

Challenges and Solutions in Teaching English for Interdisciplinary Studies: A Case Study of Language Learners at a University in Hanoi



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ABSTRACT: This study explores the specific language needs of students from different disciplines in interdisciplinary programs at Dai Nam University. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight English teachers who teach students across diverse fields, including healthcare, business, technology, engineering, and the arts. Thematic analysis was employed to identify key themes related to the linguistic challenges faced by students. The findings reveal that students require specialized vocabulary, advanced academic writing skills, oral communication and presentation abilities, and the capacity to adapt their language for different contexts. Additionally, students in technical and healthcare fields face difficulties in comprehending complex field-specific texts. The study underscores the need for tailored language instruction within interdisciplinary programs to better equip students with the linguistic competencies required for academic success and professional growth. Recommendations include integrating discipline-specific materials and providing training for teachers to address the diverse needs of students from various fields.

KEY WORDS: Language needs, interdisciplinary programs, specialized vocabulary, academic writing, oral communication, presentation skills

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Interdisciplinary studies integrate knowledge and methods from multiple disciplines, providing students with a holistic and multifaceted approach to learning. This educational model enables learners to draw upon different fields of study to address complex problems that cannot be solved by one discipline alone (Newell, 2013). The rise of interdisciplinary programs in higher education reflects the growing demand for professionals who can think critically across various domains and adapt to the increasingly interconnected global landscape (Repko, Szostak, & Buchberger, 2020).

In this context, English language instruction must evolve to meet the unique needs of interdisciplinary students. Traditional English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses are often designed for students in distinct fields, such as business or engineering, with a focus on discipline-specific vocabulary and communication skills (Hyland, 2019). However, interdisciplinary learners require a more flexible approach, combining linguistic competencies with the ability to communicate effectively across various domains. Tailoring English language instruction to this diverse group is essential for equipping students with the skills they need to succeed in both academic and professional settings (Jenkins & Leung, 2020).

Given the complexity of interdisciplinary education, English teachers face challenges in balancing general language skills with the specific requirements of multiple disciplines. To address this need, innovative pedagogical strategies are required to ensure that students develop not only language proficiency but also the ability to navigate the language demands of various fields (Duff, 2017). As interdisciplinary studies continue to expand, the demand for tailored English language instruction becomes increasingly urgent. Dai Nam University is a prominent private-funded institution in Vietnam, offering a diverse range of disciplines, including Technology, Health Care, Business Administration, and Human Arts. The university's interdisciplinary focus reflects its commitment to providing comprehensive education that addresses the needs of various professional fields. With approximately 18,000 students, it represents a significant educational hub, fostering an environment where learners from different disciplines can collaborate and innovate.

As a private university, Dai Nam benefits from greater flexibility in curriculum development, allowing it to stay attuned to emerging trends in both industry and academia. Its focus on applied sciences, health care, and the arts provides students with both technical expertise and creative development, preparing them for the demands of the modern workforce. The university's emphasis on interdisciplinary learning is particularly noteworthy, as it aligns with global trends that value professionals capable of navigating multiple fields.

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Dai Nam University places a strong emphasis on English language proficiency, recognizing it as a key factor in preparing students for global opportunities. The university aims to provide tailored English instruction that meets the unique needs of students across its diverse disciplines, including Technology, Health Care, Business, and Human Arts. By focusing on English as a crucial tool for both academic and professional success, Dai Nam is dedicated to equipping students with the language skills necessary to thrive in their respective fields. This targeted approach ensures that English instruction is relevant and adaptable to the specific requirements of each major, fostering a well-rounded and internationally competitive student body.

1.2. *Statement of the Problem*

In interdisciplinary programs, English teachers and students face unique challenges due to the diverse nature of subject matter and the varied linguistic demands across different fields of study. One of the primary challenges for English teachers is addressing the varied language proficiency levels and specialized vocabulary required by students from multiple disciplines (Hyland, 2019). For instance, students in technology or health care programs may require technical jargon and precise terminology, while students in business and human arts may focus more on persuasive communication and broader conceptual language (Jenkins & Leung, 2020). This diversity makes it difficult for teachers to design a one-size-fits-all curriculum.

Another significant challenge is the integration of discipline-specific content with general language instruction. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses typically focus on one field, but in interdisciplinary programs, teachers must balance the needs of various disciplines simultaneously (Duff, 2017). This requires a flexible teaching approach that not only addresses language acquisition but also allows students to apply language skills to their respective fields.

For students, the challenges often include understanding and applying the language in contexts that may differ greatly from their core academic training (Repko, Szostak, & Buchberger, 2020). Interdisciplinary learners may struggle with transferring language skills learned in one discipline to another, especially when faced with specialized vocabulary or different communication styles. Additionally, varying levels of motivation and engagement among students from different academic backgrounds can complicate classroom dynamics and affect the overall learning process (Hyland, 2019).

Ultimately, the intersection of language and discipline presents challenges that require innovative teaching strategies and more customized approaches to meet the needs of both students and teachers in interdisciplinary programs.

1.3. *Research Purposes*

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the challenges and identify solutions for teaching English to students enrolled in interdisciplinary programs at Dai Nam University. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the language needs of students from diverse fields such as Technology, Health Care, Business, and Human Arts, and how these needs affect English language instruction. Additionally, the study seeks to provide insights into effective teaching strategies that can be tailored to meet the specific demands of interdisciplinary learners. By examining teachers' perspectives, the research intends to propose practical solutions that can enhance English teaching practices and improve student outcomes across different disciplines.

1.4. *Research Questions*

By identifying the specific challenges and evaluating current teaching practices, this research aims to propose solutions that can enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction in interdisciplinary settings. The following research questions will guide the investigation;

1.4.1. *What are the key challenges faced by English teachers in providing instruction to interdisciplinary students at Dai Nam University?*

1.4.2. *What are the specific language needs of students from different disciplines in interdisciplinary programs?*

1.5. *Significance of the Study*

This study holds significant value for both educators and students in interdisciplinary programs, as well as academic institutions like Dai Nam University. By identifying the key challenges faced by English teachers and the diverse language needs of students from fields such as Technology, Health Care, Business, and Human Arts, this research provides critical insights into how English instruction can be tailored to suit various disciplines. Given the importance of English as a global language and a key factor in academic and professional success, the findings of this study will offer practical recommendations for enhancing English language teaching in interdisciplinary contexts.

For teachers, the study will provide an understanding of the specific difficulties associated with balancing general language instruction with the specialized needs of students across multiple disciplines. By highlighting effective strategies and solutions, the research will contribute to the development of innovative pedagogical approaches that can improve the quality of English instruction in interdisciplinary programs.

For students, the study is significant because it addresses their unique language needs, helping to bridge the gap between their academic fields and English language proficiency. Improving English instruction for interdisciplinary learners will not only enhance their language skills but also better prepare them for success in both their academic and professional pursuits.

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Additionally, this study is valuable for academic administrators and curriculum designers who aim to create more effective and inclusive language programs. The recommendations provided will support the development of curricula that are responsive to the needs of a diverse student body, ultimately contributing to the internationalization and overall competitiveness of institutions like Dai Nam University.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *Interdisciplinary Studies and English Language Teaching*

Interdisciplinary studies integrate knowledge from multiple academic fields, encouraging students to develop skills that cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries. This educational approach has gained prominence in higher education as the complexities of the modern world demand versatile problem-solvers who can draw upon diverse knowledge bases (Newell, 2013). The rise of interdisciplinary programs poses unique challenges to language education, particularly in the instruction of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). In contrast to conventional programs, where the focus is on one field of expertise, interdisciplinary programs require a more flexible and adaptable approach to English language teaching (Repko, Szostak, & Buchberger, 2020).

English language instruction in interdisciplinary programs must cater to students from various fields, such as business, technology, health care, and the arts, each with its own specialized language needs. Hyland (2019) highlights that while ESP traditionally tailors language instruction to a specific field; interdisciplinary programs require teachers to address multiple content areas simultaneously. This adds a layer of complexity to curriculum design and instructional practices, as educators must balance general language instruction with discipline-specific vocabulary and communication skills. As a result, teachers often find themselves navigating varied linguistic demands, which can challenge their ability to deliver effective lessons to students with diverse academic backgrounds.

The integration of English language instruction in interdisciplinary studies also requires pedagogical approaches that align with the learners' need to communicate effectively across multiple domains. According to Jenkins and Leung (2020), traditional models of English instruction, particularly in English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), may not adequately prepare students for the specific communicative challenges posed by interdisciplinary contexts. In these settings, students need to develop not only linguistic proficiency but also the ability to adapt their language skills to different professional and academic environments. This necessitates a more flexible approach to English teaching, one that focuses on cross-disciplinary language application.

Further, interdisciplinary studies challenge the notion of "one-size-fits-all" English language instruction by emphasizing the importance of context-specific teaching methods. Duff (2017) notes that the language socialization process differs across academic disciplines, meaning that English instruction must account for how students in different fields engage with language in their specific contexts. For instance, students in the sciences may prioritize precision and clarity in their language use, while students in the arts might focus on creativity and expression. This diversity underscores the need for adaptable language instruction that considers the varying communication demands of interdisciplinary learners.

Moreover, interdisciplinary learning promotes the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration, skills that are highly relevant to both academic and professional settings. English language instruction in these programs must support these goals by incorporating tasks and activities that foster analytical and communicative skills applicable across disciplines (Repko et al., 2020). By doing so, English courses in interdisciplinary settings can help students not only achieve language proficiency but also enhance their overall academic performance.

In conclusion, interdisciplinary studies present both challenges and opportunities for English language instruction. The literature suggests that English teaching in these programs requires a more dynamic and context-sensitive approach, one that considers the varied linguistic demands of different disciplines. As interdisciplinary programs continue to expand, there is a growing need for pedagogical innovations that can effectively meet the language learning needs of students in diverse academic fields.

2.2. *Challenges in Teaching English for Interdisciplinary Programs*

Several studies and theories have explored the common challenges faced by English teachers and students in interdisciplinary programs, particularly when dealing with diverse academic backgrounds and language needs. These challenges often stem from the complexity of teaching English to students who are enrolled in a variety of disciplines, each with its own specialized language requirements.

Diverse Language Proficiency Levels

One of the most cited challenges in interdisciplinary programs is addressing the wide range of language proficiency levels among students from different fields. Hyland (2019) highlights that students in technical fields such as engineering or technology often require more specialized vocabulary and formal writing skills, while students in the arts or social sciences might focus more on creative expression and argumentative writing. This diversity forces teachers to balance general English skills with discipline-specific language needs, making it difficult to design a curriculum that suits all learners equally.

Discipline-Specific Language and Content

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English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses traditionally focus on the language needs of a single field, but interdisciplinary programs require teachers to navigate multiple areas of content simultaneously (Hyland, 2019). For example, teachers may need to teach both technical and academic writing, depending on the students' fields. This creates a challenge for educators, who must adapt their teaching to meet the specialized vocabulary and communication practices of different disciplines.

Curriculum Design and Flexibility

According to Duff (2017), one of the central challenges in interdisciplinary English instruction is creating a flexible curriculum that accommodates the various linguistic demands of different fields. In traditional ESP courses, teachers can design lessons around specific needs, but interdisciplinary programs require a more dynamic approach. Teachers must continuously adjust content to make it relevant and practical for all students, which can lead to fragmented instruction.

Student Motivation and Engagement

In interdisciplinary settings, students may have varying levels of interest and engagement in English courses depending on their academic priorities. Jenkins and Leung (2020) suggest that students from fields where English is not a core skill (e.g., technology or sciences) may view language courses as less relevant compared to those in arts or business disciplines. This difference in motivation presents a challenge for teachers to create engaging lessons that appeal to students across multiple fields.

Adapting Pedagogical Approaches

The literature also highlights the need for adaptable pedagogical approaches that consider the diverse contexts in which students use English. Duff (2017) discusses the concept of language socialization, where learners engage with language differently depending on their academic or professional environment. This means that teachers must incorporate context-specific tasks and activities that align with the interdisciplinary nature of the programs. For example, problem-solving exercises or case studies can help make language learning more relevant for students from different disciplines.

In summary, the key challenges in interdisciplinary English language instruction include catering to diverse language proficiency levels, balancing discipline-specific content, designing flexible curricula, maintaining student engagement, and adopting adaptable teaching strategies. Addressing these challenges requires innovative approaches that consider the varied needs of interdisciplinary students.

2.3. Pedagogical Approaches for Interdisciplinary Language Teaching

Teaching English in interdisciplinary programs requires adaptable and innovative approaches that can accommodate students from various academic backgrounds. Traditional methods of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which target a single discipline, must be modified to meet the needs of students from multiple fields, such as technology, health care, business, and the arts. Below are some approaches that can effectively address the linguistic demands of interdisciplinary students:

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emphasizes the use of real-world tasks to engage learners in meaningful communication, making it an effective approach for interdisciplinary contexts (Ellis, 2003). In interdisciplinary programs, students often need to solve problems or complete tasks that require collaboration across disciplines. TBLT allows teachers to design tasks that are relevant to students from different fields, such as case studies, project-based learning, or collaborative problem-solving. These tasks promote both language acquisition and discipline-specific content learning, helping students apply language skills in practical, cross-disciplinary contexts.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) integrates language and subject matter, making it particularly suitable for interdisciplinary learners (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). In CLIL, English is used as a medium of instruction to teach subject-specific content, allowing students to learn both the language and the academic material simultaneously. For interdisciplinary students, CLIL can be tailored to combine content from multiple disciplines, helping learners develop the language skills necessary for communicating in different academic and professional settings. This approach fosters deeper cognitive engagement, as students must use English to process and apply information across various subjects.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) English for Academic Purposes (EAP) focuses on developing the academic language skills that students need to succeed in higher education. While EAP traditionally targets students from specific academic disciplines, it can be adapted to suit interdisciplinary contexts by incorporating a broader range of academic writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills (Hyland, 2019). Teachers can create a curriculum that addresses both general academic language skills and the specific needs of interdisciplinary students, such as writing research papers, conducting presentations, or participating in academic discussions that require cross-disciplinary thinking.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) Project-Based Learning (PBL) engages students in long-term, collaborative projects that involve inquiry and problem-solving. In interdisciplinary contexts, PBL can be used to design projects that require input from multiple fields, encouraging students to apply their language skills to solve complex, real-world problems (Beckett & Slater, 2005). For example, a PBL approach might involve students from technology, business, and health care working together to develop a product or solution, using English to communicate their ideas and collaborate effectively. This approach enhances language learning while promoting critical thinking and interdisciplinary collaboration.

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Needs Analysis and Tailored Instruction Conducting a needs analysis is essential for understanding the specific language requirements of students from different disciplines (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). By identifying the language skills that students need in their respective fields, teachers can tailor their instruction to meet these needs. For instance, students in health care might need to focus on patient communication, while students in business may require language skills for negotiations and presentations. Needs analysis ensures that English instruction is relevant and practical for each discipline, helping students develop the specific language competencies required for their academic and professional success.

Genre-Based Pedagogy Genre-based pedagogy focuses on teaching the specific language structures and conventions that are common to different types of texts within a discipline (Hyland, 2007). In interdisciplinary programs, students are exposed to various genres of academic writing and communication, such as research articles, case studies, reports, and essays. Teachers can design lessons that teach students how to recognize and produce these genres, ensuring that they can effectively communicate in their respective fields. Genre-based pedagogy helps students understand the linguistic expectations of different disciplines while improving their overall language proficiency.

Blended learning and Digital tools Blended learning, which combines traditional classroom instruction with online learning, are flexible approaches that can benefit interdisciplinary students (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Teachers can use digital tools and platforms to provide language instruction that is accessible to students from different disciplines, allowing for personalized learning paths. For example, online forums, discussion boards, and interactive language exercises can be tailored to different fields, enabling students to engage with discipline-specific content at their own pace. Blended learning also encourages self-directed learning, which is particularly important in interdisciplinary programs where students may have varying levels of language proficiency and academic needs.

In summary, teaching English in interdisciplinary programs requires a variety of approaches that can address the diverse needs of students from multiple academic fields. Approaches such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and Project-Based Learning (PBL) offer adaptable methods for teaching language skills in interdisciplinary contexts. Additionally, conducting a needs analysis and employing genre-based pedagogy can ensure that instruction is relevant to students' specific disciplines, while blended learning and digital tools provide flexibility and personalization in language instruction. Together, these approaches can help interdisciplinary students develop the language skills they need to succeed both academically and professionally.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the specific language needs of students from different disciplines in interdisciplinary programs at Dai Nam University. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of English teachers who work directly with students across various fields, including healthcare, business, technology, engineering, and the arts. By conducting interviews, the study aimed to uncover the unique challenges teachers face in addressing the language requirements of students from diverse academic backgrounds.

3.2. Participants

The participants in this study consisted of eight English teachers at Dai Nam University, each with varying years of teaching experience and expertise in teaching students from different disciplines. The teachers were selected using purposive sampling to ensure representation of the wide range of academic fields at the university. The participants included teachers who taught English to students from healthcare, business, technology, engineering, and arts disciplines, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the specific language needs in these diverse fields.

3.3. Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the eight participating teachers. The semi-structured interview format was chosen to allow for flexibility in responses, enabling the teachers to express their views and experiences in a more detailed and nuanced manner. The interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via video conferencing, depending on the availability and preferences of the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes and was recorded with the consent of the participants for later transcription and analysis.

The interview questions were designed to explore the teachers' perceptions of the language needs of their students, focusing on the challenges they encounter in teaching specialized vocabulary, academic writing, oral communication, and reading comprehension. Teachers were also asked about their experiences in helping students adapt their language skills to different academic and professional contexts. Sample questions included:

- *What are the specific language needs of students from the discipline(s) you teach?*
- *What challenges do you face when teaching discipline-specific vocabulary?*
- *How do you help students adapt their writing or speaking skills to fit the needs of their field?*

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3.4. Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. This method was chosen to identify common themes and patterns across the participants' responses

IV. FINDINGS

4.1. Challenges in Teaching English to Interdisciplinary Students

One of the purposes of this research was to identify the key challenges faced by English teachers in providing instruction to interdisciplinary students at Dai Nam University. To achieve this, eight English teachers with varying years of experience and who teach students from different academic disciplines including technology, healthcare, business, engineering, and the arts were interviewed. The qualitative data collected from these interviews were carefully coded and analyzed to uncover common themes and patterns in the teachers' experiences.

4.1.1. Curriculum Misalignment with Interdisciplinary Needs

A significant challenge faced by English teachers at Dai Nam University is the lack of alignment between the current curriculum and the specific needs of interdisciplinary students. The curriculum is perceived as too generic, offering little room for customization to address the diverse language requirements of students from different disciplines. Teachers noted that students from fields such as technology, healthcare, business, and the arts all have unique language needs, yet the existing curriculum applies a one-size-fits-all approach. As a result, teachers often find it difficult to cater to the distinct academic and professional demands of these students, leaving gaps in instruction that fail to meet the practical language needs of their disciplines.

4.1.2. Difficulty Teaching Discipline-Specific Vocabulary and Skills

Another key challenge for teachers is the difficulty in teaching discipline-specific vocabulary and skills, particularly when they lack the subject matter expertise in fields like healthcare or technology. Teachers mentioned that healthcare students, for example, require a strong grasp of medical terminology, while technology students need to understand technical jargon. However, the teaching materials and resources provided are often inadequate in covering these specialized areas, forcing teachers to supplement their lessons with external materials. This adds to the complexity of lesson preparation, as teachers must balance general English instruction with the inclusion of highly specific terms and concepts relevant to different fields of study.

4.1.3. Variability in Student Motivation and Engagement

Student motivation and engagement vary significantly across disciplines, posing yet another challenge for teachers. Healthcare students were generally described as highly motivated, recognizing the importance of English for their future careers. In contrast, technology and business students were often less engaged, with many viewing English as less relevant to their professional needs. This disparity in motivation makes it difficult for teachers to maintain consistent levels of engagement across all students. While healthcare students actively participate and seek to improve their language skills, teachers struggle to keep business and technology students invested in their English studies.

4.1.4. Lack of Professional Development and Institutional Support

A common theme across teacher responses was the lack of professional development opportunities and institutional support for teaching interdisciplinary students. Many teachers expressed a desire for specialized training on how to tailor English instruction to meet the needs of students from different academic backgrounds. Currently, there is minimal guidance on how to integrate subject-specific content into language teaching, leaving teachers to navigate these challenges on their own. Additionally, teachers feel they lack access to the necessary resources and tools to support their efforts in interdisciplinary teaching, which further complicates their ability to provide effective instruction.

4.1.5. Classroom Management Challenges

Classroom management is particularly challenging for teachers, as they must balance the wide range of language abilities present among students from different disciplines. Teachers frequently encounter classrooms where some students have advanced English skills while others struggle with basic concepts. This diversity in proficiency levels makes it difficult to design lessons and assessments that are appropriate for all students. Teachers expressed frustration with trying to ensure that students from both ends of the proficiency spectrum are adequately supported, often feeling that they are either slowing down or speeding up their lessons to accommodate different groups.

4.1.6. Need for Tailored Instruction and Collaboration

There is a clear demand among teachers for more tailored English instruction that addresses the unique needs of students from different disciplines. Several teachers suggested the creation of department-specific English courses that would allow for more focused instruction on the language skills most relevant to each field. Additionally, teachers emphasized the need for greater collaboration between English instructors and subject-specific faculty. By working together, English teachers could better understand the language demands of various disciplines and design lessons that align more closely with the academic and professional needs of their students.

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4.2. *Specific language needs of students in interdisciplinary programs*

4.2.1. *Specialized Vocabulary Acquisition*

A prominent need across all disciplines is the mastery of specialized vocabulary relevant to students' fields. Healthcare students, for example, must familiarize themselves with medical terminology related to conditions, treatments, and procedures, as emphasized by Teacher 1: "Healthcare students need to learn a lot of technical vocabulary related to medical conditions" (Teacher 1). Similarly, engineering and technology students require a strong command of technical jargon and documentation. Teacher 3 noted, "For engineering students, technical writing is a major focus," while Teacher 5 highlighted that "tech students need to be able to read and write technical documents" (Teachers 3, 5). This focus on field-specific language acquisition underscores the importance of providing tailored vocabulary instruction that enables students to engage with their academic and professional materials effectively.

4.2.2. *Mastery of Academic Writing and Formal Communication*

Another key need is students' ability to produce formal, well-structured written communication, a requirement that varies by discipline. For business students, writing reports, emails, and proposals is essential, with Teacher 2 noting, "Business students require a strong grasp of formal writing for reports" (Teacher 2). Arts and humanities students, on the other hand, need more advanced skills in creative and critical writing. According to Teacher 4, these students often need to write essays and critiques, which require precision and clarity in language (Teacher 4). Across all fields, students struggle to adapt their writing style to different contexts. Teacher 7 emphasized this, stating that "students need help with academic writing, particularly adapting their writing style to different contexts" (Teacher 7). This highlights the need for interdisciplinary programs to offer instruction that helps students develop the ability to adjust tone, structure, and purpose in their writing.

4.2.3. *Development of Oral Communication and Presentation Skills*

Oral communication skills are critical for students across various disciplines, particularly when presenting complex ideas to different audiences. Healthcare students, for example, need to communicate clearly and empathetically with patients, with Teacher 1 noting that "oral communication is important for patient interactions" (Teacher 1). In technical fields, students struggle to simplify and explain complex concepts in ways that non-specialists can understand. Teacher 3 stressed that "presentation skills are crucial, especially when explaining technical concepts to non-engineers," while Teacher 5 mentioned the importance of students being able to give presentations on technical subjects (Teachers 3, 5). Across all disciplines, improving oral communication and presentation skills is essential for students to effectively convey their ideas in both academic and professional settings.

4.2.4. *Contextual Language Adaptation*

Students from different disciplines not only need to learn specialized vocabulary but also to adapt their language for different contexts and audiences. Business students, in particular, need to tailor their language for negotiation and persuasive communication. Teacher 2 noted that "business students need to know how to adjust their language for negotiation and persuasive communication" (Teacher 2). The need for adapting language extends across other disciplines as well. Teacher 6 pointed out that "there's a huge difference in the language needs of healthcare and business students," which underscores the challenge of teaching students to use appropriate language for different professional situations (Teacher 6). Teacher 7 also highlighted that students often "struggle with adjusting tone, structure, and language to different contexts," indicating a broader challenge of teaching flexible communication strategies across interdisciplinary programs (Teacher 7).

4.2.5. *Comprehension of Complex Texts*

Reading comprehension of specialized, complex texts is another area where students face significant challenges, particularly in technical and healthcare fields. Teacher 1 noted that healthcare students "need to be able to understand complex medical literature" (Teacher 1). Similarly, engineering and technology students must navigate intricate technical manuals and research papers. Teacher 3 emphasized that "they need to read and understand complex technical manuals and diagrams" (Teacher 3). The ability to comprehend and analyze these materials is critical for students' academic success and their future careers. Therefore, interdisciplinary programs must focus on improving students' reading comprehension of field-specific texts to ensure they can engage with the materials required in their disciplines.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings from this study reveal that the specific language needs of students in interdisciplinary programs at Dai Nam University are shaped by the distinct academic and professional demands of their fields. One of the most prominent needs identified is the acquisition of specialized vocabulary, which varies significantly across disciplines. For instance, healthcare students must master medical terminology to succeed in both their studies and future careers (Teacher 1), while engineering and technology students require a solid understanding of technical jargon (Teachers 3, 5, 8). These differences suggest that a generalized English curriculum may not be sufficient to address the diverse vocabulary needs of students from different fields, and more tailored approaches are necessary.

Another critical finding relates to the importance of academic writing and formal communication skills, which are essential across all disciplines. Business students need to develop skills in writing reports, emails, and proposals (Teacher 2), while students in the

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arts and humanities focus more on creative and critical writing (Teacher 4). Across disciplines, students struggle with adapting their writing style to different contexts, such as formal research writing or persuasive communication (Teacher 7). This indicates that interdisciplinary programs should place greater emphasis on helping students refine their writing skills to meet the varied demands of their academic and professional fields.

Oral communication and presentation skills also emerged as a key area of need. Healthcare students must be able to communicate clearly and empathetically with patients (Teacher 1), while engineering and technology students need to present complex technical concepts to non-specialist audiences (Teachers 3, 5). This points to the need for interdisciplinary programs to incorporate more opportunities for students to practice these skills, ensuring they can effectively convey their ideas in diverse settings.

Another important finding is the challenge students face in adapting their language to different contexts. Business students, for example, need to adjust their language for negotiation and persuasive communication (Teacher 2), while students across other disciplines struggle with adjusting tone, structure, and language to suit specific professional or academic situations (Teacher 7). This highlights the importance of providing students with flexible communication strategies that can be adapted to various contexts, a skill that is critical in interdisciplinary settings.

Lastly, reading comprehension of complex, field-specific materials is a significant challenge, particularly for healthcare and technical students (Teachers 1, 3). The ability to read and analyze specialized texts is crucial for success in these fields, and this finding suggests that interdisciplinary programs should offer more targeted support to help students develop these skills.

Overall, these findings highlight the need for interdisciplinary programs to take a more tailored approach to language instruction, addressing the specific vocabulary, writing, oral communication, and reading comprehension needs of students from different fields.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study has identified the specific language needs of students from various disciplines in interdisciplinary programs at Dai Nam University. The key findings indicate that students require specialized vocabulary, advanced academic writing and communication skills, and the ability to adapt language to different contexts. In addition, students face challenges in mastering oral communication and presentation skills, as well as in comprehending complex, field-specific texts. These findings underscore the need for more tailored language instruction within interdisciplinary programs to better equip students with the linguistic tools they need for academic success and professional development.

To address these needs, it is recommended that interdisciplinary programs adopt a more flexible and targeted approach to language teaching. This could include the integration of discipline-specific vocabulary and materials, as well as a focus on developing adaptable communication strategies for both written and oral tasks. Furthermore, professional development for teachers in interdisciplinary programs should be emphasized, ensuring they are well-equipped to support the diverse language needs of their students.

By tailoring language instruction to the specific requirements of each discipline, interdisciplinary programs at Dai Nam University can ensure that students are better prepared to meet the linguistic demands of their academic and professional fields, ultimately leading to improved learning outcomes and greater success in their future careers.

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Appendix 1: Interview for focus groups

1. Teaching Experience and Background:

- Can you briefly describe your experience teaching English at Dai Nam University?
- How many years have you been teaching English to interdisciplinary students?
- What specific disciplines do your students come from (e.g., technology, healthcare, business)?

2. Student Diversity and Needs:

- How do you perceive the diversity of your students in terms of academic background and language proficiency?
- What challenges do you face when teaching students from different disciplines?
- How do students' needs differ across disciplines such as healthcare, business, and technology? How do you address these varying needs?

3. Curriculum and Instruction:

- Does the current English curriculum at Dai Nam University align well with the needs of interdisciplinary students? If not, where do you see gaps?
- How do you adapt your teaching methods to suit students from different academic fields?
- Can you provide an example of a successful or challenging moment when teaching interdisciplinary students?

4. Instructional Challenges:

- What are the key difficulties you face when teaching students from diverse disciplines (e.g., differences in terminology, engagement levels, learning styles)?
- How do you manage teaching discipline-specific vocabulary or skills when students come from varying fields?
- Do you find that students from particular disciplines (e.g., healthcare or technology) struggle more with English than others? Why do you think that is?

5. Teaching Materials and Resources:

- Are the teaching materials (textbooks, online resources) you use appropriate for students from different disciplines? If not, what modifications or additional resources would be helpful?
- What resources or tools do you currently lack that would make interdisciplinary teaching easier?

6. Professional Development and Support:

- Have you received any training or professional development specifically related to teaching interdisciplinary students? If so, how effective was it?
- What additional training or resources do you think would help you better teach students from various academic fields?

7. Classroom Management and Student Engagement:

- How do you engage students from different disciplines who might have varying levels of interest or need for English language skills?
- What strategies do you use to manage a classroom where students have diverse language abilities and academic goals?

8. Institutional Support:

- Do you feel that the university provides sufficient support (e.g., resources, guidelines) for teaching interdisciplinary students? If not, what specific support would you like to see?
- Is there a collaborative system in place where you can work with subject-specific faculty to better tailor your teaching to students' needs?

9. Assessment and Feedback:

- How do you assess students from different disciplines? Do you face any challenges in ensuring fair assessment across diverse academic backgrounds?
- How do students from different fields respond to feedback on their English language skills? Are there any noticeable differences in their ability to apply feedback effectively?

10. Suggestions and Improvements:

- In your opinion, what changes or improvements could be made to enhance English language instruction for interdisciplinary students at Dai Nam University?
- If you could introduce any new teaching methods or resources, what would they be?



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