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Original Article

Lived Experiences of Iranian Archivists in a Phenomenological Study of a Multimedia-assisted Task-based ESP Course

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of implementing multimedia on the lived experiences of Iranian archivists in an ESP course for Archival Science in Iran. The participants consisted of 23 archivists working in the National Library and Archives of Iran. Multimedia-assisted task-based instruction was employed during a 10-session ESP course. Due to the nature of phenomenological studies, at the end of the semester, the researchers conducted semi-structured, one-to-one interviews with all the participants to learn about their attitude toward implementing multimedia in ESP learning and to gain useful insights about their experiences during the learning process. The researchers followed the data analysis technique of familiarization, horizontalization, highlighting, and clustering as well as descriptive and Vivo coding. The process of data analysis revealed seven main themes of *skill development*, *practical*, *challenging*, *personal*, *work-related*, *platform-related*, and *course-related experiences*. Thus, it was concluded that the use of technology-based instruction in ESP courses could positively affect ESP learners' experiences of professional language learning, which could persuade ESP stakeholders to meticulously examine the expectations and perceptions of learners in order to hold successful ESP courses.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Archival Science, Lived Experience, Multimedia Learning, Phenomenology.

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1. Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an approach in language teaching in which the content and objectives of the course are defined based on the specific needs of the target learners. As opposed to English for General Purposes (EGP), which is "English for no obvious reason" (Johns et al. 2014, p. 1), ESP is teaching the language based on the specific needs of learners (Lesiak-Bielawska, 2019) in a particular domain. Nowadays, with the rapid and continuous changes in the context of language teaching and learning, many new developments are also occurring in the field of ESP leading to the utilization of technology in the such courses (Dashtestani & Stojković, 2015). As a practical solution, ESP teachers, curriculum developers, and administrators show interest in integrating technology into such classes.

The use of multimedia, as a technology-based approach to instruction, has gained considerable support among language teachers during the last decades. A significant aspect of multimedia learning is that it can be designed in ways that conform to how people learn, which can serve as a great aid to human learning (Mayer, 2003). The implementation of multimedia can be a helpful teaching and learning tool in ESP courses with a limited amount of time available for instruction, variability in topics and issues, and involving students with different educational backgrounds, proficiency levels, learning styles, and needs.

The journey of language learning could be different for each individual who is involved in this process. Learning English could be motivating to some learners but quite burdensome to others. Some learners may experience feelings such as anxiety, stress, and frustration, which may lead them to failure, while others may feel motivated, self-confident, and autonomous in the same context. A Focus on the lived experiences of learners as agents who are actively involved in the process of learning can be viewed as a means to gaining a more in-depth understanding of the "cognitive, emotional, motor, motivational, identity, and spiritual dimensions" (Dieumegard et al., 2019, p. 3) of the learning process. Lived experience is defined as personal knowledge obtained through direct experience that could not be normally apparent through observation or representations created by a third person who has not lived it through the eyes of the actual individuals who were involved in the situation (O'Leary & Tsui, 2022). Bradley (2002) believes that lived experiences are both keys to actual events that happened in the past and experiences of what is happening at present (those events that give meaning to the present life of the individuals). Therefore, access to the lived experiences of ESP learners could inform researchers about the factors

contributing to successful learning and the events affecting the learning process in the present time and influencing learners' life quality in the future.

Among different ESP fields, Archival Science has almost remained forgotten in Iran and, thus, demands further attention from researchers in this context. Archival Science has its roots in English-speaking countries; therefore, most of its resources are written in English. The target participants of this study, the archivists working in the National Library and Archives of Iran, need to be proficient in both general and professional English to be able to update their knowledge and communicate with their colleagues in other countries to share their professional experiences (Zarghami et al., 2022). However, the chief concern is that neither of the employees has any academic or professional degree in Archival Science. As a result, they do not normally pass any formal courses in the specific language of Archives and have a low level of general English proficiency. Given the fact that there is no specific, pre-defined ESP course on Archival Science, it is necessary to lay the foundations for an efficient ESP course that could help Iranian archivists in their professional development.

The significance of this study lay in its capacity to reflect on the lived experiences of the participants in a multimedia-assisted task-based ESP course on Archival Science, a context absent in the research domain of ESP at both national and international levels. Although implementing multimedia as a blended learning tool could provide some convincing answers to how ESP should be learned, what should be learned, and when it could be learned by those learners who are too busy to attend pre-scheduled ESP classes in fixed places at fixed times, studies on the utilization of multimedia in different educational contexts have shown different results. Involvement in such learning experiences might motivate the learners to utilize the language knowledge gained in their ESP classes to improve the quality of their work. This study investigated whether participating in a blended ESP course could help to enrich ESP learners' learning experiences and turn ESP courses into enjoyable events which, in turn, could improve the quality of their everyday job.

2. Literature Review

2.1 English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

English for Specific Purposes or what is commonly referred to as ESP, is generally defined as teaching and learning English, whether as a foreign or second language, in which the learners aim "to use English in a particular academic, professional or occupational domain.

It is English focusing on learners' special needs" (Plesca, 2016, p. 528). Gai (2017) considers ESP to be a specific profession- or discipline-related English course and defines it as the language used in a specific field by related professionals in that field.

Advances in technology in the last decades have considerably influenced language teaching and learning methods and provided language teachers with a range of teaching options by employing new forms of educational content and different ways of delivering that content in their language classes. Integrating technology in ESP courses demands a meticulous selection of content and the use of special procedures to provide learners with opportunities to gain access to authentic language. Hence, it can be considered an efficient way of teaching academic and occupational content through English.

Using technology will enable ESP learners to exploit learning strategies that help them in learning the job-related language, engage them in task-based and collaborative learning activities completely pertinent to their job, provide them with content-based authentic materials, and involve them in environments tailored to their own needs (Dashtestani & Stojokovic, 2015). Besides, technology-assisted language teaching will make it possible for students with different learning styles to actively participate in classroom interactions.

A large body of literature has been written on the effects of different teaching methods and techniques on ESP students' progress in developing the knowledge of L2 in their fields. For example, in a research conducted in the ESP context of Iran, Nezakatgoo and Behzadpoor (2017) explored the main challenges of teaching ESP in medical universities by interviewing 25 ESP stakeholders from two universities of medical sciences in Tehran. Based on the results, the researchers classified the challenges into three main groups: institution challenges (such as undetermined aims; the structure of the curricula; and syllabus content, evaluation, time limitation, and classroom size); learner-related challenges (e.g. lack of motivation; poor general English background, learners' focus on the test; and learners' inappropriate needs analysis); and teacher-related challenges (e.g. teacher's language proficiency; content knowledge; perception of ESP; teaching method; familiarity with materials development; and testing skills).

In another research in this context, Khalili et al. (2015) examined the impact of blended learning and multimedia software on Iranian medical students' vocabulary learning. The instructor introduced the same material in the same way to both groups applying two different methods of clarification. In the control group, new words were taught through

definitions and examples, and in the experimental group, the intended software was employed to teach the same words. The data collection tools included a vocabulary post-test and classroom observations. The results revealed that the experimental group had outperformed the control group on the post-test. They also demonstrated the positive effects of learning with technology on the learners' activity engagement.

2.2 Multimedia Learning

Currently, using multimedia as a means for presenting sound, image, video, text, and graphic information acts as a training tool applicable in different educational environments. Accordingly, ESP teachers are turning their attention to multimedia lessons to present professional material to their students more innovatively and interestingly. Parekh (2013) asserts that the use of multimedia as teaching material provides ESP learners with those aspects of professional content that are not easily understandable through traditional text- and image-based materials. Shevchenko (2017) suggests that, as an interdisciplinary technology, multimedia persuade learners to engage in using multiple senses during the learning process. When the students are engaged in the processes required for successful communication (i.e. hearing and sight), they will have a more in-depth understanding of content, which, in turn, will affect the long-term retention of information.

Despite the positive results obtained in most of the studies investigating the use of multimedia in language teaching, the researchers' perspectives are to some extent different from each other. Using a questionnaire survey to investigate the impact of multimedia teaching, Xu (2017) suggested that implementing multimedia might lead to the following problems: deviation in cognition, blind use of multimedia, reduction of teachers' skills, reduced learning outcomes due to poor quality of multimedia software, mechanization of the teaching process, and lack of interaction in the classroom. In the same way, Zheng (2016) concluded that in spite of the revolutionary impact of multimedia tools on language learning, there are still some difficulties in implementing multimedia learning that required the practitioners' attention. Hence, it is necessary to perform more extensive studies on the application of various multimedia-based tasks, activities, and exercises in order to promote the process of language teaching and learning, in general, and ESP courses, in particular.

Shao (2012) examined 80 Chinese EFL learners' attitudes toward the application of multimedia in language learning and their perceptions of its usefulness in vocabulary

acquisition. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect the participants' views on the instructional efficacy of the exploited digital application and its potential as a self-study tool. The results of this study showed that the use of multimedia significantly contributed to the participants' vocabulary knowledge. The responses to the questionnaire items also revealed their highly positive attitude toward the use of multimedia software during the course.

2.3 Lived Experience

Lived experience, an ongoing process of investigating a phenomenon based on subjective understandings of individuals, is a research approach deriving from phenomenological tradition. Focusing on the value of lived experience in research, Creswell (2014) maintains that individuals continually try to understand the world in which they live and work and, to accomplish this task, they develop subjective meanings of their experiences in relation to certain objects or things. O'Leary and Tsui (2022) consider lived experience as the knowledge gained from direct involvement or exposure to a meaningful event, condition, or situation. They add that lived experience is not "merely having or reflecting on an experience as it occurs; it is a recollective account that reflects on what has taken place and its retrospective impact" (O'Leary & Tsui, 2020, p. 1075). Dieumegard, et al. (2019) define lived experience as "an individual ongoing process known from within" (p. 1) and consider it as a useful means to "gain more access to individual activity taking into account its situated feature in a rich material and social environment" (p. 2).

The meanings constructed by the ESP learners in the subjective process of learning and the experiences affecting this process are varied and multiple. These variations or what can be called their lived experiences are deemed as helpful tools for researchers in educational fields in investigating the complexity of views, considering potential issues from different perspectives, especially from the first-person viewpoint (O'Leary & Tsui, 2020), eliciting the personal meanings and interpretations that people attribute to the specific experiences they gained (Frechette et al. 2020), and broadening their discussions to a wide range of categories or ideas emphasizing the learning process in different contexts by different learners. Accordingly, having access to the lived experiences of those involved in the process of language learning is a way to help researchers find out what factors contribute to the learning of the participants, what events affect the learning process in the present time, and might influence the learners' life quality in the future.

In a phenomenological study, Cabal (2018) investigated the instructional issues and challenges of non-indigenous teachers who were teaching indigenous students. Two groups of participants were involved in this research: ten teachers took part in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions and seven teachers cooperated in triangulating the data. The thematic analysis of the data indicated that the main instructional issues and challenges non-indigenous teachers faced when teaching English to indigenous students were as follows: cultural incongruence in instruction, challenging classroom environments, language maintenance, cultural incompetence, and culturally irrelevant teaching materials.

Hickey (2012) investigated the experiences of two elementary English learners in an American public school following a phenomenological approach. Her analysis of audio-recorded conversations with the two participants led her to introduce the following factors as significantly affecting the participants' learning process: the creation of enough space to let the students become teachers of their teachers, involvement of absent voices from the educational context in research in this field, and the need to employ the experiences gained from the learners to open up and clarify the held assumptions in educational settings.

Saengboon (2012) investigated the salient patterns of Thai university students' reflections on their experiences of learning English. Following the retrospective recall method of qualitative data collection, he asked the participants to write an essay in their mother tongue reflecting on their English language learning experiences before coming to school. Then, he conducted a focus group interview with the whole class. The analysis of the data resulted in the extraction of four main themes: attitudes to English, teaching performances, difficulties in language learning (especially in areas of grammar and vocabulary), and motivation.

During the last decades, the growing importance of international communications in professional fields has led different institutions and organizations to encourage their employees to learn English as a way to increase the quality of their work. Thus, employees and staff in different professional fields have been encouraged to take part in ESP courses across the world. While ESP courses have received great attention in some fields such as aviation, tourism, and business, some other fields, such as Archival Science, have received little or no attention in some contexts such as Iran.

A review of the literature on ESP indicates a great focus on ESP learners' language achievement in related courses. However, their lived experiences in classes are one of the

most neglected topics in the field of ESP research. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no research has ever been conducted on the lived experience of archivists in ESP courses. Therefore, this study aimed to answer the following question:

What are the lived experiences of Iranian archivists in a multimedia-assisted task-based Archival Science ESP course?

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study was carried out following a hermeneutic phenomenology approach. The researchers decided to use this approach because the focus of this study was on the importance of the personalized interpretations of the participants of this study regarding the experienced they gained in the specific ESP course they have participated. This approach provided the researchers with an opportunity to focus on each response to the interview questions as a way to understand the participants' lived experiences. Then, they compared the respondents' verbal and non-verbal actions and behaviors to interpret the responses. Here, the researchers collected the required data by conducting semi-structured, one-to-one interviews.

3.2 Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 23 male and female Iranian archivists employed at the National Library and Archives of Iran. They were members of one intact class selected based on convenience sampling. Most of them were between 35 and 45 years old and were M.A. or Ph.D. graduates or students. Nearly all the participants were at the lower-intermediate level in General English and the technical language of Archival Science. They had diverse educational and professional backgrounds. Before taking part in this ESP program, neither of them had studied any specialized English courses on Archival Science during their course of education, nor had they passed any ESP course on this topic in their workplace. Table 1 presents the demographics of the participants.

Table 1.

Demographic Background of the Participants

Variable	No.	Variable	No.
Gender	5	Academic Qualification	
Male	18	MA Student	1
Female		MA Graduate	15

Variable	No.	Variable	No.
		Ph.D. Candidate	1
		Ph.D. Holder	6
Age Range		Years of Work Experience	
35-40	9	5-10	5
40-45	8	10-15	8
More than 45	6	15-20	14
		More than 20	6
Major		Department	
		Archival Research	3
History	7	Acquisition and Appraisal	2
Information Science	5	Arrangement and Description	4
Other	11	Information and Communication	9
		Preservation	2
		Other	3

3.3 Instruments

In order to elicit more specific data about the experiences the participants had gained in their multimedia ESP course, the researchers used semi-structured interviews. This technique engaged the learners in real-time conversations and provided sufficient space and flexibility for potential unexpected issues to arise (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). While the researchers decided on the type and content of the questions they want to ask, they did not limited the wording and order of the questions. This helped the researcher find patterns, while still having opportunity to make reasonable comparisons between respondents.

An expert in the field of qualitative research and another expert in the field of Archival Science checked the appropriateness of the questions and the credibility of the instrument. Each interview was held in Persian and lasted for about 20-30 minutes. Due to the low proficiency level of the participants, conducting interviews in English was not possible and might have led to misunderstandings and negative reflections from the participants. It started with a warm-up conversation at the beginning to reduce the interviewees' anxiety and provided them with a lead-in to enter the dialogue. Because the researchers wanted to gain comparable and reliable data, and the flexibility to ask follow-up questions, they used an interview protocol (Appendix A) which helped them both in keeping the natural flow of conversation and, at the same time, obtain the required information from the interviewees in the given time. The semi-structured framework of the interviews enabled the researchers to ask both open-ended questions, which encouraged the participants to talk at length, and to ask more specific questions, which allowed them to speak about more specific ideas and experiences.

The interview questions were formulated in a way to encourage the participants to open up about their lived experiences of using multimedia in ESP learning and the impact it might have had on their life during and after the treatment. Appendix B provides a list of the questions prepared for the semi-structured interviews. The researchers recorded the participants' responses to the questions after obtaining their consent. All the recorded data was later transcribed, translated, and manually coded as meticulously as possible.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Before beginning the treatment sessions, the instructor (one of the researchers) held a preliminary session to introduce the course objectives, describe instructional methods, explain the requirements for passing the course, and also make them familiar with the process of using the LMS, Schoology. Moreover, the participants watched a video tutorial during this session and followed the instructions on the video as the instructor monitored and helped them.

During the treatment phase, the instructor taught the materials and monitored the students' progress in Schoology. This platform automatically checks learners' attendance, provides them with the opportunity to upload their assignments, and reminds them of the course events based on the schedule as pre-defined by the instructor. The learners can benefit from the discussion boards available in the system to discuss a particular topic. It also enables the instructor to record and observe the performance of every single student and provide them with immediate or delayed feedback.

Similar to most ESP courses, the focus of this ESP course was on improving the participants' reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge Here, the learners were required to read professional texts in English and learn a large body of vocabulary in particular areas of Archival Science. To this end, the instructor provided the learners with the required texts by uploading them on the platform along with the related pictures and audio or video files to facilitate their understanding of the content. She also projected each text on the classroom screen and asked the students to give their views about the meaning of each word. Then, she projected some pictures, audio, or video content related to that text on the screen to provide learners with audio-visual data on that topic. Since these audio-visual files pictured the professional processes the learners were involved in their daily tasks, they

were quite helpful in helping them to comprehend the text and learn the embedded technical words.

Next, the teacher checked the students' understanding of the text by involving them in different receptive activities, such as matching, selecting, sorting, filling in the blanks, semantic feature analysis, and productive activities, such as completion and creation tasks. In the final stage, the video or audio files were played for a second time to draw the students' attention to the meaning, use, and pronunciation of the new vocabulary to help them internalize the learned material. The tasks and activities performed at this stage were designed in a way to involve the students in problem-solving tasks, asking them to talk about a part of their professional work that was related to the topic of the session, encouraging them to use the newly taught technical terms in their speech, and involving them in class discussions.

Homework-related tasks and activities were uploaded in the *assignment* section of the LMS, and the class members could view them online. All the students had to answer comprehension check questions. Then, the students discussed the topic of the lesson and the instructor asked them to comment on that specific topic in the *discussion forum* of Schoology. The instructor controlled, assessed, and graded all the activities through the LMS as well. The treatment in this group was not limited to in-class activities since the students had to continue their work on each lesson in Schoology anywhere, anytime they preferred. Finally, each of the participants took part in semi-structured interviews with the instructor.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

Focusing on phenomenological methods, the researchers followed the data analysis technique introduced by Moustakas (1994), which involves familiarization (reading and re-reading the interview transcripts to become familiar with the data), horizontalization (allocating an equal value to all the statements and then removing all the repetitive, overlapping, and irrelevant statements), highlighting the significant statements, and clustering them into meaningful units. In the next step, the statements were clustered into meaningful units and coded following Saldaña's (2015) descriptive coding. This coding system allowed the assignment of specific codes or labels to the transcripts by using a word or a phrase that represented the content of each statement.

4. Results

Relying on the phenomenological theory, the researchers analyzed and interpreted the data from semi-structured interviews with the participants regarding their lived experiences in the multimedia-assisted task-based ESP course. It is noted that the extracts were originally in Persian and the researchers translated them into English. After transcribing and translating the recorded data, the researchers followed the familiarization, horizontalization, highlighting, and clustering stages introduced by Moustakas (1994) to analyze the transcribed data. Then, they employed Saldaña's descriptive coding method (2015) to manually code the data. As Saldaña (2015) suggests, descriptive coding serves as a helpful tool for further analysis and reflection in the process of assigning themes. A sample of the descriptive coding process is given in Table 2.

Table 2.

A Sample of Descriptive Coding Process of Semi-structured Interviews

Interview Extracts	**Codes**
Knowing English is important at higher education levels.	Academic Progress
This course helped me to learn so many new strategies to improve my learning.	Developing Learning Strategies
In this course, we focused on learning the language of archives.	Focus on Technical English (TE)
I need to read English texts and speak English well.	Identifying Needs
What I want to accomplish in this course is to improve my professional language ...	Improving Technical English (TE)
I tried to improve my knowledge.	Knowledge Development
We need to have such courses every year to keep our minds fresh.	Lack of Continuous Learning
If we had more class sessions, we would learn better.	Limited Number of Sessions
Knowing English is useful for developing professional skills, which helps us progress in our job.	Practicality

It should be mentioned that while coding the extracts, the researchers noticed that there were some cases where using the exact words or phrases used by the interviewees was more rational than using researcher-derived codes. Vivo coding was employed in such cases because it involves using an exact word or short phrase from the interviewees' statements as a code. A Sample of such a coding process is presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

A Sample of Vivo Coding Process of Semi-structured Interviews

Interview Extracts	**Codes**
This course will lead to job development and **job promotion**.	Job Promotion
… works such as sending or receiving emails in English or **reading records** written in English.	Reading Records
I think seriously about **immigration** and, at that time, knowing English will be very helpful to me.	Immigration
When I use English for **helping others**, I feel good.	Helping Others
I use it in some of my daily work like **reading manuals**.	Reading Manuals
I need English for **reading product information**, news, and the like.	Reading Product Information

After completing the coding process, all the codes were reviewed and revised more than five times to ensure accuracy and continuity in assigning the codes. Ultimately, 106 codes were extracted. The extracted codes were later subcategorized under higher-level meaningful themes. They included recurring ideas, subjects, or topics that appeared in the codes covering the same or similar concepts. As illustrated in tables 4-10, seven themes emerged from the 106 identified codes.

Table 4.

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Skill Development Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Developing Learning Strategies	Improving GE	Skill Development Experiences
Improving Knowledge of Technology	Improving TE	
Improving Comprehension	Improving Vocabulary	
Improving Speaking	Learning New Skills	

Table 5.

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Practical Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Academic Progress	Solving Problems	Practical Experiences
Helping Others	Surfing the Net	

Immigration	Using Educational Platforms	
Knowledge Development	Using Social Media	
Reading Appliance/Product Manuals	Using Technology	
Reading Product Information		

Table 6.

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Challenging Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Age	Low Self-confidence	
Anxiety	Negative Attitude	
Assignments	Past Experiences	
Differences Between GE and TE	Peer Pressure	
Different Proficiency Levels	Poor GE	
The difficulty of Hybrid Learning	Preferring Physical Classes	
Exam	Professional Discussions	Challenging Experiences
Fear of Making Mistakes	Reading Technical Texts	
L2 Comprehension	Receiving Low Scores	
Lack of Continuous Learning	Time Management	
A large Number of Students	Unrealistic Expectations	
Little Group Work	Using LMS	
Limited Number of Sessions	Working and Studying Simultaneously	

Table 7.

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Personal Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Finding and Fixing Weak Points	Increasing Motivation	
Further English Education	Increasing Self-confidence	
Goal-setting	Personal Communication	Personal Experiences
Good Feelings	Positive Feedback	
Identifying Needs	Socialization	
Improving Personal Abilities	Time/Energy Investment	

Table 8.

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Work-related Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Browsing Websites	Reading Records	Work-related Experiences
Doing Research	Reading Resources	
Employment Opportunities	Reading Standards/Guidelines	
Going to Missions Overseas	Receiving Good Scores	
Guiding Visitors	Searching for Information	
Holding International Positions	Searching for Resources on the Internet	
Honor	Sharing Experience	
Increased Income	Sharing Knowledge	
Promoting Work Quality	Sharing Information	
International Communication	Translation	
Involvement in International Projects	Up-to-date Information	
Job Promotion	Using Work-related Platforms	
Participation in Professional Events	Watching Work-related Videos	
Practicality	Work Prestige	
Professional Communication	Work Progress	
Professional Development	Writing Articles/Books	
Professional Qualification		

Table 9

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Platfomr-related Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Environmental Distracters	Resource Accessibility	Platform-related Experiences
Flexibility	Technical Problems	
Poor Knowledge of Technology	Technophobia	

Table 10.

Codes and the Relevant Themes of Course-related Experiences

Codes	**Codes**	**Themes**
Content Relevance	Importance of Scores	

Cooperation	Interaction with Others	Course-related Experiences
Focus on TE	Linking Texts with Pictures	
Friendly Environment	Learning Purpose	
Helpful Resources	Task Helpfulness	

Based on the above tables, seven main themes emerged from the extracted codes: *skill development*, *practical*, *challenging*, *personal*, *work-related*, *platform-related*, and *course-related experiences*. The distribution of the codes showed that a large number of codes belonged to *work-related experiences* (33 codes). This emphasized the importance of taking part in ESP courses on the participants' professional experiences and their effect on job performance.

Challenging experiences, with 26 codes, were second among the experiences mentioned by the participants. The fairly large number of difficult or challenging issues experienced by the participants demand more careful attention on the part of those involved in the field of ESP to eliminate such problems and facilitate ESP learning in such courses.

Personal experiences, *practical experiences*, *course-related experiences*, and *skill-development experiences* were next with 12, 11, 10, and 8 codes, respectively. Platform-related issues were the least mentioned experiences. The low number of codes (6 codes) related to this theme could be attributed to the importance of ESP learning regardless of the medium of instruction to the participants.

5. Discussion

The data regarding the lived experiences of the ESP participants embodied seven main factors, as follows:

Skill development experiences: The participants of this study referred to the following reasons for attending the offered ESP course: learning specialized vocabulary, being able to read technical texts in English, improving their knowledge of language and the subject matter at the same time, learning to use technology effectively, and being able to use the language in the workplace and professional environments. As acknowledged by Đurović and Silaški (2011), one of the main purposes of any ESP course is providing the learners with professional language knowledge and skills through carefully developed courses and content.

Challenging experiences: Just like any other language learning environment, the learners in the intended ESP course experienced different educational challenges (e.g. difficulty of assignments, lack of sufficient proficiency in terms of general English, the limited number of sessions), technological issues (e.g. concerning the employed virtual learning management system), and emotional problems (e.g. anxiety, fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, influence of undesirable past experiences,). Almost all the participants referred to being too busy to learn and work at the same time and, more importantly, to make a balance between the two tasks as the most important challenges they were supposed to overcome during this course. This finding is in line with Musikhin's acknowledgement of two problems that can hinder progress in ESP contexts: first, some ESP learners are recognized and certified specialists who are too busy to find enough time for participating in regular lessons and, second, some other learners have either had a bad experience with language learning previously or no experience of language learning at all (2016).

Practical experiences: Many of the participants mentioned that they have decided to take part in such courses to learn to read and understand professional and technical resources and transfer this knowledge to the learning of other skills (e.g. technological ability, media-related capability).

Personal experiences: Like other language learners, those who are involved in ESP learning develop certain personal attitudes and beliefs regarding their experience in the class. This was evident in the comments of the interviewees who had referred to some issues such as increased motivation and self-confidence, improved personal abilities and personal communication capabilities, and more socialization opportunities as the main positive outcomes of attending the target ESP course for them.

Work-related experiences: Mastering English as an international language used for professional communication is considered as one of the most important skills for the participants. Their considered it as a key factor in enabling them to achieve many of their academic and professional goals. Knowing the language and being able to use it in the relevant area of expertise was considered by them as one of the determining factors for considering employees as 'qualified' to occupy some specific job positions or to have some advantages over other employees on the workplace.

Platform-related experiences: Unlike the new generation of learners who are digital savants and belong to the 'Net generation' (Bielousova, 2017), previous generations mostly suffer from technophobia or have little familiarity with using technology as a language learning tool. This makes using an LMS for language learning a difficult experience for most of them. This was clearly evident in many statements of the participants who referred to technical problems, insufficient technological knowledge and skills as the main issues they were dealing with while learning in the technology-assisted learning environment.

Course-related experiences: Based on the participants comments, content relevance, focusing on technical English, using helpful resources, doing useful tasks, and meeting the needs of learners were among the most important issues that could lead to progress in ESP courses. Given the fact that ESP learners have a wide array of needs, relatively little amount of time and motivation to learn a language, and rare opportunities to receive technical language instruction out of the workplace, ESP instructors must tactfully choose instructional methods and techniques, course content, and materials that are responsive to the needs of all the students in specific learning contexts.

6. Conclusion

The present study investigated the effects of using multimedia in an ESP course on Archival Science on the lived experiences of Iranian archivists. The thematic analysis of the data demonstrated that the archivists' lived experiences centered around seven main issues. The participants revealed a high degree of motivation to learn Archival ESP mostly because of several *work-related reasons* for improvement in their profession. Moreover, while they had struggled in their ESP course due to a large number of *challenging experiences*, they showed a high degree of interest to participate in further similar courses. They were completely aware of the great importance of learning the technical language of Archives in becoming qualified professionals and having greater job opportunities in the work-place and real-world contexts.

The results also demonstrated that the experiences they had gained in the course could lead to *skill development* and enriching their *practical* and *personal* abilities. In addition, in the course of *platform-based learning*, the participants developed sufficient courage to use technology in their learning process through exploiting the available learning resources and becoming involved in continuous practice. Finally, as the participants realized, *course-related issues* such as defining valuable and achievable purposes, having cooperation and interaction

with others, and focusing on the learning of technical language were very important in helping them to achieve their goal of becoming proficient in the technical language of Archives.

A comparison of the challenges phrased by the participants of this study with those of previous ESP studies can guide instructors, administrators, and policy-makers in the field of Archival Science in designing and implementing more effective ESP courses. First, as stated by Sarmento, et al. (2018), ESP courses should be designed in a way to help learners to achieve their goals in specific fields of interest and to develop the specific skills they require to do their professional work (# *skill development issue*). Second, ESP courses should be designed in a way to help learners in learning specialized vocabulary, developing technical knowledge by reading the related English texts, enabling them to use the language in their profession or study fields, and taking part in professional communication (Varnosfadrani, 2009) (# *practical issues*).

Third, in the process of designing ESP courses, necessary adjustments should be made to meet the needs of the learners and eliminate the potential challenges that affect their professional development. As emphasized by Lungu (2013), involving learners in technology-enhanced language learning provides them with the flexibility they need to balance their work, learning, and family life (# *challenging issues*). Next, learning in technology-enhanced environments is the result of individual people's abilities to manage the learning process. According to Choi (2016), in technology-enhanced learning environments, learners are required to define goals, apply appropriate techniques for successful learning, and effectively manage the available resources (# *personal issues*).

Fifth, as Qian (2016) acknowledges, ESP courses should prepare learners to deal with specific challenges of their work, focus on the contextualized language related to the intended profession, remain professionally alert, and take control of the future work they are supposed to do (# *work-related issues*). Moreover, although most learner-employees of the past generation lack sufficient knowledge of technology and are reluctant to use digital platforms in their language learning classes, the ubiquitous accessibility of course materials and flexibility of technology-enhanced courses can encourage them to take the risk and become involved in the process of learning (Lungu, 2013) (# *platform-related issues*). Finally, materials should be developed based on the specific needs and professional field of the learners, focus on topic-related vocabulary and texts (Ivančević Otanjac, 2021), and be authentic (Blagojević, 2013) (# *course-related issues*).

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Appendix A
Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Demographic Information	
Interviewee's Name:	
Gender:	**Age:**
Education:	**Major:**
Job position:	**Years of experience:**
Interview Information	
Location:	**Time/Length of interview:**

A. Introduction

Thank you very much for your cooperation in the interview today.

This interview aims to shed some light on the experiences you have gained after passing this course of study (English for Archival Science). The main purpose is to investigate the effects of your participation in this course on your personal and professional life (your lived experience).

Therefore, I would like to make an interview for about 30 minutes with the students who passed the 'English for Archival Science' course, including you.

I would like to ask for your permission to use a voice recorder during the interview to collect and analyze data accurately. Data will only be used by the present interviewer for research purposes and will be completely confidential. Also, participants' names will be anonymous and individual names will not be specified.

Please relax during the interview. You are welcome to speak honestly, and there are no right answers or desirable answers. You will be allowed to skip questions that you do not like to speak about it.

B. Domains to be covered

1. The interviewee's experiences of passing the course (e.g. positive effects on their personal life; facilitating communication with native speakers; job promotion; professional development)
2. The interviewee's attitude toward the course (e.g. like-dislike; respect- disrespect; motivated-unmotivated; eager-not eager)
3. The interviewee's motivation for taking part in the course (e.g. willing to read professional sources, making effort to get a job promotion, sharing professional knowledge, taking part in international conferences, enjoying language learning in itself, having to pass the course by the external forces)

C. Template for the opening statement

1. Please tell me how it was like before you started learning English for Archival Science.
2. And how did you find it after you passed the course?

D. Question wordings

1. Do you like learning English, in general,/ 'English for Archival Science'?
2. Do you think learning English is important for your personal/professional life?
3. What motivates you to learn English?
4. What demotivates you to learn English?
5. Would you learn English if it was an optional subject?
6. How much time do you dedicate to studying English?

7. Do you use English for communication? What for? With whom?
8. Do you know any native speakers to interact with using English? How does that affect you?
9. Do you think mastering English will be beneficial for your future work?
10. What was/were your greatest experience(s) while participating in the 'English for Archival Science' course?

E. Useful probe questions

- Please tell me what you mean by that.
- Could you give me some examples?

F. Closing Questions

- Is there anything else you would like to add?
- Is there any question that should I have asked but I didn't?

G. Follow-up and Thank you

Thank you so much for sharing your experiences today. During the next few weeks, I will analyze your description of your experiences. May I follow up with you at a later date in case I need to have your feedback on any conclusions or findings that will emerge from your descriptions? This is to ensure that I am grasping the essence of your experiences accurately. Thank you.

Appendix B
Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. What goals/objectives did you seek to achieve from participating in the 'English for Archival Science' course?
2. How important is English in the daily deeds you performed in your workplace?
3. What are the benefits of knowing English in your workplace?
4. What kinds of professional development opportunities are available to you in your workplace in case you learn to use English well?
5. Do your daily deeds at work require using English?
6. In what situations are you required to communicate in English in your workplace? (Recount any specific situations that you remember).
7. Has there been a particular situation important for you as an archivist to use English?
8. What are the best times and most challenging times you have experienced using English in the workplace? Why do those particular experiences stand out to you?
9. How did those challenges/experiences affect you? How do you feel when you speak English in your workplace? Can you mention any specific experiences/examples?
10. Did something great or exciting happen to you when using English in your workplace?
11. What was the experience of studying English for Archival Science like for you?
12. What were the biggest challenges you faced during your language learning experience?
13. How have your interactions with your more experienced colleagues influenced your language learning?
14. How does passing this course influence your willingness to continue studying English outside the workplace?
15. Did you enroll and participate in any international activities during/after passing this course? If so, in what types of activities have you participated?
16. If you have the experience of learning languages outside of the organization, how do they compare it to the one you have passed here?
17. How did you feel while learning English in this course?
18. How would you describe your overall language learning experience in this course?
19. Are there things about your learning experience that you wish were different or you would like to see changed?
20. Do you have a chance to use English out of the workplace?
21. To whom do you speak English outside the workplace?
22. How important is English in your daily life outside the classroom?
23. What impact does using English have on your personal life?
24. What do you do to increase your motivation to learn English?