

Lecturer's Perception on the Students' Need of ESP at Non-English Study Program

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ABSTRACT

Teaching English at the tertiary level presents its own challenges for English teachers. As one of the compulsory courses, English is one of the courses in both English and non-English study programs, such as the one at the University of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara (UMSU). Particularly for non-English study programs, learning English is regulated based on the specificity of the English learners or students. Lecturers have the responsibility to determine the material according to the needs of their students. English learning which is focused on the need of the learners/students commonly known as English for Specific Purpose (ESP). By using a qualitative approach and descriptive method, this study aims to describe lecturer's perception on the students' need of ESP at non-English study program. Sources of data in this study were 7 (seven) English teachers from non-English study programs at UMSU. By using a qualitative descriptive method, the data were collected by using questionnaires and interview. The results showed that according to the lecturer's perception, the students' needs have inequality in learning English based on differences in their respective fields of knowledge. The students' average ability in English, the skills needed by the students, and the students' learning objectives are factors used to describe the students' need of ESP course. Based on the students' English ability, the average ability of students is at the middle / lower level, speaking and listening skills are skills that need to be learned, and their learning objectives are divided into two criteria, short-term goals related to current needs such as academic/educational needs and long-term goals related to their world of work later.

Keywords: ESP, English Learning, Lecturer's Perception

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English at the tertiary level currently presents a tough challenge to lecturers as a teacher. Lecturers must be able to design learning materials according to their needs. Even though they are already at the tertiary level, students still make repeated mistakes. Ekayati (2012)¹ states there are students still find difficulties in understanding English regarding to the topic of subject-verb agreement with an average percentage of 95% errors. This percentage showed that the lecturer needs more effort to help the students to overcome the learning problems found. Further, lecturer should find solution to increase the students' English ability.

Apart from that, teaching English must also be able to meet the needs of the learners. This need may be based on the students' competence and performance need. For the competence needs, lecturer can provide teaching activity by compiling material based on an understanding of general English (GE), while the need for performance skill in using English must be adjusted to the needs of the learners themselves. In addition, currently the need for English language skills can be an added value in the world of students' professional later. In other words, both academically and professionally, English can be used as a measure of success for students. This is in line with what Megawati (2016)² stated that mastery of English as a foreign language used in the current era of globalization is very important and is one of the academic successes of students as well as an introduction to their career in the world

¹ Ekayati, Rini. (2012). Analisa Common Errors Dalam Penerapan Aturan Subject-Verb Agreement Bahasa Inggris. Laporan Penelitian Dosen Pemula, LPPM UMSU. Medan. (Unpublished)

² Megawati, F. (2016). Kesulitan mahasiswa dalam mencapai pembelajaran bahasa Inggris secara efektif. PEDAGOGIA: Jurnal pendidikan, 5(2), 147-156. <http://ojs.umsida.ac.id/index.php/pedagogia/article/view/246/227>.

of work later.

In general, English courses are compulsory subject for students at semester 1 with 2 credits point per semester for all existing courses, including in the English Education Study Program, likewise at the University of Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara (UMSU). At UMSU, specifically at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, English courses are programmed in two semesters, namely semester 1 (General English), and semester 2 (Applied English) with each 2 credits point. At UMSU, in general the objectives of learning English are designed to provide an understanding of aspects of the English language that will be used in communication. While for the non-English study program, learning English aims to make non-English students know and be able to use English based on their field in the context of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, both formal and informal.

Based on the preliminary review with the English lecturer at the non-English program, in case of the learning outcome for learning and teaching English at the non-English study program, it has not been achieved optimally. It may because of the learning activity designed by lecturers was still dominated by General English (GE) material, where the material focused on understanding English in general concepts, not including aspects of English usage. This may not optimize the objectives of learning English itself, especially for English learners in non-English study programs. For students in the non-English Study Program, the concept of learning English is needed which is intended for certain students with specific goals as well. In determining this need, of course, the lecturer response regarding the needs of non-English study program learners is needed, before finally a specific English learning design is drawn up for non-English language study program students.

The approach of learning and teaching English specifically is known as English for Specific Purpose (ESP). ESP is a process-oriented approach to learning English, where the learning process is designed according to the needs of English learners, in what context the learners are learning English, and what goals specifically want to achieve in learning English. (Hutchinson and Waters:1987)³. Moreover, the characteristics of ESP can provide various benefits for students (pre-experience students), namely, academic interest (when studying) and non-academic (for daily needs), and student readiness to enter their professional later, where their English language skills can be an asset to compete and be competent in the world of professional that demands English language skills (Kusumaningputri: 2010)⁴.

In addition, lecturers must analyze the needs of English language learners in order to meet the need of the students needed in learning English continuously. Related to SEP, the lecturer's response to the concept of ESP related to meet the learning needs needed by students who do not study English is very important; this is with the idea that ESP itself is to answer the needs of students which keep changing through time (Adnan: 2012)⁵. Based on that previous explanation, this research is intended to describe the lecturer's perception on the students' need of ESP at the non-English study program based on the lecturer's perception of students' English average ability, students' English skills needed by the students, and students' learning objectives. Therefore the results of the research ESP can be the basis for changes and evaluation of the existing curriculum into the ESP concept, especially in non-English study programs.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

³ Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centered Approach*. Cambridge: University Press.

⁴ Kusumaningputri, Reni. (2010). English for Specific Purpose di Universitas Jember: Tantangan dan Solusi. *Pengembangan Pendidikan*. 7(2), 182-189. <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/210263-english-for-specific-purposes-diuniversi.pdf>.

⁵ Adnan, S. (2012). Needs analysis: a process to improve the learning of ESP at the college of administration-the department of Administration and Economy- university of Basra. *The Arab Gulf*, 40(1-2), 1-20. <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/article/62389>.

2.1 The Importance of Need Analysis

Learning process in education is one of the most important parts. The success of learning is largely determined by the goals, achievements, or the results of the learning process itself. When the learning process goes well, the results will be good, as well as other things related to the learning process. In fact, the learning process does not always go well. There are times when problems arise in the process due to various factors. One of the factors is the lack of lesson planning that will be carried out during the learning process starting from the process of compiling a good lesson plan in order to maximize the results as expected is not an easy matter. In fact, before compiling the lesson plan, a teacher/lecturer must first analyze the needs of students (students' need). This needs analysis is needed to determine what material is needed by students in the learning process related to their interest.

In addition, needs analysis aims to determine the difference between the desired conditions with existing conditions (as they are expected). The expected condition is an ideal condition that is expected to occur in a learning process, while the existing conditions (reality) are conditions that occur in real learning activities in class. Furthermore, needs analysis is not a result, but a certain activity in an effort to make certain decisions as well. The decision to be taken is the need to resolve the gap between expectations and reality. Thus needs analysis is an activity of gathering information about the gap between expectations and the reality experienced by students in a learning process (Adnan, 2015⁶).

There are two types of grouping needs, namely target needs and learning needs. Target needs relate to students ability to communicate in English when they are in a target situation, while learning needs relates to what students need to learn about English. (Hutchinson and Waters: 1987)⁷. In terms of the learning process, the needs of learners are the most important learning needs. Students are the target of the learning needs (target need). Based on the needs of students, target needs are divided into three, namely needs, wants, and deficiencies. The need is to see what learners need to know in order to function properly and communicate efficiently on target. Meanwhile, desire is the desire of students to learn certain things. While the drawback is the distance or gap between what students know and do not know, so learning English must focus more on this (Febriyanti: 2017)⁸.

Currently, needs analysis is increasingly developing, including not only the analysis of requirements regarding the use of language and skills in target situations but also about the analysis of learner factors and the teaching context itself. Research related to the topic had been conducted for the last few decades and carried out by many researchers. Kothalawala et al. (2015) in Febriyanti (2017)⁹ summarizes several models or approaches taken by previous researchers from the simple to the most complex models, namely, Register Analysis by Peter Strevens, Jack Ewer, and John Swales around 1960 and 1970s, Target Situation Analysis by Hutchinson and Waters in 1987, Right Analysis by Benson in 1989, and Learner-centered Needs Analysis by Nunan in 1988). In addition, need analysis is implemented in three aspect: 1) target situation analysis, 2) present situation analysis, and 3) context analysis. Analysis of the target situation relates to the students' future needs of the language being studied. The present situation analysis relates to students' present need of the language learned at this time and context analysis relates to how the environment in which learning will take place (Westerfield in Hossain (2013) ¹⁰. The information obtained based on this analysis can later be used in

⁶ Adnan, S. (2012). Needs analysis: a process to improve the learning of ESP at the college of administration-the department of Administration and Economy- university of Basra. *The Arab Gulf*, 40(1-2), 1-20. <https://www.iasj.net/iasj/article/62389>.

⁷ Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centered Approach*. Cambridge: University Press.

⁸ Febriyanti, E. R. (2018). Identifikasi Analisis Kebutuhan Pembelajar Bahasa Inggris (Non Program Studi Bahasa Inggris) pada Mata Kuliah Bahasa Inggris ESP di Lingkungan FKIP Universitas Lambung Mangkurat Banjarmasin. *Banjarmasin: Vidya Karya*, 32(2), 123-138.

⁹ Idle.

¹⁰ Hossain, Md J. (2013). ESP Needs Analysis for Engineering Students: a Learner Centered Approach. *Journal of Presidency University*.

determining the content of the material or in refinement and learning methods of ESP.

2.2 ESP at Higher Education

In facing global competition that is currently occurring in society, college graduates must have sufficient abilities to be able to compete. Not only proficiency in science, skills in other matters are also needed, one of which is language skills, in this case a foreign language. In Indonesia context, college graduate must compete with foreign students come from around the globe. It is one of the effects of globalization. This condition will cause a direct impact on the readiness of Indonesian in accepting it. This is a challenge for college graduate to take part in the competition by showing their personal competence and performance. One of the competences and performances that need to be accomplished by individual of the college graduate is their foreign language competence and performance such as English. In addition, college graduates are expected to become the excellent source of human resources as a result of their learning process at the high level of education.

Such high expectations for college graduates are not in line with the existing reality, especially those related to skills in foreign languages, in this case English. This weakness must be overcome immediately. One way that can be done is to improve and develop the recent trend of learning and teaching English usually apply in an English class. There needs to be an effort to make improvements. Moreover, in the Indonesia context of English teaching and learning, English courses in the early 1970s were complementary subjects, then changed to general subjects until the early 1980s, then became general basic subjects, until now universities have the freedom to determine subjects basic. All are recorded in the college curriculum (Afriazi, 2016)¹¹.

Since, it is not an easy task for both lecturers and students to achieve satisfactory results in teaching and learning English, lecturers and students must work together in the learning process. Lecturers must start to be creative by designing their lesson plans that can meet students' needs for English language skills in accordance with their field of study. One of the learning approaches that can be used by lecturers is the ESP (English for Specific Purpose) approach to learning English. ESP make it possible for lecturers to design lesson plans that can meet students' needs for English, and it is added that the application of ESP in teaching can be done by using a variety of innovative learning media and sources (Hamidah & Yanuarmawan, 2019)¹².

Hutchinson and Waters (1987)¹³ further explained that ESP is not only process-oriented which determines the skills and components of English related to the needs of students, but as an English learning approach in which the topics and learning methods used in learning are designed based on the students' intention in taking English course. In other words, learners not only learn English because of the obligation to take English courses, but students also have special reasons or goals in learning English, such as to take benefits of mastering English for their profession later. Thus, learning English will be more meaningful. This is also what underlies the difference between learning English in general (General English) and learning specifically (English for Specific Purposes).

Further, Hutchinson and Waters (1987)¹⁴ demonstrate that the position of ESP in teaching English for

2(2), 16-26. <http://presidency.edu.bd/uploads/Article003.pdf>.

¹¹ Afriazi, R. (2016). Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Perguruan Tinggi Menghadapi Tantangan Abad XXI. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 7(1). <http://journal.um.ac.id/index.php/jip/article/view/592>.

¹² Hamidah, F. N., & Yanuarmawan, D. (2019). Penerapan English For Specific Purposes Untuk Meningkatkan Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris Pada Guru Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan. *Jurnal ABDINUS: Jurnal Pengabdian Nusantara*, 2(2), 236-247. <https://ojs.unpkediri.ac.id/index.php/PPM/article/view/12767>.

¹³ Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centered Approach*. Cambridge: University Press.

¹⁴ Idem

language teachers is to be a branch of ELT (Teaching English). Related to it, ESP has the following characteristics:

a. Absolute Characteristic

In absolute terms, ESP is designed to meet the special needs of learning English which is designed in a flow and learning activities that are in accordance with the scientific field of the English learners themselves. Aspects of language (grammar, lexical, and register), language skills, and types of discourse or text that are in accordance with the areas of expertise of students are the emphasis of ESP learning.

b. Variable Characteristics:

Additional features of ESP are generated or designed for certain disciplines so that they can be used as a special form of teaching with a different flow from learning English in general. ESP programs are aimed at adult learners, either formally as part of an institutional or professional field. However, ESP can also be applied to secondary level students, especially certain vocational program. A prerequisite for ESP learners is that they must already have a basic knowledge of the English language, even at a beginner level.

At the tertiary level, students generally take English courses based on their obligation to take these courses. It is very rare for students to take English courses based on their desire to learn English (Ekayati, R., Manurung, I. D., & Yenni, E., 2020)¹⁵. Especially for students in non-English study programs, not a few feel that their English language skills are still very low. They still need language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. There are those who think that their speaking and writing skills are weak, so they hope that their English learning will be focused on these two skills (Asnadi, 1990 in Febriyanti, 2017)¹⁶. This becomes the challenges for English teachers, especially those in non-English study programs, to make this course meaningful and useful for these students.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive and qualitative approaches are the methods used in this research. The data presented in the form of descriptive paragraph based on the data collection. Data analysis was carried out through data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2010)¹⁷. In data collection, data is selected, focused and recorded in field notes. In this study, the data collected is data derived from the results of questionnaires and literature studies. Meanwhile, data reduction is the process of selecting/simplifying existing data both from questionnaires and literature studies. The next step was data display. What is meant by data display here is to describe or narrate the data that has been obtained. This technique is used to compile information, describe or narrate the information for further use to draw conclusions. Final step is conclusion drawing. It must be done carefully so that the conclusions obtained are of good quality and in accordance with the research objectives. Therefore, in this study conclusions are drawn continuously during the research process. This is done so that the data obtained has strong validation of data analysis.

The instrument of this research was a questionnaire which was chosen as the most appropriate tool to describe the lecturer's perception of the students' needs of ESP at the non-English study program. The contents of the questionnaire refer to the necessities, wants, and lacks. (Hutchinson and Waters: 1987)¹⁸. Questionnaires were distributed using the online form service facility - Google Form, since this research was conducted at the time of pandemic Covid – 19. In addition, literature study techniques are also used by finding references that match the research topic and theme. The source of data were

¹⁵ Ekayati, R., Manurung, I. D., & Yenni, E. (2020). NEED ANALYSIS OF ESP FOR NON-ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM. *Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching*, 4(2), 322-332.

¹⁶ Febriyanti, E. R. (2018). Identifikasi Analisis Kebutuhan Pembelajar Bahasa Inggris (Non Program Studi Bahasa Inggris) pada Mata Kuliah Bahasa Inggris ESP di Lingkungan FKIP Universitas Lambung Mangkurat Banjarmasin. *Banjarmasin: Vidya Karya*, 32(2), 123-138.

¹⁷ Sugiyono. (2010). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta

¹⁸ Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centered Approach*. Cambridge: University Press.

seven (7) English lecturers as the respondents from 5 different faculties at UMSU, particularly from the non-English study program.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The analysis was started by pointing out the real condition of the students' English ability according to the respondents' responses of question number 1 to 3 of the questioners.

Table 1: Lecturer's Perception on Students' of Non-English Study Program
 General Ability in English

Level of Students' English Ability	Response
Beginner	5
Intermediate	2
Advance	0
Total	7

In the table above, it is shown that 5 respondents stated that the majority of students' English language skills at non-English study program were at the beginner level, and 2 respondents stated that the students' English ability was at the intermediate level. This data only shows the current situation in English language learning in non-English study programs based on the respondents' perception. For the next question, it relates to the importance of taking English courses for non-English study program students. The majority of the respondents (5 respondents) think that this subject is very important for students with a percentage and 2 respondents considered that it was important. so, it can be assumed that all respondents have positive perception on the students' need of taking English course. In full, the data distribution can be seen in table 2 below.

Table 2: How important it is to take English Courses
 for non-English Students

Category	Frequency
Very important	5
Urgent	2
Quite Important / Average	-
Not important	-
Total	7

The next question is related to the perception of the students' purpose in taking English courses, apart from the reason that this course is a compulsory subject. The answer to this question also varies with the highest percentage being to be useful for their work stated by 4 respondents followed by the goal of to communicate fluently both orally and in writing stated by 3 respondents. These two variables showed relationship between them, since that having good ability in communicating with English in oral and written form is to be useful for their future work field later.

Table 3: Purpose of Taking English Courses for Students
 of Non-English Study Programs

Purpose Categories	Frequency
For work	4
To communicate fluently both orally and in writing	3
Total	7

In teaching and learning process, one aspect that is regarded as the crucial item that is the teaching and learning material. So, the next questions were related to what English material that the lecturers percept the students need for each existing English language skill like what the students need to read in English, what they need to be listened to, written and spoken in English.

Based on what the respondents responded to the related questions, the reading skill was needed by the students, 4 respondents answered that the students need their reading skill to read literature related to the field of science (57.14%), 2 respondents stated that the students need their reading skill to read lecturer material (28.58%), and 1 respondent stated that the students need their reading skill to read English book.

Table 4: Students' Required in Reading Material to Read in English

Category	Frequency
English books	1
Lecture material	2
Read literature related to the field of science	4
Total	7

Based on the table above, it showed that students need to read English material relate to the field of science which means that the lecturer have positive perception to the concept of ESP since selecting suitable material according to particular domain of the English learners is the goal of ESP (Paltridge and Starfield, 2013¹⁹).

Table 5: Required to Listen to (Listening) in English

Categories	Frequency
Understand instructions/commands	1
Understand seminars/conferences or scientific presentations	2
Understand lectures	4
Others	

In terms of listening skill, from table 5 above, there were 4 respondents argued that the students need their listening ability to understand lecturers, 2 respondents argued for understanding seminars/conferences or scientific presentations and 1 respondent argued that the students need their listening skill for understanding instructions/commands.

Related to the writing skill, 4 respondents thought that the students need their writing skill in order to communicate through writing with others about the field of science, 2 respondents argued for making notes of English lectures, and 1 respondent thought that the students need their writing skill to write a business letter/job application.

Table 6: Requirements to Write (Writing) in English

Categories	Frequency
Make notes of English lectures	2
Write a business letter/job application	1
Communicate through writing with others about the field of science	4
Total	7

For the last skill that is speaking, 2 respondents argued that the students need to use their speaking

¹⁹ Paltridge, B. & Starfield S. (Ed.) (2013) *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes*. West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

skill to be able to participate in class discussions, 2 respondents argued to the idea of using students ability in speaking to be able to speak in seminars or international conferences, and only 1 respondent argued that the students need to use their speaking skill to be able make questions and provide answers in the classroom.

Table 7: Required to Speak to (Speaking) in English

Category	Sum
Can make questions and provide answers in the classroom	1
Can participate in class discussions	2
Can speak in seminars or international conferences	2
Total	7

5. DISCUSSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTION

The ESP approach needs to be considered to be applied in the teaching and learning activity at the non-English study program at UMSU. It is based on the fact that the lecturers have positive perception towards ESP based on the data collected. In fact, the students need to be orientated to the focus of their field in learning English. The complexity of English as one of the most spoken language in the world can be simplified by focusing the learning process for the sake of the learners themselves. By this, the learning process will be much valued. The findings of this research suggest that there were at least two (2) crucial aspects of lecturers' perception on the students' need of ESP course for the non-English study program at the university.

First, according to the lecturers' point of view, the students' needs have inequality in learning English based on differences in their respective fields of knowledge. The lecturers need to consider and design their lesson plans as suitable for the students with the average English ability is at the middle / lower level, while speaking and listening skills are skills that need to be learned as the priority. Related to the teaching and learning material, lecturers state their perception that the English material should relate to the field of science of the students, for instance English economy for economic students, and so on. By doing so, the lecturer have positive perception to the concept of ESP since selecting suitable material according to particular domain of the English learners is the goal of ESP (Paltridge and Starfield, 2013²⁰). Related to the students' learning objectives, they are divided into two criteria, short-term goals related to current needs such as academic/educational needs and long-term goals related to their world of work after completing education. The short-term goal which relates to the current need of students in academic need is also influenced by the university obligation which demands the students to pass an English proficiency test before their colloquium. This is the implementation of the government policies for higher education to prepare an academic achievement related to their skill called SKPI (UU No. 2 Tahun 2021²¹). The topic of the English proficiency test is designed based on the field of study of the students. It becomes another responsibility of the lecturers to prepare the students to pass the test. Then, the long-term goal relates to the students' need of English to their world of profession. Lecturers also have positive perception about this and state that students' need of English in long-term goal is that English is to be useful for their work and to communicate fluently both orally and in writing.

Second, the implementation of ESP is not as easy as it is mentioned. Lecturers and students need to be actively involved in the process. What is expected by the lecturer should be followed by effort and support from the students and vice versa. Based on the lecturers' perception, the ESP is needed by the

²⁰ Paltridge, B. & Starfield S. (Ed.) (2013) *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes*. West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

²¹ UU No. 12 Tahun 2012 Tentang Perguruan Tinggi.

students of non-English study program, since the characteristics of ESP can help lecturers to design suitable material and approach in teaching and learning. Besides,, the role of ESP lecturers will become all-encompassing and challenging. Lecturers are designer, material provider, researcher, collaborator, and an evaluator (Dudley-Evans and ST John, 1998²²).

This study was considered to have a few limitations. First, the number of respondents was limited, and the respond as the primary data was limited only by the questioner. Future research can collect more comprehensive data from various other sources like direct interview and observation. Second, collaboration may be conducted for further research on the course design of the ESP, including the material, method, strategy, and media in teaching and learning for the non-English study program at the university level. Lastly, further studies are called for to explore a larger number of ESP aspects in the field of English Language Teaching.

²² Dudley-Evans, T. and St John, M. J (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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