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Considerations of General College English: Issues and Solutions

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This study explores a rationale for introducing English for College Specific Purposes (ECSP) to bridge the gap between College English (CE) - that is, English for General Purposes (EGP) - and English Medium Instruction (EMI), by raising several considerations for a successful implementation of ECSP. For this purpose, issues that have emerged from EGP and EMI courses are studied based on a literature review including English for academic purposes and college English in a broader manner. From this literature review, this study developed the concept of ECSP and the main factors that cause the gap between EGP and EMI. The main difficulty with CE is that it has little academic content connection to students' particular disciplines. Factors involved with EMI are content load and linguistic load; they have been found to be too high for university students. To solve these issues, this study suggests that an ECSP course needs to be employed as a part of a general college education program and as a transitional course between the two. For the successful implementation of the ECSP, several ideas must be considered: course objectives, the language medium, the allocation of course time, the appropriate level of language and content, and the training and selection of teachers for the ECSP.

[ECSP(English for College Specific Purpose)/EGP(English for General Purposes)/ College English/General College Education]

I. INTRODUCTION

College English is generally defined as an instrumental subject for the reading of English major texts as well as those in liberal arts (Isabel, 2010). Following this definition, the objectives of College English is two-fold: to help students succeed in their major academic field and to help students digest various liberal arts subjects written in English (ibid). Liberal arts subjects include the humanities, the social sciences, natural

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science, fine arts, and other disciplines that enhance college students' critical and basic knowledge in order for them to be leaders in our society (Kim, 2009). In addition to those two objectives, college English aims to help students to improve their communicative competence.

Recently, as a more practical purpose of college English, TOEFL or TOEIC courses have been widely accepted on the grounds that students consider practical English to be the most important factor. In this rapidly changing society, English as a communicative means is necessary for most professional occupations (Suh, Kim, Kang & Shim, 2006). Students have become more sensitive to real life conditions, and they consider university English to be a means for improving practical communicative ability or for obtaining higher test scores in the liberal arts. Given that universities consider students' needs and wants, the degree of satisfaction with college English courses must be within reasonable parameters. Research results on general English courses, however, indicate that some university students have little motivation to study college English because it does not provide ample opportunities to study academic English, which would be effective in encouraging university students to enter English Medium Instruction (EMI) courses. Students completing the College English course or English for General Purpose (EGP) have still found a huge gap between their English abilities and that which is required for an EMI course.

Since the beginning of this century - while comprehensive statistical data are still lacking - there has been universal recognition of the accelerating trend towards English-medium instruction in universities in ESL and EFL countries (Coleman, 2006). A number of tertiary-level students studying in their subject courses have taken EMI courses (ibid). As Korean society tries to stay abreast of globalization, it is accepted that university students need develop their ability to compete in international fields. They need to be equipped to take EMI courses. In reality, however, they have found several factors that impede their taking such EMI courses.

This study, therefore, explores a rationale for employing English for college specific purposes (ECSP) to bridge the gap between EGP and EMI. In addition, some considerations for the successful implementation of ECSP are proposed. For this purpose, issues that have emerged from EGP and EMI courses are studied based on a literature review and previous research.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, the concept and the role of the college general English and EMI courses will be reviewed generally along with the main factors that cause the gap between them.

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1. College English as EGP

College English is a part of General Education in many EFL contexts including Korea. General education originated from the European Renaissance of the 15th century. As the result of economic and political changes in Italy, citizens came to believe that they needed to be educated in a broad range of subjects in order to equip themselves with the skills and knowledge to successfully participate in their society (Kim, 2009). Since then, while the topics included in a general education curriculum have changed, the core concept has remained essentially the same. Today, with respect to this core concept, the purpose of a general college education, regardless of major, is for undergraduate students to become informed citizens; citizens with an ability to make critical judgments, and to be aware of the pleasures of intellectual and artistic pursuits (ibid).

Generally, in many EFL countries, CE - as part of general education program - is taught to university students during their first two years. This CE is intended to provide an efficient communicative problem solving methodology to a variety of groups of students while attending to their general academic needs (Hyland, 2006). The purpose of CE is normally to equip EFL students with communicative skills and strategies necessary to perform academically in an effective way at university and achieve their graduation. More specifically, the CE is based on the premise that, in any educational program, its main goal is to assist language learners to obtain an adequate ability in order to prepare students to acquire "the skills and language that are common to all disciplines" (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2000, p. 41). Recently, however, a more practical purpose of college English has been more widely employed in college general education: the introduction of TOEFL or TOEIC courses, or practical communication courses that meet the language needs of the students (Kwon, 2012; Choi & Chang, 2013).

CE as a general English course has been compulsory for all majors at the tertiary level in Korea. Even with various CE programs, it has been pointed out that a great number of the students still look for better English programs in private language institutions or for those in English-dominated countries (Seong & Chang, 2008). Some of the reasons that provoke this phenomenon have been based on dissatisfaction with English courses among university students; CE courses are felt to be ineffective, and have little major-related English content or topics (ibid). In a self-reporting survey about the learner's level of motivation toward the CE content, 49 percent of the participants presented no-response. This high rate of absence, with half of the participants providing no answer to the question, indicates that the learner's level of interest in the content of the General English course was significantly low (Seong & Chang, 2008).

In order to respond to a student's needs or goals, the content of CE courses should be relevant to his/her academic major content, rather than simply English for general

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purposes (EGP); this normally includes English conversation, reading, general writing, and speaking. To enhance college students' motivation, Richards (2007) suggests English for academic purposes (EAP) be implemented in CE courses; it should relate to the very basic content of their academic field. Students' majors and academic fields are varied; therefore, EAP also should consider the students' particular interest areas among the vast and varied fields. Along the same line, Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) also contend that CE designers need to consider students' goals and needs in a comprehensive way. In addition, Stoller (2001) points out that the CE courses must prepare students for the demands required of them in subject-matter classrooms; this should be the main objectives of CE education, especially in EFL environment.

2. English Medium Instruction

The worldwide increase of English use in a variety of areas has led to many changes in tertiary educational institutions. Today, in non-English speaking countries, English is no longer simply taught as a foreign language subject itself, but as the medium of instruction (Mahmut & Azamat, 2012). This trend demands English mediated instruction in universities regardless of a student's major or future career. This consequently poses particular challenges for tertiary education, especially when a student's English proficiency level is low or his/her basic background knowledge (in English) does not meet the requirements from his/her major field study. While struggling both with demanding academic tasks and the use of a foreign language, some students' efforts inevitably see a degree of failure and underachievement in overall academic performance or success (Aynur, 2012).

In EMI, simultaneous language and content learning is not easy for EFL university students because students are required to be able to construct written or oral texts in their own specific academic field, and also to engage in various academic tasks which include reading texts specific to their area of study, note-taking during lectures, and making presentations or discussions (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Thus, as Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) note, EMI is directly related to instruction which requires the communicative practices or tasks that a certain group of students are expected to accomplish in a given discipline-specific academic context.

Because of the differences that exist between EGP and EMI, students who are currently completing EGP courses but have limited literacy proficiency - which is necessary for major field success - find themselves in a 'meandering stream without the stepping stones' needed to reach their goals. This literacy gap appears to contribute to these students' unpreparedness to meet their academic challenges in terms of both the major's content and linguistic ability necessary for their university courses (Katie &

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Geoffrey, 2011). The gaps between CE and EMI can be summarized in the following two areas.

1) Content Knowledge

The challenge met by university students is that the content knowledge of their EMI subject courses is much more complicated than what they learn in their EGP courses. Research indicates that students in intermediate and even in advanced classes generally exposed the difficulties that occurred both in their EMI and in non-EMI classes (Kim, 2011). In recent years, research findings indicate that a particular difficulty that EMI students face is listening comprehension in their academic discipline courses (Daniel & Oh, 2013) In this regard, the fields of cognitive psychology and linguistics have conducted research on the relationship between the degree of language learners' comprehension and their existing background knowledge (Kang & Kim, 2013; Long & Reseigh, 1989). Background knowledge refers to schematic knowledge as one of the main contributors to the comprehension of information. Background knowledge also depends on the context; that is, technical and cultural knowledge or topic familiarity. Prior to the 1970s, listening was recognized as a receptive skill, and so listeners were believed to passively process the information presented to them; afterward, however, cognitive psychology came to consider listeners as active processors of the given information (Long & Reseigh, 1989). In terms of the significant role of background knowledge, Lynch (1996) pointed out that it is language learners' weaknesses or inappropriate background knowledge that prevents them from comprehending essential information, rather than only inadequate linguistic structural or grammatical competence.

With respect to reading comprehension, some studies (Schmidt & Barbara, 1994) have indicated that prior knowledge supports reading comprehension in both the first and second language. In the same vein, Kintsch and Van (1978) concluded that possession of little topic-related knowledge or basic background schemata have negative effects on comprehension not only at the level of text information operation but also at other cognitive processing levels such as recall or summarization.

Similarly, concerning the role of schemata or background knowledge on reading or listening comprehension, regardless of first or foreign language text, Carrell (1989) investigated the simultaneous effects on ESL reading comprehension of content-specific schemata. For each of the two groups of readers, one text had familiar content, the other unfamiliar. Within each group, one half of the subjects read the text with familiar content and the other half read the text in an unfamiliar content. This study indicated that the group with familiar content experienced good reading comprehension. In contrast, the other group, with unfamiliar content, produced poor reading comprehension. Jensen and

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Christa (1995) also investigated the effects of background knowledge of the topic on EAP courses in a listening-test. The findings indicated that the students' prior knowledge had a significant effect on their comprehension in some lectures. Thus, background knowledge in a particular discipline plays a significant role in reading and listening comprehension in EMI or academic English courses.

2) Linguistic Differences

The academic language used for EMI courses is typically different from EGP in terms of both lexical density and field specific discourse conventions. Lexical density is used in academic contexts in order to achieve informational density, and these contexts typically have a high proportion of discipline specific concept density (Vande, 1994). The more specific a certain discipline is, the more dense it becomes in order to make the meaning explicit. Explicitness is valued in academic contexts (ibid). It is the lexical choices that are typically considered a measure of explicitness; there is often a development of discipline-specific technical terms. The density of academic text is based on the mutual expectations of the writer of the academic texts with the reader or listener. Unfortunately, the discipline-specific content may be such that readers who are familiar with just EGP texts would have great difficulty grasping the discipline specific text's meaning. With regard to the lexicon, academic language does, of course, often contain technical terms, or specialized vocabulary commonly used in a particular discipline. This is true for almost all professional fields from business administration to experimental laboratories; additionally, the language is sometimes formal and sometimes informal. This discipline-specific vocabulary has to be learned in the students' major academic courses if they are to be successful.

A second feature of EMI text that differs from EGP includes academic grammar or discourse conventions, as noted in Elizabeth (2012). These appear within the discursive style and are repetitively used within particular discipline contexts. These discipline specific conventions, therefore, prevent EGP learners from fully comprehending the academic text. This does not mean that the grammar, syntax structure, or linguistic conventions are intentionally made less comprehensible to the EGP readers, but academic text writers are familiar with the field specific syntax of academic texts and use it in conventionally structured ways. Therefore, even when the writer elucidates the discipline-specific academic text, it may not be comprehensible to EGP readers. More specifically, the academic grammar and text structures in EMI subject matter are seldom the focus of EGP courses. This is problematic, especially for nonnative English speakers because English native speakers have many more opportunities to encounter this academic text; e.g., in their leisure time or when reading academic magazines.

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In summary, with regard to the lexical density and specific discourse features of field-specific academic contexts, particular discipline-related, genuine texts are problematic with respect to EFL students' comprehension. A student needs to comprehend and present both vocabulary and discourse conventions in order to create the generic meaning of a particular discipline in an appropriate context. This level of explicitness, which is required by EMI courses, is much different from that which is required for EGP.

III. SOLUTION DIRECTIONS

The findings of Chapter Ⅱ reveal the main reasons for university students' dissatisfaction with CE courses; the language studied and content taught in the courses often do not meet their real EMI content. A study conducted in East Asia (Chang, 2010), revealed that Taiwanese undergraduate students also required more language support at their universities; this support would be more highly relevant to field-related academic English than to general English.

College General English focuses on language; EMI courses, however, mainly deals with content relevant to field-specific knowledge (Evans & Green, 2007). The gap between CE and EMI courses should be bridged for student success in EMI courses; this has been pointed out by many EAP scholars (see also Widdowson, 1998).

These two courses need stepping stones without which students taking CE courses may experience significant difficulties. Needed are both language and background content knowledge, the two requiring significantly different focus. Also to be noted, as Swales (1990) pointed out, cognitive styles and strategies necessary for learning content knowledge and those for learning general language may not be compatible. Thus, the functions and forms of language instruction in a language class and those of a content class may be quite different. There should be, therefore, courses that bridge the gap between General English and EMI in universities. This chapter, therefore, suggests language-focused or content-focused courses which are appropriately designed for a particular college level unit.

1. English for College Specific Purposes

Notably, EMI is designed based on some absolute course objectives to meet learners' and instructors' goals and needs; to be relevant in its subject matter in the particular discipline, occupation, or activity; to serve the lexical and grammatical requirements of the related fields, and to be different and distinct from General English (Strevens, 1988). A significant gap, however, exists between CE and EMI as noted in the previous chapter.

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The language-focused CE courses and content-focused EMI courses have different and distinct course objectives; this implies that language or content are relatively emphasized or deemphasized depending on the course.

One of the classroom applications of language learning is the content-based instruction (CBI). CBI is the teaching and learning of language through content or subject-specific materials (Zohrabi, 2010). The concept of CBI needs to be incorporated into designing English for College Specific Purposes. CBI has stimulated global interest since the end of the 1990s and has been put into practice in various instructional settings (Stoller, 2001), especially in foreign language teaching (Stryker & Leaver, 1997). The internationalization of education suggests that CBI be used to cultivate talented students who will be proficient in both English and specialized subjects. In Southeast Asia, the rise in popularity of CBI approaches is attributed to the development of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses in tertiary settings (Chapple & Curtis, 2000). This is true also for many EFL countries. In CBI, the stress is on subject matter; however, some CBI designs are aimed at language acquisition rather than content acquisition, and others vice versa. CBI is based on the premise that meaning is carried through content which consequently enhances language acquisition. Bell (1999), however, argues that language and content are essentially interrelated, and it is erroneous to separate them. Wesche (1993) noted that, in CBI, the sequential order of language elements are determined by the content. In this approach, students are presented and asked to use academic subject matter. The proponents of CBI therefore believe that content or topics in the language program which are related to learners' goals can motivate them to learn language indirectly. In this regard, Stoller (2001) insisted that CBI courses be organized and based on academic content - or academic tasks in some cases - and be basic resources for curriculum design.

The subject matter presented and practiced in a language program should comprise topics or themes which are related to the students' specific field of study (Zohrabi, 2010). It is recognized that one of the strengths of EMI is that it is directed towards the demands of specific disciplines, but the context where EMI is implemented should be acknowledged in terms of the differences between the two. As Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002) insist, there exist very significant differences between differing disciplines.

It should be pointed out here that CE with little relevance to students' major disciplines barely help students to function effectively in the specific fields of their studies. It also should be pointed out that the discourse of differing disciplines does not form a unitary fundamentality, but a variety of subject-specific literacies. In reality, in many universities in the EFL context, CE courses are offered to students without regard to their majors; as a result significant gaps are created. These gaps could be bridged by a common discipline language course categorized as a unit for a college level. These could

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be a college of natural science, a college of humanities, a college of social science; or, more specifically, a College of Life and Science Technology, a College of Political Science & Economics, a College of Engineering, and so on. Examples of colleges, majors, and course names are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Position of ECSP in the Continuum from EGP to EMI

Language Focus		Content focus	
General Education	Gap between CE and EMI	Major Education	
	College Level (Example)	Major Level (Example)	Course name (Example)
EGP	ECSP	EMI	
TOEIC TOEFL English Writing English Reading	English for College of Life and Science Technology	Department of Biotechnology	Immunophysiology (English) Organic Chemistry (English) Plant Physiology(English)
		Department of Environmental Science and Ecological Engineering	Soil/Environmental Engineering (English) Environmental Microbiology (English)
	English for College of Social Science & Economics	Depart of History	History of Western Civilization (English) Western History and Culture (English)
		Department of Economics	International Finance (English) Macroeconomics (English)
		Department of Public Administration	Comparative Public Policy (English) Urban Management and Policy (English)

ECSP in Table 1 above is for a specific level of college unit (e.g., English for College of Life and Science Technology) rather than for the entire group of university students including all colleges, and rather than for a level of very specific majors in each department. The characteristics of each academic discipline in the level of each college unit build the rationale for the employment of each ECSP. Mathematics, for example, seeks to represent and explain relationships between phenomena in space and time, while literary studies seek to appreciate, explain, and critique works of literature. Thus, as Unsworth (2001) pointed out, each academic characteristic differs in its language discourse and content meaning dealt with by each different discipline. Science deals with experiment reports and with causal explanations with science-specific discourse structures, while history values causal and factorial explanations and discussions.

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In Table 1, the nature of ECSP indicates that students have to deal with the college-level culture of their specializations and with its specific discourse. Being offered a selection of different college level ECSPs, the students learn the common basic content knowledge and discourse structure of a specific discourse community which has its own unique lexis, genres, and content. It is recognized that in science, for example, there are concepts, reasoning processes, and discourse structures that are common to that field, and there are also distinguishing tasks common to each. With regard to content area, some processes are common to speakers of different languages when studying in a particular academic field such as science or history. With regard to language features, language in academic areas cannot be said to maintain a common discourse; the language that we use identifies us with a discourse group that is organized around a specific discipline. Because each discipline has its own universality and uniformity, ECSP courses need to identify and teach the lexical items, discourse structures, specific language functions which are most commonly used in a particular discipline. Natural science, for example, includes specialties such as biology and earth science whose basic background content can be categorized as belonging to the same discipline.

As students leave EGP and go on to EMI, which might require, for example, an expository essay, there is a course expectation that the student exhibit an ability to employ subject-specific knowledge and subject-specific language features such as genre, academic writing structure, registers, and discourses. Harnessing all these abilities in terms of academic background content and language features commonly used at the college level becomes a stepping stone for academic success in a student's field. Successful employment of ECSP could link students' language abilities to their major discipline by controlling the range of the basic common content and discourse structure and by compensating for the demotivational factors produced by CE courses.

2. The Concept of ECSP: Sheltering

The term 'sheltering' has become a widely used metaphor signifying a common pedagogical intervention designed to support English language learners simultaneously by allowing them to gain English proficiency and academic content knowledge (Anny, 2011). The term 'sheltering' emerged in the 1980s and was suggested by Stephen Krashen (1985) as a way for L2 students to be successful in their content classes while responding to the transition difficulties. These classes were intended to overcome the difficulties of students who have, for example, limited proficiency in the language of instruction. These L2 students were not ready for their regular academic courses. According to Krashen's theory and practice in the area of second language acquisition (1985), learners gradually develop linguistic proficiency with the aid of modified context

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that employs the sheltering concept. This concept of sheltering can be applied to ECSP because it has the potential to meet the requirements in EMI courses if either the language or academic content in EMI is simplified or modified to a broader field (e.g, natural science in general), rather than being too specific to the discipline (e.g., bio-technology at the major level).

It seems hardly reasonable to expect students to learn when they can hardly comprehend the instruction. The concept of sheltering is therefore applied to two main areas, content or background knowledge and linguistic areas. A major concept of ECSP is sheltering content knowledge in order to shelter the cognitive load through content support. In text or a context where much technical terminology or a high cognitive demand is required, students need to be fitted into appropriate levels that are customized to the learners. In other words, if EMI content is too difficult either because of the mediated language or content itself, either the former or latter should be modified in ECSP course.

Based on universities' current levels of beginner, intermediate, and advanced, instruction needs to be simplified and steps taken to gradually introduce students to in-depth instruction. This sheltering concept in ECSP is supported by some researchers; for example, Evans and Green (2007, p. 5), in a study conducted with Hong Kong undergraduate students, concluded that most Hong Kong undergraduates not only require language support at university, but also academic support through common core content for college specific purposes rather than general English. The rationale for this support is that, when students have difficulties comprehending what their instructor is trying to deliver to them, students often tend to think or believe that the course content itself is too complicated. Without some previous knowledge of disciple-specific vocabulary, the instructor's attempts to teach or explain become a fruitless effort. Learner-level appropriate content or background knowledge must be offered. It is necessary for students to have basic content knowledge in their major specific subjects before taking EMI lectures. The content needs to be modified and presented gradually prior to these lectures, thus creating a better environment for EMI classes.

A second concept of ECSP is sheltering at the linguistic level. The main problem with EMI is that most of the class time is spent on helping students to comprehend the content; the class time is devoted to content rather than language. The students consequently have little chance to learn the language or how to deal with their reading, speaking, writing, and listening. In EMI there is rarely any time for or coverage of structure and language forms; students learn their subject matter topics rather than the language forms and functions. In addition, EMI courses are usually taught by non-native subject teachers who have little knowledge of language teaching methodology or theory. If the instruction were taught through the medium of general English, it would be

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possible for the learners to use the language acquired from general English courses; they could generalize their knowledge. If the instructors, however, use unfamiliar lexis and discourse structures, the students will have serious difficulties. A main linguistic feature is vocabulary: words which may generally be used as ideas with similar meanings in other contexts. In discipline specific contexts, however, such words may have very specific meanings that differ from their general usage meanings. In other words, while the general use of a word can be applied to a general context, there are also many lexical items which can only be used with special reference only in a specific context. Some words may be little understood to some students in EMI courses, and some words are used in a way which was not identical with the way that they are used in general English or other disciplines.

In summary, there are certain aspects of language which are peculiar to specific contexts. There are certain structures, functions, and lexical items with particular conceptual meanings that are peculiar to the world of a specific EMI that are rarely found in general English. If university students overtly value improvement of more general English competencies with respect to general education, then taking EMI in their major may pose serious difficulties. Some students may not be able to avoid the gap between the CE focused on language and the EMI focused on content. As indicated by Table 1, ECSP attempts to bridge the gap by presenting some of the common academic language and content knowledge of a college-specific context that are to be used to accomplish certain tasks set by the students' major departments. This is the rationale for employing ECSP as a bridge between EGP and EMI.

IV. CONSIDERATIONS FOR ECSP EMPLOYMENT

An introduction of ECSP needs to consider several variables in order for students to prepare for their EMI courses and motivate them to attend CE courses.

1. Needs Analysis

When designing or implementing an ECSP course, two broad factors should be considered for needs analysis. The first one applies to both students and instructors. It is recognized that a general needs analysis for students can better help them to achieve their goals regarding the use of the English language within an academic context. It should be noted here, however, that instructor's needs also should be analyzed in tandem with the students' perceived needs by considering the practicalities of implementing an ECSP (Suh, 1990). As Wales (1993) pointed out, it is the instructors in ECSP programs

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who actually comprehensively understand the learners' levels of general English, subject specific English, subject content area, and the university's goals in their courses. Along with these two analyses, another factor that needs consideration is an analysis of the learners' deficiencies both during and at the end of the course. Through this deficiency analysis conducted multiple times, the learners' needs in the areas of language, content area, or academic skills can be identified; as well as the learning gaps between target language use and current learner proficiencies. In addition, the target content competencies and current background knowledge can also be identified (Belcher, 2006). The main reason that many ECSP courses fail to meet students' expectations is that some universities conduct needs analysis only at the beginning of their programs, focusing only on student wants (Stoller, 2001). Needs analyses, therefore, should not be limited merely to students' target uses of language. It should specify learners' lacks (i.e. the areas in which they need help) along with their wants (i.e. what they would like to acquire) (Zohrabi, 2010).

2. Course Objectives and Teaching Methodology

Problems may arise when ECSP is employed, one of which may be a false expectation on the part of learners or instructors that their main purpose in the course is to study only subject-specific matters on the grounds that the ECSP is simply a preparation for their EMI courses. In an ECSP, the learners may have different proficiency levels and differing background knowledge; homogeneous classes are unlikely to occur. Student needs and wants differ greatly; some students want to focus on the subject content, while others may want to enhance their level of language proficiency relevant to the discipline in order to successfully contribute to their EMI.

To maintain and enhance student interest, and to balance language and content, course objectives can be created according to the learners' needs. If the learners' needs are focused on content, the teaching methodology can be adjusted accordingly; cooperative inquiry learning or investigative learning methodology could be applied in the college of natural science. If the students' needs incline toward language learning with some need for subject matter content learning, the instructional design can focus on language learning methodology; task or activity based teaching could be considered. In either case, a content or subject matter related topic should be employed in ECSP. As an example, by presenting a topic with language-focused learning in an art history course, the instructors may find it effective to apply experiential language learning activities based on the text where students interact with each other through a meaning negotiation process. This activity may provide the learners with the opportunity to take an active role in their course instead of the passive roles that are often found in a lecture-based ECSP

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class. Activities found to be successful in this course may include many language games, pair or group dictations, paired questions and answers, and content-related, task-based activities or role plays that include interviews, etc. All of these are normally recognized as effective communicative language teaching and learning, or task-based teaching and learning.

Another option may be the incorporation of common competencies of language and content areas, which are simultaneously focused on academic skills and language learning skills. Medical English (ME) as prerequisite EMI course, for example, is offered to medical students in some medical colleges. The course is usually taught by medical subject teachers in general, using teaching materials that introduce basic medical knowledge in English but include more broad medical terminology. ME instruction, however, like many other specific major discipline EMI courses, expects English language proficiency improvement; but, in the context in which medial instructors teach without language teaching training, little connection can be expected between ME and CE in terms of curriculum objectives, teaching and learning methodologies and activities, and learning assessment. To strengthen this connection, common core objectives need to be incorporated. When employing ECSP for the purpose of integrating EGP and EMI, an incorporating idea was suggested by Yang & Zhang (2013). With respect to Medical Science education, seven domains are suggested as global essential requirements for medical education (ibid): (1) professional values, attitudes, behavior and ethics; (2) the scientific foundation of medicine; (3) clinical skills; (4) communication skills; (5) population health and health systems; (6) management of information; (7) and critical thinking and research.

Among these seven domains, critical thinking, information management, and communicative skills are also included in the main objectives for EGP language course learning; therefore, when employing ECSP, the three common objectives (3), (4), and (7) can be the core competencies for both domains, as Yang and Zhang (2013) pointed out. To be more concrete, medical students are required to have the ability to communicate effectively with their patients or the patients' families, and their colleagues both in written and spoken interaction. These competencies need to be developed in the ECSC as learning objectives in a context where meaningful use of general and medical language are equally emphasized through language learning tasks or other activities appropriate for medical tasks (see also Richards & Rodgers, 2001). It is therefore suggested that the sharing of objectives in developing medical students' communicative skills, critical thinking skills, and management information skills becomes the key competency of the common-core objectives which, in the same sense, can be applied to other disciplines such as the college of business or engineering. These common curricular elements in a college unit level would simultaneously integrate language and

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content teaching; they would eventually bridge the gap between EGP and EMI. ECSP, positioned at the middle of the language-content continuum, may need to employ the common core curricular elements in many cases.

3. Course Allocation

A study on preferable course allocations indicated that the general CE course needs to continue through the four years, rather than for only one or two years (Seong & Chang, 2008). In most EFL countries where EMI courses are implemented with little or no ECSP or with only general courses, undergraduate students are not offered general English language courses over a long enough period of time, usually only for the first or first and second semester. Students need to be exposed to general English language instruction throughout the whole period of their studies (Zohrabi, 2010). When students obtain sufficient language proficiency, they are much better able to deal with their subject-specific texts; this is indicated through cognitive load theory applied research (Sweller & Cooper, 1985). Students, however, for many reasons including the limited hours of EGP classes, insufficient teaching resources, or university facilities being unavailable for the courses during the whole four years, are encouraged to study independently, even though both the instructors and the learners recognize the need for increasingly advanced English instruction over their entire course of studies.

When ECSP courses are included and implemented as part of a general college education, course allocation for English instruction needs to be implemented over the entire four years. In some cases, research findings indicated that some students with lower language proficiency preferred to limit their CE education to the time before entering their junior year. This reflected the situation of university students who spent most of their college years in preparation for their careers, to prepare for their certification tests, to concentrate on their major subject matter, or to prepare for a qualifying test for graduation. Research indicates that this is particularly true for junior and senior years. University students' wants and needs are, however, varied. A study showed that around 40 percent of university students who scored below 80 preferred to take CE until their second year of college, while 36 percent of the students who scored over 80 preferred to take CE until their fourth year of college (Seong & Chang, 2008). Given that a considerable number of students want to have optional ECSP courses during their entire university studies, it is recommended that course allocations for the ECSP should be based on a comprehensive analysis of the needs of both students and instructors. Whenever ECSP courses are needed to compensate for language or content deficiencies, opportunities should be provided regardless of the level of grade or school year.

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4. Language Medium

With regard to the language mediated in the general university English courses, an analysis of a study indicated that 80 percent of the students preferred instruction that was mediated in both native and target languages rather than the target language alone (Seong & Chang, 2008). This study compared college learners' preferences with respect to college general English with their academic achievement in order to suggest some considerations for CE curriculum design. In this study, even the college learners with higher grades in their CE preferred concurrent use of both Korean and English. It is postulated from the study that, during ECSP learning instruction, if the instruction were properly understood and suitably applied, the learners' native language played a critical role in facilitating both the learners' subject matter content and their language acquisition. Given that the preferred language use be both target and native languages, and given that the use of both language for instruction had an impact on the learner's academic achievement, instructors need to consider contextual factors - such as their students' levels of language proficiency, content knowledge relevant to their major, and human resources put into the courses such as team teaching - when instructing a group of students with lower academic and/or linguistic abilities.

Similarly in China, some universities have stipulated that English mediated instruction should be a certain percentage of a student's total EAP course time period, so 50 to 100 percent English mediated instruction is arranged. Recent research in China also indicated that only target language mediated instruction is not the sole way to promise the successful accomplishment of both language education and content knowledge (Gajo, 2007). It is suggested in this study that the use of the both language can, in fact, positively affect the learners' language competences and academic achievement (see also Serra, 2007). It can be noted here that the study's findings can be said to modify the current general belief that the more English instruction, the more successful is education in EAP (Wang, 2010).

As for the benefits of the use of both languages when these research findings are applied to ECSP courses, meaningful instructional support can be offered by considering language options. The native language cannot be limited to merely giving instructions, classroom management, or calls for attention. O'Neill and Velasco (2007, cited in Wang 2010) also showed three ways in which code-switching to the L1 could be especially beneficial and effective for ECSP course techniques: (1) when providing the definition of a word; (2) when providing a linguistic summary; and (3) when providing a summary of a lesson in L1 in order to ensure that the students understood more of the meaning of the subject matter content as well as the language structures in the text used in the lesson. Particularly with students of limited English resources, appropriate arrangement of both

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languages is more effective because it is not focused on heavy content itself. Bilingual ECSP courses could be progressively adjusted to a higher L2 instruction content based on the students' English improvement and content knowledge over the course of the students' university studies.

Some students and instructors in some universities may prefer to maintain some portion of L1 as a means of helping students comprehend the complicated subject matter and relevant content. Other students in some levels may prefer to have only L2 ECSP courses because they may assume that only target language instruction can enhance the intent of CE, EMI, and the ECSP; a way 'forcing' the understanding of their major subjects and of comprehending the target language. Based on some research, however, classes using only the target language seemed to reduce their efficacy since, although they might help students improve their communication abilities, they interfere with their academic depth (Kim, 2011). Thus, the L2/L1 language percentage used in the instruction should be considered based on students' language level and course content knowledge, and several other factors such as students' goals or purposes.

5. Appropriate Level of ECSP

EGP proficiency level needs to be prerequisite for a pre-approved course to ECSP. It is a mistake to expose students to EMI or ECSP when they still lag far behind in their knowledge of general English. Most university students' problems in EAP courses in EFL situations are their deficiencies in the language system, the four language skills, and correct and appropriate use of language; these prohibit their successful learning of language and content (Grabe & Stoller, 1997). EMI or ECSP students in EFL situations need to acquire an adequate knowledge of general English and basic content knowledge in order to deal effectively with the requirements of their subject-specific courses. Hammond (2006) suggested a supporting approach, as opposed to simply reducing the level of both content and language. Appropriate support, in other words, is crucial, when EMI or ECSP instruction is accompanied by the appropriate cognitive load and literacy level. When deciding upon the appropriate content level or cognitive demand, and when modifying the course language to protect learners from inaccessible context, the level should be such that it actively 'pushes' students toward their goals. Interacting with content or language that might be just beyond the learners' present abilities (Krashen, 1985) is beneficial and facilitates knowledge internalization or acquisition; it helps to position the learners for future success in universities (Bunch, Abram, Lotan & Valdés, 2001). This a rather challenging concept and seems to be incompatible with the concept of sheltering as the main role of ECSP; however, these concepts - challenging and supporting - may not be mutually exclusive because both connect to the idea that

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students should be protected from learning environments that are fundamentally too difficult such as simplification or elaboration as they appeared in the theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) or cognitive load theory (Anny, 2011). When the load of subject matter and language are too high, either both or one should be made lower. This concept is recognized by cognitive psychologists: that students learn more effectively when they can build on what they already know, on existing schema. Taking into account the differences between learning a subject in one's L1 and learning a subject in a foreign language, it is generally accepted that the cognitive load is much higher in the latter case because the brain must work harder to process the L2 while simultaneously attempting to integrate new information; therefore, the language or content need to be modified into the most appropriate level. Several factors, however, should be considered when deciding upon which is selected and to what degree. These decisions should be considered with the instructor deciding upon the important variables such as whether their students need to develop their general English, or subject-specific English, or content knowledge, or all of them.

6. The Teacher in ECSP

It is generally accepted that the teachers of EAP, ESP, or CBI lack content specific knowledge because most of these teachers are expert in language teaching. These teachers need to deal with students who have different majors, expectations for their courses, goals, and needs; however, the problem is that instructors in a CBI or ESP or EAP context often have had little opportunity for enough training (Brinton & Holten, 2001). This situation or context can be equally applied to the teachers in ECSP courses because instructors who teach ECSP courses have not been trained to teach these various courses; it is hardly practical to expect the teachers of ECSP to have expertise in such a wide variety of fields as the humanities, natural sciences, social studies, and literature at the same time. Thus, there have been few official training courses offered to these instructors. According to Master (1997), in most cases, professional EAP practitioners train themselves, learning by themselves. Although a self-training methodology as a means for helping EAP teachers to function more effectively was observed in one study, this self-training course was not widely accepted because the proposed theories and practices in the study were found to have little practicality because of the too various and differing discipline contexts (ibid).

With regard to the expertise that the teachers in ECSP need to qualify them to teach both language and content, two different views exist; these two cannot be said to be incompatible. At this point, research in EAP area can be applied to this study in a broader sense. We know that language teachers should have the appropriate content

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knowledge in order to use the teaching material effectively in their EAP courses, and Bell (1999) agrees that it may be necessary for EAP teachers to possess a particular level of content knowledge in their students' academic subjects. Chen (2000, p. 396) also pointed out that EAP teachers need to know the concepts and knowledge involved if they are to successfully teach discipline-specific texts properly. EAP teachers should develop some kind of familiarity with the specialized content areas to meet the students' communicative needs for specific occupations.

Another idea is that, if language teachers need to have in-depth knowledge of a content area, then the subject teachers must also be required to be the language knowledgeable so that they do not merely focus on content. The point here is that it should be accepted that language teachers can hardly gain a truly sufficient understanding of each different discipline courses that they are required to teach. At the same time, subject teachers are equally unfamiliar with the linguistic competencies that are necessary for them to understand their students' language needs; they lack the necessary expertise to teach language or communication skills. It is thus proposed that language teachers only need to know the genres, or basic register format of a given field. The language teacher's responsibility, therefore, is to teach language and can help his/her students to gain the language skills and linguistic competencies through the specific content. Thus, language teachers learn from their students' discipline by engaging in the process of content-based instruction and by participating in meaning negotiation with their students. Students in an ECSP course would have opportunities to practice delivering the scientific knowledge of their major in exchanges with their teachers who teach the functions and sentence structures involved in the science texts; it is a mutual teaching and learning process (Hwang, 2002).

In a situation where the students in an ECSP want to focus on 60 percent of the subject matter, but have only a 40 percent language competency, alternative methodologies need to be examined. In such a context, for example, in order to solve and balance the problem of the insufficient subject knowledge or linguistic ability of the teachers, some researchers (Kim, 2012; Robinson, 1991) propose team teaching; namely, cooperative work between language teachers and subject teachers. The difficulty is that designing and implementing team teaching is not easy in most institutions. Mainly, language teachers try to adjust their teaching methodology to their students' language needs while having little knowledge of their students' subject; content teachers have an equal challenge. In this regard, Swales (1990) suggested that, in addition to teaching, EAP teachers have to understand at least the design of the relevant syllabus, the whole course structure, and the organization of the material in the discipline; they have also to understand how to evaluate their students appropriately (Gatehouse, 2001) .

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Overall, it cannot be expected that language teachers can be professionally trained both in language teaching and the teaching of subject-specific matter. Furthermore, language teachers are *supposed* to teach language skills rather than content materials. Nevertheless, if students are to learn subject-specific content in target language mediated instruction, several combinations of team teaching could be considered: non-native language teacher and non-native subject teacher; native language teacher and native subject teacher; native language teacher and non-native subject teacher; and non-native language teacher and native subject teacher. All depends on the students' needs and wants as well as the institutional situations. Given a situation where just one teacher would be in charge of the ECSP courses, the answer should be a language teacher, rather than a subject matter teacher. In most EFL university situations, subject matter teachers usually resort to translations in order to deliver the information included in the major text. They do this to ensure that the content learning takes place (Brinton et al., 2003; Zohrabi, 2010). ECSP texts closely related to subject matter, however, tend to be very technical; as a result, the subject matter teachers are rarely able to provide their students with various types of language activities. It is usually up to the language teachers to use their experience to find appropriate materials and teaching approaches, and then to implement appropriate language activities by collaborating with their students as well as the subject matter teachers.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study of previous research findings indicates that, firstly, students attending general English courses in EFL universities have shown some problems with motivation; and, secondly, that those who attending EMI courses in some survey studies indicated that there exist definite gaps between general English courses and EMI courses, or gaps between the abilities required for success in the EMI courses and the actual level of the students in terms of background knowledge and language competencies. The demotivational factors both in general English courses and EMI courses have been found to share some commonalities; e.g., few links between general courses and EMI courses viewed from academic content and language stand points. By reviewing previous research in the area of CE and EMI - including CBI and EAP - this study extracted several issues and considerations for the successful employment of ECSP and could suggest appropriate concepts for these courses.

With regard to these considerations, it was found that, in general, in EFL universities, a few ECSP courses and CE courses have been offered, but only during the students' first and second years and excluding their junior and senior years. Considering this

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course allocation, the main considerations that may be taken from this study are that, in order to facilitate more effective and successful ECSP courses that consider the medium of language, the setting of objectives and teaching methodologies must be based on variables of the learners and a needs analysis that considers both the learners' and the instructors, that considers setting appropriate language and content levels by teachers of ECSP.

The main concept of ECSP was found to be the development of sheltering courses that could be provide a shelter from the unavoidable storm of major content and language difficulties experienced by students in their EMI courses (Rosen & Sasser, 1997). If language and academic content are properly adjusted for EMI courses by the introduction of ECSP courses, these courses could be understood as a kind of 'umbrella protecting people who are unprepared to walk out into a rain-storm' (Gulack & Silverstein, 1997) They can take the role of providing some protection from the 'storm' of the cognitive load: i.e., the concepts and language load, the textual contexts and the lexical density. An ECSP course may be regarded as a way to employ Krashen's original idea (1981, 1982) that sheltering might protect language learners who aren't yet prepared to fully participate in the mainstream EMI which often has a huge language and content gap between EGP and EMI.

This study suggests that, if properly designed and implemented with the several variables being taken into consideration, ECSP courses can be of significant help to university students who have dual load, content and language, who have much difficulty in comprehending their EMI courses, and who have weak motivation for attending general English courses. More importantly, this study also suggests that language teachers in ECSP need not be afraid of having 'insufficient' content knowledge because their ECSP courses are based on a context where team teaching combinations, or mutual teaching and learning processes between the instructors and the learners can be applied to the teaching of the courses; this is equally applicable to many CBI or EAP courses.

Though ECSP cannot be the sole answer to the solving of the many issues that arise from both college general English and EMI, it could be a means of bridging the gap between EGP and EMI through the sheltering of college students' limited abilities with respect to content and language; it is, therefore, suggested that more research need to be conducted into the feasibility of ECSP courses and curriculum design for specific ECSPs in specific contexts. This would include a needs analysis of the considerations arising from this study.

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Examples in: English
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Applicable Levels: College

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