

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS' NEEDS IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify students' needs in learning English. Through questionnaires, the students' needs could be elicited from 192 students, 37 graduate employees, 19 major subject teachers, and five English teachers of Business Administration (BA) department of Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya. The questionnaire data were analyzed using means, percentages, t-test, and ANOVA and triangulated with the interview results. Four main conclusions can be drawn. First, ESP materials for academic and professional purposes are demanded in English courses because the BA students use four English skills concurrently with English courses for personal and academic purposes and subsequently for future job purposes. Second, the teaching of general English is still needed because the students lack mastery of language aspects (grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, particularly technical words) and of reception and production strategies. Third, language skills and knowledge of language aspects and of reception and production strategies can be developed through the integration of a variety of in- and out-of-classroom activities. Fourth, the teaching of four language skills needs to be integrated in each semester; however, the teaching of general English, reading, and listening should be focused in lower semesters, whereas ESP, speaking, and writing should be emphasized in higher semesters.

Keywords: needs analysis, needs, English use, difficulties, wants

INTRODUCTION

There have been several general acknowledgements of the place of needs analysis in curriculum design. As stated by Richards (1997:1), the process of curriculum development in language teaching consists of needs analysis, goal setting, syllabus design, methodology, and both testing and evaluation. In addition, Orr (1998) explains that the first step for curriculum development for English for specific purposes (ESP) is analyzing the specific learning needs of students which provides a basis for an ESP program. In short, needs analysis is the important and starting step in a curriculum design process; the results of needs analysis serve as a basis for formulating objectives, designing syllabus, selecting materials and activities, and testing.

However, there has been a tendency for syllabus designers and teachers to 'intuit' needs of students rather than to discover them. This issue has been noted by Perkan and Garip (1999) claiming that designing a course on the basis of the administrators' beliefs and interests or the teachers' perceived needs would not be a realistic approach; instead, learners' needs, requirements and interests should also be considered and it requires needs analysis of the learners. Richards (2001) suggests that the needs analysis should be the starting point for developing ESP programs. Accordingly, it is paramount to develop courses relevant to the learners' needs and interests.

Due to the importance of identifying and fulfilling students' needs, it is considered important to conduct needs analysis. In this paper, needs analysis is defined as systematic activities in obtaining and assigning value to information which is necessary to identify and validate learning-related needs of a particular group of learners and which the language curriculum design is based on.

Needs refer to things necessary or useful for the fulfillment of learning objectives. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:54-57) classify the language learners' needs into two: *learning needs* and *target needs*. The former refers to what the learners need to do in order to learn and the latter refers to what the learners need to do in the target situation. The analysis of the target needs in this research specifies English language skills and linguistic knowledge required to communicate effectively in real-world settings that are determined by examining:

1. necessities: the demands of English in the target situations – in what situations and communicative activities English is needed;
2. lacks: difficulties in using English – what aspects constrain the students in using English; and
3. wants: what are actually needed – what kinds of learning activities the students feel they need in English courses.

There are two research questions. The first is "What are the students' needs in learning English at Business Administration (BA) department of Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya (POLSRI)?" The second is "Are there any differences of the needs of the students in the second, fourth, and sixth semester?" The purposes of the present study are to identify the learners' needs in learning English at BA department of POLSRI and to compare the needs of the students in semesters two, four, and six. The investigation of the learners' English needs focuses on target needs carried out in the global level – the investigation of communicative situations in which the students need or will need to use English and English-related activities required in those situations. The analysis specifies English language skills and linguistic knowledge required to communicate effectively in real-world settings that are determined on the basis of English use, English difficulties, and wants concerning learning activities in English courses. The results of the need analysis are expected to contribute to the development of POLSRI, particularly to the English syllabus designers in readjusting the English syllabus and to the English teachers in selecting appropriate teaching materials and methods.

The research was carried out in Palembang, South Sumatera. It was a multi-site study because data were gathered from some places: POLSRI and some work settings available in Palembang. The work places include: one government office, one social institution, two universities, and some types of companies including: one hotel, one regional company, four banks, five foreign companies (supermarket, fast food restaurant, motorcycle dealer, plantation company, and pharmaceutical company), and four private companies. The respondents consisted of four groups: 192 students, 37 graduate employees, 19 major subject teachers, and five English teachers of BA department of POLSRI.

The instrumentation adopted in this study was a combination of self-designed questionnaires and interviews for unpacking data on students' needs in learning English including English use, English difficulties, and wants on learning activities in English courses. Four sets of questionnaires which were administered to different groups of respondents include:

1. questionnaire for BA students unpacks students' perceptions on their use of English, English difficulties, and wants on learning activities in English courses;
2. questionnaire for teachers of English examines teachers' views on students' use of English during English instruction and students' English difficulties;
3. questionnaire for BA teachers specifies teachers' views on students' use of English during major subject instruction; and
4. questionnaire for BA working graduates investigates the graduates' use of English for job application and employment in work settings.

The English use items mainly have a six-point scale: *always or almost always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom, and never or almost never*. Different from the items on English use, the items on English use for job application, English difficulties and wants have dichotomous choices; the choices are respectively *yes – no, difficult – not difficult, and want – not want*. Interviews were employed as an additional data-gathering instrument to obtain in-depth information which was not gained through questionnaires.

The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The questionnaire data were analyzed using means and percentages. The mean or average score is used to analyze the data on English use (the answers to six-point scale items), whereas the percentage is used to analyze the

data on English use for job application, English difficulties, and wants (the answers to dichotomous choice items). Further analyses were based on t-test for independent samples and one-way ANOVA computed using the SPSS. The t- test was used to compare the students' and English teachers' perceptions on the students' English difficulties, whereas the ANOVA was used to compare English use, English difficulties, and wants of the students in semesters two, four, and six. Concerning the comparison of English use, only the students' English use perceived by the students themselves could be compared. The questionnaire findings were then triangulated with the interview results analyzed qualitatively. The final conclusions were based on both the quantitative and qualitative data. The conclusions derived from the findings of this study were, as Maxwell (1996:97) called, 'internal generalizability'—the generalizability of conclusions were within the settings and groups studied.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Students' Needs in Learning English

The students' needs in learning English are interpreted on the basis of their English use, English difficulties, and wants on learning activities in English courses.

English Use

The BA students use English in some settings: educational, domestic, future work, and other settings. Concerning educational settings, the students use English on campus of POLSRI, both inside and outside the classrooms, and at private English courses. The students employ four English skills in each setting but the skill mostly used varies from one setting to another.

The students' English skills are employed the most – the frequency is *usually* – in English classes. This happens because the teacher not only utilizes English as a medium of instruction but also encourages the students to use the target language. Such a condition is, of course, facilitative. In general, the teacher's effective use of English is a model of the target language use and maximizes English exposures which may, combined with the effect of the teachers' encouragement, increase the students' motivation to learn and use English. Specifically, the learners get benefits from the teaching of English through English, that is "not only do the learners have an ongoing demonstration of the importance of listening, but they also have continuous opportunities for integrating listening with other language and academic learning skills, and for using listening for authentic purposes" (Rost, 2001:12). Furthermore, Rost (1994:141-142 in Nunan, 2002:239) points out that listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learners; understanding input at the right level enables any learning to begin. The finding suggests that the students are required to have good listening comprehension skill.

In major subject classes, the students use English in small chunks. This condition occurs because the subject matter teachers seldom communicate in English. Among the four language skills, the reading skill is most widely used by the students; the frequency is sometimes. The students sometimes read such English written discourses as instructional materials, final test questions, and instructions. The use of English in the test questions for major subjects is an indication that one of efforts to create English atmosphere in the BA department is working. As explained by the BA department secretary, the BA department is trying to create English atmosphere; one of the ways is by encouraging the major subject teachers to write at least 20% of final test questions in English (unrecorded informal discussion with the secretary of BA department on March 5, 2005). The research result implies that the students are required to have good reading comprehension skill for academic purposes. This implication is in line with Kusni's (2004) finding that the reading comprehension skill for academic purposes is the most important skill to develop and the main focus in ESP courses.

Concerning the use of English in educational settings, some learners taking private English courses also use English at the courses. English is used for both receptive and productive communication.

Outside the classrooms, the BA learners also utilize English. Out of learning hours on campus, the learners use English simply for greeting or having small chats with friends and

teachers of English. In addition, some learners utilize English when they communicate with foreigners via internet or met in public places but the frequency is seldom. Furthermore, the students employ English in the domestic settings, generally for completion of learning tasks, practices, and pleasure.

BA alumni use English during the process of job recruitment. They wrote application letters in English, spoke English alternated with Bahasa Indonesia during job interview sessions, and took English tests. Types of questions in the English tests comprise vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar, writing compositions, listening comprehension, and speaking.

Having been recruited in job places, the graduate employees also utilize English for job purposes but the English use is minimal. Among the four language skills, the reading skill is mostly used. English is occasionally needed for comprehending job-related literatures and instructions.

In future job settings, the current students will also use English like what is done by the BA graduate employees. For job application, the students will make use of linguistic knowledge (grammar, vocabulary) and four language skills for writing application letters, speaking during job interview sessions, and answering English test questions. For job employment, the students will use four English skills but the skill mostly used will be reading, for example reading job-related literatures and instructions. The prediction is based on the graduate employees' experience in using English for job application and employment. There are two reasons underlying the prediction. First, the graduate employees and the students have the same educational background. Second, the students' preferences on work places (particularly bank, private company, and foreign company) and job positions (particularly administrative staff, customer service officer, and secretary) are similar to the graduate employees' job places and positions. The findings suggest that for succeeding in the job market competition, the graduates are demanded to possess not only good academic skills but also adequate knowledge of English (vocabulary and grammar) and four English skills. In addition, good reading comprehension skill is required because English is mostly needed for reading purposes in professional contexts.

Regardless of the language settings, the students employ more English for receptive communication (listening and reading) than productive one (writing and speaking). English is used the most for listening purposes. For example, the BA students often use English to watch films and listen to English teachers, songs, and radio. The finding corresponds to what Rost (2001:7) states that the most widely used skill is listening. The second most use of English by the students is for reading purposes. The students sometimes use English for reading news, stories, instructions, formal letters, and literatures related to the study field and general knowledge. Such types of English use suggest that the students are required to have good listening and reading comprehension skills for personal and academic purposes.

In summary, the students use four English skills for academic, personal, and future job purposes. English is mostly needed for listening and reading purposes. However, they use English limitedly outside the English classrooms. The interpretation of the finding is very straightforward. The limited use of English is closely related to the status of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. As stated by Judd (1983:39), EFL serves "little communicative function for students once they finish the actual course" and "the use of English for any purpose outside the classroom is minimal and of short duration."

English Difficulties

The BA students and the teachers of English have the same perception that the students encounter some difficulties when communicating in English, either in listening, reading, writing, or speaking ($t = 0.623, p > 0.05$).

"Comprehending the spoken form of the target language is one of the most difficult tasks for the language learner" (Paulston & Bruder, 1976:127 cited in Suparmin, 1997:222). The statement is corroborated by the present research finding that the BA students encounter difficulties in comprehending spoken English. Six major listening problems for the students are understanding rapid talks, understanding technical words, getting specific information, understanding sentence structure, remembering the information heard, and understanding pronunciation. Another problem is unfamiliarity of the information structure of oral discourses; the students simply listen and they

can not classify the main idea and supporting details. One of the English teacher respondent thinks that for overcoming the students' listening problems, their knowledge of the information structure needs to be developed. Concerning the students' difficulty in remembering the information heard, it might be related to what Ellis (1997:139 in Suryanti, 2002:47) states that a listening passage comes into a listener's ears in twinkling of an eye. The most difficult listening aspect for the BA students is comprehending rapid talks. It is in line with Suryanti's (2002:53) finding. According to Brown (2001:254), "Virtually every language learner initially thinks that native speakers speak too fast Learners will nevertheless eventually need to be able to comprehend language delivered at varying rates of speed and, at times delivered with few pauses."

When reading English texts, the BA students have four main problems including understanding technical words, getting specific information, understanding sentence structure, and comprehending the text rapidly. In addition, the students apply ineffective reading strategies -- focus on words and often look up words in a dictionary. The most problematic aspect is understanding technical words. It seems that the problems are related one another. As stated by Gebhard (1996:210), some students, including advanced students, complain that they read too slowly because of one or a combination of these problems: too many new words, too complex grammar, unfamiliarity with the topic, and ineffective reading strategies -- reading a word at a time and looking up many new words in a dictionary. The findings on the students' reading difficulties imply two things. First, the enrichment of syntactic and vocabulary knowledge is demanded because such knowledge is crucial to comprehend reading passages due to its fundamental contribution to process the language (Eskey, 1986 and Swaffer, 1988 in Gebhard, 1996:217-218). Second, the knowledge of such reading strategies as guessing the meaning of words from context and reading for specific information is needed for reading comprehension. The implementation of the effective reading strategies, furthermore, can minimize the problems of vocabulary, specific information recognition, and slow reading.

When writing in English, the BA learners have four major problems including grammatical sentence formation, use of technical words, paragraph organization, and topic mastery; paragraph organization is the most problematic aspect. Those problems are also faced by some other college students majoring in English as found by some researchers (Alwasilah, 2004:104; Kareviati, 2004:i; and Mansyur, 2002:112). Referring to Byrne's (1988 in Kareviati, 2004:24) statement that for most people, writing is a difficult activity either in a mother tongue or in a foreign language, no wonder if any student has writing problems especially when writing in EFL. However, it is essential for the BA students to overcome their writing constraints because they use the writing skill for personal, academic, and future professional purposes although the use is minimal. The knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and paragraph organization needs to be developed. Dealing with the students' problems of topic mastery, it can be solved by connecting writing activities and reading activities. By reading, the students can obtain important insights not only about subject matter that can be the topic of writing but also about how to write, as the result of observing written texts.

Speaking English is the other difficult communicative activity for the BA students. Seven serious speaking problems are grammatical sentence construction, use of technical words, systematization, fluency, topic mastery, bravery or confidence in speaking and use of common words. Another problem is speaking strategy; when asked to speak English, the students use the translation strategy; they tend to write, translate, and memorize scripts before speaking so that they lack spontaneity in speaking. The most problematic speaking aspect is grammatical sentence construction. Referring to the students' speaking problems, developing the knowledge of language aspects and speaking strategies is crucial because, as explained by Harris (1969, in Susanto, 2001:21), a speaker of a language has to possess knowledge of language elements (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary) and ability to perform social interaction by using linguistic knowledge. Having good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar not only produces language accuracy but also contributes to fluency and bravery or confidence in speaking. According to a student respondent and an English teacher respondent, lack of bravery or confidence in speaking is partly due to the limited vocabulary. Regarding the students' problems of topic mastery, it can be solved by relating

speaking activities to either listening or reading activities. By listening or reading relevant texts, the students can gain a lot of information to talk about.

Wants on Learning Activities

The students want three main groups of learning activities: activities exploring language skills, activities exploring language aspects, and other activities supporting the development of language proficiency.

The activities exploring language skills include activities related to writing, speaking, listening, and reading. For increasing productive skills, the students favour to write formal letters and papers and to have such speaking activities as conversation, presentation, discussion, interview, and role play.

For developing the listening skill, the students need in-class live listening (through discussion and presentation) and listening through media (using audio and audio visual equipment). Indeed, either live listening or listening using media has its own merits. Harmer (2001:229-231) explains that live listening is a popular way of ensuring genuine communication in which the students can interrupt the speaker and ask for clarification, whereas listening using media allows the students to hear a variety of voices other than their own teacher's and give them an opportunity to know a range of different characters and situations, especially where real people are talking. Overall, listening activities, either listening with or without media and either intensive or extensive listening, not only provide the students with good opportunities to hear a variety of voices which may in turn increase their listening comprehension but also help them improve their pronunciation and speaking habits. Because watching films and listening to songs and radio are popular English-related communicative activities for the BA students, the teacher can make use of such authentic resources for the teaching purposes.

In term of the learning activities exploring the reading skill, the students prefer in and out-of-classroom reading activities that can be integrated with such production activities as discussion, presentation, and summary writing. The students' preferred reading activities imply two things. First, the students want to be successful learners by learning not only in the classrooms but also outside the classrooms. As reviewed by Jazadi (2004:8), the studies conducted by Lamb (2002) and Pickard (1996) indicate that successful learners in EFL context make use of out-of class English learning and exposures to maximize the opportunities in learning and practicing English. Therefore, Pickard recommends that classroom activities be supplemented with a range of out-of-classroom activities. Second, the students want to increase four English skills through learning activities that are planned in such a way for the skill integration. Brown (2001:232) exemplifies the integration of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in reading instruction by conducting such activities as discussing the topic to activate students' schemata, listening to the teacher's explanation about the text to be read, focusing on certain reading strategies, and writing a paraphrase of the reading passage. The teacher should take a particular notice of this finding. Although the reading instruction is focused in semester two (Ujihanti, Suroso, Rosidawati, 2000), the teacher needs to think carefully about how to include or relate reading activities to other activities. For example, the reading activity can be a pre-activity of the speaking or writing activity.

Concerning the activities exploring language aspects, the students want to learn or practise pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (both common and technical words). Obviously, the students' preferences on such activities result from their receptive and productive communication problems mainly because of low mastery of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, particularly technical words.

Most of the students (91.15%) want pronunciation practice; such a preference might relate to their pronunciation problem for comprehending spoken English, especially delivered by native speakers. I fully agree with Jones (2002:185) asserting that "listening will continue to play a large part in pronunciation training, with perhaps more authentic listening tasks with a variety of accents." In line with Jones, Harmer (2001:185) claims that the key to successful pronunciation teaching is to have students listen and notice how English is spoken – either on audio or videotape or from the teachers themselves. I believe that the pronunciation training can be conducted independently by the learners. Listening to spoken English with a variety of accents and delivery

speed can benefit the learners, not only to their own understanding of spoken English (listening skill improvement), but also to their own oral production (speaking skill improvement).

Grammar remains the major headache and the importance of grammar learning is recognized by many BA students in all levels. This is an interesting finding when it is related to the issue of grammar teaching in ESP courses – students are supposed to have a good command of grammar in general English courses during their secondary schools. In addition, as explained by Kavaliauskiene and Uzpaliene (2003), the current trend in communicative language teaching is to avoid teaching grammar or, if necessary, to minimize the amount of grammar teaching. However, the students' perceived wants can not be ignored because they relate to their motivation in the learning process (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987:57). The questions now are when the teaching of grammar should be given and what grammar items need to be taught. In term of what grammar items to be taught, it is important for the teacher to choose the grammar points which are relevant to the students' needs (Swan, 2002:14) determined based on their task performance – what specific problems they are experiencing (Richards, 2002:153; Loschky and Bley-Vroman, 1993 in Larsen-Freeman, 2001:39). In this case, it is necessary to conduct further research on grammatical analysis.

The students' preference on vocabulary learning gives a clear indication that the students are aware that vocabulary enrichment is the significant need in order to solve their communication problems partly due to the limited vocabulary. The students seem to agree with what Richards and Renandya (2002) claim that "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write." For vocabulary development, Hunt and Beglar (2002:258) suggest three approaches to vocabulary teaching and learning. The approaches are incidental learning (learning vocabulary as the results of extensive reading and listening), explicit instruction, and independent strategy development (practicing guessing the meaning from context and training learners to use dictionaries).

For supporting the development of language proficiency, the students favour other activities, i.e.: language games, translation, and TOEFL practice. The use of language games does not only increase students' motivation and fun but also provide excellent practice for improving pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and four language skills. Referring to the students' preference on translation, it seems that the students want to practice their linguistic knowledge and language skills. According to Newmark (1982:18 in Yusrida, 2001:18), translation involves two communicative activities: comprehension (requiring linguistic knowledge of the source language and reading ability) and formulation (rewriting the obtained message in the target language). It means that the written translation can increase grammar and vocabulary knowledge as well as reading and writing skills. When the translation is conducted orally, it can also increase pronunciation and both listening and speaking skills. TOEFL practice is the most favourite activity among the other activities supporting the development of language proficiency. The students' preference on TOEFL practice might be related to the academic and job requirements. At the end of semester six, the BA students are to take TOEFL held by English department (unrecorded informal discussion with the secretary of BA department on March 5, 2005). In addition, some universities and companies give standardized English tests such as TOEFL to test applicants' English proficiency. I believe that TOEFL practice allows the students to improve their linguistic knowledge and language skills, thereby increasing their TOEFL scores.

Comparison of Needs of Students in Different Semesters

In term of language necessities or the demands to use English, the three groups of students use English in the same settings: educational, domestic, future work, and other settings. In addition, the students conduct the same types of English-related communicative activities. Furthermore, regardless of the settings, they use English with the same frequency (sometimes) for overall activities ($F = 1.895, p > 0.05$). The condition might happen because the three groups of students have the same educational background and English exposures. However, when the English use was examined specifically based on the language settings, they use English with different frequencies ($F = 4.559, p < 0.05$). The significant difference exists between the second semester students and the sixth ones; in BA classes and in domestic settings, English is sometimes used by sixth semester students but seldom by the second ones. When examined based on the language skills, the three

groups of students are different in the frequency of English use for writing purposes ($F = 17.881, p < 0.05$). The highest level students use more English for writing purposes. For example, they use more English for writing diaries and personal letters. Such use of English is for personal purposes; they seem to be more aware of the importance of English. Another example is that the sixth semester students use more English for writing abstracts. Such use of English might be related to the academic requirement; the BA students in the last semester are obliged to write the abstract of the final research report in both Bahasa Indonesia and English (unrecorded informal discussion with the secretary of BA department on March 5, 2005).

Regarding lacks, the BA students in the three levels have an agreement of perceptions on their English difficulties ($F = 1.214, p > 0.05$). The three groups of students encounter the same problematic aspects which impede their communication, either in listening, reading, writing, or speaking. Six major listening problems for the students are understanding rapid talks, understanding technical words, getting specific information, understanding sentence structure, remembering the information heard, and understanding pronunciation; the most difficult aspect is comprehending rapid talks. When reading English texts, the students have four main problems including understanding technical words, getting specific information, understanding sentence structure, and comprehending the text rapidly; the most problematic aspect is understanding technical words. When writing in English, the learners have four major problems including grammatical sentence formation, use of technical words, paragraph organization, and topic mastery; paragraph organization is the most problematic aspect. Seven serious speaking problems are grammatical sentence construction, use of technical words, systematization, fluency, topic mastery, bravery or confidence in speaking, and use of common words; the most problematic aspect is grammatical sentence construction. Limited exposures to English outside the English classrooms might be one of the causes of the students' English difficulties. However, it is difficult to explain why the same problematic aspects are encountered by the students in three different levels. Of course, it requires further research to find out the reasons.

Dealing with wants, the three groups of students, in general, have different perceptions on wants concerning learning activities ($F = 3.306, p < 0.05$). Specifically, they have different perceptions on wants concerning the activities exploring language skills ($F = 7.877, p < 0.05$), particularly the activities exploring the productive skills ($F = 9.804, p < 0.05$); the significant difference exists between the students in semester six and those in semesters two and four. The sixth semester students want more types of learning activities exploring the productive skills than the second and fourth semester students. Compositions, summaries, formal letters, and papers are discourses which are favoured to write by the sixth semester students, but only formal letters and papers are preferred by the second and fourth semester students. In addition, conversation, presentation, discussion, speech, interview, and role play are favourite speaking activities for the students in level three, but delivering speech is not a favourite activity for the students in levels one and two. The sixth semester students' more preferred learning activities might be related to their more use of English for productive communication in order to fulfill personal, academic, and future job purposes. For example, dealing with personal purposes, the sixth semester students sometimes use English for writing diaries and personal letters. In addition, for fulfilling academic requirements, the last semester students are obliged to use English for writing the abstract of the final research report and for presenting the report orally (unrecorded informal discussion with the secretary of BA department on March 5, 2005). Furthermore, for fulfilling future job purposes, the last semester students will use English for job application – writing application letters, speaking during job interviews, and taking English tests – as immediately as possible after their graduation. However, although the students in the three levels have different perceptions on wants concerning overall learning activities, they want three main categories of learning activities: activities exploring language skills, activities exploring language aspects, and other activities supporting the development of language proficiency. The three groups of students have the same wants on activities exploring language aspects ($F = 0.709, p = 0.05$). More than 87% of the students in each group want to learn or practise pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (both common and technical words). The students in the three groups also have the same wants on other activities supporting the development of language proficiency ($F = 0.696, p = 0.05$). They favour translation,

TOEFL practice, and language games; the highest percentage of the students in each level want TOEFL practice. Obviously, the students' preferences on activities exploring language aspects and other activities supporting the development of language proficiency result from their receptive and productive communication problems mainly because of low mastery of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, particularly technical words.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The results show that three categories of needs are evident. The BA students use four English skills for academic, personal, and future job purposes. They, however, use English limitedly outside the English classrooms. English is mostly needed for listening and reading purposes. However, the students encounter some difficulties when communicating in English, either in listening, reading, writing, or speaking, mainly due to low mastery of language aspects (grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, particularly technical words) and of reception and production strategies. Therefore, they want a variety of learning activities to be integrated one another and conducted inside and outside the classrooms. It is also found that in general, the students in different semesters have similarities in the three categories of needs. However, they have slight differences in language use and wants. Compared with the lower semester students, the highest semester students want more types of writing and speaking-related learning activities because they use more English for productive communication due to the academic and future job requirements in addition to their own personal needs.

Based on the research findings, four main conclusions can be drawn. First, the combination of ESP instructional materials for academic and professional purposes appears to be demanded in English courses because the BA students in semesters two, four, and six use four English skills concurrently with English courses for personal and academic purposes and subsequently for future job purposes. Second, the teaching of general English is likely to be needed in English courses because the students lack mastery of language aspects (grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, particularly technical words) and of reception and production strategies. Third, language skills and knowledge of language aspects and of reception and production strategies can be developed through the integration of a variety of in- and out-of-classroom activities. Fourth, the teaching of four language skills needs to be integrated in each semester; however, the English instruction in lower semesters need to be focused on general English, reading, and listening, whereas the English teaching in higher semesters need to be emphasized in ESP, speaking, and writing because general English and receptive skills provide solid foundations for ESP and productive skills respectively.

Suggestions

Due to the limitation of this study, three suggestions are offered for further research. First, researchers who are willing to conduct a similar study are recommended to employ English tests and observations in addition to questionnaires and interviews as data gathering instruments. The analysis of test items which are problematic for the students can portray the students' real difficulties. The observations in major subject classrooms, in particular, and in workplaces, if possible, provide evidence of the way English is used in real world situations. Second, in addition to the analysis of the learners' target needs (necessities, lacks, and wants), the analysis of learning needs should also be conducted because both types of needs must be taken into account in conducting needs analysis. Third, it is recommended that future researchers conduct target needs analyses in further levels: rhetorical, grammatical-rhetorical, and grammatical based on the result of the global level analysis.

For the development of POLSRI, particularly the development of English syllabus design and teaching and learning process, two main suggestions are delivered. First, it is suggested that the English syllabus designers and teachers pay adequate attention to the students' needs, as the result of this study. Second, for the purpose of validating the students' needs, they are recommended to conduct ongoing needs analyses because the needs might develop and change over time.

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