# English for Specific Purposes in Military Contexts: Insights from a Vietnamese EFL Teacher's Experience

**Pham Trut Thuy[1], Le Thanh Thao[2]**
*[1]Nam Can Tho University, Vietnam*
*[2]Can Tho University, Vietnam*
*Email: ptthuy@nctu.edu.vn[1], thaole@ctu.edu.vn[2]*

**Abstract**

This qualitative study explores the distinctive aspects of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to military forces, through the lens of a Vietnamese EFL teacher's experiences. The research focuses on understanding the unique challenges and strategies involved in military ESP teaching, set within the context of a public institution in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. Employing semi-structured interviews, the study delves into the teacher's reflections, revealing key themes such as the importance of adapting to the specific linguistic needs and operational contexts of the military, the integration of military culture and hierarchy into language learning, and the emphasis on discipline and structured approaches. The analysis is informed by two theoretical frameworks: the concept of ESP teaching and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), offering insights into the tailored content and pedagogical adjustments required in military settings. Findings highlight the necessity for ESP programs to be meticulously customized for military contexts, emphasizing practical application and cultural sensitivity. The study underscores the need for ESP educators to have a deep understanding of military hierarchy and culture, and for teacher training programs to include components on contextual sensitivity. The findings contribute to the field by outlining specific pedagogical strategies and content considerations essential for effective ESP teaching in military contexts.

**Keywords:** *A Vietnamese EFL teacher's, English for Specific Purposes teaching, experiences, military contexts*

## INTRODUCTION

The realm of English language teaching (ELT) encompasses a broad spectrum of contexts, varying not only in pedagogical approaches but also in the unique challenges and nuances presented by different learner groups (Kormos & Smith, 2023; Richards & Renandya, 2002). Among these contexts, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to military forces stands out as a particularly distinct and underexplored domain. Previous research, such as by Denysiuk et al. (2021) and Orna-Montesinos (2018), highlights the growing need for effective EFL teaching strategies in the military context, particularly due to the increasing global interconnectedness and the role of English in international military cooperation and peacekeeping operations. This qualitative study seeks to delve into the intricacies of this specific teaching context by examining the experiences and reflections of a Vietnamese EFL teacher who has worked extensively with military personnel.

The research questions guiding this study are centered around understanding what differentiates the teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to military forces from teaching ESP in other disciplines. Research by Hajjar (2017) and Wilson (2008) underscores

the unique cultural and hierarchical nuances that influence language learning in the military, requiring distinct pedagogical strategies. This investigation is particularly pertinent given the increasing global interconnectedness and the crucial role of English as a lingua franca in international military cooperation and peacekeeping operations (Denysiuk et al., 2021; Orna-Montesinos, 2018). The military, as a specialized domain, not only requires a distinct lexicon but also a unique understanding of the cultural and hierarchical aspects that shape the learning environment (English, 2004; Wilson, 2008). Additionally, the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by Vygotsky (1978) is particularly relevant in guiding the teaching approach. The ZPD refers to the range of tasks that a learner can perform with guidance but not independently. In this context, ZPD helps identify where military personnel require scaffolding in their language learning journey, allowing for tailored instructional strategies that bridge the gap between current capabilities and potential proficiency.

This study adopts a qualitative methodology, utilizing in-depth interviews to garner insights into the teacher's experiences, challenges, and strategies in teaching EFL to military personnel. Indicators for data collection include the learner's current skill level, specific language needs related to the military context, and the strategies employed to facilitate progress within the ZPD. By focusing on a Vietnamese context, the research contributes to the broader understanding of EFL teaching in non-Western settings, an area that remains relatively underrepresented in current literature. In exploring these dimensions, this study aims to enrich the discourse on ESP teaching, offering valuable perspectives for educators and policymakers in designing and implementing effective EFL programs for military forces. The insights gained from this research could also potentially inform broader pedagogical practices in ESP across various disciplines, highlighting the importance of context-specific approaches in language teaching.

## ESP: An Overview

ESP, as defined by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), is an approach to language teaching in which the content and methodology are shaped by the specific needs of the learners. ESP diverges from general English in its focus on specific terminologies and language functions relevant to particular professions or fields of study (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Recent literature has emphasized the dynamic nature of ESP, adapting to the evolving needs of diverse professional contexts, including business (Bhatia & Bremmer, 2012; Nilufar, 2023), medicine (Azizi et al., 2022; Ghobain, 2014), law (Basturkmen, 2014; Dafouz & Smit, 2016), etc...

## Teaching English to Military Personnel

The teaching of English to military personnel is a specialized branch of ESP, characterized by its focus on military terminology, communication protocols, and cultural sensitivities (McKay & Brass, 2011). Studies such as those by Caiza Marcalla and Chicaiza Jacome (2022) and Kaplan et al. (2004) have highlighted the need for a practical, task-based approach in military language training, focusing on skills like following instructions, tactical communication, and understanding military manuals. Cultural competence is also crucial, as military operations often involve multinational cooperation (Soeters & Goldenberg, 2019).

Literature in this area is, however, relatively scarce, especially regarding non-Western contexts.

## Challenges in ESP Teaching to Military Forces

Teaching English to military forces presents unique challenges. According to Clark (2013), one primary challenge is the need to balance language proficiency with tactical communication skills. The literature emphasizes the importance of situational language training, where linguistic skills are taught within the context of military scenarios (Gregory & Carroll, 2018; Luqyana et al., 2023). Furthermore, the hierarchical nature of the military and varying educational backgrounds of learners can pose pedagogical challenges (Gøtzsche-Astrup et al., 2022).

## ESP in the Vietnamese Context

Vietnam's integration into the global economy has increased the demand for English proficiency in various sectors, including the military. Studies like Tran and Tanemura (2020) and Nguyen et al. (2022) have documented the growing emphasis on English education in Vietnam, but there is a noted lack of research specifically on ESP for the military. The existing literature on Vietnamese ESP focuses mainly on sectors like tourism (e.g., Hanh, 2023) and business (Bui, 2022; Thi, 2019), with Le (2011) pointing out the need for more context-specific research in areas like military English.

## Teacher Reflections and Experiences in ESP

Reflective practice in teaching, as highlighted by Farrell (2007, 2013, 2017), is a critical component in understanding the complexities of ESP teaching. Teacher narratives and reflections provide valuable insights into the challenges and strategies employed in specific teaching contexts (Mann, 2005; McVee & Boyd, 2015; Kim & Asbury, 2020). This is especially relevant in specialized fields like military English, where standardized teaching methods may not be applicable.

This literature review underscores the gap in research on the teaching of English for military purposes, particularly in non-Western contexts like Vietnam. While existing literature provides a foundation in understanding ESP and its applications in various fields, there remains a dearth of knowledge about the specific challenges and methodologies applicable to military English. This study aims to contribute to this underexplored area by examining the reflections of a Vietnamese EFL teacher, offering a unique perspective on the nuances of teaching English to military personnel.

## METHODS

## Research Design

This qualitative study is anchored in the interpretivist paradigm, emphasizing the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals within their specific contexts (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). To explore the nuanced differences in teaching ESP to military forces compared to other disciplines, the research design incorporates the use of semi-structured interviews. These interviews are pivotal in capturing the depth and complexity of

the experiences, beliefs, and teaching practices of a Vietnamese EFL teacher working with military personnel.

The research design of this study is underpinned by two principal theoretical frameworks, each contributing a unique lens through which the teaching of ESP to military personnel is examined. The first framework centers on the concept of ESP teaching itself (Hyland, 2007; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2020). ESP, by its very nature, is tailored to meet the specific language and communication needs of learners within distinct professional or occupational settings. This aspect of ESP is crucial in understanding and addressing the unique requirements of military language training. It encompasses not only the specialized terminology and lexicon that are inherent to military contexts but also extends to the specific communication practices and contextual needs that are unique to this domain. Such an ESP-focused framework enables the study to delve deeply into how English language teaching is adapted and structured to suit the military environment, focusing on both linguistic and pragmatic aspects of language use in this specialized field.

The second theoretical framework guiding this study is rooted in sociocultural theory, particularly drawing upon Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the ZPD. This perspective underscores the importance of social interaction in the learning process and the pivotal role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning. The ZPD refers to the range of tasks a learner can perform with assistance from a more knowledgeable other, but not independently. This assistance helps bridge the gap between what the learner can do on their own and what they can achieve with guidance. The ZPD concept is especially relevant in the context of military training, where the hierarchical and disciplined nature of the environment can significantly influence the dynamics of teacher-learner interactions. By applying the principles of sociocultural theory, this study aims to gain insights into how the social environment and the relationships between the teacher and the military learners contribute to the learning process. This includes examining how teachers navigate and negotiate the power structures and formalities inherent in military settings to effectively support and enhance the learning of their students. Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive theoretical base for exploring and understanding the complexities and specificities of teaching ESP in a military context.

**The Subject**

In this study, the participant is a 30-year-old Vietnamese male, working as an EFL teacher in a public institution located in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. His selection as the sole participant for this research is a deliberate one, based on his unique and pertinent experiences in teaching EFL within a military context. This teacher has been involved in mentoring Vietnamese soldiers, providing them with essential English language skills that are increasingly necessary in the global military landscape. His experience includes not just traditional classroom teaching but also extends to the realm of online learning, a method that has gained significant traction and importance in recent times. This diverse range of teaching methods and contexts, particularly his voluntary involvement in the military education sector, provides a rich and varied perspective, making his insights invaluable for this study.

Ethical considerations are paramount in this study, particularly given the sensitive nature of working within a military context. The participant's privacy and confidentiality are rigorously protected. All identifying information, including the name of the individual and the institution, is anonymized to ensure privacy. The participant has been informed about the purpose of the study, the nature of his involvement, and his rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any adverse consequences. Informed consent has been obtained, ensuring that the participant understands the scope of the research and agrees to the use of his responses for academic purposes.

The choice of a Vietnamese EFL teacher from the Mekong Delta region also offers a unique cultural and geographical perspective. This region, known for its diverse cultural dynamics and distinct educational challenges, provides a rich context for exploring the nuances of teaching EFL to military personnel. The participant's experiences and reflections are expected to yield valuable insights into not only the specifics of teaching in a military setting but also the broader context of English language teaching in Vietnam, particularly in regions outside the major urban centers. This focus contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse challenges and strategies in EFL teaching across different contexts within the country.

**Data Collection**

The data collection for this study was primarily conducted through semi-structured interviews, a method chosen for its flexibility and depth in exploring the participant's experiences and insights. Before the main interviews, a pilot study was conducted to test the initial set of interview questions. This preliminary phase was crucial in refining the questions to ensure they were clear, relevant, and capable of eliciting detailed and meaningful responses. Based on the feedback and outcomes from the pilot study, necessary revisions were made to the interview protocol.

The revised interview questions included inquiries such as: "Can you describe your experiences in teaching English to military personnel?" and "How do you adapt your teaching strategies to meet the specific needs of learners in the military context?" These questions aimed to delve into the participant's personal teaching experiences, the challenges faced, and the strategies employed in the unique setting of military EFL teaching.

Interviews were conducted at locations and times convenient for the participant to ensure a comfortable and conducive environment for open discussion. Each interview session lasted approximately one to one and a half hours, providing ample time for in-depth exploration of topics. The interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, the participant's native language, to facilitate ease of expression and to ensure clarity and depth in the participant's responses. This choice was crucial for capturing the nuances of the participant's experiences and perspectives.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the participant's insights, additional data collection methods were employed as needed. These included follow-up questions, requests for clarification, and, when necessary, additional meetings to delve deeper into specific areas of interest. Furthermore, triangulation was utilized as a method of data validation, comparing

the interview data with other sources such as documentation and observational notes to establish consistency and reliability. This cross-checking approach helps to identify any discrepancies and ensures that the conclusions drawn are based on multiple perspectives, adding depth and credibility to the findings. This multi-faceted approach to data collection was designed to provide a rich, detailed, and nuanced understanding of the participant's experiences in teaching EFL in a military context, thereby enriching the findings of this study.

**Data Analysis**

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews underwent a thorough thematic analysis, a method particularly suited for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This analysis began with a meticulous process of transcribing the interviews, which were conducted in Vietnamese, to ensure accuracy in capturing the participant's responses. Following transcription, the data were read and re-read to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding, a process essential for recognizing emerging patterns and themes.

The initial phase of the analysis involved coding the data, where segments of the text were labeled with codes that succinctly captured the essence or main idea of that segment. This coding was both a reflective and iterative process, requiring constant comparison of the data with the developing codes to ensure consistency and relevance. As more data were coded, these initial codes were then grouped into potential themes, which represented broader patterns in the data. These themes were not just mere aggregations of codes; they were analytically constructed to capture something important about the data in relation to the research questions.

After identifying potential themes, the next step involved reviewing and refining them. This entailed checking the themes against the coded extracts and the entire dataset to ascertain if they formed a coherent pattern. This phase was crucial for ensuring that the themes were not only supported by the data but also formed a meaningful narrative in relation to the research questions. The final stage of the thematic analysis involved defining and naming the themes. This process was not merely about assigning labels but entailed a detailed analysis of each theme, exploring the nuances and complexities within them. The themes were then analyzed in relation to each other and the overall data set, providing a comprehensive understanding of the participant's experiences and perspectives on teaching EFL in a military context.

Throughout this process, a reflexive approach was maintained, where the researcher's biases, assumptions, and influences were acknowledged and critically examined. This reflexivity was integral to ensuring the credibility and rigor of the analysis, allowing the findings to emerge as a transparent and authentic representation of the participant's experiences. The thematic analysis thus provided a structured yet flexible approach to unraveling the rich, detailed, and complex data obtained from the interviews, offering insightful answers to the research questions of this study.

## FINDINGS

### Unique Communication Style and Hierarchical Learning in Military ESP

The finding that distinctly characterizes the teaching of ESP to military forces, as opposed to other disciplines, revolves around the unique combination of a specialized communication style and the hierarchical nature of military learning environments. The participant reflected on this difference: "In the military, communication is about being direct and concise, especially in high-pressure situations. This is a stark contrast to, say, corporate or academic ESP where the focus might be on elaboration and persuasion."

This excerpt can be elucidated through the lens of the ESP teaching framework, which emphasizes the need for specificity in language instruction tailored to the learner's professional context. In military ESP, the focus on direct and concise communication reflects the operational realities of military personnel, where clarity and brevity are often critical. This requirement is distinctly different from other ESP domains such as business or academia, where language use might include complex negotiations or elaborate academic discourse.

Simultaneously, the excerpt also aligns with the concept of the ZPD. In the context of military ESP, the ZPD is not just about linguistic competence but also about acclimatizing to the hierarchical and disciplined nature of military settings. The participant's teaching approach, therefore, had to be attuned not only to the linguistic level of the learners but also to their accustomed learning environment. This approach differs from other ESP settings where the learning environment might be more collaborative or egalitarian, and where the ZPD would focus more on the development of specific professional jargons or discourse styles.

### Integration of Military Culture and Hierarchy in Language Learning

Another significant finding from the study revolves around the integration of military culture and hierarchy into the language learning process, which distinctly differentiates the teaching of ESP to military forces from other disciplines. The participant reflected on this unique aspect: "In the military, the learning environment is deeply influenced by hierarchy and discipline. I had to align my teaching methods with these cultural aspects, which is quite different from teaching ESP in a corporate or academic setting where the environment is more egalitarian."

This excerpt underlines the necessity of adapting teaching strategies to accommodate the hierarchical and disciplined nature of the military culture, a key aspect of ESP teaching. In this context, ESP teaching goes beyond imparting language skills; it involves understanding and integrating the specific cultural and organizational ethos of the military into the teaching process. This adaptation is contrastingly different from other ESP disciplines, where the teaching approach might be more collaborative and less influenced by rigid hierarchical structures.

Additionally, this finding is elucidated through the lens of the ZPD. The ZPD emphasizes the social context of learning and the interactive role of the teacher. In a military setting, the ZPD is navigated within a framework of strict discipline and hierarchy, which

markedly influences the teacher-learner interaction. The participant's approach to adjusting his teaching methods to fit within the military's structured environment showcases his understanding of the social dynamics at play. This approach is crucial in creating an effective learning environment within the constraints of military hierarchy, as opposed to more flexible and egalitarian settings typically found in other ESP contexts.

**Emphasis on Practical Application and Situational Learning**

Another significant finding from the study is the emphasis on practical application and situational learning in military ESP teaching, contrasting with other disciplines. The participant shared, "In my experience, teaching English to military personnel goes beyond textbook learning. It is crucial to integrate practical scenarios and simulations. This approach is distinct from more traditional academic or business English settings, where the focus might be on theoretical knowledge or specific business communication skills."

Analyzing this excerpt through the lens of ESP teaching, it is evident that the military context demands a highly practical and situation-based approach. Unlike other disciplines where the focus might be on theoretical aspects of language or specific professional jargon, military ESP requires the language training to be immediately applicable and relevant to real-world military operations and scenarios. This specificity necessitates a curriculum that is deeply intertwined with practical skills and real-life applications, making the learning process more focused on immediate utility rather than abstract concepts.

From the perspective of the ZPD, this finding highlights the role of the teacher in creating learning experiences that are within the reach of the learners' current abilities, yet challenging enough to promote growth. In a military context, this involves designing learning activities that mimic real-life military scenarios, thereby situating language learning within the practical experiences of the learners. The teacher needs to scaffold these experiences, bridging the gap between the soldiers' existing language skills and the demands of their professional roles. This approach is markedly different from ZPD dynamics in other ESP contexts, where the scaffolding might focus more on expanding theoretical understanding or developing specific professional competencies.

**The Importance of Cultural and Contextual Sensitivity**

A further notable finding from the study is the heightened importance of cultural and contextual sensitivity in teaching ESP to military forces, a factor that distinctly sets it apart from teaching ESP in other disciplines. The participant elaborated, "When teaching English to military personnel, I realized the importance of understanding their specific cultural and operational context. This goes beyond language proficiency; it is about being sensitive to the military ethos and the nuances of their everyday reality. It is quite different from teaching in corporate or academic settings, where cultural considerations might be less pronounced or of a different nature."

From an ESP teaching perspective, this finding emphasizes the need for a curriculum and teaching approach that are deeply rooted in the cultural and operational realities of the military. Unlike other disciplines where ESP may focus more on linguistic skills and sector-specific jargon, in the military, an understanding of the cultural ethos and day-to-day realities

of military life is crucial. This requires the teacher to go beyond being a language expert to becoming a cultural intermediary, facilitating a deeper connection between the language content and the learners' professional and cultural context.

Looking at this finding through the lens of ZPD, it highlights the need for the teacher to create a learning environment that is culturally and contextually relevant to the learners. In a military setting, this involves understanding the unique culture of discipline, hierarchy, and camaraderie, and incorporating these elements into the teaching process. The teacher must carefully navigate these cultural dynamics, tailoring the language instruction to fit within the military framework while also pushing the learners towards greater linguistic competence. This approach is distinct from other ESP contexts, where the cultural and contextual factors might be less integral to the learning process or manifest differently.

**Enhanced Focus on Discipline and Structure in Language Learning**

An additional key finding of the study is the enhanced focus on discipline and structure in the language learning process within the military, distinctly different from other ESP teaching contexts. The participant noted, "Teaching English in the military required a greater emphasis on discipline and structured learning approaches. This contrasts with my experiences in other ESP areas, where there is often more flexibility and a less formal learning environment."

This aspect of the finding can be interpreted through the concept of ESP teaching, which recognizes the need for adapting teaching methods to suit the specific requirements of the learner group. In the military context, the emphasis on discipline and structure is a reflection of the broader organizational culture. This necessitates a teaching approach that aligns with these values, incorporating a more regimented and structured methodology than might be typical in other ESP domains such as business or academia, where the learning environment can be more flexible and less hierarchical.

From the perspective of the ZPD, this finding highlights the teacher's role in adapting their instructional strategies to the learners' environment. In the military, the learning process is deeply intertwined with the values of discipline and hierarchy. The teacher must therefore create and facilitate learning experiences that not only respect this framework but also utilize it to enhance the learning process. This might involve more structured and guided learning activities, consistent with the disciplined nature of the military setting. This approach contrasts with the application of ZPD in more flexible learning environments, where the scaffolding provided by the teacher might allow for more exploratory and learner-driven approaches.

**DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study offer novel insights into the distinct challenges and dynamics of teaching ESP to military forces, shedding light on how this context significantly differs from other ESP disciplines. This discussion will juxtapose the current study's findings with previous literature to underscore its unique contributions to the field. The emphasis on a direct, concise communication style and the adaptation to hierarchical learning environments in military ESP teaching is a distinctive finding of this study. Previous research on ESP in

various contexts, such as corporate or academic settings, often highlights the importance of elaboration, persuasion, and sector-specific jargon (e.g., Baaji, 2018; Giampieri & Harper, 2022; Knight & Yorke, 2004). In contrast, this study underscores the need for brevity and clarity in military communication, aligning with the operational imperatives of military contexts (Haddington et al., 2022; Rautiainen et al., 2022). This finding enhances our understanding of ESP by illustrating the necessity of tailoring language instruction to suit the operational realities of different professional fields, particularly in high-stakes environments like the military.

Another significant contribution of this study is the highlighting of the integration of military culture and hierarchical structures into the language learning process. While previous ESP studies have acknowledged the importance of cultural sensitivity (e.g., Aguilar Pérez, 2018; Nieto & Zoller Booth, 2010), this study brings a new perspective by focusing on the unique cultural and operational ethos of the military. This insight is critical in ESP teaching, where understanding and integrating the learner's professional culture is as important as language instruction. This finding extends the ESP teaching framework by incorporating the dimension of cultural integration, especially in contexts with rigid hierarchical structures.

The complexities of navigating hierarchical dynamics in military settings, as revealed in this study, mark a significant departure from the existing literature on ESP teaching in more egalitarian contexts. Previous research in corporate or academic ESP settings often discusses a more collegial and flexible teaching approach (Slim & Hafedh, 2019). In contrast, this study shows how military ESP teaching requires an acute awareness and alignment with the chain of command and protocols, leading to a different classroom dynamic. This finding enriches the ESP literature by demonstrating the varied applications of ESP teaching principles in different organizational cultures.

The focus on practical application and situational learning in military ESP, as opposed to the theoretical emphasis often found in other disciplines, is a notable finding of this research. This aspect of ESP teaching, while recognized in previous studies (e.g., Chen et al., 2019), is shown here to take on heightened importance in a military context. The study expands on existing literature by illustrating how ESP teaching in the military necessitates a curriculum deeply intertwined with practical skills and real-life applications, highlighting the need for immediate utility and relevance in language instruction.

The heightened importance of cultural and contextual sensitivity in military ESP teaching, as found in this study, adds a new dimension to the existing ESP literature. While cultural sensitivity is a recognized component in ESP teaching (McKay & Brass, 2011), this study specifically illuminates its criticality in military settings. It shows how effective ESP teaching in the military goes beyond language proficiency to include an understanding of the unique military ethos and operational context.

Lastly, the study's finding on the enhanced focus on discipline and structured learning approaches in the military context contributes to a deeper understanding of ESP teaching. It contrasts with the more flexible and informal learning environments often found in other ESP disciplines (Tuomainen, 2015; Xu et al., 2020). This finding extends the scope of ESP

research by highlighting how teaching approaches must be adapted to align with the broader organizational culture, especially in disciplined and hierarchical settings like the military.

## CONCLUSION

The study embarked on an exploration of the unique aspects of teaching ESP to military forces, distinctly different from other disciplines. Set in the context of a Vietnamese EFL teacher's experiences, the study aimed to uncover the subtleties and complexities of this specific teaching domain. Employing a qualitative approach, the study focused on semi-structured interviews with a 30-year-old male Vietnamese EFL teacher, providing an in-depth view of the challenges and strategies involved in teaching English within a military context.

The thematic analysis of the interview data revealed several key findings. Firstly, the need for a unique communication style and adherence to the hierarchical learning environment in military ESP was emphasized, contrasting sharply with the more egalitarian and flexible approaches in other ESP settings. The study also highlighted the integration of military culture and hierarchy into the language learning process, underscoring the necessity for teachers to adapt their methods to align with the military's disciplined nature. Furthermore, the importance of practical application and situational learning was identified, necessitating a shift from traditional textbook learning to a more scenario-based approach. Finally, the study brought to light the heightened importance of cultural and contextual sensitivity in the military teaching context, a factor that sets it apart from other ESP disciplines.

The implications of the study on teaching ESP to military personnel are multifaceted and significant. The findings highlight the necessity for ESP programs targeted at military forces to be carefully designed to meet the specific requirements of military communication and operational contexts. This involves developing a curriculum that emphasizes direct and concise language usage, crucial for effective communication in military operations, and incorporating practical, scenario-based learning to mirror real-life military situations.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance for ESP educators in military contexts to possess a comprehensive understanding of military culture and hierarchical structures. This knowledge is vital not just for language instruction, but also for creating a conducive learning environment that acknowledges and respects the discipline and order inherent in military settings. The findings suggest that teachers in these environments need to be adept not only in teaching English but also in navigating the unique dynamics of the military culture.

Additionally, the study points to the necessity of integrating components of cultural and contextual sensitivity into teacher training programs, especially for those preparing to teach in specialized fields such as the military. This aspect of training is crucial for educators to effectively understand and adapt to the distinctive learning environment of the military, ensuring that the teaching methods employed are appropriate and effective.

Finally, the findings from this study emphasize the need for flexibility and adaptability in teaching approaches within military settings. Given the unique and demanding nature of

military environments, educators must be prepared to adjust their teaching strategies to align with the specific needs and constraints of these settings. This adaptability is key to ensuring that the language training is relevant, effective, and responsive to the dynamic and often high-stakes context of military operations. In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the specific requirements of ESP teaching in military contexts and offers important guidelines for curriculum development, teacher training, and pedagogical approaches in this specialized field.

In conclusion, this study contributes significantly to the field of ESP by providing insights into the distinct challenges and requirements of teaching English in a military context. It underscores the necessity for specialized approaches in ESP teaching, tailored not only to the linguistic needs but also to the cultural and operational realities of specific learner groups.

**LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

This study, while providing valuable insights into the teaching of ESP in a military context, does have its limitations. Primarily, the research is based on the experiences and perspectives of a single Vietnamese EFL teacher. While this focused approach allows for an in-depth exploration of individual experiences, it also limits the generalizability of the findings. The unique cultural, geographical, and institutional context of the participant means that the findings might not be directly applicable to other settings or military contexts in different countries. Additionally, the qualitative nature of the study, though rich in detail, means that the conclusions drawn are interpretative and subjective, relying heavily on the participant's self-reported experiences and perceptions. This subjective nature could influence the objectivity and replicability of the study.

To address the limitations of the current study and further enrich the understanding of ESP teaching in military contexts, future research could take several avenues. One primary direction is to broaden the participant base. By including a more diverse group of teachers from various countries and military backgrounds, future studies could offer a more comprehensive view that transcends the specific cultural and institutional context of the current study. This expansion would not only enhance the generalizability of the findings but also provide comparative insights across different military ESP environments. Such a cross-cultural and cross-institutional approach would contribute to a more global understanding of the nuances involved in ESP teaching in various military settings.

Additionally, integrating quantitative methods or adopting a mixed-methods approach could greatly benefit future research in this area. Such methodologies would bring a different dimension of objectivity and allow for the triangulation of findings, thereby offering a more holistic view of the teaching practices and challenges encountered in military ESP settings. Furthermore, conducting longitudinal studies to monitor the long-term effectiveness of various ESP teaching strategies within the military would be invaluable. These studies could provide critical insights into the sustainability and impact of different educational approaches over time. Pursuing these directions in future research would build upon the findings of the

current study, aiming to develop a richer, more detailed, and expansive understanding of ESP teaching dynamics in military contexts.

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