

Teachers' Perspectives, Practices, and Challenges in English for Specific Purposes in Non-English Major Students

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Abstract. This study aims to obtain teachers' perspectives, practices, and challenges in English for specific purposes in non-English major students. The researchers distributed some questionnaires as the instrument to the English Teacher Forum. There were seven respondents from some universities; University of Muhammadiyah Makassar, STIMIK Widya Pratama, University of Muhammadiyah Lamongan, University of Mataram, University of Muhammadiyah Magelang, University of Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin, Banyuwangi State Polytechnic, and Indonesian Aviation School (STTKD) Yogyakarta. The questions items focused on obtaining the respondents' characteristics including the length of teaching ESP, the gender, their major in teaching ESP, etc. Also, it tried to explore the ESP teachers' perspectives, practices, and the challenges during teaching ESP. The findings stated all respondents have been teaching in other major than English; Economics, Engineering, Health, and Tourism. All respondents agreed to that ESP is an essential part in their learners' academic and/or professional life, taught by collaboration among English teachers, major teachers, and practitioners with the qualifications such as knowledge in a specific topic and certain sciences, qualify in English to teach the learners in their field of study, English teachers who have experience in the field related with the material taught, and the length of time to encounter the subject or competence certification on the related subject.

Keywords: Perspectives; Challenges; ESP

1. Introduction

Nowadays, more people are spending their time to learn English as the second language. Many countries include English in their teaching curriculum, even from the younger age. Indonesia is one of them which instruct English must be taught from elementary school until universities along with the acceleration of technology and international relations [1]–[3]. It's easy to see just how important English is around the world. Many international businesses conduct meetings in English, universities teach courses in English and, around the world, tourists and travelers use English as a common language. So, teaching English to student is something urgent [4], [5].

At universities, teaching English must be conducted as a general basic course for the first-year Learners [6]–[8]. Of course, since English is still a foreign language in Indonesia, this process requires the accuracy of the syllabus, materials, and approaches due to the conditions and needs of Learners. It is not easy for non-English Learners to learn the language since the pronunciation, spelling, grammatical features are greatly different [9], [10].

For the Learners who choose English as their major, they have high awareness, interest, and motivation to learn the language. However, situations and conditions are slightly or even more different with Learners in non-English major [11]–[13]. Until now, there has not been a single method, technique, or approach known to be truly effective and efficient to use in teaching the language in the classroom. In the context, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is still best approach to teach them [14].

There is a heavy concern of ESP teaching on the choice of the appropriate methodology to achieve the specific purposes, the more important focus should be on the needs of the learners and consequently, their expectations with the outcome of their learning [15]. English for Specific Purpose (ESP). Paltridge and Starfield stated that English for specific purposes (ESP) refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain [16], [17].

Moreover, ESP has some characteristics, as Dudley-Evans stated that one of them is ESP programs are designed to cater to the discipline- or vocation-specific needs of learners with a different level of

language ability to communicate for work or study purposes in specific disciplines [18]. The other characteristic is ESP is informed by an approach along with instructional design (design and procedure) and the materials and methods are developed or adapted to provide learners with needs responsive instruction [19], [20].

Therefore, before teaching ESP, the teachers should prepare the teaching tools such as syllabus, media, and method matched with the Learners' needs in their disciplines. However, the effectiveness of teaching ESP in Indonesia must still be improved [21]. There was some empirical investigation into the effectiveness of ESP teaching in Indonesia. Kurniasih investigated the learners' need in learning English for accounting. In learning English, she found most Learners get bored, the others reveal they hardly understood English material, and could not understand the teacher explanation easily. there are difficulties in TESP [22]. One of them is course design[23]. Designing a course in ESP, the teachers do need analysis, to arrange the syllabus, and to decide the appropriate methodology to be used in teaching which require teacher to adjust with the characteristics of the learners [23].

In teaching ESP, English teachers has been dealing with a lot of problems, such as their poor English proficiency, their passive performance, and their low interest and motivation in learning[24]. Worst of all, most of Learners have not even had autonomous learning ability and rely too much on teachers, thus it is teachers who do most of the work, explaining everything and talking for over 90% of the class time, and eager to get out of such a difficult situation [25].

Meanwhile, it is supposed that ESP should be taught by teachers who are experts in a specific major with high English level, which could guarantee that an ESP instructor helps Learners with both technical content of a course as well as language issues [26]. The problem is most ESP teachers teaching in all majors in universities are graduated from English Education Major. So, when they have to teach ESP in all majors, they are required to learn the material based on the discipline in which they teach, to understand the technical English terms, and discuss with the instructors in their study program to eliminate misunderstanding of the topic [27].

So, the phenomenon above inspired the writer to conduct research concerning with the teachers' perspectives, challenges, and difficulties in teaching ESP. Based on the problem faced as stated on the background of the study above, it has created question as follow: how the teachers' perspectives in teaching ESP, how the teachers' challenges in teaching ESP, and how the teachers' difficulties in teaching ESP [28].

This study will be a significant endeavor good environment in teaching English especially in English for specific purposes. Furthermore, the result of this study is expected to be useful for ESP teachers as one of the considerations for determining the syllabus, the media, the techniques, and the method in teaching ESP. To be more detail, we can see the significances of the study as follow: for the student, this study will help the students to develop their communicative competence by using the ESP module based on the analysis of their needs. For teachers, they can use the output of this research as basis of adjustments in terms for teaching ESP as well as discipline according to the nature and need of the learners they have at hand.

Furthermore, for the researchers, they can use research findings as a great help for their future work. This can also serve as related literature for future studies that will be conducted along the same line.

2. Method

Research Design

This study has applied qualitative research design. It describes the process in learning and teaching and the phenomena inside that [29], [30]. It focused on the English teachers who are teaching in non-English major Learners in some universities in Indonesia. From the distributed questionnaires to English teachers' community, seven respondents have replied back; they are from eight universities; University of Muhammadiyah Makassar, STIMIK Widya Pratama, University of Muhammadiyah Lamongan, University of Mataram, University of Muhammadiyah Magelang, University of Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin, Banyuwangi State Polytechnic, and Indonesian Aviation School (STTKD) Yogyakarta..

Research Instrument

To obtain a better insight in to the English teachers' perspective, challenges, and difficulties in teaching English in non-English major Learners, the researcher has distributed questionnaires and

interview as the instrument in this research to the teachers. These participants are the English teachers who are teaching in non-English major Learners in some universities in Indonesia.

Data Collecting Techniques

The researcher has applied three steps to analyze the data. Firstly, the researcher has arranged the mass data in good order, so that data analysis can be done easily. Secondly, the researcher has written down the results of interviews with the English teacher in implementing English for specific purposes in class. Then the data was synthesized from the teacher and make technical indexes and other related data. The third, the researchers described the results of teacher interviews. The final step is, the researcher has given meaning and interprets the data. When all data has been analyzed, researchers began to describe the findings and all data will be presented descriptively.

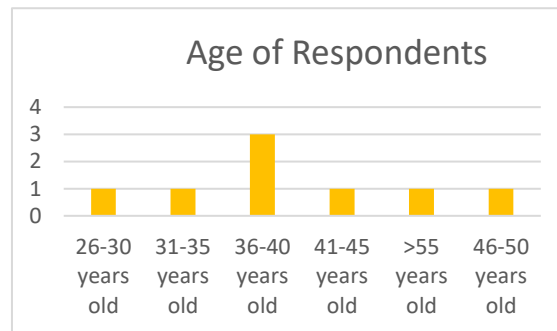
3. Findings

The author analyzes the characteristic of respondent, the gender of respondent, the background of respondent education, duration of ESP. This section explains in several subsections with the detail explanation of the findings below:

Respondents Characteristics

a) The Ages

Table 1. The Ages of Respondents



In table 1, age 36-40 are dominant who take ESP, they are three people. and the other age range are 26-30, 31-35, 41-45, up to 55 and 46-50. Each of them are is only one.

b) The Gender

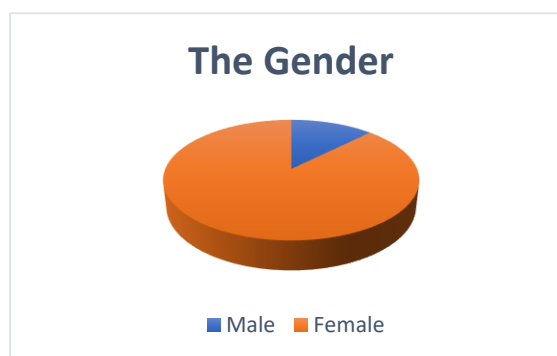
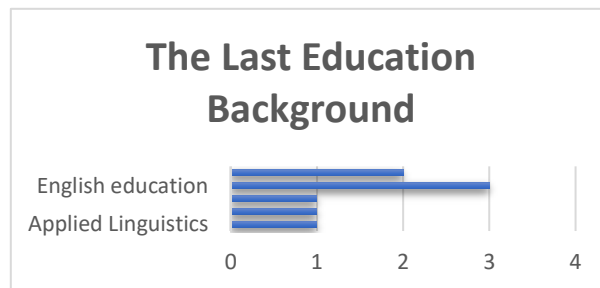


Figure 1. The Gender of Respondents

According to figure 2, most respondents are female English teachers (90%) and the rest is a male English teacher (10%) as shown from the table.

c) The Latest Education Background

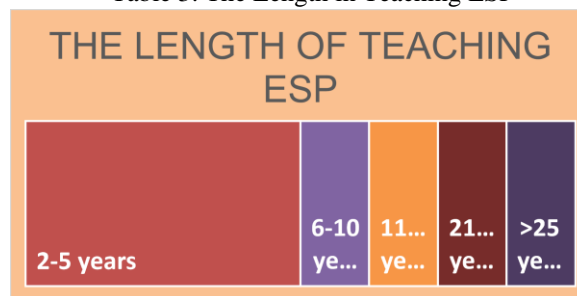
Table 2. The Latest Education Background



From table 2 analysis, it stated that all teachers have been teaching not only in one major but also in various majors. They are teaching in Economics (Sharia, Accountings, Management), Medicine, Engineering Computer, Hospital Administration, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Communication Science, Psychology, Pharmacy, Teaching English for Young Learner (TEYLIN), Tourism and Business Management Program, Hotel and Tourism, Aviation, and English Language Literature.

d) The Length in Teaching ESP

Table 3. The Length in Teaching ESP



From the table 3 above, it shows half respondents (50%) are relatively new in teaching ESP considering they just get teaching experience in ESP less than 6 years. Meanwhile, the others are variative in length of teaching ESP. Otherwise, one respondent has been getting experience for more than 25 years.

4. Discussion

The Teachers' Perspectives in Teaching ESP

The teachers' perspectives in teaching ESP will be presented that all respondents agreed that ESP is an essential part in their learners' academic and/or professional life, with some considerations such as; the learners need to learn kinds of English related to their field of study or job in the future, learning ESP supports their learners' skills which will be useful in their career, and English will be their communication tool for their future job [31]. They agreed in their opinion that ESP is as important as their learners' main subjects as the ESP teaching supports the learners in familiar with the English technical terms in their field of study.

They agreed in their opinion that ESP is more suitable or important in teaching English for their learners considering that ESP being related to or designed for specific disciplines; and ESP using a different methodology from that of general English, in specific teaching situations. For the most suitable teachers to teach ESP: whether the English teachers/lecturers, subject teachers, or practitioners, all respondents agreed in their opinion that collaboration between the English teachers, the subject teachers, and the practitioners (Team Teaching) will create the best syllabus for their learners in achieving the English learning goals. In qualifications must be possessed by an ESP teacher, there are various opinion have been delivered by the respondents, such as; knowledge in a specific topic and certain sciences, qualify in English to teach the learners in their field of study, English teachers who have experience in the field related with the material taught, and the length of time to encounter the subject or competence certification on the related subject.

The teachers' challenges and Problems in teaching ESP

Due to the fact that the ESP learners have their objectives well-defined from the very beginning, these being directly related to their practical, job-related or professionally oriented needs, the choices the teachers have to make in order to design a course should not, theoretically, be so complicated based on the reality [32]. From the data analysis, there are some challenges have been frequently faced by the respondents, such as follow; Constructing the module/handout, deciding the appropriate topics, learners' knowledge in English, learners' capability in English, number of Learners in a class, learners' mixed ability, learners' motivation in learning English, time allocation, learners' self-confident, and These can be seen from the figure below:



Figure 2. The Challenges in Teaching ESP

Needs analysis is not unique to ESP but it is essential in helping the teacher to define “the specific course (module, handout, topics, etc), texts, linguistic forms, and communicative practices that a particular group of learners must acquire” [33]. The Learners’ level of language knowledge is essential as teachers nowadays face the challenge of working with multilevel classrooms, or, if we are to use the terminology, “mixed-ability” classes. Learners arrive in ESP learning environments with a varied background of linguistic knowledge and this leads to a new hardship, teachers getting engaged in a differential teaching process, so as to satisfy Learners’ needs and necessities. In other side, ESP courses offer learners a relevant language in a context that is related to learners’ interests, and are different in nature than EGP courses, where the language and content tend to be general and not necessarily based on learners’ needs and interests. Based on the results of this study, it can be argued that by fulfilling learners’ needs and by providing content that is based on their needs and interests, learners may become actively engaged in the learning process, which may lead to more positive attitudes towards the L2 learning experience. All of this may produce higher levels of motivation, or at least have a measurable effect on learners’ motivation. Since learners in ESP classes have needs that are presumably fulfilled by the nature of these courses, it appears that these courses have a positive effect on their learning motivation. As Crookes and Schmidt state, “a programme that appears to meet the Learners’ own expressed needs will be more motivating, more effective, and thus more successful [34].” Moreover, Gardner believes that motivation is affected by the environment in the class, the nature of the course and the curriculum [35]. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova assert that creating an environment where learners can envision desired future selves will not only providing them with “tasters” of desired future states, but will help them create more potent ideal L2 selves [36]. These conditions appear to exist in ESP courses because the nature and purpose of these courses is to meet learners’ needs and future goals. It can thus be concluded that ESP courses play a major role in stimulating and enhancing learners’ ideal L2 selves.

5. Conclusion

In comparison with teaching EGP, teaching ESP usually poses a lot more challenges. Focusing on the specific needs of the learners, constructing the appropriate module/handout based on the need analysis after deciding the appropriate topics, being aware in learners’ knowledge and capability in English, creating interactive and supportive atmosphere in the class in order to increase the learners’ motivation, allocating time wisely while encouraging the learners to increase their self-confident in improving their English to be the one of their skill in facing the next competitions are the challenging [37]. Of course, it needs more collaboration among the ESP teachers, the major teachers, and also the policy maker to construct the best learning process.

In Addition, among the institution policy, the teaching facility, the teaching material, the teaching skills, the English skills, the students’ perception toward English, the most challenges in teaching ESP

are: teaching skills, students' perception toward English, and teaching facility [38]. Furthermore, effective teaching ESP in the classroom involves a student-oriented and learning process. It is a type of instruction that can inspire students, provide knowledge, communicate concepts, and assist students with learning disabilities [39]. According to Souriyavongsa, college teaching necessitates a thorough understanding of the information to be communicated as well as how to explain it to students [40]. As a result, college ESP classes place a greater emphasis on current awareness, discussion, and presentation. Furthermore, successful teaching ESP provided by the lecture is expected to be able to handle the learning process in order to motivate students to learn by inspiring them and acknowledging their challenges.

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