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Implications for ESP Syllabus Design in Beni City**



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Agronomy Students' Preferences for English Learning Methods and Implications for ESP Syllabus Design in Beni City

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines agronomy students' preferences for English learning methods. It also explores their implications for the design of an effective English for Specific Agronomic Purposes (ESAP) syllabus in the higher education context of Beni City. Specifically, it seeks to identify pedagogical approaches that align with students' learning styles and support communicative competence development within an ESP framework.

Methodology: The study adopted a descriptive-analytical research design combining Needs Analysis, syllabus document analysis and student questionnaires. Data were collected from agronomy students across the first to third year to capture variations in learning preferences and engagement.

Findings: The findings indicate that existing English syllabuses lack sufficient disciplinary relevance, progression and alignment with students' preferred learning methods. Students demonstrate a strong preference for interactive, communicative and media-based learning activities, while traditional grammar-focused, individual and abstract problem solving tasks generate lower engagement. These results suggest that an effective ESAP syllabus should integrate agronomy-specific content, progressive skill development and contextualized tasks, supported by interactive and collaborative pedagogical approaches. Task-Based Learning, Collaborative Learning and carefully scaffolded Project-Based Learning emerge as the most appropriate instructional frameworks for agronomic English instruction.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: The work contributes to ESP theory by empirically confirming that learner preferences and pedagogical practices are central to effective syllabus design in discipline-specific contexts. At the policy level, it challenges the continued dominance of grammar-centered English curricula in agronomic higher education. Practically, it offers evidence-based guidance for developing a learner-centered, progressive ESAP syllabus model syllabus tailored to agronomic programs in Beni City.

Keywords: *English for Specific Purposes, Agronomic English, Learning Preferences, Interactive Learning, ESP Syllabus Design, Higher Education*

JEL Codes: I21, I23, A22, J24, D91

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

English has become an indispensable medium for accessing scientific knowledge and participating in global academic and professional communities. As emphasized by David Crystal (2003, pp. 67-70), English functions as the dominant language of international communication, particularly in science and technology. In higher education, this dominance is reflected in the widespread use of English in scholarly publications, conferences and research collaboration. In the field of agronomy, where innovation is closely linked to global knowledge exchange, English proficiency enables students to access up-to-date research, interpret technical documents and engage with international stakeholders. According to Ken Hyland (2016, pp. 13-18), academic success in specialized disciplines depends largely on learners' ability to understand and produce discipline-specific texts. The implication is that for agronomy students, English is not merely a subject of study but a functional tool for professional development and scientific engagement.

However, effective use of English in agronomy requires more than general language proficiency. It demands discipline-specific communicative competence. The concept of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as developed by Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters (1987, pp. 8-9), highlights the importance of aligning language instruction with learners' academic and professional needs. In this regard, English for Specific Agronomic Purposes (ASAP) focuses on equipping students with linguistic skills necessary to perform tasks such as reading scientific articles, writing field reports and communicating technical information. Ken Hyland (2022, pp. 205-208) further argues that ESP has evolved to incorporate discipline-specific discourse practices, emphasizing the need for context-sensitive and purpose-driven language instruction. These perspectives underscore the necessity of shifting from General English teaching to more specialized and relevant approaches in agronomy education.

Despite this theoretical recognition, English instruction in many non-English-speaking contexts, English instruction in agronomy programs remains grammar-centered and weakly connected to disciplinary practices, resulting in limited learner engagement and inadequate communicative outcomes. Jack Richards (2015, pp. 52-55) argues that earlier language teaching approaches tended to emphasize grammatical and structural accuracy rather than communicative competence, thereby limiting opportunities for meaningful language use. In agricultural education, this misalignment is particularly problematic, as students are expected to apply English in real-world professional contexts. Recent empirical studies support this concern. Arias-Contreras and Moore (2022, pp. 98-104) found that although students may perform well in English exams, they often lack the ability to use English effectively in academic and professional situations. Similarly, El Ouardi (2021, pp. 7-10) identifies a gap between classroom instruction and the communicative demands of agricultural engineering programs. These findings suggest that grammar-focused instruction does not adequately prepare students for the realities of agronomic communication.

Moreover, the lack of contextualized and relevant instruction often results in low learner engagement and limited communicative outcomes. Hajar and Triastuti (2021, pp. 5-8) emphasize that when teaching materials do not reflect students' disciplinary needs, learners may struggle to see the relevance of English to their studies and future careers. This lack of relevance can reduce motivation and hinder the development of essential language skills. In contrast, the use of authentic materials and task-based activities has been shown to enhance both engagement and learning outcomes. Sobirova (2025a, pp. 169-170) highlights that authentic agricultural texts and real-life communication tasks help students connect classroom learning with professional practice. Therefore, it improves both linguistic competence and subject knowledge.

Therefore, within the ESP framework effective syllabus design and pedagogy should be grounded in a thorough understanding of learners' needs, disciplinary discourse and preferred learning methods. Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo St John (1998, pp. 121-123) stress that Needs Analysis is a fundamental component of ESP, as it informs the selection of content, teaching methods and assessment strategies. Recent research highlights further the importance of considering learners' preferences in instructional design. Zhang (2021, pp. 6-9) demonstrates that blended and student-centered approaches can significantly improve engagement and learning outcomes in ESP contexts. Similarly, Pavlenko (2024, pp. 3-6) identifies emerging trends in ESP, including the integration of digital tools, task-based learning and interdisciplinary approaches, all of which require an understanding of how students learn best.

Understanding agronomy students' learning preferences is therefore essential for developing effective English for Specific Agronomic Purposes (ESAP) instruction. Learners may differ in their preferences for instructional methods, such as collaborative learning, practical tasks or technology enhanced learning. Aligning teaching strategies with these preferences can enhance motivation, participation in lessons and overall learning effectiveness. Dragoescu et al. (2024, pp. 2-4) emphasize that integrating language learning with scientific content and practical activities can better prepare students for real-world professional communication. Furthermore, Sobirova (2025b, pp. 76-77) underscores that ESP-oriented instruction plays a crucial role in improving employability and global competitiveness among agricultural graduates.

In the context of Beni City, where English is learned as a foreign language, these challenges are particularly significant. Limited exposure to the English language outside the classroom, combined with traditional teaching methods, may further restrict students' opportunities to develop communicative competence. Despite the growing importance of English in agriculture, there is limited research on how agronomy students in this context prefer to learn English and how these preferences can inform ESAP syllabus design.

Therefore, this study investigates agronomy students' preferred English learning methods and examines their implications for ESAP syllabus design in Beni City. By exploring the relationship between learning preferences and effective language instruction, the study aims at

contributing to the development of more relevant, engaging and context-sensitive ESP programs. Ultimately, aligning English teaching with students' needs and preferences is essential for enhancing their academic success and professional readiness in the field of agronomy.

Research Problem

Despite the need for discipline-specific English competence, current ESAP instruction in Beni City does not sufficiently align teaching methods with agronomy students' learning preferences. Instruction relies largely on traditional grammar and individual written exercises, which students find only moderately engaging. Empirical evidence indicates that students strongly prefer interactive, communicative and media-based methods, while showing lower engagement with problem solving, project-based and solitary tasks. This mismatch limits students' motivation and effectiveness of English learning outcomes.

Research Questions

Main Research Question: How do agronomy students' preferences for English learning methods and styles influence effective English for Specific Agronomic Purposes (ESAP) instruction?

Secondary Research Questions :

1. Which English learning methods and styles do 1st-3rd agronomy students most and least prefer?
2. How do different learning methods namely interactive, media-based, grammar-focused and project-based affect students' engagement in vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning?

Research Hypotheses

Main Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between the effectiveness of English instruction for agronomy students and the use of interactive, communicative or content-based learning methods, compared to grammar-centered or individual approaches.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant positive association between effective English instruction for agronomy students and the use of interactive, communicative and content-based learning methods rather than individual, grammar-centered or individual learning approaches.

Secondary Hypotheses :

1. Secondary Hypothesis 1

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in agronomy students' preference between interactive or communicative learning methods and traditional grammar-focused or individual learning methods.

Alternative Hypothesis: Agronomy students significantly prefer interactive and communicative learning methods such as group work, oral practice, and media-based activities to traditional grammar-focused and individual learning methods.

2. Secondary Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis: There is no difference in the effectiveness or engagement of vocabulary and grammar learning when taught through contextualized, collaborative and oral activities compared to isolated rule memorization and written exercises.

Alternative Hypothesis: Vocabulary and grammar learning are significantly more effective engaging when taught through contextualized, collaborative and oral activities than through isolated rule memorization and written exercises.

Research Objectives

General Objective: To examine agronomy students' preferences for English learning methods and styles in order to inform the design of an effective English for Specific Agronomic Purposes (ESAP) syllabus.

Specific Objectives :

1. To identify and categorize the English learning methods and styles preferred by 1st-3rd agronomy students.
2. To analyze students' levels of engagement in vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning across different instructional methods.
3. To provide pedagogical implications for aligning ESAP syllabus content and teaching approaches with students' learning preferences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews key theoretical and pedagogical perspectives on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and syllabus design, with particular attention to learner needs, interaction and contextualized language use. It synthesizes research on task-based, collaborative and project-oriented approaches, as well as the role of vocabulary, grammar and progression in discipline-specific instruction. The review establishes a framework for examining how ESP principles can inform the design of an effective English syllabus for agronomy students.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 19) and Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, pp. 4-5) define English for Specific Purposes by its focus on learners' specific academic or professional needs and communicative practices of their target discourse communities. Therefore, ESP syllabus design moves beyond general language structures to emphasize discipline-specific genres, tasks and skills required in real academic and professional contexts. Robinson (1991, pp. 263) characterizes

ESP courses as goal-directed and needs-based, requiring close alignment between learners' objectives, syllabus content and instructional methods.

Basturkmen (2006, pp. 18-19) reinforces this view by arguing that effective ESP syllabuses must be grounded in real-world discourse and authentic tasks reflecting learners' target situations. Rather than presenting isolated linguistic items, ESP syllabuses should identify target tasks, decompose them into pedagogical subtasks and sequence them in a way that promotes cumulative skill development. This task-based orientation ensures relevance, coherence and progression, which are central features of effective ESP syllabus design.

Nunan (1988, pp. 8-9) and Richards (2001, pp. 33-34) uphold that research in language education consistently demonstrates that learner engagement increases when instructional practices align with students' learning preferences and social interaction patterns. In ESP contexts, where language use is functional and goal-oriented, interactive and collaborative approaches are particularly effective in promoting motivation and communicative competence. Vygotsky's (1978, pp. 57-58) sociocultural theory highlights social interaction as primary mechanism for learning, supporting the use of group work, dialogue and collaborative tasks. Empirical studies by Storch (2002, pp. 147-148) confirm that collaborative learning fosters deeper language processing and improved performance. Ellis (2003, pp. 9-16) further argues that Task-Based Language Teaching operationalizes communicative principles by engaging learners in meaningful, outcome-oriented tasks that mirror real-world language use.

Nation (2001) and Richards (2006, pp. 10-15) argue that studies on vocabulary acquisition show that learners retain and apply new vocabulary more effectively when it is encountered through listening, interaction and meaningful use rather than rote memorization. Similarly, when Widdowson (1983) argues that language learning should develop learners' ability to use linguistic resources in real communicative contexts, contrasting this with the isolated acquisition of rules and forms, Larsen-Freeman (2003) critiques traditional, rule-based grammar instruction and advocates for a communicative contexts than when taught as isolated rules. These findings support pedagogical approaches that integrate form and meaning through authentic communication rather than emphasizing decontextualized exercises.

Beckett and Miller (2006, pp. 3-16) emphasize that Project-Based Learning further extends these principles by linking language learning to sustained, discipline-related projects that enhance authenticity and learner motivation. However, research by Hyland (2004, pp. 18-21) notes that learner-centered and discovery-based pedagogies can fail to provide adequate scaffolding for L2 writers, indicating that careful instructional support is necessary when learners are expected to work with high levels of autonomy and cognitive demand.

Nunan (2004, pp. 64-68) and Richard (2006, pp. 83-87) declare that research in syllabus design underscores the importance of vertical progression, whereby linguistic complexity and

communicative demands increase across academic levels. Yalden (1983, pp. 110-120) outlines how communicative syllabuses are designed so that language use is structured around meaningful interaction and discourse, implying that progression involves increasing communicative complexity. Robinson (2001, pp. 287-318) states that syllabus progression in task-based frameworks should involve sequencing tasks with increasing cognitive and international demands so that learners systematically engage with more complex communicative and discourse challenges. Widdowson (1983, pp. 20-30) and Hyland (2004, pp. 20-80) support that in scientific disciplines, this typically entails movement from comprehension of foundational texts to the production of advanced, discipline-specific academic discourse.

Pedagogically, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, pp. 19-27) and Richards (2006, pp. 13-25) emphasize that communicative and constructivist approaches emphasize learner-centered, meaning-focused instruction grounded in authentic instruction. When Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, pp. 111-118) describe task-based and collaborative frameworks as effective means for putting ESP principles into practice, Beckett and Miller (2006, pp. 3-16) illustrate how project-based frameworks provide a practical means of implementing ESP principles in classroom instruction.

In conclusion, the literature converges on the view that effective ESP syllabus design must be needs driven, discipline-specific, interaction-oriented and vertically structured, with tasks reflecting authentic target discourse practices. While previous studies strongly support interactive, task-based and collaborative pedagogies in ESP, limited empirical research has examined agronomy students' learning preferences in non-English-speaking higher education contexts. The present study addresses this gap by investigating agronomy students' preferred English learning methods and exploring how these preferences can inform the design of coherent and effective English for Specific Agronomic Purposes syllabus in Beni City.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive and analytical research design to evaluate the English syllabus for the first cycle students in higher education in Beni City. Data were drawn from syllabus analysis and empirical learners' responses to provide a comprehensive account of the curriculum and its implementation. Consistent with Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2022, pp. 223-225), integrating document analysis with participant data enabled a more holistic understanding of the syllabus. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018, pp. 585-589) conclude that such an approach aligns with educational research practices that combine documentary and primary data to strengthen descriptive analysis.

Sampling

The sample consisted of agronomy students from the first to third academic year in higher education institutions in Beni City. It is exhaustive. Nworgu (1991, p. 71) specifies that the sampling frame must be an exhaustive list of all elements in the population to ensure that every member has an equal opportunity for selection. The elements making up this sample are those that are investigated actually. They stood at 412 informants among which 409 students received, completed successfully and handed in back the questionnaire under the control of the Chiefs of sections and Deans of faculties.

Methods

Data were collected through syllabus document analysis and student questionnaires. The English syllabus for the first cycle agronomy students in higher education in Beni was analyzed qualitatively as an official curriculum document, focusing on objective, content, pedagogy and assessment strategies. Student questionnaires gathered students' perceptions of syllabus relevance and implementation. The use of both data sources allowed for triangulation and enhanced the credibility of the findings.

Techniques of Data Collection

Syllabus focused on content relevance, skill progression and assessment practices. Questionnaires elicited students' preferences and perceptions of learning methods and styles, vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning.

Techniques of Data Analysis

Qualitative data were thematically analyzed, while quantitative responses were summarized using descriptive statistics.

DATA PRESENTATION

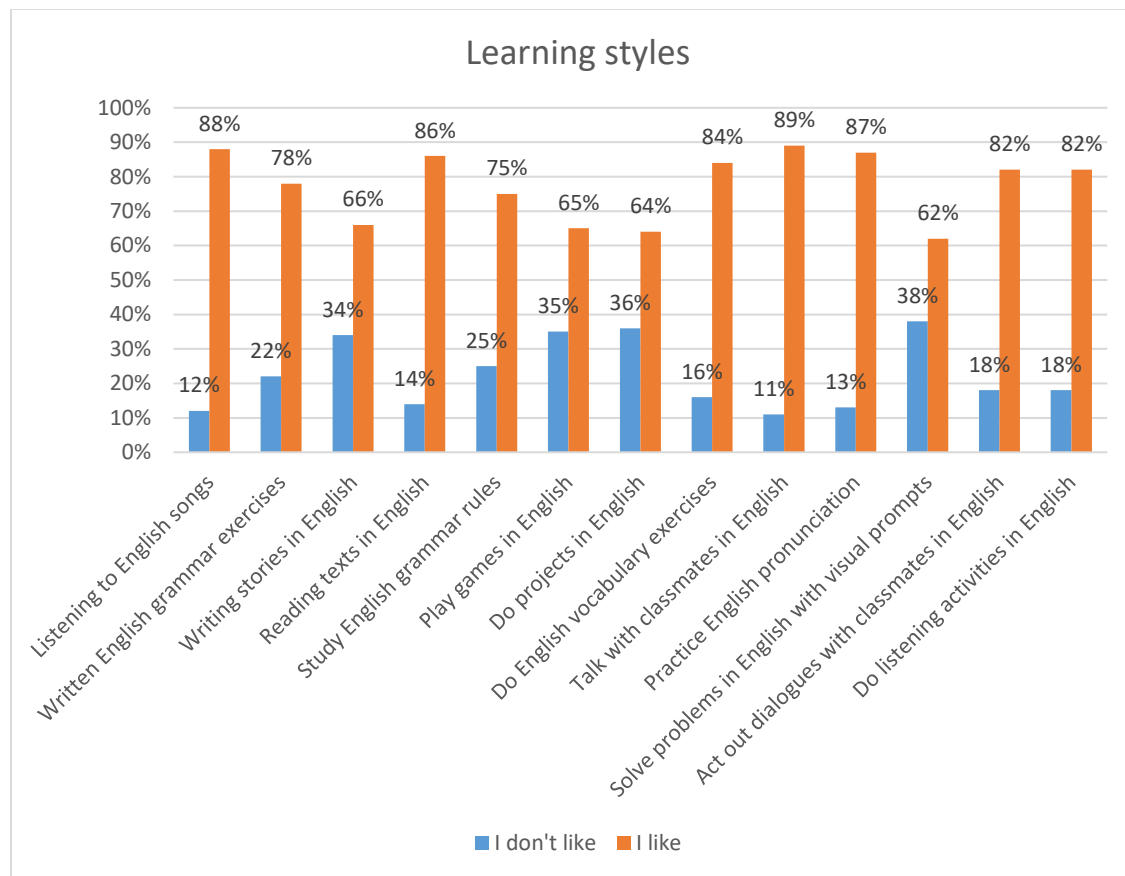
This section presents the preferred learning methods, styles and engagement of the first, second and third year agronomy students in English for Specific Agronomic Purposes (ESAP). It focuses on two key areas: Students' preferred learning approaches and their engagement in vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning.

1. Question about 1st-3rd Agronomy Students' Preferred Learning Methods and Styles in English for Specific Agronomic Purposes

The first, second and third year agronomy students' preferred learning methods and styles in English for Specific Agronomy Purposes constitute 4 groups notably methods combining interaction and communication, media-based and reading activities, methods involving problem-solving with visual clues and some project-based learning, traditional written exercises and grammar study.

The methods combining interaction and communication include talking with classmates, acting out dialogues and pronunciation practice. They are highly preferred (82-89%) by students. Next, media-based and reading activities encapsulate songs and texts. They are also very popular (86-88%). Traditional written exercises and grammar study are moderately liked (64-78%). Finally, methods involving problem solving with visual clues and some project-based learning are less preferred (62-64%). For more light, learn from the following bar chart 1.

Bar chart 1: The First to Third Year Agronomy Students’ Preferred Learning Methods and Styles in English for Specific Agronomic Purposes



Source : Primary data 2024

2. Questions about English Learning Methods, Vocabulary Acquisition and Grammar Learning

Students’ responses regarding English learning methods, vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning were measured on 4-point scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = A lot and 4 = Far too much.

It was noticed that students rarely engage effectively when working alone (not at all, MS = 1.73 / SD = 0.964). They are slightly more engaged, but still limited while working in pairs (Little, MS = 2.39 / SD = 0.904). They have moderate engagement in in-group work (Little, MS = 2.93 / SD = 1.073), which is more favorable than pairs or alone. They have moderate engagement in whole-class work (Little, MS = 2.75 / SD = 1.109); this is slightly lower than group work.

In addition, students have moderate engagement in learning vocabulary by listening (Little, MS = 2.95 / SD = 1.061). Engagement is slightly lower in vocabulary by seeing new words (Little, MS = 2.77 / SD = 1.016) than listening. Nevertheless, visual input remains moderately effective. Moderate engagement is also evident in reading and copying tasks (Little, MS = 2.76 / SD = 1.039) as well as in applying vocabulary (Little, MS = 2.89 / SD = 1.081). In contrast, studying grammar rules is perceived as slightly less effective, with formal grammar study considered less engaging (Little, MS = 2.62 / SD = 1.062). They reported between low-to-moderate engagement in homework exercises (Little, MS = 2.61 / SD = 1.011). They slightly have higher engagement in in-class exercises (Little, MS = 2.75 / SD = 1.016). Finally, they seldom have moderate engagement in understanding grammar via speaking (Not at all, MS = 2.89 / SD = 1.047).

The overall mean score for interest in learning English methods and acquisition of vocabulary and grammar (Little, MS = 2.71 / SD = 0.609) indicates a general moderate engagement across all activities. This evidence suggests that students generally neither strongly enjoy nor favor these aspects of English learning. Most students share a similar moderate attitude towards these tasks. The table 1 below enlightens the data above.

Table 1: The first to third year agronomy students' preference of English learning methods, vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning.

| Do you like: | Mean Score | Standard Deviation | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Working alone? (Tasks in the English class) | 1.73 | .964 | Not at all |
| Working in pairs? (Tasks in the English class) | 2.39 | .904 | Little |
| Group work? (Tasks in the English class) | 2.93 | 1.073 | Little |
| Whole-class work? (Tasks in the English class) | 2.75 | 1.109 | Little |
| By listening to new words? | 2.95 | 1.061 | Little |
| By seeing new words? | 2.77 | 1.016 | Little |
| By copying and reading new words? | 2.76 | 1.039 | Little |
| By using new words? | 2.89 | 1.081 | Little |
| By studying the form of grammar rules? | 2.62 | 1.062 | Little |
| By doing exercises at home? | 2.61 | 1.011 | Little |
| By doing exercises at school? | 2.75 | 1.016 | Little |
| Through oral practice in class, understanding the true meaning of grammar rules? | 2.89 | 1.047 | Not at all |
| Overall love of English learning methods, vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning | 2.71 | .609 | Little |

Source : Primary data 2024

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of the first to third year agronomy students' learning methods and styles culminates in showing preference for interactive and communicative methods. Talking with classmates (89%), acting out dialogues (82%) and pronunciation practice (87%) indicate that students value peer interaction and oral practice. It also shows engagement through media and reading. Listening to songs (88%) and reading texts (86%) shows students enjoy learning English through meaningful and enjoyable content. These methods enhance listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition and cultural familiarity. Next, the analysis uncovers moderate preference for grammar and writing exercises. Written grammar exercises (78%) and grammar rules study (75%) are appreciated by students, but less engaging for them than communicative or media-based methods. Writing stories (66%) is moderately liked, which suggests that the students expressed some interest in creative writing. Finally, the analysis demonstrates that the first, second and third year agronomy students have lower preference for problem solving and project-related tasks.

Problem solving with visual clues (62%) and project work (64%) are less popular. It is possibly because they require more learners' effort, more autonomy and abstract thinking on his part.

Informants' responses indicate preferences for collaborative work, vocabulary acquisition methods and grammar learning approaches. Variability of these preferences are reflected in the standard deviation.

Students show lowest engagement when working alone (1.73). Preference for collaborative work engagement increases in pairs (2.39) and peaks in in-group work (2.93). This suggests that students would benefit from collaborative learning. Whole-class activities are slightly less engaging (2.75) than group work. This fact is possibly due to limited individual participation in the assigned tasks.

For vocabulary acquisition methods, listening to new words (2.95) is perceived as slightly more effective than seeing (2.77) or copying/reading (2.76). In addition, using new words (2.89) reinforces learning, indicating that active engagement with vocabulary supports retention more effectively than passive exposure to the words.

Grammar learning approaches show that studying grammar rules alone (2.62) and doing exercises at home (2.61) are less engaging. Doing exercises in the classroom (2.75) and oral practice (2.89) are slightly more effective. It highlights the importance of interactive, guided grammar learning.

The standard deviations (SDs) range from 0.904 to 1.109. This range shows moderate dispersion. Students' engagement varies across methods. The overall SD of 0.609 for the combined score indicates consistency in students' moderate preference for different English learning strategies.

FINDINGS

The data analysis uncovers five key findings.

1. Students strongly favor peer interaction and oral practice. Talking with classmates (89%), acting out dialogues (82%) and pronunciation practice (87%) indicate high engagement with interactive activities.
2. Listening to songs (88%) and reading texts (86%) show that students enjoy learning English through meaningful and enjoyable content, which supports vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension and cultural familiarity.
3. Written grammar exercises (78%) and grammar rules study (75%) are moderately appreciated, while creative writing activities like story writing (66%) show some interest; though engagement is lower than in communicative or media-based methods.
4. Problem solving with clues (62%) and project work (64%) are least favored, likely due to higher cognitive demands, required autonomy or abstract thinking.

5. Across all activities, students show moderate engagement ($MS = 2.71$, $SD = 0.609$), with most students exhibiting similar participation levels, indicating consistent but not strong enthusiasm for English learning tasks.

DATA DISCUSSION

The learning process requires strategies for it to be successful. They are of four kinds. The interactive learning incorporates more group discussions, dialogues, role-plays and pronunciation exercises. Next, the media integration makes use of songs, videos and texts to make lessons engaging and relatable. In addition, the balanced approach combines grammar study with interactive and creative tasks to maintain engagement. Finally, the motivation and effort encourage students to like lower-preferred methods such as projects and problem solving activities. It needs scaffolding, games or contextualization to increase appeal. In short, students are motivated by fun, communicative and meaningful learning activities rather than abstract or purely written exercises. Students' engagement increases when learning is social, interactive or culturally relevant.

The debate around the first, second and third year agronomy students' responses regarding preference of English learning methods, vocabulary acquisition and grammar learning brings to say that students prefer interactive and collaborative learning, i.e. group work, oral practice and using words in meaningful contexts. Passive methods such as working alone, studying rules and doing exercises alone are less favored. Vocabulary learning through listening and active use is more effective and liked than passive memorization. Grammar is better learned contextually, not just by memorizing rules or doing exercises. Therefore, as syllabus tailors, teachers play a central role in shaping classroom activities. In this role, they are expected to encourage group activities, pair discussions and oral practice; reduce over-reliance on individual silent study and rote exercises; include listening and usage-based exercises for vocabulary and integrate grammar teaching into practical communication rather than only rule memorization.

Overall Check

The findings of this study confirm that the main question, examining how agronomy students' preferences for English learning methods and styles influence effective ESAP instruction, is satisfactorily addressed; as students clearly favor interactive, communicative and media-supported approaches, which correspond to higher levels of engagement compared to individual and grammar-centered methods. This evidence directly supports the main hypothesis that effective ESAP instruction is strongly associated with participatory and content-based approaches rather than traditional ones. It fulfills the general objective of informing a needs-based syllabus design. In the same vein, the first secondary question, which sought to identify the most and least preferred learning methods, aligns with its corresponding hypothesis and objective, as the data show a marked preference for group work, oral practice and media-based activities over grammar-focused and individual tasks. Therefore, it is easy to make a clear categorization of

learning styles. Finally, the second secondary research question regarding the effect of different methods on engagement in vocabulary and grammar learning is also addressed: The results indicate that students are relatively engaged in collaborative and contextualized vocabulary activities such as listening and using new words than in isolated grammar study and written exercises. This partially confirms the related hypothesis and achieves the objective of analyzing engagement patterns, although the overall moderate level of engagement suggests the need for further pedagogical improvement.

In conclusion, the study successfully answers all research questions and achieves its objectives. The hypotheses are largely confirmed, with strong evidence supporting the effectiveness of interactive, communicative and content-based approaches in ESAP instruction.

However, the generally moderate engagement levels suggest that further pedagogical innovation is needed to fully optimize students' motivation and learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the current English syllabus for agronomy students in Beni City lacks disciplinary relevance, continuity and progression. This factor limits students' communicative competence. Findings show that students are most motivated by interactive, communicative and content. The lecturers are suggested to use rich learning methods, including Task-Based, Collaborative and Project-Based Learning. Grammar, individual exercises and abstract problem solving activities are less engaging. Effective agronomic English instruction requires a syllabus that integrates agronomy-specific content, progressive skill development and contextualized tasks across all academic years, coupled with learner-centered, interactive pedagogical approaches.

Recommendations

1. Develop a structured, cumulative ESP syllabus tailored to agronomy that ensures relevance, coherence and progression across the three years.
2. Prioritize interactive, collaborative and task-based teaching methods to enhance engagement and real-world communicative competence.
3. Integrate vocabulary and grammar instruction into meaningful, context-driven activities rather than isolated, rule-focused exercises.
4. Scaffold lower-preference tasks, such as problem solving and project work activities to increase accessibility and motivation.
5. Align assessment methods with authentic agronomic tasks to reinforce the link between language learning and disciplinary practice.
6. Future research should pilot and evaluate the proposed syllabus model longitudinally.

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