

## Should English Teachers Teach Science? - An Action Research on the Foundation English Program of Applied Sciences

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The purpose of the present study is to investigate the desirable proportions of Specific English Content (SEC) and General English Content (GEC) in the Foundation English Program (FEP) at the Faculty of Applied Sciences of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, where the students need English for academic and general communication purposes. The study is an action research, which is an investigation to improve the teaching process. The study uses comparison of Placement Test (PT) and Mid-semester Test (MT) results, item analysis of the MT results, and analysis of students and teachers surveys as its methods of study. The results of the study show that the average mark a student scored at the PT, 60%, has risen to 64% in the MT although the former comprised more GEC and the latter more SEC. The item analysis of the MT reveals that out of the 6 SEC items, 4 show desirable Item Facility values. With the 6 GEC items, however, only one item shows such desirability. Analysis of stakeholder surveys reveals that overall desirability of the students over the GEC of the FEP is 48%, whereas with the students the same percentage is over the SEC. The results lead to the conclusion that the students in the setting can acquire SEC efficiently with proper teaching intervention. As the test results and students feedback depict a slightly more desirability of the GEC, efficient handling of the GEC, with the revealed proportions of both, is recommended.

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