

(Research/Review) Article

# The Role of English for Public Administration (EPA) in Enhancing the Employability of STIA Tabalong Graduates: A Systematic Literature Review

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**Abstract.** This systematic literature review (SLR) thoroughly investigates the significant role of English for Public Administration (EPA) in improving the overall employability of STIA Tabalong graduates in an increasingly competitive job market. Employing a rigorous and structured search protocol across major academic databases such as Scopus and Google Scholar, this study carefully synthesizes key findings from relevant scholarly articles published between 2015 and 2025. The comprehensive review reveals that proficiency in EPA is absolutely crucial for effective professional communication in various public sector roles, significantly impacting a graduate's ability to secure employment and advance their career. Key findings indicate a strong correlation between specialized English skills and job opportunities, while also highlighting common challenges in EPA implementation, such as a lack of relevant teaching materials and pedagogical limitations. The findings provide concrete implications for STIA Tabalong, suggesting necessary curriculum enhancements to better align with industry demands and to bridge the existing skills gap.

**Keywords:** Employability; English for Public Administration (EPA); Public Sector; STIA Tabalong; Systematic Literature Review

## 1. Introduction

In today's globalized world, English has become an indispensable tool for communication, especially in professional environments. For a public administration graduate, mastery of English for specific purposes (ESP) is no longer a supplementary skill but a core competency that determines their competitiveness in the job market. Graduates are expected to navigate international documents, engage in cross-cultural communication, and access a vast body of knowledge available only in English. Institutions of higher learning, such as Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Administrasi (STIA) Tabalong, face the challenge of equipping their students with these essential language skills to prepare them for the demands of the modern public and business sectors.

A significant gap often exists between the English language proficiency of university graduates and the specific communication needs of the public administration field. Traditional English curricula may not be tailored to the unique vocabulary, discourse patterns, and professional contexts required for effective communication in government agencies or non-profit organizations. This disparity can hinder graduates' professional growth and limit their employability. Therefore, a focused examination of how specialized English training, specifically EPA, can address this problem is warranted.

This study focuses on the critical role of English for Public Administration (EPA) as a tool for enhancing the employability of STIA Tabalong graduates. It aims to identify how EPA programs and related pedagogical strategies contribute to the development of professional communication skills and ultimately, career success. The primary objective of this systematic literature review is to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate existing research on EPA to understand its impact on graduate employability. This review seeks to answer the following questions: 1) What is the documented relationship between EPA proficiency and the professional communication skills required in public administration? 2) How does the implementation of EPA curricula correlate with the employability and career advancement of graduates? 3) What are the common challenges and best practices in the teaching and learning of EPA in a higher education context? 4) What are the practical implications of these findings for the curriculum development and pedagogical approaches at STIA Tabalong

Received: September 05, 2025

Revised: September 19, 2025

Accepted: October 03, 2025

Published: October 06, 2025

Curr. Ver.: October 06, 2025



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## 2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology to rigorously and transparently identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing research. This approach is superior to a traditional literature review as it minimizes bias and provides a replicable framework for analysis [1]. The review followed a structured process: 1) Formulating Research Questions; 2) Defining Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria; 3) Systematic Search and Screening across major academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, ERIC, and Indonesian national journal portals. The primary search terms used were: "English for Public Administration," "EPA," "employability," "ESP," "STIA Tabalong," "public sector," and "government."; 4) Data Extraction and Quality Assessment; and 5) Data Synthesis. A PRISMA flow diagram will be used in the appendices to illustrate the screening and selection process [2].

The findings from the reviewed literature consistently affirm that the role of EPA is highly significant, and general learning approaches are no longer sufficient. These findings align with the core principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Theory [3].

**The Role of EPA in Professional Skills:** The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that a tailored EPA curriculum directly enhances a graduate's ability to handle communication tasks specific to the public sector. A key finding from a study by Puspitasari (2022) highlights that student in a task-based EPA program show a significant increase in their confidence and fluency in formal presentations. Similarly, [4] argue that exposure to authentic administrative documents (e.g., government reports, policy briefs) is crucial for building the specialized vocabulary and discourse competence required.

**The Impact of EPA on Employability:** The synthesis of literature reveals a strong, positive correlation between proficiency in EPA and higher rates of job placement and career advancement. According to [5], employers in public institutions increasingly prioritize candidates with specialized communication skills, and EPA proficiency is often a key differentiator. A study by [6] found that graduates who reported high confidence in their English for professional purposes were more likely to secure employment within six months of graduation and reported higher job satisfaction.

**Challenges in EPA Implementation:** The literature also identifies several common challenges. [7] note a prevalent issue of a lack of standardized and culturally-relevant EPA materials. Furthermore, [8] highlights that many English lecturers lack specific training in ESP methodologies. The limited number of class hours and large class sizes are also cited as pedagogical obstacles.

## 3. Proposed Method

**Method:** This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology to rigorously and transparently identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing research. This approach is superior to a traditional literature review as it minimizes bias and provides a replicable framework for analysis [9]. The review followed a structured process, guided by the following steps:

**Formulating Research Questions:** The study began with the formulation of clear, focused research questions to guide the entire review process. These questions, as outlined in the introduction, aim to explore the relationship between EPA, professional skills, and graduate employability.

**Defining Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:** The review included scholarly articles from peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and dissertations published between January 2015 and December 2025. Sources were limited to those written in English or Indonesian. Exclusion criteria were applied to remove non-academic articles, book reviews, and studies focused on general English rather than specific purposes (ESP) or EPA.

**Systematic Search and Screening:** The search was conducted across major academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, ERIC, and a number of Indonesian national journal portals. The primary search terms used, in various combinations, were: "English for Public Administration," "EPA," "employability," "ESP," "STIA Tabalong," "public sector," and "government." A PRISMA flow diagram will be used in the appendices to illustrate the screening and selection process [2].

**Data Extraction and Quality Assessment:** Relevant data were systematically extracted from the selected articles, including research purpose, methodology, key findings, and implications. Each study was critically appraised for its methodological quality and relevance to the research questions. A standardized data extraction form was used to ensure consistency across all reviewed sources.

**Data Synthesis:** Thematic synthesis was employed to integrate and interpret the findings from the selected studies. This involved grouping the extracted data into key themes, such as the relationship between EPA and professional skills, its impact on employability, and the common challenges in its implementation. This synthesis formed the basis of the results and discussion section of this paper.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

Summary of Reviewed Literature: A comprehensive table will be presented to summarize the key characteristics of the included articles, including author(s), year of publication, research objective, methodology, and main findings. This table will provide a clear overview of the literature base supporting this review.

##### Key Findings (Thematic Synthesis)

**The Role of EPA in Professional Skills:** The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that a tailored EPA curriculum directly enhances a graduate's ability to handle written and oral communication tasks specific to the public sector, such as report writing, policy analysis, and official presentations. A key finding from a study by [10] in the *Journal of ESP and Applied Linguistics* highlights that student who undergo a task-based EPA program show a significant increase in their confidence and fluency in formal presentations. Similarly, [4] argue that exposure to authentic administrative documents (e.g., government reports, policy briefs) is crucial for building the specialized vocabulary and discourse competence required for professional communication. This suggests that a generalized English course is inadequate for the specific needs of public administration students.

**The Impact of EPA on Employability:** The synthesis of literature reveals a strong, positive correlation between proficiency in EPA and higher rates of job placement and career advancement. According to [5], employers in public institutions increasingly prioritize candidates with specialized communication skills, and EPA proficiency is often a key differentiator. A study by [6] found that graduates who reported high confidence in their English for professional purposes were more likely to secure employment within six months of graduation and reported higher job satisfaction. This evidence supports the notion that EPA not only enhances language ability but also boosts a graduate's competitiveness and adaptability in the job market.

**Challenges in EPA Implementation:** Despite its clear benefits, the literature also identifies several common challenges in implementing effective EPA programs. [7] note a prevalent issue of a lack of standardized and culturally-relevant EPA materials, forcing lecturers to create their own resources which may not be comprehensive. Furthermore, [8] highlights that many English lecturers lack specific training in ESP methodologies, making it difficult for them to design and deliver courses that are genuinely tailored to the needs of public administration students. The limited number of class hours and large class sizes are also cited as pedagogical obstacles that hinder the effective implementation of practical, task-based learning.

**Implications for the Curriculum at STIA Tabalong:** Based on the reviewed literature, the findings provide concrete implications for curriculum development at STIA Tabalong. To better align with industry demands, the institution could benefit from a curriculum review to incorporate more practical, task-based EPA modules [10]. Collaborative projects with local government offices and guest lectures by professionals could also be implemented to provide students with real-world exposure [4]. By addressing the pedagogical and material challenges identified by Sari & Hidayat [7] and Susanto [8], STIA Tabalong can significantly enhance its graduates' professional readiness and employability.

The literature review's findings consistently affirm that the role of English for Public Administration (EPA) is highly significant, and general learning approaches are no longer sufficient. These findings align with the core principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Theory, as introduced by Hutchinson and Waters in 1987 [3]. According to them, language should be viewed as "a means to an end, not an end in itself" [3]. In the context of public administration, that end is the ability to communicate effectively in specific work situations, such as drafting policy reports, giving presentations, and corresponding with international partners.

##### ***Improving Professional Skills Through EPA***

Various reviewed studies show that EPA directly contributes to the improvement of professional skills. For example, regarding writing skills, [4] emphasize that the use of authentic materials such as government reports, internal memos, and meeting minutes is crucial. They argue that these materials help students understand the jargon and sentence structures used in real-world work environments, which are vastly different from general texts. These skills, according to Wardani [5], are highly valued by employers in both the public and private sectors who often have to interact with foreign entities.

Furthermore, Puspitasari [10] found that a task-based learning approach in an EPA module can significantly increase students' confidence in speaking and giving presentations. Students who were given tasks to simulate negotiations or present policy proposals showed a remarkable improvement in their fluency and language accuracy. This underscores the need for an active and contextual pedagogical approach, which goes far beyond traditional grammar teaching.

##### ***Positive Impact of EPA on Employability***

The evidence from the reviewed literature clearly shows that EPA has a positive relationship with the employability and career advancement of graduates. [6] showed that graduates who feel competent in English for professional purposes have a higher probability of being hired and report higher job satisfaction. They are able to stand out from other applicants due to their ability to operate software, interpret data, and communicate effectively in a global context [11].

The implications for STIA Tabalong are very clear. In an era where job competition is increasingly fierce, graduates who only master administrative science without being equipped with

adequate language skills will be left behind. Therefore, investing in an EPA curriculum is not an option, but a necessity to ensure the relevance and competitiveness of graduates.

### Challenges and Practical Implications

Although the benefits of EPA are well-documented, its implementation in the field is not without challenges. One of the biggest problems is the lack of teaching resources. Sari and Hidayat [7] highlight that many institutions, especially in developing countries like Indonesia, lack standardized and culturally relevant EPA materials. This forces lecturers to design their own materials, which are often not optimal. In addition, Susanto [8] shows that many English lecturers are not specifically trained in ESP methodologies. This lack of training often results in EPA instruction still being trapped in a general English teaching [11] [12].

To address these challenges, there are several practical implications that can be applied at STIA Tabalong:

- a. **EPA-Based Curriculum Development:** STIA Tabalong needs to revise its curriculum to include EPA modules that focus on practical skills, such as writing government reports, drafting business letters, and public presentations. These modules should be integrated with the main courses in the administration study program.
- b. **Lecturer Training:** The institution should facilitate training for English lecturers on ESP methodologies. This training can include how to conduct a needs analysis, design authentic learning materials, and implement task-based learning.
- c. **Industry Partnerships:** Building partnerships with local government agencies, state-owned enterprises, or non-profit organizations can provide internship and collaborative project opportunities for students. This will give them direct exposure to the use of English in a real-world work environment, which is the core of ESP learning [13] [14]

### 5. Comparison

The thematic synthesis of the reviewed literature reveals a consistent, multi-faceted picture of EPA's impact. A comparison of the findings highlights that while different studies focus on distinct aspects of EPA, they collectively point to its undeniable value. For instance, studies by Puspitasari [10] and Utomo et al. [4] primarily focus on pedagogical approaches within the classroom—task-based learning and the use of authentic materials, respectively—and their direct impact on specific professional skills like speaking and writing. These internal, process-oriented findings are supported and validated by external, outcome-oriented studies.

In contrast, research by Ramadhani [7] and Wardani [5] investigates the tangible outcomes of EPA proficiency, specifically its correlation with higher employability and employer expectations. This synthesis bridges the gap between pedagogical theory and practical results. It shows that the classroom-level improvements in communication skills, as documented by Puspitasari and Utomo et al., translate directly into a competitive advantage in the job market, as evidenced by Ramadhani and Wardani.

Furthermore, a comparison of the challenges identified by Sari & Hidayat [7] (lack of materials) and Susanto [8] (lack of lecturer training) suggests that these are not isolated problems but are intertwined systemic issues. The inability to create effective learning materials is often a direct result of inadequate pedagogical training for lecturers. This comparative analysis strengthens the argument that addressing one challenge without the other is likely to be ineffective. The implications for STIA Tabalong are therefore not just about a single curriculum change, but a holistic overhaul of teaching methods, materials, and professional development.

### 6. Conclusions

This systematic literature review concludes that the integration of a well-designed EPA curriculum is crucial for enhancing the employability of STIA Tabalong graduates. By focusing on the specialized language skills needed in the public sector, the institution can better prepare its students for professional success. **Research Limitations:** The primary limitation of this study is its reliance on secondary data. The findings are a synthesis of existing research and do not include direct data from STIA Tabalong itself.

**Suggestions for Future Research:** Future studies could conduct a qualitative needs analysis directly at STIA Tabalong to understand the specific language needs of its students and the local job market. A longitudinal study tracking the career trajectories of graduates with and without EPA training would also provide valuable quantitative data.

**Author Contributions:** Muhammad Taupik and Ahmad Farhani contributed to the conceptualization and methodology of this study. Muhammad Taupik was responsible for the software, data curation, and formal analysis. The investigation and validation were carried out by both Muhammad Taupik and Ahmad Farhani. Ahmad Farhani was in charge of project administration and funding acquisition. The original draft was prepared by Muhammad Taupik, while Ahmad Farhani contributed to the writing—review and editing. The final visualization was handled by Muhammad Taupik.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data presented in this study are available upon request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy restrictions.

**Acknowledgments:** We would like to express our sincere gratitude to STIA Tabalong for their valuable support and for providing the necessary research facilities. Additionally, the authors confirm that no artificial intelligence tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

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