

ADAPTING ENGLISH INSTRUCTION: AN ANALYSIS OF NON-EFL STUDENTS' LEARNING NEEDS

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Abstract: This study aimed to conduct a need analysis to examine the non-EFL students' needs of English subject in university. This needs analysis covers English in general and in particular needed by the students. A quantitative research method was followed in the present study. Data was collected by using questionnaires. The items in the questionnaires addressed various issues; in other words, the emphasis was determining students' lacks, wants and necessity on English subject. All new non-EFL undergraduate students at Kuningan University in academic year 2021/2022 involved in this study. They are from five different faculties; Faculty of Economy, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Faculty of Computer, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Forestry. Based on the results of questionnaires filled out by 421 students, it is known that, first, in relation to students' lack on English subject, this study focuses on the competence of language skills and students' difficulties in mastering the four English skills. Most students assessed their English language skills competence at moderate level. Listening and speaking skills are assessed as the first priority followed by writing and reading skills. However, the research findings also show that speaking skills seem to be the most difficult skills for them apart from weak grammar and low vocabulary mastery. Second, related to the students' wants on English subject, the preferred language skills are reading followed by speaking, listening and writing. Third, related to necessity on English subject, learning activities that students need to function effectively is to combine English and Indonesian as a medium in delivering material. Most students also think that learning English is better in large groups under the supervision of lecturers. Furthermore, feedback, revision, and reflection are very important aspects for developing the ability to self-regulate learning. Therefore, students prefer to be corrected immediately by the lecturer when they make mistakes. To achieve learning effectiveness, students also expect the integration of a variety of activities and the development of learning materials.

Keywords: *English as a Foreign Language; non-EFL students; students' needs.*

INTRODUCTION

In order to prepare qualified human resources who are able to compete in work competencies, Universitas Kuningan facilitates students through English course as a primary course to take, so that every student has the opportunity to improve their English proficiency. Considering that there are various different study programs, thus, Universitas Kuningan must prepare an English curriculum that can be used in all study programs.

Brown (2019) describes curriculum development as a collection of actions that facilitate agreement and unity among teachers,

students, administrators, and faculty. It encompasses various distinct aspects such as evaluating needs, establishing goals and objectives, testing, developing materials, instruction, and evaluating the program. This is shown in Figure 1.

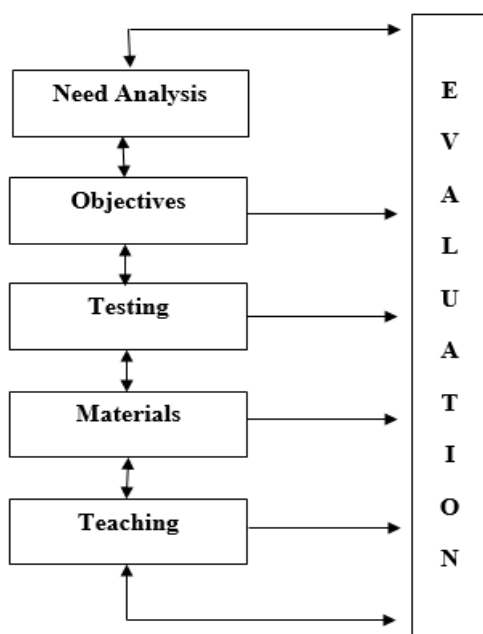


Figure 1. *The approach to curriculum design*

Brown (2019) characterizes curriculum goals as broad statements that articulate desired, achievable outcomes and objectives, which are grounded in identified language and situational necessities (p. 71). In contrast, instructional objectives are depicted as precise declarations that outline the specific knowledge, behaviors, and/or skills anticipated to be demonstrated by learners at the conclusion of a course or program (p. 73). A detailed scrutiny of the disparities between the definitions of goals and objectives uncovers that the level of explicitness significantly differentiates the two. Transforming the recognized needs of students into goals and objectives acts as a foundational unit, which can further serve to delineate and structure all educational activities into a comprehensive curriculum. After the establishment of goals, essential elements constituting student needs can be meticulously examined, evaluated, and organized to fabricate a cohesive educational journey. To encapsulate, objectives furnish a lucid framework that facilitates the meticulous crafting, molding, and refinement of the curriculum.

The fundamental components in developing good goals are: (1) Subject : what can students, learners or workshop participants do at the end of the course, program or workshop? (2) Performance : what are students expected to be able to do at the end of the class? (3) Condition : describes the situation and conditions surrounding the show. (4) Measuring: how to observe and test performance. (5) Criteria : the level of

performance accuracy that is considered sufficient.

Language curriculum needs analysis involves looking at current learners regarding their knowledge of the language, where they should try to use the language for the purposes they want, and what they feel they want to learn (Matthews, 2018; Bovill and Woolmer, 2019; Nation and Macalister, 2020). A very useful way to take into account the needs of learners in language learning is to use a syllabus that is structured around the needs of the learners. This must involve teachers and students in deciding what to teach and how it will be taught. Nation (2018) suggests the stages of preparing a syllabus that are tailored to the needs of students, namely: (1) students suggest what they want to learn during the lesson. (2) the teacher discusses this with the students and together they reach a decision whether to be included in the lesson or not and how much time to devote to it. This discussion process can involve the teacher commenting on the usefulness and practicality of what is suggested by the students, and together reaching a consensus about it. (3) The suggestions were successfully used in learning. (4) After a week or two, the negotiations are resumed, evaluating what worked in the lesson and making further suggestions for the syllabus.

Furthermore, Graves (2019) elaborates that data collection can occur within three temporal stages: prior to learning, early in the process, and continuously throughout the learning journey. This gathered information can be both objective and subjective in nature. Subjective needs are discerned through students' self-assessments, utilizing tools like lists, scales, questionnaires, and interviews. It is crucial, during the educational process, to engage in discussions regarding the syllabus contents, as per Nation and Macalister (2020), ensuring the learning material maintains relevance and utility in the eyes of the students. Students often possess a keen awareness of their learning desires and areas requiring improvement.

On the other hand, objective needs can be identified through various means, such as questionnaires, one-on-one interviews, and data compilation, like the collection and analysis of exam papers or textbooks. Observational strategies, such as shadowing a student's daily activities, along with casual discussions with educators and students, and administering tests, are also productive approaches to gathering objective needs information, as outlined by Nation and Macalister (2020). In these interactive

exchanges, the educator's role is pivotal in guiding discussions by offering insights into necessary learning areas and effective learning strategies.



Figure 2. *Three types of needs* (Nation & Macalister, 2020)

Figure 2 illustrates three kinds of educational needs, aiming to discern what is essential for students to learn, aligning with their interests and desires (Nation and Macalister, 2020). The needs analysis concentrates on evaluating students' current knowledge and identifying areas that require further learning, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant and beneficial. Optimal needs analysis is achieved by posing pertinent questions and efficiently seeking their answers. Consequently, this research aims to comprehensively address the students' needs focusing on their deficiencies, desires, and necessities.

Presently, there is a governmental paradigm shift towards student-centric education, facilitated through the Independent Curriculum. Here, students are central to the educational process (Setiawan, 2022). The government has tacitly tailored this curriculum to be congruent with students' individual characteristics and educational attainment levels. Kurka (2022) emphasizes the significance of aligning education with students' unique traits and performance levels. Thus, educators should be equipped with teaching modules accompanied by suitable guidelines, obviating the need for multiple modules, which could introduce biases. Proactive adaptability among educators towards curriculum modifications is essential (Jenkins, 2020), necessitating educational institutions to be agile in adapting to such curricular transitions (Barradell et al., 2018; Rahmatunisa and Agustiana, 2018; Howson and Kingsbury, 2021).

In the context of the industrial and digital revolutions, the Merdeka Curriculum teaching module has emerged as a pivotal instrument, especially pivotal in the adaptation to new

educational paradigms (Hicks, 2018; Maipita et al., 2021). The Independent Curriculum's module encompasses various systematically designed educational tools, methods, and guidelines, all meticulously aligned with students' evolving needs. They are constructed considering the longitudinal development of students, integrating clear learning objectives aimed at engendering compelling and meaningful educational experiences.

Several prior studies have focused on needs analysis in education. For instance, Febriyanti (2017) explored the English language needs of non-English study program students in ESP English Courses, uncovering diverse language learning needs. Similarly, other research by Alfian (2019), Aflah & Rahmani (2018), and Ninsisana & Nawa (2019) delved into the specific learning needs in English courses, each uncovering unique findings ranging from a focus on speaking skills to a preference for mixed learning methods and the importance of linguistic practice.

In summary, this research contributes uniquely to theoretical, practical, and professional domains. It is anticipated to augment existing literature concerning the English language needs analysis for non-EFL students, offering practical insights for curriculum developers, and aiding educators in optimizing teaching materials and assessment tools to enhance student achievements.

METHOD

This research, aimed at analyzing the English learning needs of non-EFL students at the University of Kuningan, utilized a quantitative research method by employing survey research strategies. The essence of quantitative research lies in objectively testing theories by exploring the correlations between variables (Malik & Hamied, 2016). Concurrently, survey research strategies are deployed to quantitatively describe specific trends, attitudes, or opinions within a selected population sample, providing a comprehensive overview (Cresswell, 2017).

For data collection, this study relied on questionnaires with the intention of generalizing findings across the broader population from a specific sample. Data was collected from the University of Kuningan, focusing on non-EFL undergraduate students from various faculties, such as Economics, Teacher Training and Education, Computer Science, Law, and Forestry, during the 2021/2022 academic year.

Several preparatory steps were taken before the commencement of data collection. Initially,

the researchers identified the participants and established the research locations. Following this, necessary permissions were obtained to access the participants and designated research sites. The researchers then ascertained the types of data necessary to address the research questions, subsequently developing a suitable research instrument—a questionnaire, in this case.

Questionnaires, crucial in collecting information relevant to analyzing the English learning needs of students, were used as the primary data collection tool. They were designed to unearth various aspects, such as the students' preferences, interests, and socio-cultural backgrounds. Utilizing digital platforms, questionnaires were distributed via Google forms during the initial lecture meetings, aiding in the streamlined distribution and analysis of collected data.

The questionnaire, structured around the theory presented by Nation and Macalister (2020), concentrated on exploring three critical areas: deficiencies, desires, and necessities in English learning needs. Responses, captured using a four-point Likert Scale, were statistically analyzed to

offer a descriptively quantitative insight, facilitating an in-depth understanding of the English learning needs of students at the University of Kuningan.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part is divided into three parts, namely students' lack, wants, and necessity on English subject.

Students' lacks on English subject

In the initial segment of the questionnaire, the focus was laid on uncovering the students' deficiencies in the English subject. Emphasis was placed on evaluating the proficiency of students' language skills and identifying the challenges they encounter in mastering the essential four English skills. Such evaluation is vital to ascertain students' competency levels and the issues they grapple with in their English learning process. The subsequent table illustrates the students' self-assessed competency levels in English, as reflected in responses to questions one through seven.

Table 1. *Students competence in language skill*

No.	Language Skill	Total			
		Very low	Weak	Moderate	Good
1.	Listening	3%	22%	55%	20%
2.	Reading	3.5%	43%	42%	11.5%
3.	Speaking	7%	48%	35%	10%
4.	Writing	3%	30%	49%	18%

Table 1 illustrates the variations in students' self-evaluated necessities across the four linguistic capabilities. A substantial number of students perceived their proficiency in English skills to be average. In specific, 55% assessed their listening skills as moderate, 42% for reading, 35% for speaking, and 49% for writing. These findings underscore the prioritization of cultivating listening and speaking abilities in English instruction, succeeded by writing and reading. This is consistent with the research by Alfian (2019) and Kaya (2021), emphasizing the students' deficiency in speaking due to the

requisite foundation in vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, corroborating these observations, Boroujeni and Fard (2013) discovered a pronounced emphasis by students on enhancing speaking skills. This entire process unfolds in a unique educational ambiance where diverse responsibilities are allotted to the participants. Consequently, the formulation of teaching materials for speaking necessitates an initial needs assessment to foster the development of effective speaking skills, as echoed in the findings by Adi (2017), Agusliana, Rachmawati, & Hardjono (2014), and Hakim (2016).

Table 2. *Students' competence in language aspect*

No.	Language Aspect	Total			
		The lowest	Weak	Moderate	Good
1.	Grammar	7%	57%	30%	6%
2.	Vocabulary	5%	50%	37%	8%
3.	Pronunciation	5%	46%	42%	7%

Table 2 presents the students' self-assessed competencies concerning various language

aspects. Notably, 57% of students believe their grammar is subpar, and 50% feel their vocabulary

is lacking. The data reveals that speaking is perceived as the most challenging skill by 46% of students, possibly due to limited language exposure in their learning environments.

In the context of language acquisition, notably for professional or academic objectives, learning often takes on an intensive form. Professionals, such as managers, secretaries, or technicians, frequently engage in concentrated short courses with the expectation that focused immersion in a specific language or skill will enhance their English-requisite job performance. Analogously, pre-study intensive English programs tailored for academic objectives are prevalent in scenarios where English is the medium of instruction. Here, students undergo rigorous language and study skill enhancement sessions before commencing their main courses, premised on the assumption of achieving a requisite proficiency level beforehand.

Furthermore, the table delineates the students' perceived challenges in listening and speaking skills, evidencing a harmony between their self-rated English competencies and the skills they find most challenging. In the domain of material development, these insights should guide English educators in calibrating the complexity of their instructional content to align with the students' proficiencies and needs.

Students' wants on English subject

The subsequent section of the questionnaire aimed to discern the types of knowledge and skills deemed essential by the participants to effectively engage in their desired English learning pursuits. The focus was on language skills and the auxiliary tools beneficial for teaching and learning.

Findings revealed a preference hierarchy in language skills: reading was most favored at 47%, followed by speaking (19%), listening (18%), and writing (17%). In terms of teaching and learning aids that resonate with students' learning preferences and existing provisions, written and visual media such as images and diagrams were most prevalent. Alfian (2019) highlighted that students frequently leverage media and technology tools like televisions, tape recorders, and social platforms such as YouTube and Facebook for English proficiency enhancement. Such practices fall within metacognitive strategies.

Technology acts as a supportive scaffold in tackling complex problems and projects by offering diverse resources like visualization tools, references, and guidance. Multimedia databases

accessible through various platforms like CD-ROMs, videodiscs, or the World Wide Web emerge as vital reservoirs for student research endeavors. Moreover, teaching materials anchored in digital or multimedia technologies aim to optimize student learning outcomes by integrating effective instructional strategies (Aflah and Rahmani, 2018; Warasini, 2021). These technology-based reference tools eclipse traditional book format counterparts by offering enriched audio and video information presentations, among other advantages.

Students' necessity on English subject

This section aims to uncover the necessities that would enable learners to function effectively in English subjects. It was observed that a substantial majority of students (81%) favor a bilingual approach, incorporating both English and Indonesian in material delivery. This aligns with findings from Ninsisana and Nawa (2019), emphasizing the efficacy of bilingual instruction in enhancing listening skills and vocabulary enrichment.

Moreover, a varied preference was noted in the learning environment: 35% of students leaned towards small-group learning, while 65% believed larger groups under lecturer supervision would enhance their English learning. For assessments, a blend of student-centered and problem-centered approaches was utilized, incorporating regular and relevant formative assessment opportunities. Such approaches, including the evaluation of student-created products and comparative assessments, facilitated both teacher and student evaluations and subsequent revision opportunities, fostering conceptual growth and a better understanding of professional realms.

The classroom organization also played a pivotal role, where different structuring methods significantly impacted participation and collective learning. The effectiveness of collaborative group work, paired with individual accountability norms, was acknowledged. Such a setup propelled groups towards collective success, ensuring all members attained a foundational understanding before advancing to more complex, project-based activities.

Feedback emerged as a crucial aspect, with a preference for immediate teacher corrections upon error occurrences. This immediate feedback, coupled with opportunities for revision and reflection, nurtures metacognitive skills vital for self-regulated learning development. Thus,

fostering deep domain understanding and self-regulation skills is essential for cultivating independent, reflective learners.

Exploring the necessity of English subjects revealed that 67% of students viewed English as crucial, and 32% believed its importance in future career prospects, facilitating communication with potential colleagues. This aligns with the studies of Arianti (2017) and Ria and Malik (2020),

underscoring English learning as a preparatory step towards career readiness.

Lastly, focusing on classroom learning activities, the data illustrated a predominant interest in vocabulary exercises and simulations (55%), followed by drills (35%), and a smaller focus on grammar practice (10%), as depicted in Table 3. This information is crucial for tailoring syllabi and developing relevant instructional materials.

Table 3. *Learning activities*

No.	Learning Activities in English Subject	Total (percentage)			
		Not necessary	Less necessary	Important	Very important
1.	Role play	2.5%	25%	55%	17.5%
2.	Simulation	0%	5%	40%	55%
3.	Matching	5%	27.5%	50%	17.5%
4.	Reading Comprehension	0%	12.5%	70%	17.5%
5.	Multiple Choice	0%	7.5%	75%	17.5%
6.	Drilling	0%	10%	55%	35%
7.	Grammar exercise	0%	17.5%	50%	32.5%
8.	Vocabulary exercise	0%	2.5%	42.5%	55%
9.	Translating Indonesian to English	0%	5%	65%	30%
10.	Translating English to Indonesian	0%	17.5%	70%	12.5%

The table generally illustrates that students consider all listed learning activities as significant, suggesting that teachers should incorporate these preferences when developing materials and designing educational activities. It has been observed that while preferences for certain methodologies may fluctuate over time, these methods often persist, even when their popularity wanes. This observation is particularly true for approaches like grammatical translation, which remains prevalent in various regions.

Concerning the application of drill-and-practice exercises, these are ideally suited for continuous practice across various curricular areas, especially for reinforcing already acquired knowledge. However, the use of drill-and-practice is deemed unsuitable during the initial phases of learning new material (Richards, 2017). Computer-based exercises are primarily designed to reinforce previously learned content, not to

introduce new skills directly. For introducing new concepts or skills, technology-based tutorials, which act more as a teacher providing direct instruction, are recommended over repetitive drill-and-practice methods.

Focusing on linguistic knowledge is commonly linked with an emphasis on accuracy within language learning, as the expectation is for learners to attain proficiency in linguistic forms. Such evaluations aim to gauge students' knowledge concerning specific content areas defined within the educational syllabus's objectives.

Lastly, the questionnaire aimed to discern the perceived importance of English proficiency in students' future careers, a crucial aspect to understand to cater to the students' future needs effectively. Detailed insights into these future occupational requirements are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Benefits of English for future careers*

No	Benefits of English	Total (persen)	
		Usefull	Useless
1.	Listening to an instruction	92.5%	7.5%
2.	Reading the instruction	90%	10%
3.	Listening to directions	90%	10%
4.	Reading financial reports	67.5%	32.5%
5.	Recording transactions	75%	25%
6.	Making a journal diary	62.5%	37.25%
7.	Writing books	72.5%	27.5%

8.	Composing books	60%	40%
9.	Making financial reporting	75%	25%
10.	Compiling and sorting documents (invoices, checks, etc.)	75%	25%
11.	Writing a memo or message	90%	10%
12.	Reading job -related literature	70%	30%

The majority of students find English beneficial for various tasks such as reading financial statements, recording transactions, writing ledgers, creating financial reports, organizing and categorizing documents, writing memos, and taking messages. Febriyanti (2017) highlighted that non-EFL students possess diverse objectives regarding their English language proficiency, with some goals being immediate, while others are future-oriented. Hence, educational content should be meticulously tailored based on a comprehensive profile of the learners' needs, encompassing communication goals, communicative environments, communication means, language proficiencies, functions, structures, etc.

CONCLUSION

This study's data analysis leads to several key conclusions. Firstly, concerning students' deficiencies in the English subject, the study underscores the students' language skill competencies and challenges in mastering the four pivotal English skills. Most participants rated their English proficiency as moderate, identifying listening and speaking as primary areas of focus, followed by writing and reading. However, speaking appears to be the most formidable challenge for the students, compounded by inadequate grammar and vocabulary.

Secondly, regarding the students' preferences in the English subject, reading emerged as the most favored language skill, succeeded by speaking, listening, and writing. This preference aligns with the students' identified weaknesses, particularly in reading. It is inferred that through enhanced reading skills, students could bolster their vocabulary and grammar, indirectly improving other language proficiencies. Additionally, the study unveils a preference for written and visual media, like pictures and diagrams, as effective teaching and learning aids, underlining their significance in facilitating English learning.

Lastly, in terms of the necessities for effective English learning, a combination of English and Indonesian languages as instructional mediums appears preferable. A majority also lean towards learning in larger groups under a lecturer's guidance. Furthermore, immediate feedback,

revision, and reflection emerge as essential metacognitive aspects in nurturing self-regulated learning abilities. Thus, in synthesizing effective English teaching materials, a thorough needs analysis is imperative, incorporating considerations of language skills, linguistic components, educational aids, learning activities, and the instructor's role in providing feedback.

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