that they learned a lot from the course and emphasized how important it was to attend every lecture because it would help them in their future coursework. However, the majority of them stated that additional teaching hours were needed to study ESP, as four hours a week is estimated to be insufficient, especially for beginners.

In general, most students suggested that team teaching be implemented in the ESP course. However, in contrast to novice and intermediate students, advanced students requested that this course be assigned to specialized instructors in their scientific colleges during the first semester of the preparatory year. They contended that because this course is strictly scientific, it should only be taught by experts who are well-versed in both the technical terms and the intricacies of their fields. It might be stated that the English department's ESP program, which begins in the second semester, is merely seen as a trial run intended to improve students' general and scientific English proficiency and open doors to their future specializations. Additionally, deducting two teaching hours from the allocated time for the ESP specialist from four teaching hours previously taught by ELTs in the second semester affected the study plan approved by the department, which is destined to enhance all the bits and pieces of the English language, and not just terminology.

Team teaching enabled ELTs and DSTs to learn from one another, deepening their subject-matter knowledge and interdisciplinary skills. Collaboration enriched the experience of teachers, heightened their effectiveness, and promoted their professional development. Team teaching helped teachers to complement one another, minimize

isolation, and develop partnerships. Yet, teachers in this study reported that it was difficult to arrange enough meetings for cooperating and discussing because they did not have enough time to do so. Their high workload and timetabling did not fully permit them to assume such a strenuous undertaking. The findings showed that team teaching improved the quality of instruction as ELTs and DSTs approached the same topic from different angles, one focusing on the aspects of language and the other on the horizons of students' specialisms. Hence, students gained proficiency from the expertise of two teachers, minimizing, in this way, the potentiality of receiving erroneous information. Co-teachers worked to satisfy the needs of the students and attenuate their hurdles related to language and special content areas. Also, the results showed that team teaching improved student engagement, motivation, and academic performance. Team teaching was a great contributor to dispensing high-quality instruction. Teachers collaborated to pool resources, spark discussion, and broaden students' minds. They boosted active class participation, debate, and critical thinking. Most students acknowledged that team teaching provided them with a rich, diversified, and enlivening learning experience dispensed by two teachers rather than one. Consequently, students benefited from different personalities, teaching styles, and experiences.

The increasing popularity of team teaching is usually linked to its success in promoting academic standards, but there are various challenges. Indeed, this approach presents some impediments such as managing different teaching styles, extra burden, more time and effort, and workload distribution. To overcome these challenges, smooth communication and collaboration among team members can enhance effective decision-making and efficient learning experiences. More importantly, careful planning, communication, and coordination, as well as support from administrators, are essential to ensuring the success of this innovative approach. The findings disclosed that this approach had positive effects. Having two lecturers to teach ESP to the same group can be considered a great luxury for students. Yet, this noble undertaking was not without a cost; it required colossal expenses in terms of human and capital resources.

### 6.1. *Recommendations for Future Research*

Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of team teaching in different educational contexts and to develop the best practices and guidelines for its implementation.

Other research studies should embark on comparing the effects of different paradigms in real classroom situations to adopt the most appropriate ones that suit teachers' and students' styles. Upcoming research should focus on one specialism and specific groups assigned to either beginner, intermediate, or advanced levels. Future research could also try true cooperative teaching in which DSTs and ELTs collaborate to plan and organize courses, as well as come and teach the ESP material in the same classroom.

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