

English Skills for Non-English Major Students: A Need Analysis Survey at a University in Jambi

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Abstract: This study aims to identify and find out the English needs of Non-English Major (NEM) students at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP), Jambi University. Needs analysis in English learning focuses on targets (target needs) and learning needs (learning needs). This is intended to achieve more effective and comprehensive English learning that is truly in accordance with the needs and fields of science of the students. It is also expected that English learning can facilitate students to easily communicate with the fields of science they are studying and master English for learners with specific goals. This study involved around 400 students in the odd academic year 2024/2025 FKIP, Jambi University. The exploratory survey technique used for data collection was to conduct a questionnaire. The technique of analyzing data using Analysis Descriptive Statistics. The results of the study are expected to be the right reference and reference for designing and developing learning tools, especially in the English Course for NEM Students at FKIP, Jambi University.

Key words: Exploratory survey; Learning needs; Need analisis; Non-English Major students; Target needs

***Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengetahui kebutuhan Bahasa Inggris mahasiswa Non-Bahasa Inggris (NEM) di Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (FKIP) Universitas Jambi. Analisis kebutuhan dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris difokuskan pada sasaran (target needs) dan kebutuhan belajar (learning needs). Hal ini dimaksudkan agar tercapainya pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris yang lebih efektif dan komprehensif serta benar-benar sesuai dengan kebutuhan dan bidang ilmu mahasiswa. Diharapkan pula pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dapat memfasilitasi mahasiswa untuk mudah berkomunikasi dengan bidang ilmu yang sedang dipelajarinya dan menguasai Bahasa Inggris bagi pembelajar dengan tujuan tertentu. Penelitian ini melibatkan sekitar 400 mahasiswa tahun ajaran ganjil 2024/2025 FKIP Universitas Jambi. Teknik survei eksploratori yang digunakan untuk pengumpulan data adalah dengan melakukan angket. Teknik analisis data menggunakan Analisis Statistik Deskriptif. Hasil penelitian diharapkan dapat menjadi acuan dan referensi yang tepat untuk merancang dan mengembangkan perangkat pembelajaran khususnya pada Mata Kuliah Bahasa Inggris bagi Mahasiswa NEM di FKIP Universitas Jambi.*

***Kata kunci:** Survei eksploratori; Kebutuhan belajar; Analisis kebutuhan; Mahasiswa Non-Bahasa Inggris; Target kebutuhan*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a global environment that requires good English language skills. However, many students still have difficulty learning and understanding English in an academic setting. Most of the students at universities often face challenges in learning English as a foreign language. The problems that arise include the lack of opportunities for practice in real situations, the need for specific skills in English for their field of study, and uncertainty about effective learning methods. English language skills have become a necessity in communicating and mobilizing in a very wide scope. English language skills can be obtained formally starting from elementary education to university level, including the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, FKIP, Jambi University. Currently, FKIP UNJA has around 29 Study Programs (S1) with various disciplines and students with different expertise backgrounds. At the beginning of each semester, English Courses are offered as Compulsory University Courses (MKWU) and all new students are required to enroll. In learning so far, English in each study program is only taught about general matters and basic English skills and has not been directed at study program-specific knowledge. This, of course, is an obstacle in improving and honing student competence in English and is very contrary to the objectives of learning English for students who have

different scientific fields. Among these study programs are Bimbingan dan Konseling, Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, Pendidikan Guru Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Administrasi Pendidikan, Pendidikan Kimia, Matematika, Pendidikan Biologi, Ekonomi dan Sejarah and all these study programs are categorized as Non-English Major (NEM) Study Programs. The student capacity is approximately 2500 people each year with diverse and different educational and scientific backgrounds. As one of the graduation requirements during the study period, FKIP students are required to complete the English language course offered in each first semester of the academic year and must pass because this English course is also a Compulsory University Course (MKWU). However, in the process of learning English in each study program at FKIP so far, there have been several shortcomings that must be evaluated and followed up, such as the presentation of teaching materials only about general materials and basic scientific studies. In addition, English learning in each study program has not been directed at the specific scientific content of the study program itself and has not been in accordance with the learning objectives and learning context of each Study Program. In this English learning process, there are also many students who face difficulties, especially Non-English Major (NEM) students, due to motivational factors and skills and expertise (cognitive factors). This, of course, becomes an obstacle in improving and honing students' competence in English that is correct or relevant to their field of science and is contrary to the objectives of learning English for students who do not have an English background. In addition, this problem also creates obstacles for lecturers to provide materials that are in accordance with the diverse disciplines of the students, which results in the learning process not being carried out effectively. In addition, there are also problems that can affect students' motivation and self-confidence in learning English because differences in the structure of their native language can also cause difficulties in understanding and using English fluently and effectively.

By considering these problems, researchers are interested in taking a problem-solving approach by identifying, mapping and analyzing the English learning needs of NEM students at FKIP, Jambi University, in the hope of providing valuable contributions and insights for the development of more effective English learning programs that are in accordance with the needs of these students. In strengthening this research, many previous studies have been conducted that have shown that careful needs analysis can help design more effective and relevant English learning programs for NEM students. However, there is still a lack of research that specifically identifies the needs of NEM students in the University environment, especially on the target (target needs) and learning needs (learning needs), which are the focus of this research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous definitions have been provided for English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Some authors define ESP as English instruction tailored to specific purposes. Others, however, delineate it as the instruction of English utilised in academic pursuits or for specific program or professional objectives, or as the instruction for non-native speakers who acquire the language for specific purposes. Hutchinson & Waters (1987) characterise English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a language teaching methodology wherein all decisions about content and methodology are predicated on the learners' motivations for learning. Robinson (1991) characterised ESP as an endeavour encompassing education, training, and practice, relying on three principal realisms of knowledge: language, pedagogy, and the student's specialised area of interest. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) constitutes a subset of English as a second or foreign language. It typically pertains to instructing the English language to university students or employed individuals, focussing on the required vocabulary and abilities. Similar to any language instruction designed for special reasons, a particular course in English for special reasons (ESP) will concentrate on a specific program or profession, such as Technical English, Scientific English, English for medical practitioners, English for hospitality staff, or English for NEM. Although the focus may appear

narrow, a course in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can exert a broad influence, exemplified by Environmental English.

English for academic purposes, delivered to students prior to or throughout their degree programs, constitutes a form of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), similar to Business English. Richards and Rodger (2001) perceive English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a movement aimed at addressing the linguistic requirements of learners who necessitate English to fulfil particular roles (e.g., student, engineer, nurse) and who seek to acquire content and practical skills through the language rather than mastering it for its own sake. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) differentiate between "General English" and "English for Specific Purposes (ESP)." ESP was executed by tailoring to the requirements of students. Teaching and learning activities often prioritise student learning as the foremost objective. In other words, instructing ESP employs a student-centered methodology. Students' demands are articulated based on their motivations for learning English and the specific style of English that will be advantageous for their future endeavours. The needs of students will vary depending on the environment. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) characterise ESP as a method of language acquisition in which all decisions are predicated on students' motivations for learning. ESP instruction must include the requirements of pupils in acquiring English proficiency.

ESP pertains to the instruction of English tailored for certain learners pursuing specific occupational fields. Tomlinson (2003) proposes ESP as a comprehensive concept that refers to the instruction of English to learners pursuing the language for specific occupational or academic purposes. Basturkmen (2010) asserts that ESP courses can accommodate: 1) pre-experience students: those without professional experience, such as vocational high school students; 2) experienced students: those currently employed in their profession while learning the language; or 3) post-experience students: those who have previously worked in their profession but are no longer employed.

Needs analysis is the first step in designing English for specific programs, materials, and syllabus objectives. According to Brown (2005), needs analysis is a process to identify the gap between the conditions that should be and the actual conditions, which will provide a basis for planning and developing effective learning programs. Therefore, analysis needs help to develop materials in accordance with the needs of students and fields of study. In addition, Long (2005) also stated that proper needs analysis is the key to identifying major problems in language learning and designing programs that can address these problems effectively. Referring to these theories, this study aims to not only identify the needs of NEM students at FKIP, Jambi University, but also to develop concrete and evidence-based recommendations for developing English learning programs.

Learning needs refer to learners' wish and need to learn a language. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), learning needs are what the learners need to do to learn. *Target needs* refer to what students need to do in the target situation. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) classify the language students' needs into two: learning needs and target needs. The first refers to what students need to do to learn, and the last refers to what students need to do in the target situation. *ESP* refers to an approach to language learning that is based on the learners' needs and the specific reasons for learning identified from the needs analysis. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP is an approach to language learning where all decisions are based on students' reasons for learning.

Needs analysis is the process of discovering and assessing students' needs, desires, and requirements. Needs analysis in English for Specific Purposes aims to assess students' requirements. Songhori (2008) states that this process involves identifying and considering the language and skills students will utilise in their prospective professional or vocational environments in relation to their current knowledge, perceived needs, and the limitations and opportunities of the teaching context. Needs analysis in English for specific purposes exclusively

concentrates on evaluating student requirements. Consequently, the analysis presented will enhance and facilitate fulfilling their job requirements. Needs denote essential or beneficial elements required for achieving learning objectives. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) categorise language learners' demands into learning and target needs. The first pertains to the actions pupils must undertake to acquire knowledge, whereas the latter pertains to the actions required in the target context. Basturkmen (2010) asserts that requirements analysis aims to determine the specific languages and skills required by language learning groups. According to Richards (2001), the method employed to collect information regarding student needs is termed Needs Analysis. One category of needs analysis is learner analysis; Nunan (2006) asserted that this analysis relies on data regarding the pupils. This information can assist educators in developing a syllabus that aligns more closely with the students' traits. Hossain (2003) asserts that needs analysis leads to the formulation of ESP courses. Target needs assess the requisite English language skills and linguistic knowledge essential for effective communication in real-world contexts. This involves evaluating necessities, deficiencies, and desires. Evaluating necessities entails identifying the demands for English in specific situations and communicative activities. Assessing deficiencies focuses on the obstacles that hinder students' use of English. Lastly, examining desires seeks to determine the types of learning activities that students perceive as necessary in their English courses. Moreover, assessing student learning needs necessitates that educators comprehend students' interests and initiate the learning design process utilising the insights gathered from students, thereby addressing their demands (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study encompassed approximately 400 students in the 2024/2025 academic year at FKIP, Jambi University. The data collection method was a questionnaire-based exploratory survey adapted from Sari et al. (2023). The method of examining data is descriptive statistical analysis. The study's results are anticipated to serve as a pertinent reference for designing and developing educational resources, particularly for the English Course for NEM Students at FKIP, Jambi University. The research instrument is a tool that allows researchers to design data collection steps to answer research questions by considering various criteria such as validity, reliability, objectivity, and usability. The instrument used to collect data is a questionnaire. In data collection, researchers distributed questionnaires to students as samples to obtain data on the needs of NEM students in learning English. To make it easier for students to answer questions, researchers translated the questionnaire into Indonesian. The questionnaire is a form filled out by participants in a study and returned to researchers as part of the survey design. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts. The first part asks about the students' personal background. The second part asks about the students' needs in learning English skills and the third part asks about the Target needs of the tourism department. The questionnaire category used is a closed questionnaire, and the responses are assessed based on a Likert scale ranging from one to four, "very unnecessary" (1), "not needed" (2), "needed" (3), "very necessary" (3). This questionnaire uses two languages, namely English and Indonesian, to make it easier for students to answer each item on the questionnaire. For the third part of the questionnaire, which is also a closed questionnaire, there are two items about target needs and future career targets. Students only mark items that they think are their target needs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings present the result of this research and analysis of the data that were collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire related to students' needs in learning English and the questionnaire was already answered by 450 students. This part aimed to describe the information about the students' learning needs based on English skills. The participants here were the students in the odd academic year 2024/2025 FKIP, Jambi University.

Table 1
Students learning needs for reading skills

No	Items	Responses Percentage			
		Highly Unneeded	Unneeded	Needed	Highly Needed
1.	comprehend the text by translating it into Indonesian	-	-	71.4%	28.6%
2.	read aloud the text by using correct pronunciation and intonation	-	-	57.1%	25.8%
3.	discuss the content of the text in a group to comprehend it	-	-	62.9%	37.1%
4.	read the text individually and answer questions about the text	-	-	74.2%	25.8%
5.	text related to the study program	-	-	62.9%	37.1%
6.	analyze new vocabulary	-	-	74.2%	25.8%

Table 1 shows that all items in reading materials gained more than 50% of students' choices. It means that those students needed to learn them in their classes. It is clearly seen that reading material about "analysing new vocabulary" and "reading text individually and answering questions about the text" are mostly chosen by the students, 74.2%. Students choose them because they feel it is needed to understand English text. Moreover, "text related to the study program" and "discuss the content of the text in a group to comprehend it" are highly needed by the students, which gained 37.1%.

Table 2
Students learning needs for speaking skill

No	Items	Responses Percentage			
		Highly Unneeded	Unneeded	Needed	Highly Needed
1.	how to do greetings and introduction	-	-	54.3%	45.7%
2.	discuss certain topic or problem	-	-	45.7%	54.3%
3.	practice dialogue in front of the class with a partner	-	-	60%	40%
4.	conversation about asking for and giving opinions	-	-	54.3%	45.7%
5.	role-play for speaking practice	-	-	42.9%	57.1%
6.	share information with friends in a group	-	-	45.7%	54.3%

Table 2 shows that all items in speaking materials gained more than 50% of students' choice. It reveals that 60% of students need the skill to practice dialogue in front of the class with a partner. Moreover, a chance to practice their skill in speaking English in a role-play is highly needed by the students, who gained 57.1%.

Table 3
Students' learning needs for writing skill

No	Items	Responses Percentage			
		Highly Unneeded	Unneeded	Needed	Highly Needed
1.	arrange sentences into one correct paragraph	-	-	62.8%	37.1%
2.	identify and correct sentence structure errors	-	-	62.8%	37.1%
3.	write the text that is similar to the text given	-	-	65.7%	34.3%
4.	identify and correct punctuation errors in the text	-	-	62.9%	37.1%
5.	Understand the paragraph unity	-	-	45.7%	54.3%
6.	Writing academic essays	-	-	62.9%	37.1%

These items show that writing materials gained more than 50% of students' choices. It means that those students needed to learn them in their classes. It is clearly described in Table 3 that writing material about "write the text that is similar to the text given" is mainly chosen by the students (65.7%). Moreover, "understanding the paragraph unity" is highly needed by the students (54.3%). It is appropriate for students' future careers that will use writing skills in future work; students will write any kind of text.

Table 4
Students learning needs for listening skill

No	Items Listening	Responses Percentage			
		Highly Unneeded	Unneeded	Needed	Highly Needed
1.	identify things related to dialogue/ monologue	-	-	62.9%	37.1%
2.	identify expressions related to a dialogue/ monologue	-	-	65.7%	34.3%
3.	answer questions in writing from a dialogue/ monologue	-	-	54.3%)	45.7%
4.	answer questions orally from dialogue/monologue	-	-	62.9%	37.1%
5.	listening to information on the media	-	-	60%	40%
6.	listening and understanding lectures/speech	-	-	60%	40%

All of the items in listening materials gained more than 50% of students' choice. Table 4 shows that listening material about "identify expressions related to a dialogue/ monologue" is chosen mainly by the students (65.7%), while "answer questions in writing from a dialogue/ monologue" is highly needed by the students (45.7%).

The results of answering a questionnaire about their opinions about their target future career and target needs, the students mostly said that their target needs are the sake of future profession related to their program. The NEM industry is rapidly growing, and jobs in NEM are becoming highly sought after. Working in this sector will offer a huge range of interesting roles, such as meeting new people and the opportunity to travel. That is why students mostly prefer the chosen English skills.

In addition, when the students were asked about their needs in the work later, all of them answered that they would prefer to be ready in conversation with other people using English and then with business partners and also guests, and they gave various responses. All of the students answered the question. They had various responses; most of them answered that they really prefer conversation.

Discussion

Based on the findings, their target need is conversation, which means that they need a lot of speaking skills. Students at a university must learn English, which will include a lot of speaking activities to improve students' capacity and willingness to interact with foreigners. Speech lessons are also accompanied by pronunciation practice so that the learners can not only learn to communicate well but also pronounce the words well. Students demonstrated a strong preference for activities like analyzing new vocabulary and reading texts individually to answer comprehension questions. This indicates that they perceive these activities as fundamental for understanding English texts, a skill essential for both academic success and professional tasks such as reading documents, emails, or reports. Additionally, reading materials related to their study programs and group discussions about text content suggest a need for contextual and collaborative learning.

Speaking skills emerged as a significant area of interest, with 60% of students emphasizing the need to practice dialogues in front of the class. Moreover, students expressed a strong preference for role-playing activities, showcasing their desire to simulate real-world conversations. This focus on speaking reflects their aspiration to be confident in professional communication, such as engaging with business partners and guests, which aligns with their career goals. Writing is another critical area, with over 50% of students selecting writing-related materials. Notably, 65.7% preferred activities like writing texts similar to given examples, and 54.3% prioritized understanding paragraph unity. These preferences highlight their recognition of writing as an essential skill for their future careers, where tasks may involve drafting reports, emails, or proposals. These results suggest that students are aware of the practical applications of writing skills in their professional lives.

The data on listening skills shows that students prioritize activities that enhance comprehension of spoken English. For example, 65.7% chose materials focusing on identifying expressions in dialogues or monologues, while 45.7% needed to answer written questions based on spoken content. This preference indicates their intent to improve auditory processing skills, which are critical for effective communication in real-world scenarios like meetings or interactions with international clients.

The findings underscore the importance of aligning language learning with career objectives. Students expressed a clear preference for mastering conversational English, particularly in professional contexts involving business partners and guests. Their responses reflect the demands of industries, such as the rapidly growing NEM sector, which values effective communication, networking, and global collaboration.

Implications for Language Education

The results suggest that English language curricula should:

1. Incorporate Profession-Specific Content: include reading and writing tasks relevant to students' study programs and future industries.
2. Emphasize Speaking Practice: provide ample opportunities for dialogues, role-plays, and public speaking to build confidence and fluency.
3. Focus on Collaborative Learning: facilitate group discussions to enhance comprehension and teamwork skills.
4. Strengthen Listening Skills: Use diverse auditory materials to train students to understand accents, expressions, and contextual cues.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated that learning needs refer to what students need to do to learn. Hutchinson and Waters have considered the 'target needs' as an umbrella term, which in practice hides a number of important distinctions. It is more useful to look at the target situation in terms of (a) necessities, (b) lacks, and (c) wants. The most important 'needs' for Identifying the Terms of ESP syllabus target needs. In ESP, usually, needs are categories of needs defined by the target situation, that is, what the learner must know to function effectively in the target situation. The second component of 'Target needs' is to identify student deficiencies. The third component in analyzing needs is 'wants'. The learner may have a clear conception of the 'needs' of the target situation; they will definitely have views on their 'lack'. It will give them a view of what they need. According to the findings of the previous section, the students' needs learning skills of English were divided into four skills they were reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Based on the findings about certain skills, especially for reading skills, students mostly choose biographical text that relates to their major, which means students need to know about biographical text, like how to read biographical text, and maybe it will be used by them to prepare to work later. Students' needs in learning English are divided into four skills and every skill they must have to become qualified learners needed by the social environment, especially in the NEM industry, which has some qualifications, such as being qualified in implementing suitable English skills for the NEM majors.

On the other hand, according to Songhori (2008), in this process, the language and skills that the students will use in their target professional or vocational workplace in their study areas are identified and considered in relation to the present state of knowledge of the students, their perceptions of their needs and the partial possibilities and constraints of the teaching context. It means that needs analysis in English for specific purposes only focuses on analyzing student needs. Therefore, the analysis provided will improve and support achieving their needs in the workplace. Thus, they do not need to learn all things that are too general, and they do not even need it because they learn better when they can see the reasons why they attend the study program and find compatibility between their learning needs and the contents of the study they must learn. Learning material for general English does not support the needs of students (Suyadi, 2016).

English material taught should be based on the needs of students in learning. The lecturers can use the findings of this research to create a syllabus that is more appropriate to the characteristics of the students. According to Hossain (2003), needs analysis results in developing ESP courses. The findings will inform the teacher what students need to learn English. Based on the findings, students must have English content in the NEM program, including many speaking activities to improve students' capacity and willingness to interact with foreigners. Speech lessons are accompanied by pronunciation practice so that the learners can learn to communicate well and pronounce the words well.

CONCLUSION

Students' preferences for reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities reflect their awareness of the skills required for their future careers. By tailoring language instruction to meet these needs, educators can better equip students to excel in professional environments, particularly in globally connected industries like NEM. Addressing these preferences will enhance their proficiency and boost their confidence and readiness for the workplace.

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