



## INVESTIGATING INDONESIAN LEARNERS' USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE (L1) IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES CLASSROOMS: A SURVEY-BASED STUDY

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### Abstract

This study investigates learners' use of the mother tongue in English for Specific Purposes classrooms and examines students' perceptions of lecturers' use of the mother tongue as part of instructional practice. Drawing on a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 66 students enrolled in ESP courses at a public university in Indonesia. The participants, drawn from several intact classes, completed an online questionnaire adapted from an established instrument and contextualized to the Indonesian setting. The questionnaire explored the frequency and functions of students' mother tongue use as well as their evaluations of teachers' use of the mother tongue in explaining vocabulary, grammar, instructions, and discipline related content. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. The findings indicate that learners do not rely on their first language indiscriminately but use it selectively to support comprehension, peer collaboration, and expressive clarity in cognitively demanding situations. In addition, students perceive lecturers' use of the mother tongue as pedagogically appropriate when it serves specific instructional purposes, particularly in clarifying technical terminology and complex professional concepts. English remains recognized as the primary medium of instruction, while the mother tongue functions as a supportive resource. These findings provide empirical support for a balanced and context sensitive approach to mother tongue use in ESP instruction and contribute to ongoing discussions on multilingual practices in higher education. The study is limited by the use of convenience sampling, the relatively small sample size, and reliance on self-reported questionnaire data, which may affect the generalizability of the results.

**Keywords:** English for Specific Purposes, Learner Perceptions, Mother Tongue, Multilingual Practices, Tertiary Education, Survey Research

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## INTRODUCTION

## مقدمة

The role of the mother tongue in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms continues to be a central concern in language education research. Historically, exclusive use of the target language has been promoted on the assumption that maximal exposure to English accelerates language learning and enhances communicative competence. Yet, this perspective has been increasingly critiqued as overly restrictive, with scholars highlighting the pedagogical value of strategic first language use for supporting comprehension and reducing cognitive load in content-oriented classes (Shin et al., 2020). In contexts where learners engage with specialized terminology and professional discourse, the mother tongue can function as a cognitive bridge

that connects existing knowledge with new disciplinary concepts.

Despite growing recognition of its potential utility, empirical research that centers on learners' own use of their native language in ESP settings remains limited. Much of the existing literature has focused on teacher perspectives or classroom policies, documenting how instructors navigate between the target language and the first language during instruction (Narymbetova, 2025; Sihombing, 2025; Sundari & Febriyanti, 2021). While these studies provide important insights into instructional choices, they do not fully capture how students themselves manage and interpret first language use during learning activities. Unlike prior studies that primarily examine teacher code-switching practices, the present study foregrounds learners' agentic use of the mother tongue as a strategic resource in discipline-specific ESP contexts. A gap thus persists in understanding learners' reported behaviors and their perceptions of how first language use impacts engagement and understanding in ESP classrooms.

Evidence from second language education suggests that students often rely on the native language for pragmatic and cognitive support. Learners' report using the first language to organize notes, translate teacher explanations, and negotiate meaning with peers during collaborative tasks. This pattern of usage indicates that the native language is not simply a fallback when learners encounter linguistic difficulty but can actively facilitate comprehension and task completion (Odlin, 2022; Wodniecka et al., 2020). Such findings align with broader literature showing that learners benefit from first language support when dealing with complex content that extends beyond basic vocabulary and everyday communication (Kafabih et al., 2025).

Another dimension of first language use concerns learners' perceptions of how instructors employ the native language in instructional contexts. Teachers frequently use the first language to explain new vocabulary, clarify complex content, and provide procedural instructions, and these practices can influence learners' motivation and confidence (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). Perceptions of instructional language use are crucial because they shape learner engagement and can either support or undermine learners' willingness to participate in target language tasks. Yet, systematic evidence capturing how learners interpret their instructors' language choices in ESP settings is sparse.

Contextual factors such as learners' English proficiency, prior exposure to English for academic purposes, and the cognitive demands of specific tasks further complicate the picture. Research in foreign language classrooms shows that first language use varies by task type, learner proficiency, and classroom norms, suggesting that its function is not uniform across instructional contexts (DiCamilla & Antón, 2012; Li, 2023; Moore, 2013). Understanding these dynamics requires empirical investigation that foregrounds learners' voices and their own reported practices.

The aim of this study is to investigate learners' use of the mother tongue in ESP classrooms from the learners' perspective. By examining both the patterns and functional purposes of first language use and learners' perceptions of the instructional roles of the mother tongue, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive description of how L1 is integrated into ESP learning processes. The focus on learner experiences will generate evidence that can inform more nuanced pedagogical strategies, balancing target language exposure with appropriate first language support.

To address this aim, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What patterns and functional purposes characterize learners' use of the mother tongue

in English for Specific Purposes classrooms?

2. How do learners perceive the instructional roles of the mother tongue in English for Specific Purposes classrooms?

By centering learners' experiences, this study contributes empirical evidence on first language integration in ESP contexts, offering practical insights for instructors and curriculum designers into how the native language can be used to support comprehension, collaboration, and engagement with professional content while maintaining meaningful exposure to English.

## METHOD

## منهج

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to examine learners' use of the mother tongue in English for Specific Purposes classrooms. This design was selected because the research aimed to document existing patterns of language use and learner perceptions as they naturally occur in instructional settings, rather than to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships. Descriptive survey designs are widely used in applied linguistics and ESP research when the objective is to map tendencies, frequencies, and attitudes within a defined population (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Data were collected during one academic semester from undergraduate students enrolled in an English course at a public university in Yogyakarta. The course was offered to several intact classes following a shared syllabus and comparable instructional objectives. From this population, 66 students completed the questionnaire and constituted the final dataset. The study employed convenience sampling, as participants were drawn from classes that were accessible to the researcher and willing to participate. Such sampling is common in classroom-based survey research, particularly when the goal is to explore pedagogical phenomena within a specific instructional context rather than to generalize to broader populations (Mackey & Gass, 2022).

The research instrument was adapted from the questionnaire developed by (Glušac et al., 2023), which investigates the use and instructional functions of the mother tongue in ESP learning contexts. The adaptation process focused on contextual alignment, with references adjusted to reflect Indonesian ESP classrooms while retaining the original item structure and conceptual scope. No items were removed or substantially altered, ensuring consistency with the theoretical assumptions underlying the original instrument and supporting comparability with previous findings in ESP research. Given the descriptive aim of the study and the absence of structural modifications, the adapted questionnaire was used without a separate pilot test, and its internal consistency was considered acceptable based on the reliability evidence reported in the original study.

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section included five items collecting demographic and background information, such as faculty affiliation, year of study, age, length of English learning experience, and self-assessed English proficiency. Self-assessment was categorized into poor, average, and excellent, a practice commonly employed in ESP and EFL survey studies to capture learners' perceived competence when standardized proficiency measures are not available. These items were used solely to describe the participant profile and were reported at the beginning of the Results section.

The second section comprised items examining learners' use of the mother tongue and their perceptions of its instructional role in ESP classes. Items addressed the frequency of mother tongue use for note taking, comprehension support, peer interaction, expression of ideas, and

translation of professional texts, as well as learners' perceptions of teachers' use of the mother tongue for explaining vocabulary, grammar, instructions, and discipline specific content. For analytical clarity, only items from this section were included in the main analysis, and items were reported sequentially to ensure transparency and alignment with the research questions.

Most items employed a four-point frequency scale consisting of always, sometimes, rarely, and never. This scale was chosen to encourage decisive responses and reduce central tendency bias, which is frequently observed in Likert type surveys with neutral midpoint options. One item required participants to select a single statement representing their overall view on the appropriateness of mother tongue use in ESP classes, ranging from complete rejection to unrestricted acceptance. This format was retained to capture clear attitudinal positioning rather than gradational agreement.

The questionnaire was administered online to facilitate participation across multiple classes. Prior to data collection, participants received information regarding the purpose of the study and provided informed consent. Participation was voluntary, responses were collected anonymously, and no identifying information was requested. These procedures align with ethical standards for educational research involving human participants and support the reliability of self-reported data by reducing social desirability effects (British Educational Research Association, 2018).

## RESULT | نتائج

This section presents the findings of the study, beginning with participants' demographic and background characteristics, followed by the analysis of learners' use of the mother tongue in English for Specific Purposes classrooms. A total of 66 students participated, drawn from multiple ESP classes at a public university in Indonesia.

With respect to age, the majority of participants were between 18 and 19 years old, representing 56 students or 84.8% of the sample. Five participants were younger than 18, accounting for 7.6%, and another five were older than 19, also 7.6%. This indicates a cohort predominantly within the typical undergraduate age range.

Participants' self-assessment of English proficiency showed that 36 students, or 54.5%, considered their proficiency average. 28 students, or 42.4%, rated their English as poor, and only 2 students, 3%, reported excellent proficiency. This suggests that most learners perceived themselves as having limited to moderate English ability, which is relevant when examining the role of the mother tongue in ESP learning activities.

Regarding prior English learning experience, responses indicated considerable variation in the length of study. Although the data were heterogeneous, this range demonstrates that learners approached ESP courses with different levels of exposure and preparation, which may influence both their use of the mother tongue and their perceptions of its instructional role.

To provide a clear structure for presenting the findings, the questionnaire items were classified according to the research questions, as shown in Table 1. Items 1 through 7 correspond to RQ 1, which investigates learners' own use of the mother tongue and their perceptions regarding its use in ESP classrooms. Items 8 through 13 correspond to RQ 2, which explores learners' evaluations of lecturers' use of the mother tongue as an instructional resource. This classification serves as a bridge between participants' background information and the detailed

analysis of responses organized by research question.

**Table 1.** A Questionnaire Items Classification

RQ	Item(s)
RQ 1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
RQ 2	8,9,10,11,12,13

This framework guides the subsequent presentation of results, ensuring that the discussion of learners' and instructors' language practices is aligned with the study's objectives.

**Table 2.** Learners' Use of the Mother Tongue in ESP Classrooms (RQ1)

Item	Statement	Mean	SD	Frequency/Percentage			
				1	2	3	4
1	How often do you use your mother tongue in your ESP classes?	2.64	.757	4/6.1%	23/34.8%	32/48.5%	7/10.6%
2	What do you think about using the mother tongue in ESP classes?	2.76	.745	1/1.5%	25/37.9%	29/43.9%	11/16.7%
3	I use my mother tongue for taking notes during class.	2.39	.820	9/13.6%	27/40.9%	25/37.9%	5/7.6%
4	I use my mother tongue to translate for myself what the teacher said.	3.08	.751	1/1.5%	13/19.7%	32/48.5%	20/30.3%
5	I use my mother tongue to communicate with my colleagues when we need to do a task together.	3.55	.706	2/3.0%	2/3.0%	20/30.3%	42/63.6%
6	I use my mother tongue when I think I will not be able to express myself adequately in English.	3.35	.595	0/0%	4/6.1%	35/53.0%	27/40.9%
7	I translate professional texts into L1 to be able to fully understand them.	3.09	.854	3/4.5%	12/18.2%	27/40.9%	24/36.4%

Based on Table 2, the findings indicate that the use of the mother tongue in ESP classrooms was a common and functional practice among the participants. Overall frequency patterns show that most students reported using their L1 at least sometimes, with only a small proportion indicating rare or no use. Item 1 demonstrates that nearly half of the respondents selected the sometimes option, suggesting that L1 use occurred in a situational and needs based manner rather than as a habitual classroom language. This aligns with the view that learners strategically alternate between languages to manage cognitive load in subject specific language learning contexts (Kontio & Sylvén, 2015; Maillat & Serra, 2009).

Students' perceptions toward the appropriateness of mother tongue use further support this pragmatic orientation. As shown in Item 2, most respondents considered L1 use acceptable from time to time or whenever it was needed, while very few endorsed a strict English only position. This finding diverges from earlier ESP research that reported more restrictive attitudes toward L1 use due to concerns about reduced exposure to the target language (Breeze & Roothoof, 2021; Levine, 2003). Instead, the present results suggest that learners conceptualize the mother tongue as a pedagogical resource rather than an obstacle, particularly in cognitively demanding ESP settings.

Analysis of functional uses of the mother tongue reveals clear patterns across learning activities. Item 5 recorded the highest mean score, indicating that students frequently relied on

their L1 when interacting with peers during collaborative tasks. This supports previous findings that peer interaction is one of the domains where L1 use is most prevalent and pedagogically justified, especially for negotiating meaning and task management (Linh, 2019; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2019). Similarly, Items 4, 6, and 7 show that students often used their mother tongue to translate teacher explanations, compensate for limited expressive ability in English, and fully comprehend professional texts. These results echo recent ESP studies emphasizing the role of L1 in supporting comprehension of specialized content and disciplinary discourse (Glušac et al., 2023).

In contrast, Item 3 indicates that using the mother tongue for note taking was comparatively less frequent. This suggests that students were more inclined to engage with written academic input directly in English, possibly reflecting an awareness of genre conventions and assessment expectations in ESP courses. Taken together, these findings extend previous research by demonstrating that L1 use in ESP classrooms is not limited to vocabulary clarification but encompasses a wider range of cognitive, interactional, and affective functions. Such evidence underscores the importance of reconceptualizing mother tongue use as a strategic and context sensitive practice rather than a deviation from effective ESP pedagogy.

**Table 3.** Students’ Perceptions of Teachers’ Use of the Mother Tongue in ESP Classrooms

Item	Statement	Mean	SD	Frequency/Percentage			
				1	2	3	4
8	The teacher uses the mother tongue when explaining the meaning of new general lexemes.	2.79	.851	3/4.5%	23/34.8%	25/37.9%	15/22.7%
9	The teacher provides translation of new technical words.	3.02	.712	2/3.0%	10/15.2%	39/59.1%	15/22.7%
10	The teacher uses Indonesian to explain the correct form of technical terms borrowed from English when no established equivalent exists in Indonesian, for example whether the correct form is <i>email</i> , <i>imel</i> , or <i>surel</i> .	2.91	.739	2/3.0%	15/22.7%	36/54.5%	13/19.7%
11	The teacher uses the mother tongue to explain grammar.	2.70	.744	3/4.5%	22/33.3%	33/50.0%	8/12.1%
12	The teacher uses the mother tongue when giving instructions for the tasks we need to do.	2.55	.845	5/7.6%	30/45.5%	21/31.8%	10/15.2%
13	The teacher uses the mother tongue to explain professional content (e.g. types of contracts, process of production, etc.).	2.58	.895	7/10.6%	25/37.9%	23/34.8%	11/16.7%

Table 3 reports the results for RQ 2, which examines learners’ perceptions of teachers’ use of the mother tongue in ESP classrooms. Overall, the descriptive statistics indicate that the use of Indonesian by lecturers was perceived as selective and pedagogically motivated rather than pervasive. Across all six items, responses were concentrated in the sometimes category, suggesting that L1 was employed situationally to address specific instructional needs.

Items 8 and 9 show that teachers’ use of the mother tongue was most salient at the lexical level. The explanation of new general lexemes and the translation of technical vocabulary yielded

relatively higher mean scores compared to other instructional functions. In particular, Item 9 recorded the highest mean, indicating that students frequently perceived L1 as helpful when dealing with specialized terminology. This finding is consistent with research in ESP contexts that highlights the facilitative role of the mother tongue in ensuring terminological accuracy and preventing conceptual misunderstanding in discipline specific learning (Glušac et al., 2023; Nhac & Nguyen, 2024; Taylor, 2014).

Item 10 provides further insight into a context sensitive function of L1 use, namely explaining the appropriate form of technical terms borrowed from English that lack established equivalents in Indonesian. The dominance of sometimes responses suggests that lecturers intervened linguistically when uncertainty arose regarding acceptable usage or orthographic conventions. This practice reflects an awareness of local academic and professional norms and supports arguments that L1 can serve as a mediating tool between global English terminology and local linguistic standards (Kuteeva, 2020; Mahili, 2014).

With regard to structural support, Items 11 and 12 indicate moderate use of the mother tongue for grammar explanations and task instructions. Although English remained the main instructional language, occasional recourse to Indonesian appeared to function as a scaffold to secure comprehension and procedural clarity. This pattern aligns with pedagogical perspectives that view limited L1 use as a means of reducing cognitive load and avoiding misinterpretation during complex explanations, particularly in content oriented language learning settings (Bruen & Kelly, 2017; Littlewood & Yu, 2011).

Finally, Item 13 shows that teachers used the mother tongue to explain professional content only occasionally, as reflected in the relatively lower mean score. This suggests a conscious effort to maintain English exposure for disciplinary content while reserving Indonesian for moments when conceptual difficulty or contextual specificity required additional clarification. Compared with earlier studies reporting more extensive teacher reliance on L1 (Almoayidi, 2018; Awan & Sipra, 2015), the present findings point to a more restrained and principled approach to language choice in ESP instruction. Overall, learners perceived teachers' use of the mother tongue as purposeful, supportive, and aligned with instructional demands rather than as an obstacle to English language development.

## DISCUSSION

## مناقشة

This study sought to clarify how learners use the mother tongue in ESP classrooms and how they evaluate lecturers' use of the mother tongue as part of instructional practice. Overall, the findings point to a consistent pattern in which the mother tongue functions as a facilitative resource rather than a competing medium. Learners' responses suggest that both student initiated and teacher mediated uses of the mother tongue are shaped by perceived instructional value, cognitive demands, and disciplinary specificity, rather than by habitual dependence or resistance to English.

Addressing the first research objective, learners' reported use of the mother tongue appears to be selective and situational. Students did not indicate pervasive reliance on their L1 across all classroom activities. Instead, they tended to activate the mother tongue in moments that required clarification, reassurance, or efficiency. This pattern suggests that learners maintain an underlying orientation toward English as the principal language of ESP instruction, while drawing on their L1 as a strategic support. Such behavior aligns with established views in second

language acquisition that see bilingual learners as active managers of their linguistic resources rather than passive recipients of instruction (Johnson, 2010; Valdés, 2005).

The frequent use of the mother tongue for peer interaction deserves particular attention. Learners reported turning to their L1 most often when collaborating with classmates on tasks. This finding can be interpreted through a sociocognitive lens, where collaborative dialogue serves as a space for hypothesis testing, meaning negotiation, and shared problem solving. Using the mother tongue in these contexts may allow learners to focus on task completion and conceptual understanding without the additional cognitive load imposed by exclusive English use (Alegría de la Colina & del Pilar García Mayo, 2009; Antón & DiCamilla, 1998; Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2010). Importantly, this does not necessarily diminish English development, especially when collaborative work ultimately feeds back into English mediated outputs.

Learners also reported using the mother tongue to compensate for perceived limitations in expressive ability. When students felt unable to articulate ideas adequately in English, the mother tongue functioned as a fallback resource. Rather than signaling failure, this behavior can be seen as an adaptive strategy to preserve communicative intent and participation. Research on learner agency emphasizes that such compensatory strategies often coexist with long term language development, particularly in academic contexts where precision of meaning is prioritized (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989).

The use of the mother tongue for understanding professional texts further underscores its cognitive role. ESP materials frequently involve dense terminology, abstract concepts, and discipline specific discourse conventions. Learners' tendency to translate or reprocess such texts in their L1 reflects an effort to ensure accurate comprehension rather than superficial decoding. This finding resonates with studies showing that controlled translation can deepen conceptual understanding and promote cross linguistic awareness when used judiciously (Liashuk, 2019; Witte et al., 2009).

Learners' overall attitudes toward mother tongue use reinforce these behavioral patterns. The predominance of conditional acceptance suggests that students neither reject nor fully endorse unrestricted L1 use. Instead, they appear to support a principled approach in which the legitimacy of the mother tongue depends on pedagogical intent. This stance mirrors contemporary critiques of rigid English only ideologies, which argue that such policies often ignore learners' linguistic realities and academic needs (Hall & Cook, 2012; Macaro, 2001).

Turning to the second research objective, learners' perceptions of lecturers' use of the mother tongue reveal a similarly nuanced position. Students tended to view teacher initiated L1 use as most appropriate in contexts requiring precision, such as explaining new lexical items or technical terminology. In ESP settings, where disciplinary accuracy is central, such uses may prevent misconceptions and reduce ambiguity. Previous ESP research has emphasized that lexical clarity is foundational to learners' ability to engage with professional discourse communities (Kargar, 2025; Ruitenbergh & Towle, 2015).

The explanation of borrowed technical terms represents a particularly salient function of the mother tongue. Learners' acceptance of L1 use in this area suggests sensitivity to the sociolinguistic realities of disciplinary language, especially in contexts where terminology has not been fully standardized. Clarifying form and usage through the mother tongue may help learners navigate parallel lexical systems and avoid fossilization of incorrect forms. This finding extends earlier work by showing that learners value the mother tongue not only for semantic clarity but also for normative guidance within specialized registers (Haddad, 2020; Prinsloo, 2007).

Learners' responses regarding grammatical explanations indicate a more cautious stance. While the mother tongue was not rejected outright for grammar instruction, it was not perceived as essential either. This suggests that learners may view grammar as more amenable to English mediated explanation, provided that instruction remains comprehensible. Such perceptions align with research indicating that the effectiveness of L1 use in grammar teaching depends heavily on instructional quality and learner proficiency, rather than on language choice alone (Levine, 2014).

The relatively moderate endorsement of mother tongue use for task instructions and professional content further illustrates learners' expectations of balance. Students appear to accept limited L1 use to ensure understanding, yet they do not demand extensive reliance on it. This finding distinguishes ESP contexts from some general EFL settings, where learners may expect greater teacher dependence on the L1. The difference highlights how disciplinary orientation shapes learners' language ideologies and tolerance for multilingual practices (Bunch & Martin, 2021; Canagarajah, 2017).

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support multilingual and sociocultural models of language learning that conceptualize the first language as a mediational resource. The selective use of the mother tongue by both learners and teachers can be understood as scaffolding that supports learners' movement toward greater autonomy in English mediated academic practices (Canh & Hang, 2019; Cummins et al., 2012). Rather than hindering development, such scaffolding may enable learners to engage more fully with complex content and disciplinary reasoning.

From a policy and curricular perspective, these findings have implications for language use guidelines in higher education ESP programs. Rather than enforcing uniform English only policies, institutions may benefit from adopting flexible pedagogical frameworks that recognize strategic mother tongue use as a legitimate instructional resource. This includes integrating guidance on principled L1 use into ESP curricula and providing professional development for lecturers on when and how the mother tongue can be employed to support comprehension without reducing meaningful exposure to English. Training that emphasizes pedagogical intent, task type, and disciplinary demands may help lecturers make informed language choices aligned with learning objectives rather than relying on implicit or ad hoc practices.

Pedagogically, the results suggest that rigid prohibitions against mother tongue use may be misaligned with learners' needs in ESP classrooms. Allowing principled and purposeful L1 use may enhance clarity, reduce anxiety, and support deeper engagement with subject matter. This does not imply diminishing the central role of English, but rather recognizing that multilingual resources can be leveraged to support learning outcomes more effectively. Teachers' professional judgment therefore becomes critical in deciding when and why the mother tongue may be employed.

In conclusion, this study confirms that learners perceive the mother tongue as a legitimate and valuable resource when used selectively in ESP instruction. Both research objectives are met in demonstrating that mother tongue use is guided by function, not habit, and that learners expect balance rather than exclusion. These findings contribute to ongoing debates on language policy in higher education by providing empirical support for flexible, context sensitive approaches to language use in ESP classrooms. They underscore the importance of moving beyond monolingual assumptions and recognizing multilingual competence as an asset in discipline specific language education.

## CONCLUSSION | خاتمة

This study examined learners' use of the mother tongue in ESP classrooms and their perceptions of lecturers' use of the mother tongue as part of instructional practice. The findings demonstrate that the mother tongue is not viewed as a competing medium but as a functional resource that supports comprehension, interaction, and disciplinary understanding when used selectively. By foregrounding learners' perspectives, the study advances current discussions in ESP pedagogy that call for moving beyond rigid English only positions toward more context sensitive approaches to language use.

The results contribute to the field by showing that both student initiated and teacher mediated use of the mother tongue is guided by pedagogical purpose rather than habitual dependence. Learners reported relying on their first language primarily in situations involving lexical precision, conceptual clarification, and collaborative problem solving, while still recognizing English as the main language of instruction. This balanced orientation supports theoretical models that view multilingual competence as an asset in academic learning and reinforces the relevance of sociocultural and multilingual perspectives in ESP research.

From a practical standpoint, the study suggests that principled use of the mother tongue can enhance instructional clarity without diminishing exposure to English. For ESP practitioners, particularly in content heavy disciplines, allowing limited and purposeful L1 use may facilitate deeper engagement with specialized terminology and complex professional concepts. Such an approach acknowledges learners' linguistic resources while maintaining the central role of English in ESP learning.

Future research could extend this work by combining survey data with classroom observations or interactional analyses to capture actual language practices in situ. Comparative studies across disciplines or longitudinal designs examining changes in learners' attitudes and language use over time would also provide valuable insights. Together, these directions would further refine understanding of how multilingual resources can be optimally integrated into ESP instruction.

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