

**DESIGNING PROJECT-BASED ENGLISH TASKS
FOR ANIMAL HUSBANDRY STUDENTS: A CURRICULUM-
ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses in vocational higher education often face challenges related to relevance, curriculum alignment, and student engagement. These challenges are more visible in under-researched fields such as Animal Husbandry. This study presents a curriculum-oriented design of project-based English tasks for first-semester Animal Husbandry students and examines students' project outputs as evidence of learning. Using a qualitative pedagogical research design, the study documents the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) through poster projects based on real practicum activities, including pregnancy checking using ultrasonography and silage production. Data were collected from student-generated artifacts, such as posters, short written texts, vocabulary lists, and reflections. The findings show that project-based tasks helped first semester students use English in a functional way to describe procedures, explain processes, and communicate discipline-related knowledge. The student posters also show meaningful integration of language and content, as well as positive student engagement. This study suggests that curriculum-aligned project-based tasks can make ESP instruction more relevant, visible, and meaningful for vocational higher education students, particularly in Animal Husbandry study programs.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes; Project-Based Learning; Animal Husbandry; Vocational Higher Education; Curriculum Alignment

A. INTRODUCTION

English has become an essential skill for students in applied and vocational disciplines, including animal husbandry. Students in this field are increasingly exposed to English through academic sources, such as international journals and technical references, as well as through professional practices involving equipment manuals, medicine labels, and communication within global agricultural and livestock industries. As a result, English is no longer viewed merely as a general academic subject but as a practical tool that supports

learning, professional preparation, and future employability (Nur et al., 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2025; Tong & Jiang, 2022).

Despite this growing need, English instruction in non-English departments often remains disconnected from students' disciplinary contexts. In many higher education institutions, English courses for applied science students continue to rely on general English materials that emphasize grammar drills and decontextualized language practice. This approach frequently limits students' engagement and makes it difficult for them to see the relevance of English to their field of study. Previous studies have reported that general English instruction can reduce students' motivation and may not effectively support students' academic or professional communication needs (Jiang et al., 2019; Nashir et al., 2022). To address this issue, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been widely recognized as a relevant approach for teaching English in higher education. ESP is commonly understood as an approach that focuses on learners' specific academic or occupational purposes for using English (Dudley-evans, 1998; Hyland, 2022). Rather than teaching English as a uniform set of linguistic structures, ESP emphasizes the importance of context, relevance, and learners' communicative needs. According to Hyland (2022), ESP is both international in scope and specific in purpose, allowing it to be adapted across disciplines while maintaining a strong focus on contextualized language use.

The theoretical foundations of ESP highlight the central role of needs analysis and contextual relevance. Early ESP scholars such as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) that English language instruction should be informed by learners' communicative requirements rather than predetermined linguistic content. Later developments in ESP theory extend this view by emphasizing that ESP courses should reflect not only linguistic needs but also disciplinary practices and institutional goals (Dudley-evans, 1998). From this perspective, ESP functions as a bridge between language learning and participation in academic and professional communities. However, despite its strong theoretical grounding, ESP implementation in higher education continues to face significant challenges. Several scholars report that ESP courses are often difficult to implement due to limited instructional time, insufficient collaboration with subject specialists, and institutional reliance on traditional general English curricula (Nabung et al., 2024; Soruc et al., 2018). As a result, ESP is frequently delivered in a generic manner that does not fully address the specific needs of individual study programs. This lack of contextualization is particularly evident in vocational education. Research across various professional domains shows that ESP courses are often misaligned with program learning outcomes and workplace communication demands (Arno-Macia et.al., 2020; Najmaddin & Sur, 2019; Sintia et al., 2025). When English instruction is not aligned with disciplinary contexts, students may struggle to transfer language knowledge to real-world situations.

In response to these concerns, recent ESP literature increasingly emphasizes the importance of curriculum alignment. Curriculum alignment refers to the coherence between program-level outcomes, course objectives, instructional activities, and assessment practices (Bhatti et al., 2022; Shaltry, 2020). Studies suggest that aligned ESP curricula are more likely to support meaningful language use and enhance students' perception of relevance (Belyaeva, 2015; Nguyen, 2017). In vocational contexts, alignment is also closely related to industry needs and professional communication practices (Athanasidou et al., 2016; Bukhari & Patoliya, 2023).

Alongside curriculum alignment, pedagogical strategies play a key role in operationalizing ESP principles in the classroom. One instructional approach that has gained increasing attention is Project-Based Learning (PjBL). This approach emphasizes learning through extended tasks that require students to collaborate, solve problems, and produce tangible outcomes. Previous studies show that PjBL can support meaningful language use, learner engagement, and autonomy in ESP contexts (Kavlu & Muhammad, 2020; Silvani et al., 2025; Tien, 2021; Zečević, et.al., 2025). Research conducted in various disciplines, including teacher education, engineering, and natural sciences, indicates that project-based tasks can help learners connect language learning with disciplinary content (Indrasari, 2016; Krisdianata & Larasati, 2025; Zulfa et al., 2025). Nevertheless, existing PjBL research also highlights that implementing PjBL face challenges. Challenges related to teacher's planning and training, time management, students' lack motivation and understanding, limited resources and peer collaboration difficulties (Awaliyah et al., 2025; Hardono & Seli, 2025; Marentek, 2025). These findings suggest that PjBL should not be adopted as a generic method but should be designed in a way that aligns with learners' proficiency levels and curricular goals.

While ESP and PjBL have been widely explored in many vocational fields, research focusing on ESP in animal husbandry remains limited. Most ESP studies concentrate on disciplines such as engineering (Akmal et al., 2020; Birhan, 2019; Kalkayeva et al., 2025), tourism (Putra & Muyawan, 2024; Oktarin et al., 2019; Suharto & Wafom, 2024), health sciences (Agustina et al., 2025; Syukur & Kismanto, 2023), and teacher education (Gayatri et al., 2024; Murtafi'ah, 2025; Reswari et al., 2025). Only a small number of studies explicitly address English instruction in animal husbandry contexts. One notable example is the study by Nur et.al., (2024), which proposes a needs-based flipped-TPACK model for animal husbandry English. However, this study primarily focuses on instructional technology and needs analysis rather than on curriculum-oriented project task design and student learning products. This limited attention indicates a gap in ESP research. Although theoretical discussions of ESP, curriculum alignment, and project-based pedagogy are well established, few studies document how project-based English tasks are designed and implemented in under-researched disciplinary contexts such as animal husbandry. In particular, there is a lack of pedagogical accounts that foreground students' project outputs as evidence of contextualized language learning. Therefore, this study aims to present a curriculum-oriented design of project-based English tasks for animal husbandry students and to showcase the resulting student projects as learning artifacts. By focusing on the design process and the products generated through project-based learning, this study seeks to demonstrate how PjBL can make ESP instruction more visible, relevant, and meaningful for vocational learners in an under-researched disciplinary context.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative pedagogical research design aimed at documenting and analyzing instructional practices and learning products within a natural classroom setting. The study provides a systematic account of how a particular instructional design was implemented and how students responded through their learning artifacts. Such a design is appropriate for educational research that seeks to generate pedagogical insights rather than causal claims (Ishtiaq, 2019; Tisdell et.al., 2025). The study was conducted in a first-semester compulsory English course in an undergraduate Animal Husbandry program at an Indonesian higher education institution. The course consisted of 16 students with beginner-level English proficiency. All students participated in the project-based tasks as part of

normal coursework requirements. No sampling procedures were applied, as the study focused on documenting classroom practices and learning products within a naturally occurring instructional context (Tisdell et.al., 2025). English instruction was delivered as part of the regular curriculum, and the project activities formed an integral component of course assessment rather than an externally imposed intervention.

Data were collected from multiple classroom artifacts generated during the instructional process. These included: group posters produced as the final project, short written paragraphs accompanying the posters, vocabulary lists developed during task preparation, and brief written reflections completed at the end of the project. These artifacts were treated as primary data sources, as they represent students' language use and meaning-making processes within the instructional context. Data collection took place over the course of the project implementation. All student artifacts were collected at the end of the instructional cycle. To ensure ethical considerations, students' names and identifying information were removed prior to analysis. Participation in the study did not require additional tasks beyond normal course activities.

Data analysis followed a qualitative descriptive approach. Student artifacts were analyzed to identify patterns in language use, content organization, and task completion. The analysis focused on how students expressed ideas, used vocabulary, and structured basic written texts in relation to the assigned tasks. Rather than evaluating linguistic accuracy in detail, the analysis emphasized communicative clarity and the ability to convey meaning through written and visual elements. This approach is consistent with qualitative educational research that prioritizes meaning and description over quantification (Creswell, 2017). To enhance trustworthiness, the study applied data triangulation across different types of student artifacts. Consistency of patterns across posters, written texts, and reflections was examined to strengthen the credibility of findings. In addition, transparent documentation of instructional procedures and assessment criteria was maintained to allow readers to understand the context and limitations of the study (Tisdell et.al., 2025). Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Students' participation occurred as part of regular coursework, and no personal or sensitive data were reported. All artifacts included in the analysis were anonymized to protect student identity.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section reports and discusses the results of the project-based English tasks implemented in the Animal Husbandry program. Drawing on student-generated posters as learning artifacts, the discussion highlights students' use of contextualized ESP vocabulary, functional language use, and the alignment between English instruction and practicum-based curriculum objectives.

Students' Ability to Use Contextualized ESP Vocabulary

One of the most visible outcomes of the project-based English tasks was students' ability to use English vocabulary relevant to animal husbandry practices. Analysis of all student posters shows that learners were able to select, categorize, and present vocabulary items that were directly connected to practicum activities. In posters related to ultrasonography (USG), students consistently used discipline-specific terms such as *ultrasonography*, *probe*, *ultrasonic gel*, *abdominal area*, *pregnancy check*, *diagnostic method*, and *animal welfare*.

These vocabulary items were not presented in isolation, but embedded in short explanatory paragraphs that described the procedure step by step. Similarly, posters on silage production demonstrated students' familiarity with key terms such as *forage*, *fermentation*, *airtight container*, *anaerobic condition*, *nutrient content*, and *feed reserve*. Across groups, each poster included a vocabulary list ranging from 15 to 20 items. The selection of vocabulary was based on relevance and function rather than memorization. This suggests that vocabulary learning occurred through meaningful use within authentic tasks. Rather than memorizing vocabulary lists detached from real practices, students learned lexical items through meaningful use in practicum-based tasks. This aligns with ESP foundations that view language as shaped by communicative purposes and disciplinary contexts (Dudley-evans, 1998; Hyland, 2022).

Functional Language Use in ESP through Project-Based Learning

Beyond vocabulary acquisition, the posters reveal that students used English primarily in a functional manner. Rather than focusing on grammatical complexity, students selected language forms that served immediate communicative purposes. This pattern appeared consistently across all project topics, including tools and preparation for USG, procedural steps of pregnancy checking, interpretation of results, animal welfare considerations, and silage production. For example, posters on *Tools and Preparation for USG* relied heavily on technical nouns, simple descriptive clauses, and labelling practices. Although the linguistic structures were basic, the language was accurate and directly related to practicum activities. Posters describing *Steps of Pregnancy Check* demonstrated students' ability to sequence actions using procedural markers such as *first*, *then*, and *after that*. This functional use of language reflects a key principle of ESP pedagogy, in which communicative effectiveness in specific disciplinary contexts is prioritized over grammatical sophistication (Dudley-evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Hyland, 2022).

Integration of English Language and Disciplinary Knowledge

The posters also show a strong integration between English language use and disciplinary knowledge in animal husbandry. Students did not produce generic English texts; instead, they described real procedures they had performed during practicum, such as restraining ewes during USG, applying gel, interpreting ultrasound images, chopping forage, compacting silage materials, and managing storage conditions. In USG-related posters, students explained not only technical steps but also the rationale behind them, including stress minimization and animal welfare considerations. This indicates that English functioned as a medium for expressing professional knowledge rather than as an isolated subject. Similarly, posters on silage production demonstrated students' understanding of the relationship between proper processing, fermentation, and feed quality, communicated through simple but accurate English sentences. The use of images, vocabulary tables, and short descriptive paragraphs further shows that students were able to represent their knowledge multimodally. When ESP tasks are connected to disciplinary practices, students can use English to communicate familiar content, and visual learning artifacts such as posters can further support meaning-making and engagement (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Indrasari, 2016; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Hyland, 2022; Kavlu & Muhammad, 2020).

Variation of Language Genres Across Project Topics

An important contribution of this study lies in the variation of language genres represented across the posters. Although all groups worked under the same general theme of taking care of farm animals, the division of project topics resulted in diverse communicative emphases. Procedural genres were dominant in posters related to ultrasonography preparation and pregnancy checking, while explanatory and process-oriented genres appeared more frequently in posters on silage production and storage. Posters addressing *Results and Animal Welfare during USG* introduced evaluative and descriptive language, including verbs such as *detect*, *evaluate*, and *monitor*. This variation demonstrates that Project-Based Learning can naturally expose students to multiple ESP genres without explicit genre instruction. Students' ability to shift between describing tools, explaining processes, and reflecting on ethical considerations suggests that project-based tasks can support genre awareness in an implicit and accessible manner. These findings are consistent with previous ESP studies that highlight the importance of exposing learners to discipline-specific genres through authentic tasks (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Indrasari, 2016; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Hyland, 2022).

Curriculum Alignment through Practicum-Derived Projects

From a curriculum-oriented perspective, all project topics were directly derived from compulsory practicum activities in the Animal Husbandry program. This alignment played a crucial role in shaping students' engagement and language production. Because the projects were based on familiar activities—such as ultrasonography and silage making—students were able to focus on communicating known content rather than struggling to generate ideas. This supports earlier arguments that curriculum-aligned ESP tasks reduce cognitive load and allow learners to allocate more attention to language use (Bhatti et al., 2022; Shaltry, 2020). Moreover, the alignment ensured that English learning complemented, rather than competed with, disciplinary objectives. Through these projects, English functioned as a medium for consolidating disciplinary knowledge, reinforcing the idea that ESP can serve both language and content learning goals simultaneously.

Student-Generated Posters as Learning Artifacts

The posters produced in this study functioned as tangible learning artifacts that made students' learning visible. Each poster reflected students' decisions regarding vocabulary selection, content organization, and visual representation. While linguistic accuracy varied across groups, all posters demonstrated students' attempts to negotiate meaning using English in discipline-specific contexts. This finding supports previous research suggesting that student-generated products are valuable indicators of learning in PjBL contexts, as they make students' learning processes and outcomes visible (Indrasari, 2016; Kavlu & Muhammad, 2020). Importantly, the posters also revealed students' growing awareness of professional communication. In posters addressing animal welfare during USG procedures, students explicitly linked diagnostic practices with ethical considerations, indicating that ESP tasks can support not only technical communication but also professional values. To provide concrete examples of students' learning artifacts, selected mini posters are presented in the figure 1.

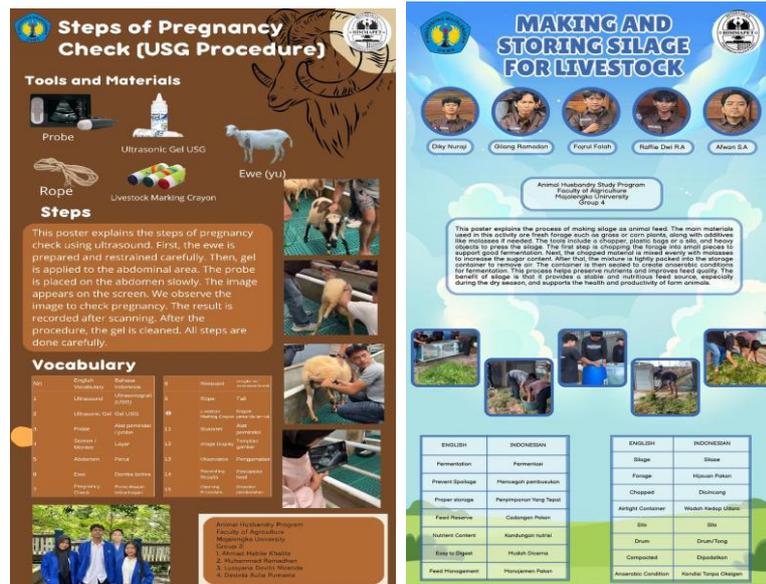


Figure 1. Samples of Students' Project-Based Posters

The posters were selected to illustrate how students used English to communicate discipline-specific knowledge derived from practicum activities.

Addressing the Gap in ESP for Animal Husbandry

The collective analysis of all poster projects contributes to the limited body of literature on ESP in Animal Husbandry. While ESP studies have been widely conducted in engineering, tourism, and medical contexts, research focusing on animal husbandry remains scarce. This study responds to this gap by documenting how project-based English tasks can be designed around practicum activities and by presenting student-generated posters as empirical evidence of learning. Unlike needs-analysis-focused studies such as Nur et al. (2022), this study foregrounds learning products as the primary data source. The findings demonstrate that PjBL enables Animal Husbandry students to use English flexibly across different communicative purposes, even at an early stage of language learning. The findings suggest that PjBL offers a viable pedagogical strategy for implementing ESP in Animal Husbandry programs, particularly in contexts where students' English proficiency is limited. Designing projects around practicum activities allows English instructors to align language learning with disciplinary goals while maintaining student motivation. The variety of poster topics further indicates that ESP instruction does not need to be narrowly defined. Instead, it can encompass a range of communicative tasks that reflect the diversity of professional practices in animal husbandry. Through curriculum-aligned project design, ESP courses can become more relevant, meaningful, and supportive of students' future professional needs.

D. CONCLUSION

This study shows that PjBL can be an effective strategy to implement ESP in Animal Husbandry program when tasks are aligned with practicum activities. By designing English projects based on real practices, English was used as practical tool for communication rather than as an abstract subject. The student posters demonstrate that beginner-level learners are able to use English to describe procedures, explain processes, and present discipline-related

information in a clear and meaningful way. Across all project topics, students showed engagement with English through relevant vocabulary and simple sentence structures. The posters also helped make students' learning visible and increased their sense of ownership over the task. From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that ESP instruction in vocational education benefits from task designs that build on students' existing disciplinary knowledge. In conclusion, PjBL can help make ESP instruction more relevant, meaningful, and accessible for Animal Husbandry students. However, this study is limited to a single class and instructional setting. Future research could examine similar project-based ESP designs in different institutions or over a longer period of time. Therefore, further studies may also explore how students' language use develops across multiple projects or how multimodal elements support ESP learning.

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