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" Explorando la necesidad y el impacto de los cursos de inglés para fines específicos (ESP) para estudiantes de inglés de nivel B1+ "

" Exploring the Necessity and Impact of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Courses for B1+ Level English Learners "

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Abstract

This academic study investigates the need for and influence of English for Specific Purposes courses for university-level students with a B1+ English proficiency, considering the increased industry demand for language skills. The study recognizes that proficiency in technical English is one of the most important elements for professional growth, especially in fields that offer opportunities for academic and career advancement in which accurate communication is essential. The main objective of the study was to assess the opinions of both students and faculty regarding the importance of English for Specific Purposes and their current level of proficiency in technical English to justify the development of appropriate ad hoc curricula. For these purposes, a mixed-methodology approach was implemented, consisting of questionnaires for students and faculty, a diagnostic test of technical vocabulary, and a descriptive analysis of the collected data. The results revealed a high appreciation of ESP among the participants; 61.11% considered English proficiency essential in their professional training, although only 41.2% demonstrated adequate proficiency in technical English. This gap indicates a substantial discrepancy between the perception of competence and the actual skills achieved. In this case, the research demonstrates the need to design and integrate relevant educational approaches within the ESP framework of the university curriculum, geared toward increasing language skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking at advanced levels, in order to develop optimal employment opportunities alongside improved academic performance.

Keywords: Specialized Learning, Linguistic Competence, ESP Courses, Technical English, Level B1+.



Resumen

Este estudio académico investiga la necesidad e influencia de los cursos de inglés para fines específicos destinados a estudiantes a nivel universitario con un dominio del inglés B1+, considerando la mayor demanda de la industria por habilidades lingüísticas. El estudio reconoce que el dominio del inglés técnico es uno de los elementos más importantes para el crecimiento profesional, especialmente en campos que ofrecen oportunidades de avance académico y de carrera en los cuales la comunicación precisa es esencial. El objetivo principal del estudio fue evaluar las opiniones tanto de estudiantes como de profesores sobre la importancia del inglés para fines específicos y su nivel actual de competencia en inglés técnico para justificar el desarrollo de un currículo adecuado ad hoc. Para estos propósitos, se implementó una metodología mixta que consistió en cuestionarios para estudiantes y profesores, una prueba diagnóstica de vocabulario técnico y un análisis descriptivo de los datos recopilados. Los resultados revelaron una alta apreciación del ESP por parte de los participantes; el 61.11% consideró que el dominio del inglés es esencial en su formación profesional, aunque solo el 41.2% mostró un dominio adecuado del inglés técnico. Esta brecha indica una discrepancia sustancial entre la percepción de competencia y las habilidades reales alcanzadas. En este caso, la investigación demuestra la necesidad de diseñar e integrar enfoques educativos relevantes en la moldura del ESP en el currículo universitario, orientados hacia el aumento de las habilidades lingüísticas, la resolución de problemas y el pensamiento crítico, a niveles avanzados, con el fin de desarrollar oportunidades óptimas de empleo junto a una mejora en el rendimiento académico.

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje Especializado, Competencia Lingüística, Cursos ESP, Inglés Técnico, Nivel B1+.



Introduction

The Language Center of the Technical University of Ambato (UTA) has been a reference point in the central region of the country for 25 years, providing educational services to the university community. These programs include regular English courses at levels A1, A2, and B1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR); open programs for external students at levels A1, A2, B1, B1+, B2, and C1; as well as online, hybrid, and children's English courses. In this context, the implementation of an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) program is proposed to strengthen the professional skills of UTA students.

Higher education institutions, responsible for preparing efficient and competitive professionals, must anticipate the demands of an increasingly competitive and globalized labor market. In this sense, mastering English as a universal language is essential for professional performance. Recent educational reforms in Ecuador have highlighted the importance of improving English language instruction, underscoring its relevance as a second language in preparing professionals for 21st-century challenges (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

English has become an essential tool for university professionals, allowing them to access scientific and technological advancements published in this language, as well as to facilitate communication at international academic events, such as conferences and scientific forums (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020). In this context, the teaching of English for professional purposes in Ecuadorian universities is an urgent need. This is justified by the fact that in an increasingly interconnected world, English enables interaction and understanding between speakers of various languages (Kenny, Isik-Tas, & Jian, 2021).

The teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has gained importance in the last 20 years, since its origin in the 1960s. Today, it is widely recognized in various professional fields, such as engineering, tourism, business, medicine, and dentistry (Bekteshi & Xhaferi, 2020). Additionally, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have played a crucial role in the evolution of this teaching, integrating not only linguistic but also humanistic, economic, managerial, and ecological aspects, presenting new challenges for its implementation (Rachayon, 2020).

At UTA, the Language Center houses students from various disciplines belonging to its 10 faculties, which presents the challenge of designing a project that meets the specific professional needs of each one. This research project aims to implement the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Program to strengthen the professional competencies of UTA students. While there is widespread recognition of the effectiveness of teaching English as a second language, few studies have explored the specific impact of ESP courses across the different faculties at UTA. This makes this project an innovative proposal (Dudley-Evans, 1997).



The importance of implementing an ESP program lies in the growing demands of the labor market, where professionals capable of addressing the complex problems surrounding today's society are needed. One of the main objectives of this research is to provide UTA teachers with a teaching modality that motivates students to learn English for professional purposes, allowing them to navigate contemporary settings (Zaghar & Zaghar, 2021).

The impact of this project is focused on improving the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process of ESP, by providing students with the linguistic tools necessary to succeed in their areas of specialization. Despite the consensus on the importance of mastering English, insufficient progress has been observed in the development of strategies that facilitate the proper use of the language by UTA graduates. This fact is one of the main motivations for this study, whose primary goal is to propose a curricular strategy that allows UTA graduates to acquire the necessary linguistic competencies in their respective professional fields (Khoshhal, 2018).

The beneficiaries of this project will be UTA students, who will have a tool that will help them develop meaningful competencies for their professional integration. Additionally, the results of this research will be available in the institutional repository, allowing other teachers to use it as a reference in the future, giving this project social relevance (Marjanovikj-Apostolovski, 2019).

State of the art

After World War II, English became established as the international language in fields such as technology and commerce, driving the need to adapt its teaching to specific professional contexts. This approach marked the origin of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), whose guiding principle was articulated by Hutchinson and Waters: "Tell me why you need English, and I will tell you the English you need" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Since then, ESP has focused on analyzing the linguistic characteristics of students' specialized areas of work or study.

ESP shares similarities with general English teaching (ELT), but its main distinction lies in its thematic and student-centered approach (Kenny, Isik-Tas, & Jian, 2021). While ELT aims at a broader understanding of the language, ESP provides specific instruction tailored to students' professional needs (Bekteshi & Xhaferi, 2020). According to Bekteshi and Xhaferi, ESP offers non-native students a competitive advantage in higher education and employment by enabling them to communicate effectively in specific contexts (Bekteshi & Xhaferi, 2020).

Regarding roles in the teaching-learning process, Rachayon argues that ESP students often have more knowledge of the technical content than their teachers, requiring a more flexible and collaborative attitude from the instructor (Rachayon, 2020). In this regard, Dudley-Evans suggests that the role of the ESP teacher should be more that of a facilitator rather than a source of knowledge, reinforcing the interactive and collaborative nature of this approach (Dudley-Evans, 1997). Additionally, students' motivation in ESP tends to be driven by instrumental



interest, i.e., their desire to acquire the language for practical career benefits (Zaghar & Zaghar, 2021).

A crucial aspect of ESP courses is the creation of teaching materials tailored to the specific needs of students. Khoshhal emphasizes that these materials should be designed following a thorough analysis of those needs and should enable students to apply English in real professional discussions (Khoshhal, 2018). Marjanovikj-Apostolovski adds that the materials should be motivating and help students perceive how technical vocabulary can be used in real-world situations (Marjanovikj-Apostolovski, 2019).

Several studies have demonstrated the importance of ESP courses in the development of professional competencies. Gavrilova et al. found that undergraduate and master's students in fields such as economics and law in Russia consider ESP courses essential for their professional training (Gavrilova, Trostina, Tutaeva, & Sahakyan, 2019). Jafari and Alemi, in turn, conducted a study with engineering students in Iran and concluded that long-term practical objectives motivate students more than the obligation to learn technical English (Jafari Pazoki & Alemi, 2020).

Despite advances in ESP teaching, significant research gaps persist. For example, Lei and Hu highlight the difficulties students face in academic writing in English, particularly in doctoral contexts, where students have yet to fully master scientific writing in English (Lei & Hu, 2019). Other studies have also suggested that ESP can be an effective tool to reduce unemployment by improving graduates' communication skills in English (Bekteshi & Xhaferi, 2020). However, areas such as the impact of ESP in non-technical disciplines and the most effective methodologies for teaching intermediate-level students still require further exploration.

Although numerous studies have emphasized the importance of ESP in various disciplines, much remains to be explored regarding its application in specific educational contexts, such as B1+ level students in Latin American universities. This study aims to contribute to the existing research by implementing an ESP program at the Technical University of Ambato, with the goal of addressing the identified gaps and offering recommendations for teaching English in specific professional contexts.

Methodology

The research was conducted using a field modality with a mixed approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, specifically the assessment of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) proficiency among B1+ level students in the regular program of the Technical University of Ambato (UTA). A descriptive-exploratory methodology was employed, aiming to diagnose and verify the linguistic competence of the students before and after the implementation of the



ESP program. The exploratory aspect addressed a relatively understudied area in the local context, while the descriptive component focused on collecting and analyzing detailed data.

Given the small and homogeneous nature of the study population, no probabilistic sampling was used. In the first phase, a purposive sample of 170 students, all enrolled in the regular B1+ English program, voluntarily participated in the study. These students came from various fields of study, such as educational psychology, medicine, mechanical engineering, law, agronomy, business administration, and accounting. This diversity provided a broad view of the impact of the ESP course across different professional disciplines.

The study was divided into two main phases. In the diagnostic phase, an initial assessment (pre-test) was administered to determine the level of technical English proficiency of the students before starting the ESP course. This pre-test was conducted in Laboratory No. 3 of the Faculty of Accounting and Auditing at UTA, using questionnaires specifically designed to measure technical vocabulary and the students' ability to apply English in professional contexts related to their fields of study. Ten questionnaires were designed and tailored to the different disciplines, which were validated by field experts and English teaching specialists. The validation process included a pilot phase with regular B1-level students, and the feedback obtained was incorporated to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments.

Subsequently, a pilot English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course was implemented, designed to develop linguistic skills tailored to the students' professional needs. This course focused on a key linguistic skill, selected based on the pre-test results, and was integrated into one or two institutional domains of UTA. At the end of the course, a post-test was administered to evaluate the students' progress, particularly in terms of their acquisition of technical vocabulary and their ability to use English in specific professional situations. This final evaluation allowed for a comparison of the results obtained before and after the intervention.

For data collection, the Microsoft Forms platform was used, facilitating the administration of the questionnaires and the efficient collection of student responses. All collected data were securely stored, ensuring participant privacy. Data processing was carried out using the SPSS statistical software, which generated detailed descriptive reports. The analysis included comparisons of means, frequencies, and standard deviations, providing an accurate assessment of the students' progress in mastering technical English.

The study applied strict inclusion criteria: participants had to be enrolled in the regular B1+ English program, regularly attend classes, and sign an informed consent form authorizing the collection, use, and storage of their personal data in accordance with research ethics standards. The validation of the evaluation instruments was a key process in the methodology, in which the questionnaires were reviewed by experts in each discipline and by specialists in English



teaching. Following this validation, necessary adjustments were made to ensure that the instruments were clear, relevant, and appropriate to the students' competence level.

Despite the rigor of the methodological design, it is important to note some limitations of the study. Given the small size of the sample and its purposive selection, the results cannot be generalized to the entire population of B1+ level students. However, the findings provide a valuable starting point for future research on the teaching of English for specific purposes in university contexts.

Results

The level of competence in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was evaluated among 170 B1+ level students at the Technical University of Ambato (UTA), representing various faculties. The most represented faculties were Administrative Sciences, Humanities and Education, and Accounting and Auditing, each with 23.53% of the surveyed students. Other faculties, such as Health Sciences (11.76%), Agricultural Sciences, Civil and Mechanical Engineering, and Law and Social Sciences, were also represented, though in smaller proportions (5.88% each). The initial evaluation (pre-test) revealed significant variability in students' linguistic competence levels, view table 1.

The pre-test was designed to assess the mastery of technical vocabulary in each field of study, consisting of 15 multiple-choice questions, graded on a scale of 0 to 15 points. The following table presents the key descriptive statistics from the pre-test scores:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of ESP Pre-test Scores

| Descriptive Statistics | ESP Pre-test Scores |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Scale | 0 - 15 |
| Minimum | 1 |
| Average | 9.706 |
| Standard Deviation | 3.981 |
| Median | 9 |
| Mode | 8 |
| Maximum | 15 |



The average score was 9.706 out of 15, representing 64.71% of the maximum score, which indicates that, on average, students do not possess an adequate level of knowledge in English for Specific Purposes. The standard deviation of 3.981 (26.53% of the maximum score) suggests considerable variability in the scores, with some students achieving significantly higher or lower scores than the average, view table 2. The median score was 9 (60% of the maximum score), and the mode was 8 (53.33% of the maximum score), indicating that a significant portion of students have an intermediate or low level of competence. Additionally, the minimum score was 1 point, and the maximum score was 15 points, further highlighting the disparity in ESP competence among the students in the sample.

A count of students according to their level of ESP competence based on their pre- test scores is presented in the following table:

Table 2: ESP Pre-test Evaluation Criteria Distribution

| Pre-test ESP Evaluation Criteria | Count | Percentage (%) |
|---|--------------|-----------------------|
| Competent in their Specific Field | 70 | 41.2 |
| Some Knowledge | 80 | 47.1 |
| Low Knowledge of Field-Specific Vocabulary | 20 | 11.8 |
| Total | 170 | 100 |

41.2% of the evaluated students demonstrated sufficient knowledge of English for Specific Purposes in their field, being able to communicate effectively in professional contexts. However, 47.1% of the students showed a partial level of knowledge, indicating that they need to strengthen their skills to achieve adequate proficiency. Finally, 11.8% of the students demonstrated a low level of vocabulary knowledge in their specific field, highlighting the need for significant support to improve their competence.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Responses to the ESP Needs Assessment Questionnaire

| Questions / Scales | N | % |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1. What is your age? | | |
| ▫ 18 to 24 years | 38 | 22,22% |



| | | |
|---------------------|------------|----------------|
| ▫ 25 to 34 years | 121 | 71,18% |
| ▫ 35 to 44 years | 2 | 1,18% |
| ▫ 45 years or older | 9 | 5,56% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

2. Which faculty do you belong to?

| | | |
|---|------------|----------------|
| ▫ Humanities and Education | 38 | 22,22% |
| ▫ Law and Social Sciences | 9 | 5,56% |
| ▫ Civil and Mechanical Engineering | 9 | 5,56% |
| ▫ Electronic Systems and Industrial Engineering | - | 0,00% |
| ▫ Design and Architecture | - | 0,00% |
| ▫ Administrative Sciences | 38 | 22,22% |
| ▫ Accounting and Auditing | 38 | 22,22% |
| ▫ Food Science and Biotechnology Engineering | - | 0,00% |
| ▫ Agricultural Sciences | 19 | 11,11% |
| ▫ Health Sciences | 19 | 11,11% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

4. How long have you been studying English at the university?

| | | |
|---------------------|------------|----------------|
| ▫ Less than 1 year | - | 0,00% |
| ▫ 1 to 2 years | 47 | 27,78% |
| ▫ 3 to 5 years | 94 | 55,56% |
| ▫ More than 5 years | 28 | 16,67% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

**5. Do you consider mastering the English language important for your professional development in your field of study?**

| | | |
|---|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | - | 0,00% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | 28 | 16,67% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | 104 | 61,11% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

6. How often do you use English in your academic activities (readings, assignments, presentations, etc.)?

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely | 66 | 38,89% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes | 57 | 33,33% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always | 9 | 5,56% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

7. Do you believe your current English skills are sufficient to meet the requirements of your degree program?

| | | |
|---|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely NOT | - | 0,00% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probably NOT | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure | 47 | 27,78% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probably YES | 76 | 44,44% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely YES | 28 | 16,67% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

**8. How important is it for you to improve vocabulary specific to your field of study in English?**

| | | |
|---|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not important at all | - | 0,00% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slightly important | 38 | 22,22% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately important | - | 0,00% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Important | 57 | 33,33% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very important | 76 | 44,44% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

9. How often do you feel frustrated or limited by your English skills during your studies?

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never | - | 0,00% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely | 28 | 16,67% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes | 104 | 61,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequently | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always | 19 | 11,11% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

10. Do you believe an English for Specific Purposes (IFE) course would help improve your academic performance?

| | | |
|---|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely NOT | 9 | 5,56% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probably NOT | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure | 19 | 11,11% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probably YES | 66 | 38,89% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely YES | 57 | 33,33% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

11. How willing are you to dedicate time and effort to improve your English skills?



| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| □ Not willing at all | - | 0,00% |
| □ Slightly willing | 38 | 22,22% |
| □ Neither willing nor unwilling | 9 | 5,56% |
| □ Willing | 85 | 50,00% |
| □ Very willing | 38 | 22,22% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

12. Do you think an English for Specific Purposes (IFE) course should be mandatory in your degree program?

| | | |
|------------------|------------|----------------|
| □ Definitely NOT | 28 | 16,67% |
| □ Probably NOT | - | 0,00% |
| □ Not sure | 9 | 5,56% |
| □ Probably YES | 76 | 44,44% |
| □ Definitely YES | 57 | 33,33% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

13. How important is it for you to be able to communicate effectively in English with professionals in your field in the future?

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| □ Not important at all | - | 0,00% |
| □ Slightly important | 38 | 22,22% |
| □ Neither important nor unimportant | - | 0,00% |
| □ Important | 57 | 33,33% |
| □ Very important | 76 | 44,44% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

14. In which skills should an English for Specific Purposes (IFE) course focus?

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------|
| □ Reading and writing | - | 0,00% |
|-----------------------|---|-------|



| | | |
|---|-----|---------|
| ▫ More reading and writing than listening and speaking | 19 | 11,11% |
| ▫ Equal emphasis on both | 76 | 44,44% |
| ▫ More listening and speaking than reading and writing | 47 | 27,78% |
| ▫ Listening and speaking | 28 | 16,67% |
| Total | 170 | 100,00% |

In the table 3, the sample consists of 170 students. Regarding age, the majority falls within the range of 25 to 34 years (71.18%), followed by 18 to 24 years (22.22%). A smaller percentage is aged 45 or older (5.56%), while only 1.18% is between 35 and 44 years old.

Concerning faculty affiliation, the highest representation is distributed equally across Humanities and Education, Administrative Sciences, and Accounting and Auditing, each comprising 22.22% of the sample. Faculties such as Agricultural Sciences and Health Sciences each account for 11.11%, while Law and Social Sciences, as well as Civil and Mechanical Engineering, each represent 5.56%. No respondents reported affiliation with Electronic Systems and Industrial Engineering, Design and Architecture, or Food Science and Biotechnology Engineering.

Regarding the time studying English at the university, 55.56% of the respondents have studied for 3 to 5 years, 27.78% for 1 to 2 years, and 16.67% for more than 5 years. No student reported studying for less than 1 year.

On the importance of mastering English for professional development, 61.11% strongly agree, 11.11% agree, and 16.67% neither agree nor disagree. A total of 11.11% strongly disagree; no student disagreed.

In terms of frequency of English use in academic activities, 38.89% reported rare use, 33.33% use it sometimes, 11.11% frequently, and 5.56% always. An additional 11.11% reported never using it.

When asked whether their current English skills meet the requirements of their degree, 44.44% responded "probably yes", 27.78% "not sure", 16.67% "definitely yes", and 11.11% "probably not". No respondents selected "definitely not".



Regarding the importance of improving field-specific vocabulary, 44.44% consider it very important, 33.33% important, and 22.22% slightly important. No student indicated "not important at all" or "moderately important".

For the item measuring frustration due to English limitations, 61.11% reported feeling frustrated sometimes, 16.67% rarely, and 11.11% both frequently and always. No student reported never experiencing frustration.

Concerning the usefulness of an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course, 38.89% believe it would "probably" help, while 33.33% responded "definitely yes". Responses of "probably not", "not sure", and "definitely not" were reported by 11.11%, 11.11%, and 5.56% respectively.

Willingness to improve English was reported as "willing" by 50.00%, "very willing" by 22.22%, and "slightly willing" by 22.22%. Only 5.56% were neutral; none selected "not willing at all".

Regarding whether the ESP course should be mandatory, 44.44% responded "probably yes", 33.33% "definitely yes", 16.67% "definitely not", and 5.56% "not sure". No one selected "probably not".

On the importance of future professional communication in English, 44.44% considered it very important, 33.33% important, and 22.22% slightly important. No respondent selected the neutral or lowest importance options.

Finally, when asked in which skills an ESP course should focus, 44.44% selected equal emphasis on all skills, 27.78% preferred more listening and speaking than reading and writing, 16.67% favored listening and speaking only, and 11.11% chose more reading and writing than speaking and listening. No one chose reading and writing exclusively.

Analysis of the results

The diagnostic evaluation reveals a notable disparity in the linguistic competence of the students. While a considerable portion of the students has a functional knowledge base, the majority still requires additional training to reach the necessary level in English for Specific Purposes. These results justify the need to implement a structured English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Program at UTA, with a personalized approach that allows students to improve their skills and be better prepared to face the challenges of the global labor market. The implementation of this program will not only improve the students' academic performance but also provide them with the linguistic tools necessary to excel in their respective professional fields.



Conclusions

The results of the evaluation of the B1+ level students' linguistic competence in English for Specific Purposes indicate that their current level is not adequate to effectively handle professional situations in their respective fields. With an average score of 64.71% of the maximum grade, it is concluded that most students do not have sufficient mastery of technical English, and there is also considerable variability among them in terms of linguistic competence.

41.2% of the evaluated students demonstrated adequate knowledge of English in their professional area, while 47.1% have basic knowledge that requires strengthening. 11.8% of the students showed a low level of competence, highlighting the urgent need for educational intervention. This disparity in competence levels suggests that a more structured program is needed to address linguistic deficiencies and ensure that all students acquire the necessary skills for professional success.

It is recommended to implement an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Program designed to develop the necessary professional competencies. This program should be integrated into the academic offerings of the Technical University of Ambato (UTA), promoting close collaboration between the Language Center and the various faculties. Such collaboration is key to ensuring that the design of materials and educational activities align with the professional needs of each field of study, thereby facilitating a more applied and contextualized learning experience.

While this study shows the feasibility of implementing an ESP program, further research is needed to optimize its integration and measure its long-term impact on graduates' professional trajectories. Additionally, future research should focus on expanding the sample and exploring different teaching methodologies that further enhance the acquisition of specialized linguistic skills.

In summary, the implementation of the ESP Program at UTA will be an essential tool for improving students' linguistic competence, better preparing them to face the challenges of the global job market.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the submitted article.

Authors' Contribution Statement



All authors contributed significantly to the development of this article.

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