College English Teaching in Saudi Arabia: Challenges and Solutions

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Abstract

English is the main language used in academic and research settings worldwide, playing a crucial role in acquiring knowledge across various fields and gaining access to cultural values from different parts of the world. In Saudi Arabia, English has become a vital language for effective communication and an integral part of the educational curriculum, particularly at the university level. All new students and those joining English departments must enroll in English courses as part of the Preparatory Year Program (PYP). Despite significant investments aimed at promoting the use of English among Saudi university students, the results have not met the authorities' expectations. This paper aims to conduct a comprehensive review of research carried out by Saudi scholars and others, focusing on the challenges faced by teachers and learners in the Saudi EFL context. The study will delve into the reasons behind the perceived shortcomings in English language delivery at the university level and explore a range of issues that are widely acknowledged to impact the teaching and learning process. By reviewing available studies in the literature, the study will examine related factors and discuss potential solutions to improve the learning and teaching situation.

Keywords: Classroom challenges, college English teaching, Saudi EFL context, hybrid curriculum

1. Introduction

Teaching is a demanding profession that constantly looks for individuals who thoroughly understand pedagogy. However, teaching English as a foreign language is a more difficult job that necessitates a high level of professional consciousness informed by pertinent specialized knowledge and stated ideals (Leung, 2009; Shulman, 1986).

In recent years, there have been notable transformations in English language education in Saudi Arabia. In the past, English was introduced as a foreign language starting from the seventh grade. However, the Saudi Ministry of Education has since acknowledged the significance of English language proficiency in fostering an enlightened society, consequently making it a mandatory subject from the fourth grade through the university level. This strategic shift aligns with the broader initiatives undertaken by educational entities in Saudi Arabia to elevate the standard of English as a foreign language instruction and enhance students' academic achievements (Rehman & Alhaisoni, 2013).

There are numerous reasons why proficiency in the English language holds significant value in Saudi society. Firstly, given that the latest technological and scientific resources are predominantly written in English, mastering the language is essential for effectively accessing and utilizing these resources. Secondly, language proficiency plays a crucial role in supporting Saudi Arabia's stand among the world's major economies, contributing to its unprecedented economic growth (Almegren 2022; Alzahrani, 2017). Lastly, being proficient in English facilitates cross-cultural exchange and encourages a dialogue between civilizations, fostering the sharing of ideas between nations (Al-Seghayer, 2023).

Despite dedicating at least six years to studying English, many Saudi students lack the necessary competency at the university level (Alqahtani, 2019; Alshammari, 2021). Several studies have also indicated that many Saudi EFL learners consistently exhibit below-average English skills (Al-Nasser, 2015; Alrabai, 2016; Khan, 2011).

Therefore, the current study aims to enhance the quality of English language instruction and learning in Saudi EFL college education. It seeks to align with the Saudi Arabian government's 2030 vision, which aims to modernize the country's society and globalize its economy, especially in the fields of science and technology. Furthermore, it is in harmony with the Ministry of Education's objective of achieving improved outcomes in English language education.

2. Significance of the Study

This paper aims to highlight the challenges encountered by both educators and learners in Saudi EFL settings, presenting practical solutions to enhance language teaching and learning. EFL instructors must comprehend their teaching environment and address the challenges they encounter, contributing to the refinement of their professional practice. The study's insights into the existing instructional challenges confronted by EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia hold practical value for curriculum developers, teacher educators, and policymakers. Furthermore, the findings seek to heighten awareness among less experienced teachers, urging them to contemplate their

teaching approaches, while also assisting more experienced instructors in tailoring their instruction to better align with the specific needs of their language classrooms.

3. Methodology

The methodology adopted in this paper adheres to a well-organized and transparent approach for conducting a review research paper that specifically explores challenges in English college education within the Saudi EFL context. The systematic process, starting from the initial literature search and extending to data synthesis, yields insightful interpretations with practical implications for pedagogy. The study focuses on key themes, concepts, and variables related to these challenges, including students, teachers, textbooks, assessments, and more. The initial screening, based on titles and abstracts, assists in identifying pertinent studies. The literature search involves meticulous identification of databases, journals, and repositories, guided by a systematic search strategy. Furthermore, the review scrutinizes SLA studies conducted by Saudi scholars and others, extracting relevant information aligned with the study's objectives. Data extraction from selected studies prioritizes key findings, methodologies, sample characteristics, and limitations. Thematic and content analyses form the basis for data synthesis, addressing variations, inconsistencies, and gaps in the literature. Ultimately, the findings lead to comprehensive interpretations, concluding in a detailed exposition of pedagogical implications.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Challenges on the Part of the Students

It is imperative to discern the challenges encountered by Saudi students in their English language learning endeavors. Despite undergoing English instruction since primary school, Saudi students confront noteworthy impediments in proficiently utilizing the language they are learning. This issue pervades across students of varying proficiency levels, encompassing both novice and advanced learners.

One of the biggest obstacles to learning English is the lack of exposure to the language in students' surroundings (Fareh, 2010). Essentially, English lacks substantial presence beyond the classroom, leading to a lack of motivation among students to engage with the language. While a small number of native English speakers may be found teaching in Saudi Arabia, the overall presence of English-speaking foreigners, primarily tourists or those in the business sector, is limited. Tourists tend to concentrate on specific areas such as tourist attractions, hotels, or business establishments (Alharbi, 2015; Khan, 2011). Furthermore, the constrained proficiency of Saudi students in English may contribute to their hesitancy in utilizing the language in such contexts.

Unfortunately, a significant oversight in many English classes is the lack of emphasis on learners' intentional efforts in acquiring a foreign language. Consequently, numerous students remain uninformed about effective approaches to language learning, even after years of studying English. Only a limited subset of students, who have adopted a strategic set of methodologies, has demonstrated success in genuine language acquisition. As highlighted by Khan (2011), despite meticulous planning, a well-crafted curriculum, suitable textbooks, qualified instructors, and effective administration, the process of teaching and learning the English language appears to yield inefficacious outcomes, particularly concerning skill development.

Many researchers have stressed the importance of independent learning of a foreign language (Asmari, & Javid, 2011; Dӧrnyei, Henry & Muir, 2015; Nunan, 2003; Schmenk, 2005; Ushioda, 1996). Nunan (2003) suggested that providing clear instruction related to learning goals can promote autonomy. Further, Nunan also highlighted the importance of involving learners in designing their own action plans to achieve their goals, which makes their objectives more explicit. Jingnan (2011) emphasized the importance of students having an intrinsic motivation to take responsibility for their learning. This involves formulating learning objectives, designing activities, selecting appropriate methods, and evaluating the learning process.

Previous research suggested that mastering the skill of self-directed learning, also known as learning how to learn, is crucial for individuals who want to learn a new language. The reason is that there is not sufficient time allocated within a structured learning environment to ensure that students fully comprehend the subject matter. Additionally, if the student has not been adequately equipped with the necessary skills to take charge of their own learning outside of the classroom, it is improbable that any learning will take place. When learners take charge of their learning, the gap between them and their teacher shrinks. This results in fewer negative emotions like anxiety, frustration, and alienation, making the learner more open to learning (Brown, 1973; Dickinson & Carver, 1980; Naiman, Frohlich, Stern &Todesco, 1978; Stern, 1983)

Another major challenge in language learning, as highlighted by Fageeh's (2011) research, is that EFL learners place a great emphasis on developing their writing skills. This is a widely accepted view supported by numerous studies conducted in the Arab world, including Saudi EFL settings which suggested that a learner's ability to listen, speak, and read in English is heavily dependent on their writing competence (Alsamdani, 2010; Al Ghamari, 2004; Alkubaidi, 2014). Thus, writing skills are given more attention at the expense of other language skills. Al Shumaimeri (2003), for instance, claimed that students often leave secondary education without the ability to engage in a simple conversation in English, indicating a lack of proficiency in the language despite years of study.

Although Saudi universities tend to emphasize all skills equally during the preparatory year by utilizing textbooks that integrate various skills, writing is still the most heavily practiced skill for students particularly those pursuing an English language major at higher education. This is, however, acceptable to a great extent because the writing skill, "…… is needed for taking notes, describing objects or devices and writing essays, answering written questions, writing their compositions, writing experimental reports" (Tahaineh, 2010, p.79).

In addition to acquiring course content, it is imperative to provide students with opportunities to practice diverse communication,

interaction, and problem-solving skills within the classroom. Encouraging students to establish connections with both their instructors and the subject matter cultivates a genuine interest in learning, and mitigates potential anxiety. With the absence of encouragement, the classroom environment may become unwelcoming and intimidating, resulting in disengagement and a reluctance to participate. Consequently, students may opt for passive involvement, refraining from active participation or verbal contributions, and limiting their interactions to providing factual details in written form, particularly during examination scenarios.

Within university EFL classes, students exhibit diverse backgrounds and disparate levels of education. Discrepancies are apparent between students coming from rural areas and those from urban locales, where the latter often enjoy superior classroom facilities. Disparities further extend to the availability of resources, with some students having access to more resources, while others rely solely on textbooks for their learning materials. Furthermore, the lack of a standardized language proficiency placement test in some universities poses a potential disadvantage for weaker students. However, implementing admission tests, particularly for those joining English departments, could improve this situation by ensuring that only students with adequate English proficiency are accepted.

Students' motivation and purposes for learning English, which can vary greatly, is yet another crucial factor in the developmental processes of learning languages. Some view English as a mandatory course to be completed, without grasping its significance as a communication tool that can help them adapt to technological and scientific advancements. For many learners, English is perceived as a responsibility, rather than an enjoyable pursuit. These individuals may lack the drive to actively engage in class, and may solely aim for a passing grade to complete the course. Liton (2012) reported that Saudi EFL classes suffer from a significant lack of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Fareh (2010) similarly observed that teachers in Arab countries face considerable challenges with their learners' aptitude, initial preparedness, and motivation. They frequently express dissatisfaction with their students' low proficiency and insist that the students lack interest in learning English. In the context of Saudi Arabia, many studies claimed that EFL Saudi students primarily exhibit instrumental incentives toward learning English (Alrabai, 2014b; Daif-Allah & Aljumah, 2020; Massri, 2017).

However, when asserting claims about language learning outcomes, it is essential to meticulously consider diverse factors that can influence students' motivation, level of involvement, and commitment throughout the learning process. Al-wossabi (2022) pointed out that while motivation and aptitude are important predictors of success in learning a second language, other variables related to teachers' and learners' behaviors in the classroom should also be taken into account to gain a more comprehensive understanding of factors that contribute to L2 achievement. Liton, (2012) pointed out that most studies have focused on the issues faced by students and have placed the blame for their low performance in English on them. However, in a study conducted by Khan (2011), a different viewpoint was presented, placing the responsibility for language teaching-related issues on the teachers themselves. Khan observed that the challenges faced by teachers could arise from various factors, including inadequate teaching qualifications, lack of training as EFL teachers, inexperience as bilingual teachers, misperceptions of Arab culture, and insufficient awareness of their students' needs. According to Al-Khairy (2013) and Alrabai (2016), a lack of teacher support, a lack of student encouragement or praise, overcorrecting students' errors, criticizing students' learning attempts, peer pressure, inappropriate teaching methods, a lack of use of modern educational aids, and other factors also contribute to Saudi students' low motivation.

Many students may lack motivation to learn English because they see it as a subject that requires rote memorization of words and grammar rules, as well as the acquisition of separate skills, rather than an integrated set of skills and subskills. This perception is compounded by the fact that English is often considered a general subject alongside more specialized subjects like physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology. As a result, students, in the preparatory year, may prioritize their specialized subjects over learning the English language.

4.2 Challenges on the Part of Teachers

In many EFL classrooms, teachers tend to prioritize exam preparation for their students. While this may seem to be a reasonable objective, it is not the ultimate aim that students should strive for. Unfortunately, many students also prioritize passing exams over becoming proficient in the language they are learning. Consequently, teachers may feel afraid, guilty, or embarrassed if their students perform poorly on exams. As a result, some teachers may focus exclusively on teaching English to help students pass exams (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

Furthermore, students may exert pressure on their instructors to adhere strictly to prescribed texts. Such requests can instill a misguided sense of security among students, as they are aware that final exams are structured around these specific texts. These attitudes, therefore, may shape the instructional approaches adopted by their teachers (Beattie,1995). As a result, teachers may need to frequently alternate between pedagogically and socially oriented behaviors to cater to the learners' learning and social needs.

The researcher has observed the aforementioned behavior in some Saudi EFL contexts, where students may even ask instructors to list themes/activities that may appear in final exams. However, a good practice for reducing such pressure on EFL teachers is seen in the preparatory year at Jazan University's English Language Institute, where students' examination sheets are corrected by other raters rather than their main teachers. Furthermore, exams are created anonymously by different teachers. Students' demanding attitudes are then shifted from their teachers into investing extra effort not just in studying their textbooks but also in any supplementary resources offered by their instructors. Hence, teachers need to be more autonomous in selecting appropriate teaching practices and not be bound by social conventions or learners' expectations about how to teach and what methodology to follow (Hall, 2011).

In many Saudi EFL settings, instructors often gravitate towards traditional teaching approaches influenced by socio-cultural and institutional factors. Consequently, the adoption of communicative teaching methods may pose a challenge for them (Rehman &

Alhaisoni, 2013). Consequently, speaking skills are often overlooked in comparison to reading, writing, and listening skills. Although modern textbooks now give equal importance to all four language skills, EFL teachers still prioritize the other three skills over speaking skills. This is primarily because teaching speaking skills is more difficult, given factors such as large class sizes, time constraints, student resistance out of shyness or fear of making mistakes, and the nature of the task at hand.

Interestingly, a considerable number of Saudi EFL students demonstrating enhanced proficiency in English speaking have improved their skills outside the traditional classroom setting. Some have pursued English courses in English-speaking countries, while others have engaged in conversational classes to augment their communicative competence. These experiences underscore the notion that speaking is a particularly challenging skill to acquire and apply effectively. Consequently, we recommend a strategic allocation of additional time and resources specifically dedicated to the instruction of speaking skills, distinct from the prescribed integrative skill textbooks. These sessions should adopt a less intimidating and more student-centered approach, incorporating real-world tasks, visual/audio aids, and assessments as opposed to traditional exams.

Several researchers argue that many teachers in Saudi EFL settings often assume a more authoritative role rather than a facilitating one. Consequently, students tend to be overly reliant on teachers as the primary source of knowledge, adopting a passive stance in the learning process and functioning solely as recipients of the teachers' knowledge. This approach denies students the opportunities to engage in collaborative discovery learning with their peers (Alharbi, 2015; Al-Johani, 2009; Alkubaidi, 2014; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Fareh, 2010; Rajab, 2013).

This is not to assert that Saudi EFL classes must exclusively adopt a student-centered approach. Teacher-centeredness and student-centeredness are not inherently contradictory; instead, they collectively contribute to the attributes of a cooperative learning environment. An optimally productive learning environment facilitates independent student work while concurrently offering ample support and guidance from teachers. Such an environment should underscore the constructive nature of learning, emphasizing that both students and teachers are mutually dedicated to attaining shared objectives and learning outcomes.

4.3 Challenges on the Part of Textbooks

Generally speaking, ESL textbooks used in teaching language skills at higher education take into account the values, beliefs and customs of Saudi society. These are essential as guidance for both teachers and students. Students benefit from using ESL textbooks because they provide a reference, a syllabus that reflects predetermined learning objectives, an effective resource for self-directed learning, an effective resource for the presentation of material, a source of ideas and activities, and support for inexperienced teachers who are still working on developing their confidence (Cunningsworth, 1995). Yet, they are still written with the ESL context in mind. Themes are built around topics, places and activities that culturally and socially address different lifestyles and different ways of thinking and attitudes. One of the most demotivating aspects for learners, according to Dörnyei (2001), is that students study material that they perceive as having no relevance to their lives. Such concern arises in contexts where there is a predetermined curriculum that teachers are obliged to follow, as well as a set of skills and information that students are unlikely to use in the real world.

In the Saudi EFL context, a notable challenge in language education is the absence of cohesive and sequential systems for teaching and learning that bridge the gap between schools and higher education. This lack of alignment poses difficulties for recent school graduates in acquiring the requisite skills outlined in ESL textbooks at the higher education level. To mitigate this challenge, institutions such as Jazan University's ELI have introduced initiatives like "The Bridge Course." This program is designed to equip new students with a foundational understanding, preparing them for the English courses in the preparatory year. Tailored versions of the bridge course are crafted to accommodate students with varied specializations. These preparatory courses aim to facilitate a smooth transition for newly admitted students into their degree programs by providing a comprehensive grasp of the expected knowledge level and disciplinary requirements.

A hybrid curriculum that combines current ESL textbooks with newly created themed and text-based materials focused on students' interests and desires could be a valid solution to the above-mentioned issue. This approach will increase students' motivation and enthusiasm for the subject matter, and encourage them to use L2 in real-life situations. Additionally, it will result in higher levels of autonomous language learning and proficient language ability. By employing a hybrid curriculum, educators can broaden the range of strategies ESL textbooks offer to recycle thematic and text-based information that students find interesting. This approach may speed up language learners' proficiency (Al-wossabi, 2022). However, as pointed out by (Al-wossabi, 2022, p. 347),

> *"The idea of creating thematic and text-based content to be used in addition to the textbooks used by teachers could be challenging. It could also be viewed as a burden and as such there should be clear-cut explanations for the reasons and aims behind using a particular content-based design. Teachers' support out of their own desire to participate is useful and will in turn lead to more effective syllabus design and effectively tailored instructions"*

4.4 Challenges on the Part of Teaching Methods

In both EFL higher education and school settings, a notable issue arises when EFL teachers fail to effectively guide students in utilizing activities from their textbooks. Teachers often confine their instruction to the prescribed textbooks and curricula, typically employing explicit teaching methods. Consequently, students encounter challenges in applying their acquired knowledge to practical language use,

often resorting to completing tasks as instructed without a deeper understanding. Al-Misnad (1985) and Syed (2003) observed a tendency where students are not actively encouraged to seek knowledge independently, relying on teachers to furnish necessary information, which is then memorized and reproduced during exams.

As noted by Alrashidi and Phan (2015), a prevalent learning method among most Saudi EFL students is heavy reliance on memorization. This involves memorizing sentences, grammar rules, and vocabulary without grasping their meanings or structures. Such inappropriate classroom practices may lead to the adoption of ineffective learning strategies, hindering the development of communicative competence among Saudi EFL learners (Alkubaidi, 2014; Almutairi, 2008; Mohammad & Hazarika, 2016).

Regular professional development workshops and seminars are essential for EFL practitioners. As highlighted by Tshabalala (2014), the quality of teacher training significantly influences instructional methods and skill development, particularly for the digitally oriented generation of learners today. When compared to more experienced teachers, newly trained certified personnel have more to offer because they have new information and abilities. Thomas (2008) asserted that higher education institutions should strive to provide effective, flexible, simple, and accessible learning opportunities in order to fulfill the needs of a new generation of students enrolling in these institutions. To indicate this fact, Edge (1996) pointed out that it appears necessary for EFL countries to work toward developing language teaching methods that take into account the political, economic, social, and cultural factors and, most importantly, the EFL situations in their countries rather than relying on knowledge, methodology, and materials controlled and disseminated by Western ESL countries.

4.5 Challenges on the Part of Language Assessment

According to Alsamaani (2014), the Saudi EFL context, along with many other Middle Eastern and Asian EFL settings, places a strong emphasis on norm-referenced and objective assessment in schools. Local examination boards or individual teachers typically prepare and administer tests, while the Ministry of Education oversees the school-level examination systems. While this may not be entirely true in Saudi higher education EFL settings, objective assessments are still used to some extent. However, summative assessments, which are mainly operationalized through examinations, are prevalent in EFL Saudi settings. Those assessments place a high emphasis on questions that only require students to retrieve information from memory, without requiring higher-order critical thinking skills (Umer, Zakaria & Alshara, 2018). According to Almossa and Alzahrani (2022) in some cases where a variety of assessment tasks were used, there is a lack of standards and criteria for setting the tasks. They added that in institutions where assessment is unified, such as in the university preparatory year, teachers lack the authority to make assessment-related decisions.

Evaluating the overall language proficiency of Saudi EFL students, particularly those majoring in English language education poses a formidable challenge. The use of inappropriate assessment methods often leads to a misjudgment of students' actual language abilities. Moreover, the pressure felt by teachers for their students' performance, which reflects on the perceived quality of their work, may lead to a narrow focus on specific sections of the textbook to ensure favorable test outcomes. This approach may fall short in accurately assessing students' practical language abilities, as they are not tested on their capacity to apply and use language purposefully. Such methods present significant obstacles for students, hinder their creativity and learning, and do not facilitate instructors in achieving the desired outcomes. Instead, they contribute to a situation where students of varying proficiency levels graduate with comparable high GPAs

Another issue is that standardized/unified or centralized examination formats continue to be common in Saudi EFL higher education (Alfallaj & Al Ahdal, 2017). These exams should not be viewed as the sole indicator of a student's language abilities. They are static and frequently lack constant, constructive feedback to track student progress. Students are not given access to a clear interpretation of exam results other than being informed of their marks. This disparity can lead to students developing negative attitudes toward studying English. Additionally, instead of sharing sufficient levels of communication and full engagement and commitment in a safe learning environment, a sense of distance is created between both teachers and students.

To better fulfill the needs of their students, EFL instructors can be trained and encouraged to choose, plan, implement, and adapt alternate methods of assessment in their classrooms. These alternatives will assist in developing a more positive attitude toward learning English and achieving more effective results. For example, it may be beneficial to use more engaging modes of assessment, such as presentations, debates, portfolios, narrative essays, peer feedback, and self-assessments, among others. Specific alternative assessments' implementation may be discussed. and explained to students, which will aid in the creation of an engaging learning environment, giving emotional support to learners by complimenting their work and efforts, supporting them when necessary, discussing various forms of assessments with them, and providing them with clear instructions and helpful feedback.

4.6 Challenges Related to Large Classes

In higher education, numerous Saudi EFL classes are relatively large, particularly considering the communicative nature of language learning. In certain Saudi EFL contexts, class sizes can surpass thirty students, presenting challenges for both teachers and students in establishing an effective communicative environment. Failing to achieve such an environment may adversely impact learning outcomes (Cuseo, 2007; Herington & Weaven, 2008; Horning, 2007; Monks & Schmidt, 2011).

Hornsby, Osman, and De Matos-Ala (2013) also pointed out that teaching large classes at universities can be difficult for both teachers and students. Instructors struggle to provide a meaningful learning experience to a large number of students, while students may find it hard to gain knowledge and develop critical thinking skills. Large classes can make it challenging for instructors to design effective learning activities and monitor student progress, especially for those students who sit at the back and may not participate as much. This

can hinder the academic development of students in English (Harmer, 2000; Yu, 2004).

Smaller class sizes offer significant advantages for both teachers and students, allowing for a more focused and personalized approach to instruction. Miller-Whitehead (2003) emphasized that one notable benefit is the positive impact on teachers' morale and the reduction of discipline issues. In smaller classes, teachers can promptly identify and address problems, minimizing disruptions and fostering a conducive learning environment. Finn, Pannozzo, and Achilles (2003) highlighted the profound effects of class size on students' social and academic engagement, emphasizing that students in smaller classes feel a heightened pressure to participate actively due to increased visibility to the teacher.

Moreover, Resnick (2003) argued that smaller classes contribute to elevated student achievement, as teachers can dedicate more attention to each student, reducing distractions and off-task behavior. Monke (2010) supported this perspective, asserting that smaller classes lead to more effective teaching and improved learning outcomes. The positive influence of smaller classes extends beyond academic performance. Normore and Ilon (2006) concluded that they create a conducive environment for student and teacher engagement, allowing for more cognitive involvement and offering sufficient time for comprehensive curriculum coverage.

In the realm of language proficiency, smaller classes provide unique advantages. Horning (2007) contended that class size significantly impacts the learning-teaching process, particularly in subjects like writing and reading. Smaller classes, according to Horning, are particularly advantageous for these subjects, facilitating a more effective and focused approach to language development.

5. Pedagogical Implications

In the field of College English language education, the student's primary goal is not to just learn English but to use it to advance their personal, academic, and professional objectives. To enhance the effectiveness of English language learning, it is necessary to create additional materials beyond the existing ESL textbook. These supplementary materials need to be discipline-specific to cater to the different areas of study. A hybrid curriculum can serve this purpose and enable a more efficient delivery of English in the Saudi EFL context. By addressing the students' wants and needs in their respective fields of study, this approach can increase their motivation and minimize the negative impact of language teaching and learning challenges. Ultimately, it will help students find a purpose in using their language skills in real-life practices (Al-wossabi, 2022).

Teachers need to conduct ongoing needs analysis to identify what their students want and need in terms of language, to be able to achieve their personal, academic, and professional goals. The information collected from these surveys and examinations can help teachers specify the language requirements that are significant to particular academic or disciplinary contexts and are worthwhile to focus on in teaching. Once the needs or aims are identified, teachers can evaluate the language, skills, and disposition of their students. With this information, teachers can identify strengths that can be capitalized on and needs that must be addressed to move students to the next level.

Teachers should also select teaching approaches, methods, and materials that help them achieve the proposed objectives for the curriculum. They need to design and sequence activities proposed in the additional materials in a way that facilitates student learning. Once the supplementary syllabus is designed, it can be implemented as part of the broader curriculum in respective programs of study.

Further, teachers should evaluate whether course objectives are achieved and whether students are succeeding in their academic disciplines. Teacher-designed assessment tasks and/or tracking student performance in their disciplinary learning can be used for evaluation. Results from the evaluation provide feedback that can be used to refine and deliver supplementary materials and help evaluate their level of appropriateness to the existing ESL textbooks.

Another crucial aspect is that college English teachers must have a deep understanding of the language and classroom practices that are specific to the disciplines they teach. Since language and text play a vital role in all disciplinary teaching and learning, teachers must engage students in text discussions, which helps them understand how knowledge and values are conveyed through language and other modalities in academic disciplines.

To achieve this goal, college English teachers should receive professional development training that helps them develop their knowledge of how language works in their discipline. They also need to acquire strong skills for planning engaging units of instruction that promote the integration of language and content. Effective strategies for supporting the exploration of language and meaning in daily instruction are also essential (Schleppegrell & O'Halloran, 2011). Specifically, they may need training that will help them discover ways to engage students' interests and maximize their participation in disciplinary learning and socialization. Teachers also need to learn how to affirm students' linguistic and cultural identities while building on their everyday language and knowledge resources in their disciplinary learning (Cummins, 2014). Lastly, teachers need to develop strategies for scaffolding text comprehension and production for authentic purposes and across diverse contexts.

However, students should also participate actively in the learning process. Communication with the teacher and other students is essential for language skills to be practiced and developed. Asking questions, expressing ideas, and participating actively in class discussions are all essential to language development. Students who take ownership of their education and establish reasonable objectives are more likely to succeed. Students can ensure they are moving in the right direction by collaborating with their teacher to set clear goals and monitor their progress. Students have many opportunities in EFL classes to practice and improve their language skills. To take full advantage of such opportunities, students should keep speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English inside and outside the classroom context.

6. Conclusion

The situation of English education at the university level in Saudi Arabia is marked by both opportunities and challenges. In higher education, students are required to specialize in specific disciplines, necessitating the development of targeted knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Language serves as the primary conduit for imparting disciplinary knowledge and ideology. As Saudi Arabia undertakes a more prominent role in the global economy, the demand for English proficiency escalates, given that much of the world's academic publishing and political negotiation transpires in English. Therefore, for productive interaction with the global community, Saudi society must predominantly utilize English to learn from diverse cultures and countries and to share its own culture and products with the world.

A pivotal consideration for educators and curriculum designers is an understanding of students' needs. It is imperative for language teachers and curriculum designers to grasp the specific requirements of the students under their instruction. To facilitate this, proficient language teachers should prioritize the development or selection of curricula tailored to the diverse fields of study, thereby aligning with the needs and interests of all students. Furthermore, administrators should enact requisite measures to ensure that instructors and curriculum designers receive optimal, logistical and administrative support.

Acknowledgments

"Not applicable"

Authors contributions

"Not applicable"

Funding

"Not applicable"

Competing interests

"Not applicable"

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Sciedu Press.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

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