

A NEED ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LEARNING FOR ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS STUDENTS AT DR. SOEBANDI UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Analysing English learning for Economics and Business students at dr. Soebandi University involves examining how English material and instruction is tailored to meet their specific academic and professional needs. In digital era of global economy, proficiency in English is crucial for accessing international markets, participating in global business networks, and understanding global economic trends. Thus, this study is to find out how English language learning is designed for students in economics and business disciplines and its impact on their academic and professional success. The qualitative method is applied to investigate the Needs Analysis. The data is collected through questionnaire and interviews to gather all information to improve the materials design of English for Economic and Business subject. There were 30 students of Economic and Business Faculty at dr. Soebandi University, and two lecturers. The finding of the study shows material relevance content, task-based learning and technology enhance materials that needed and should be improved in designing effective materials for Economics and Business students, which preparing them for both academic and professional success.

Keywords: *Need analysis, English for Economic and Business*

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English remains as a foreign language. But as know that it has expanded using in the various levels of society, including communities and nations. It is also employed for interactions with foreigners, business dealings, diplomacy, and educational purposes. By this reason, English becomes importance in communication, whether actively or passively. Consequently, English for Economic and business is one of a compulsory subject for all students of Economic and Business Faculty at dr. Soebandi University.

English for Economics and Business belongs to English for Specific Purposes (ESP). As noted by Basturkmen (2010), the primary aim of ESP is to equip students with the language and communication skills necessary to excel in their specific fields of study, work, or profession. ESP emphasizes the terminology relevant to particular context that allowing students to become proficient in specialized terms (Jeczelewski, 2016). The goal of teaching ESP is to prepare students for the specific English language requirements they will encounter in their future careers (Mahardika, 2014). In summary, ESP focuses on teaching and learning English for use in specific domains, thereby helping students develop business English skills.

Material design in English for Specific Purposes must be carefully planned and assessed to ensure that students achieve their objectives effectively. Basturkmen (2010) states that the stage where ESP instructors identify the specific language needs and skills required by their learners known as needs analysis. The researcher as the English lecturer for English of Economic and Business need to analyse in selecting

materials for the students to meet their needs.

The approach of need analysis of ESP should address specific instructional goals, such as enabling students to read English texts related to their field of study, communicate in writing, deliver presentations and have a conversation. Moreover, Daulay (2021) states technological advancements are closely linked to economic changes. In this case, global market operations rely on the swift flow of information made possible by new communication technologies. Likewise, education is also increasingly influenced by the emergence of new technologies and media.

Lastly, the lecturer pointed out the importance of determining what should be taught in the English for Business course. A needs analysis helps educators identify the key language skills, terminology, and communication strategies that are most relevant to the students' future professions. This step is vital as it ensures that the curriculum covers essential topics, thereby enhancing students' readiness for the job market. Without a structured analysis of needs, the course may overlook critical skills that students require, resulting in gaps in their language proficiency that could hinder their professional success.

Teaching materials enables lecturer to continuously enhance the ESP course and adapt it to the evolving needs of students. Therefore, the researcher aims to conduct this study to determine the most effective material design the English for Economic and Business that suit to the needs of students in the Faculty of Economics and Business at dr. Soebandi University.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study describes the application of needs analysis to explore the needs, shortcomings, gaps, and desires in order to create an effective syllabus or lesson plan for nursing students. The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive analysis in the form of numbers and percentages, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis to be presented. As proposed by Milles at.al (2016) in analysing the data concerning the components of data analysis in the interactive model.

Data collection techniques were carried out through the distribution of questionnaires and interviews regarding the needs of ESP learners. The questionnaire used is a closed-ended type, containing questions with the options that respondents can directly answer. There were 30 students of Economic and Business Faculty consist of Entrepreneurship and Digital Business, and two lecturers as the participants of this research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, data on learning needs was collected from 30 students and the lecturers. The data from the questionnaire was divided into three sections: students' personal information, students' needs for learning English for Economic and Business, and the material requirements for the course.

The first section gathered information about the students' personal background. The respondents were selected from 30 students of the Faculty of Economics and Business majoring in Entrepreneurship and Digital Business who had completed their General English course in the previous semester. Detailed information is provided in Table 1.

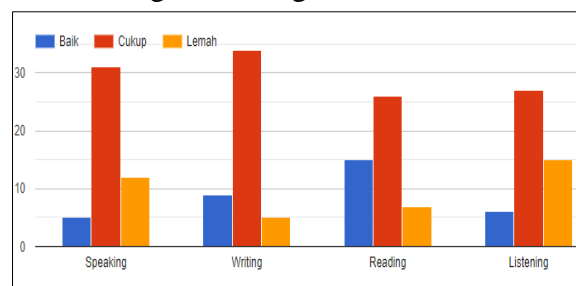
Table 1 Students Personal Information

Gender		English Proficiency level	
Female	18	Poor	3
Male	12	Fair	15
		Good	10
		Very good	2

In the next section, students asked by the questions about their need in learning English for Economics and Business. There result showed that 76% strongly agreed that English for Economics and Business was essential for their job performance, 23% agreed, and only 1% felt that English was not really beneficial for their study or work performance.

The second section was aimed to assess learners' English proficiency across each skill as illustrated in the diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1. English skills



Most students felt they had a relatively good command of each skill, with writing at 70.9%, followed by speaking at 62.5%. However, they were weaker in listening at 58.5% and reading at 52.1%. This suggests that they are good proficient in productive skills, such as speaking and writing. Meanwhile, they fair proficient in receptive skills of listening and reading.

In the third section was about the needs of additional hours of the course English for Economics and Business. There were 36% strongly agreed and 64% agreed

that they need additional time both and theory and practice of the English course. It means the credit point of the course should be added.

The final section of the questionnaire focused on the materials needed by students, based on their objectives of the field. Students were provided with a list of 15 course objectives of English materials that ranked using the following scales: "Essential Priority," "High Priority," "Medium Priority," "Low Priority," and "Not a Priority." They will answer according to their needs.

Table 1. Course Objectives

Course objective	Percentage
1. Listening to business conversation	65%
2. Listening to the news of Economics issues	65%
3. Reading a business email / letters	76%
4. Reading a documents or agreement	77%
5. Reading work-related to Economics and Business issues	75%
6. Practice job interviews	81%
7. Practice conventions with customers/clients	74%
8. Practice Business phone call	63%
9. Practice to express opinions in business meeting	78%
10. Delivering a speech in business forum	68%
11. Practice product presentations	71%
12. Writing report documents (meetings / sales / finance, etc.)	75%

13. Writing proposals (projects, plans, etc.)	73%
14. Writing a job application letter and personal data	84%
15. Writing a business email/letter.	77%

Source: Students' questioners

The following data was gathered from the English lecturers. The lecturer participated in a semi-structured interview, that asked about the purpose of teaching English for Economics and Business students, how the lecturer designs the materials, and what should be included in the English for Economics and Business course.

The result on the interview, it was found that the lecturer taught English as a compulsory general subject. The materials based on the lesson plan given by the Faculty that mostly contains of basic general English for college students. The lecturers sometimes teach reading related to economics issues while rarely focuses on Economics and Business terminology.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A needs analysis in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is crucial because it ensures that the course content is directly relevant to the learners' specific goals, professional contexts, and language requirements. As stated in Malik and Ria study (2020) that need analysis can get important result in designing materials for English for Business course. By conducting a needs analysis, the materials can address the particular skills and vocabulary that students will use in their future careers, making the learning process more effective and engaged.

One of the key points proposed by the lecturer emphasized how needs analysis directly influences the design of teaching materials. By identifying the specific areas of English for Economics and Business that are most important for students, such as business communication, presentations, negotiations, or writing reports. The lecturer can create the appropriate materials that address these areas. The lecturer's highlighted that needs analysis enables to craft lessons plan that are directly aligned with students' career aspirations, thus making the learning process more efficient and effective.

From the data gathered among the students of the Faculty of Economics and Business provides valuable insights into their personal backgrounds, English proficiency levels, and perceived needs for learning English in their specific fields. Most students have a moderate level of proficiency, there is a need to enhance English skills to meet the demands of their academic and professional environments. The predominance of students with fair and good proficiency levels indicates that there is a foundation of English knowledge, but need an improvement, particularly as students transition from general English courses to more specialized language needs in Economics and Business contexts.

Meanwhile, there were also the students' perceptions of the importance of English for their studies and future careers in Economics and Business. The findings reveal a strong consensus among the students regarding the value of English in their professional development: 76% of students strongly agreed that English for Economics and Business was essential for their job performance, while 23% agreed. Only 1% of the respondents felt that English

was not particularly beneficial for their study or work performance.

These results underscore the critical role that English plays in the fields of Economics and Business, where effective communication skills are vital for success. The overwhelming agreement on the importance of English highlights a clear demand for specific English instruction that appropriate to the needs of business students. This also suggests that students are highly motivated to improve their English skills when they see a direct link to their career prospects.

For the course material objectives that assessed the students' proficiency in various English skills include writing, speaking, listening, and reading. It seems that students generally felt more confident in their productive skills, with writing being the highest at 70.9%, followed by speaking at 62.5%. However, they reported lower proficiency in receptive skills, with listening at 58.5% and reading at 52.1%.

This suggests that students are relatively stronger in expressing themselves (productive skills) but more challenges in understanding English when it is presented in written or spoken form (receptive skills). The lower scores in listening and reading indicate that students might struggle with comprehension, which is critical for understanding complex business texts, instructions, or conversations in real-world business settings. Therefore, while students feel capable of producing English, there is a clear need for targeted instruction to enhance their listening and reading skills, which are essential for successful communication in business contexts. It is line with Liton (2015) suggests that Business English courses are essential for enhancing communication skills, which can subsequently improve

workplace performance and open up new career opportunities

The primary objectives of the English for Economics and Business course, highlighting the skills deemed essential by students for their academic and professional development. These objectives cover a broad range of language skills, including listening, reading, speaking, and writing, all must be the specific needs of students pursuing careers in Economics and Business. The percentages represent the proportion of students who identified each objective as important for their learning and future job performance. These are objectives and the implications for course design.

1. Listening Skills in Business Contexts.

The objectives related to listening skills, such as “Listening to business conversations” (65%) and “Listening to the news of Economics issues” (65%), reflect the students’ recognition of the importance of understanding spoken English in business contexts. As explained by Gray and Murray (2011) that listening skill in the business is highly priority element in the task work. Listening skill is crucial for students as they navigate real-world business environments, where they must comprehend discussions, negotiations, and updates related to economic trends. However, the relatively moderate emphasis on listening skills suggests that while students value these competencies, they may not yet fully grasp the critical role that active listening plays in effective business communication.

2. Reading Skills Focused on Business and Economics.

The objectives related to reading skills received strong emphasis, with high percentages for “Reading a business email/letters” (76%), “Reading documents or agreements” (77%), and “Reading work-related to Economics and Business issues”

(75%). This indicates a clear need among students to develop their reading comprehension skills, particularly when dealing with complex texts such as contracts, reports, and professional correspondence. The ability to understand and analyze such documents is essential for making informed decisions and engaging in successful business transactions. The emphasis on reading suggests that students recognize the value of being proficient in interpreting written materials, which are integral to business operations.

3. Speaking Skills for Professional Interaction.

The objectives related to speaking skills focus on practical, real-world applications such as “Practicing job interviews” (81%), “Practicing conventions with customers/clients” (74%), and “Practicing business phone calls” (63%). The high importance placed on job interview practice reflects students’ awareness of the competitive job market and their desire to present themselves effectively. Meanwhile, practicing interactions with customers and clients highlights the need to build confidence in business communication, which is essential for networking, negotiations, and customer relations. The slightly lower emphasis on business phone calls may indicate that students feel less comfortable or less familiar with this form of communication, suggesting an area for further instructional focus.

4. Speaking Skills in Formal Business Settings.

Objectives like “Practicing to express opinions in business meetings” (78%), “Delivering a speech in a business forum” (68%), and “Practicing product presentations” (71%) underscore the need for students to develop public speaking and presentation skills. These skills are vital for

leadership roles, pitching ideas, and representing their companies or products effectively. The significant percentages indicate that students are aware of the importance of clear and persuasive communication in business settings, yet these areas still offer opportunities for further skill enhancement, particularly in building confidence and fluency.

5. Writing Skills in Professional Contexts.

Writing skills received high importance across various professional tasks, such as “Writing a job application letter and personal data” (84%), “Writing a business email/letter” (77%), and “Writing proposals (projects, plans, etc.)” (73%). The strong emphasis on writing job application letters reflects students’ immediate needs as they prepare to enter the job market. Additionally, skills in writing business correspondence, reports, and proposals are crucial for documenting, planning, and communicating effectively within professional environments. The data suggests that students view these writing skills as directly impacting their employability and performance in business roles. It is line with Ria and Malik (2020) on their study prioritized on students’ need to be emphasized on writing that referred about the use of writing at work.

From the objectives identified in the English for Economics and Business course highlight the comprehensive approach needed to equip students with the skills required in professional settings. There is a balanced focus on developing receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing), reflecting the diverse language demands of business environments. The data reveals that while students place significant value on all aspects of business communication, particular emphasis is needed on enhancing

their writing skills for professional purposes and improving their confidence in spoken business interactions.

These findings underscore the importance of a targeted curriculum that addresses the specific needs of business students, providing them with practical language skills that directly translate into their academic and professional success. By focusing on these identified objectives, educators can design more effective English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses that prepare students to meet the challenges of the business world with confidence and competence.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of this research is importance of conducting a needs analysis in ESP courses, particularly in English for Economics and Business. It is provides a comprehensive overview of the students’ background, proficiency, and perceived needs, and material objectives for English in their field of study. By identifying the specific requirements of students, the lecturers can design courses that are relevant, targeted, and effective. This belongs to an approach not only improves learning outcomes but also better prepares students to meet the language demands of their future careers. Therefore, integrating needs analysis into the development of English for Economics and Business courses is not just beneficial but also essential for ensuring the success of both the students and the educational program.

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