

## Portraying the Learning Needs of English Language in Non-English Department Students

Nunung Mardianti<sup>1</sup>, Lalu Belik Made Dwipa<sup>2</sup>

PGSD STKIP HAMZAR Lombok Utara

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### Abstract

*The existence of English language courses plays an important role in efforts to welcome industry 4.0. This is caused by the use of English which dominates knowledge and science and even today's lifestyle. Thus, in the implementation of teaching, English has been taught from low level education to high level education. Learning English at the college level non-English majors have different needs than English majors. Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) is present as one of the non-English majors and has a curriculum that requires students to master English, especially for research needs, articles, teaching materials and books and other sources written in English. This is because education departments have already developed in countries that use English and Latin as their national languages. It can be emphasized that some of the learning materials and resources written in books, articles and journals related to the field of PGSD are written in English and Latin. So that through needs analysis, lecturers and students can find out which aspects of language skills and competencies must be mastered to support the scientific field they are pursuing. Through the results of the analysis, lecturers can also determine what teaching methods, media and materials are in accordance with the learning objectives that have been formulated.*

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### Corresponding Author:

Nunung Mardianti

PGSD STKIP HAMZAR Lombok Utara

Email: [nunungmardianti28@gmail.com](mailto:nunungmardianti28@gmail.com)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian government has recently been very strongly promoting the industrial revolution 4.0. All parties are asked to prepare themselves to be able to compete with the global world. As we enter the beginning of the 21st century, the industrial revolution has entered its fourth phase where industry is now utilizing digital technology (Tjandrawinata, 2020). With the global competition faced by Indonesia in the era of the industrial revolution in the digital age, Indonesian people must prepare skills provision for the community, especially in two core skills, namely the ability to utilize information technology and the ability to speak foreign languages, especially English.

Language English has been studied by Indonesian people from elementary school level to university level, where it can be said that English is still an obstacle experienced by foreign language learners (Phillips, 1996). In fact, mastery of English is a basic need for everyone to fulfill various needs, ranging from requirements to continue their education to a higher level to work requirements (Manhattan, 2018). English has an important role at the levels of higher education, secondary education and primary education in various parts of the world. In Indonesia, English is taught first in secondary education. This is because English subjects have been moved into the Local Content group at the elementary level. Meanwhile, at the higher education level, English is one of the mandatory subjects in the curriculum for English and non-English majors. The number of semester credits for English courses offered varies depending on the policies at each university. There are several non-English majors, including Tourism, PGSD, Pharmacy, Law, Economics, International Relations and others. The learning needs of English for PGSD majors are different from the English language context for tourism majors.

As is known, students majoring in tourism tend to need to improve their speaking skills in English. In the scope of their work, which involves a lot of interaction with foreign tourists, it inevitably requires them to speak English correctly and clearly. So speaking skills are important for students majoring in tourism to master. In line with this, research conducted by Mulyono et al (2023) found that the majority of students majoring in tourism aimed to learn English to support their future careers in the Service and Hospitality industry. Specifically, they chose to focus on speaking skills. On the other hand, medical students have different English learning needs. Mardianti (2016) found that medical study program students at Mataram University studied English with the main aim of being able to read English journals in order to develop their careers.

On the other hand, students from the PGSD department focus more on improving reading skills than other language skills because of the demand to read a large number of PGSD scientific publications. Furthermore, Yulia (2017) analyzed the learning needs for English language courses of PGSD students and found that students studied English to improve their pedagogical skills through articles and journals in English. Through these learning resources they want to improve their teaching professionalism to a higher standard. Apart from that, they also of course want to learn English content. Sajadi and Oghabi (2011) argue that English texts have been seen as a very important medium for obtaining information. According to Pavel (2014), currently the number of scientific publications in English has increased by 80% of all journals indexed in Scopus. Apart from that, English is also widely used as an official language in many international conferences in various countries. Therefore, PGSD students need to read PGSD publications to gain insight and knowledge in their field.

However, facts on the ground reveal that there are still many students majoring in non-English, including students majoring in PGSD or majoring in tourism who have poor English language skills. This is because the teaching and learning process at both primary and secondary education levels is not followed optimally by students. For them, English subjects are only limited to a collection of 16 kinds of formulas that are arranged to determine certain time information such as simple present tense, past tense or perfect continuous. In fact, English material is very diverse to learn if the material can be presented in an interesting method. Meanwhile, when they start to enter higher education, they are expected to have standard English proficiency. Even though these students come from schools where English teaching methods and infrastructure are different.

As previously explained, as a non-English major, PGSD students have the highest need for mastering English among other majors. This is due to the availability of their learning resources, most of which are written in English. Learning sources here refer to books, journals and articles related to the PGSD field. However, even though they are required to have good command of English, this does not mean they have to master all aspects of English because all students from non-English majors have different learning goals based on their respective majors. In anticipating this, the parties in charge of designing the curriculum need to carry out a learning needs analysis.

Needs analysis has an important role in English for specific purposes (ESP), especially in English for PGSD majors. Dudley-Evans & Johns (1987, in Tasci, 2007) believe that needs analysis can be used as a reference or guide in curriculum development, syllabus design, creating lesson plans and adopting learning materials effectively. So by conducting a needs analysis, teaching staff can determine learning objectives that suit student learning needs. Grave (2007) suggests that teaching methods implemented from the needs analysis process can help students to evaluate their learning process and make them more aware of their own learning needs. By considering students' language learning needs and motivation, it is important to carry out a needs analysis so that curriculum managers, subject teachers

and students have clear direction regarding the teaching and learning process in ESP classes.

The author will try to elaborate on several variables in the title of the article by synthesizing research results from several journals related to the topic raised in this article. A complete explanation will be presented in the scope of the study section.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study is a library research method or approach. Library or library research can be interpreted as a series of activities relating to methods of collecting library data, reading and taking notes and processing research materials (Zed, 2003). In library research there are at least four main characteristics that writers need to pay attention to, including: First, that the writer or researcher is dealing directly with text (manuscript) or numerical data, not with direct knowledge from the field. Second, library data is "ready to use" meaning that researchers do not go directly into the field because researchers are dealing directly with data sources in the library. Third, that library data is generally a secondary source, in the sense that researchers obtain material or data from second hand and not original data from first hand data in the field. Fourth, that the condition of library data is not limited by space and time (Zed, 2003). Based on the above, data collection in research is carried out by reviewing and/or exploring several journals, books and documents (both printed and electronic) as well as other sources of data and/or information that are considered relevant to the research or study.

## 3. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

### English position

Globally, English has been used in many countries in the world as an international language. Specifically, in Indonesia English has a position as a foreign language (Khairani, 2011). Because English is a foreign language, there are several characteristics inherent in English, including; English is one of the compulsory subjects at secondary education level and is one of the selection materials for entering tertiary institutions. English is also used as the language of instruction in certain departments at universities and is used in student textbooks.

### English in the college curriculum.

The provisions governing the basic structure of the higher education curriculum are contained in RI Regulation no. 19 of 2005 concerning national education standards (SNP). According to Syam (2011), several articles of the government regulations contain rules regarding content standards related to the scope of material and level of competency which are formulated in criteria regarding graduate competency, study competency and subject competency. These competencies consist of competency standards and basic competencies developed based on five subject groups, namely the Personality Development, Knowledge and Skills, Creative Skills, Creative Behavior and Life and Society groups. From this grouping of courses, there are four courses that must be given in higher education, namely religious education, citizenship education, Indonesian and English. It is hoped that this series of courses can provide the direction and goals of Higher Education as stated in Minister of National Education Decree No. 232/U/2000.

If Judging from the need for English at the tertiary level, there are differences in the portion of learning in each department. In the English department itself, the intensity of teaching is of course longer than in teaching English in other departments. Apart from being determined by student learning needs, the policies of each educational institution also play an important role in determining the portion of English language learning. Generally,

English is dominantly taught in tourism majors as a non-English language. This has become a provision because graduates majoring in tourism are expected to be able to master a foreign language to support their performance in working in the tourism sector.

Many English language teaching institutions in educational institutions, especially higher education, are based on the principle that the language must be related to the purposes for which language learners can use it after studying it. A general example of English for special purposes (ESP) can be seen from the English language needs of the PGSD field at university level. According to Gylys and Wedding (1983, in Yang, 2005), terminology in the field of PGSD is a specific thing that is used to make the communication process in the field of education and teaching more effective. The terms used in the field of teaching and educational services are unique and complicated at the same time. This uniqueness requires language learners to take a lot of time to learn specific terminology contextually if they really want to understand the terms.

Apart from that, Sajadi & Oghabi (2011), from their research, found that the ability to read English is the most frequently needed and is the most important language skill for PGSD students. This is because PGSD students are required to read many medical scientific publications such as articles, journals and books written in English which of course contain many educational and teaching terms in them.

### **Needs analysis**

One of the principles in ESP is that language teaching should start from an analysis of students' needs, especially in English for special purposes (ESP). Richard (1984, in Tasci, 2007) shows that each child has different language needs and what is taught. They should reflect these needs. Thus, analysis of student needs aims to produce information that makes learning designs adaptable to student needs. Sudjana (2006) further stated that needs analysis can be considered as a basis for teaching English for non-English major students in the process of determining the basis of a course. Therefore, a needs analysis must be the first thing to be carried out because this activity will determine "what" and "how" the learning process will take place.

Graves (2000, in Tasci, 2007) defines needs analysis as a systematic and continuous process of taking information about student needs and preferences and interpreting this information to make decisions related to learning to meet student needs. He emphasized that an assessment needs analysis also needs to be carried out before designing the curriculum. In connection with this, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasized that needs analysis is an activity that cannot be done just once but must be carried out continuously. In other words, analysis procedures must be carried out not only at the initial stage of lesson preparation but continue for approximately one or two semesters.

Furthermore, Brown (1995, p.43) states that needs analysis consists of several activities in which the activities contain important information to help the curriculum creation team and teachers in compiling the curriculum. Brown added that the information obtained from the needs analysis contains how much students know, how much they already know and what they need to learn.

Nunan (1988) states that the first procedure or step that must be taken in analyzing needs is to decide what kind of data will be taken. The next thing that must be determined is when the data will be collected, by whom and for what purpose. Meanwhile, regarding instruments that can be used in data collection, namely questionnaires, interviews, observations and assessments.

In relation to the issue of needs, Brindley (1989, in Fatihi, 2003) provides two categories of needs, namely subjective and objective. Objective needs are the student's situation in learning a language and its use in the language. According to Brindley, objective needs are

easier to research because they include factual information and can be known through observation. Objective needs can be identified through taking demographic information, for example in what ways or methods they need to use English in real practice, their current level of language mastery, and what other aspects or materials they need to learn.

Subjective needs are the needs of students in learning situations and can be understood from affective factors and cognitive factors, such as personality, self-confidence, attitudes, desires, expectations related to English learning, cognitive style and learning strategies of a student. Thus, subjective needs are considered more complicated because students' desires and expectations are considered difficult to monitor if only through observation.

Hutchinson & Waters (1987) divides needs analysis into 2 types, namely target needs and learning needs. Target needs consist of necessities, lacks and wants. Necessities refer to something that students must know to understand and use the target language, lacks is the gap between the student's level of proficiency and the level they want to achieve in the target language, while wants are the subjective needs of language learners. On the other hand, learning needs consist of the knowledge that learners already have, language skills, and their perceptions of the target language. Learning needs have an important role in helping teachers determine material that is suitable for students. In this way, the material adopted can be adjusted so that it is not too easy or difficult for them to learn.

### **Implementation of language needs analysis in English language teaching for PGSD majors**

As explained in the previous chapter, needs analysis has a very important role in determining which direction to teach English for non-English majors, especially PGSD majors. In simple terms, it can be said that needs analysis can be likened to determining a route or direction to a place. As teachers and administrators, teachers must know the starting point of the learning itself, the route that can be taken and the goals to be addressed so that the aspects of what they want to achieve become clearer.

Pavel (2014) from research he conducted regarding teaching English for medical purposes. Initially Pavel tried to analyze the needs of PGSD students in learning English. After students' needs are identified, the researcher then determines learning objectives based on the data from the needs analysis obtained. After determining the learning objectives, the material is selected, which is taken from authentic material. Using a task-based syllabus that focuses on communication and activities that reflect teaching only helps students improve their pedagogical knowledge but also their language skills.

In a different case, Sabet & Daneshvard (2010) raised the issue of the influence of ESP material on the English language proficiency of elementary education students. By creating three types of material sources, namely material based on language needs analysis (teacher-made material), original material (International material) and domestic material (SMAT). Based on the posttest results, it was found that English language proficiency was highest in the group of students who were given material from the results of their needs analysis (teacher-made material). This means that the implications of student needs analysis activities have a positive effect on the output and proficiency of their language skills.

From the research above, it can be concluded that conducting an analysis or identification of student needs is very important, especially students majoring in non-English. The implications of the analysis which is then used to structure English language learning can help students achieve learning goals that do not deviate too much from their language learning needs. In addition to the work, learning plans created by lecturers and instructors can be further realized in class. Moreover, the results of the analysis of student needs can make it easier for teachers and lecturers to determine appropriate methods, media and learning materials.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The existence of English subjects or courses cannot be separated from its very important role in facing the industrial era 4.0. This is caused by the use of English which dominates knowledge and science and even today's lifestyle. So, in the implementation of teaching, English has been taught from level education to higher level education. In relation to education, starting from sources of learning materials, literature, scientific publications, especially for several non-English departments such as the tourism department, education department, and international relations department, requires students in these departments to have adequate English language skills. In fact, students majoring in basic education are not required to have maximum proficiency in all English skills and competencies because each student from a different major has different English language needs. Because it will be difficult to teach material from all aspects of English due to limited lesson time allocation. Therefore, language needs analysis is very important for ESP lecturers to carry out. So that through the language needs analysis process, they can get clear direction regarding the development of a syllabus which includes material, objective methods and assessment of learning outcomes.

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