

# Needs Analysis on the Problems of Islamic Economics Students in Learning ESP at State College of Islamic Studies (STAIN) Pekalongan

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to discuss the needs analysis on the problems of Islamic Economics students in learning ESP at STAIN Pekalongan. This study involved 41 students and 3 teachers as the subjects. The data in this research were analyzed by using SPSS program. The data used in this paper were taken from questionnaires given to the students and interviews of some lecturers. The method applied to investigate students' problems in learning ESP was quantitative method and qualitative design in order to get reliable and valid interpretation of data analysis. The result shows that ESP problems include vocabulary (42.0%), course contents (22.0%), and grammar (12.0%). The result from the questionnaires show that the first problems are related to limited vocabulary (40.0%), lacks of students' language skills (24.4%), and boring classes (14.4%). Some students also believe that 7.8% of problems are related to teaching materials (course contents) that the lecturers used, which are not suitable with their needs, and finally, the incompatibility of the lecturers, including difficult materials (6.7%).

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## 1. Introduction

Needs analysis is the starting point of curriculum development and syllabus design for the students. In designing syllabus at the beginning process, needs analysis plays an important role as a basic to set goals and objectives of the course.

English plays an essential role in higher educational level in all countries. English as an international language has become part of non-English department in all instances. Then the using of English comes to different needs to different people. English as a foreign language (EFL) develops a branch which is called English for Specific Purposes (ESP). ESP comes out in order to fulfill a different needs of people all over the world.

Needs analysis for ESP is very important in order to know the necessity and the lacks of a program, especially to know the students' problems. Despite of that, there is no research that examined the problem of students in STAIN Pekalongan especially in Islamic Economic Program. Based on the fact, it is very important to know the students' problems so that it will be easy for all English lecturer and also all parts who are involved in the program to improve the ESP program.

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Based on the interviews with some English lecturers, there has been no formal survey related to problems that are faced by the Islamic Economic students in using English for specific purposes courses in STAIN Pekalongan. In order to understand as much about the learners as possible, an investigation of the formal needs analysis of the medical students and instructors in their use of academic English is essential. These needs will then serve as a guide to improve or expand the existing English programs, so that more effective English courses will be created for the medical students in the future for instance. Therefore, the curriculum or syllabus must be adjusted to the students' needs. This paper addresses the issue of learners and instructors' preferences and expectations of the main problems of ESP classes in the school of Islamic Economics. The investigation aimed at gathering such data from the students and their lecturers at the college to make informed decisions to ensure effective language learning.

Based on preliminary interview, it can be stated that non-English Students in a college level always face some problems in learning ESP. this problems can be seen from the incompetence in using English. Students do not know how to function the language itself. They see the language only limited on theory not practices. As a result, they fail to use the language based on their own needs; occupational needs. The problem of learning ESP in a college level becomes an important issue that needs more attention from people who keep in touch with education.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher gives a clear problem statement as follows: "What is the problem of Islamic Economics Students in learning ESP at STAIN Pekalongan?" Based on the problem statement, this research aimed to investigate needs analysis on the problems of Islamic Economics Students in learning ESP at SAIN Pekalongan. It can be a solution for a syllabus designer in designing the ESP syllabus.

The outcomes of the research theoretically are expected to be useful contribution to the study of needs analysis on ESP. The outcomes of the research practically are (1) for the syllabus designer, this research will be useful for the them to develop the syllabus based on the students' needs, (2) for the readers, this research can be a reference.

There are several previous studies which are related to the research about need analysis of students in learning ESP that was taken by the researcher. The first research comes from [Bonjadi et al. \(2013\)](#) entitled *Problems of English for Specific Purpose course for Medical Students in Iran*. The researchers focuses on an ESP course offered at Tabriz Faculty of Medical Sciences in Iran and the results showed that ESP instruction was limited to train special vocabulary, reading, and translating numerous texts. The second research discussed *Needs Analysis Informed Teaching for English for Specific Purposes* written by [Albassri \(2016\)](#); in this research, the researcher investigates English for specific purposes (ESP) needs of business students to explore how best to address their expressed needs through subsequent tutoring. The third research was taken from [Hermayawati \(2010\)](#) entitled *Analisis Kesulitan Belajar Bahasa Inggris Mahasiswa*. The last research is from [Hui \(2017\)](#) entitled *The Learning Needs Analysis of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in College*.

From the five previous studies above, it is important to look for the novelty of this research. Based on the result from the researchers before, the researcher in this research took a different population and sample. The research was conducted in STAIN Pekalongan specifically in department of Islamic Economics where there has been no formal survey addressed to the students' problem in learning ESP.

## 2. Underlying Theories

English for Special Purposes is one branch of English Language Teaching. Another branch is General English (GE). General English is usually studied for exam purposes, while ESP is used to prepare learners to perform adequately for the learning goals related to their field study, in this case, they will use the language the learners apply the language they are learning ([Hutchinson & Waters, 1987](#)). Considering this, when designing the ESP course, it is important to analyze the target situation and linguistic features of the related situation.

Hutchinson and Waters refer needs analysis as target situation analysis. It presents the processes of identifying target situation accompanied by the analyzing the identified features of the related situation ([Hutchinson & Waters, 1987](#)). Needs analysis is the basic of any ESP program. It explores learners' needs related to curriculum and syllabus. besides, it can gives a solution for the gap between students' needs and what lecturers provide as well as authorities in decision-making process. According to [Belcher \(2016\)](#), needs analysis becomes an issue of accommodation and compromise between various stakeholders, educators, and learners.

According to [Basturkmen \(2010\)](#), ESP courses are divided into 3 phases related to the course timing: (1) pre-experience; it occurs when the learners learn English before they enter the occupational fields, (2) during-

experience; it happens when the learners are working in their occupational fields that they expect to have the English lesson based on their daily work routines, and (3) post-experience; it takes place when teachers give English lessons to learners who have stopped working.

### 3. Research Methods

This research was conducted at Islamic Economics Student in STAIN Pekalongan. Due to constrain in terms of time, distance and accessibility, the needs analysis conducted in this research obtains feedback from the students and the lecturers who are academically involved with the instructional process of ESP. The research involved 41 students in the third-year of Islamic Economics and 3 lecturers. This research focuses on some points: first is the role of English lecturer and student in the instructional process, the second is infrastructure, and the last is material used in the process of teaching and learning. These aspects become the researcher's focus. The researcher in this research applied quantitative design and qualitative design in order to get reliable and valid interpretation of data analysis. Instruments of data collection used in this research are questioner and interview. The students were selected randomly in order to get variant answers about problems appear in learning ESP.

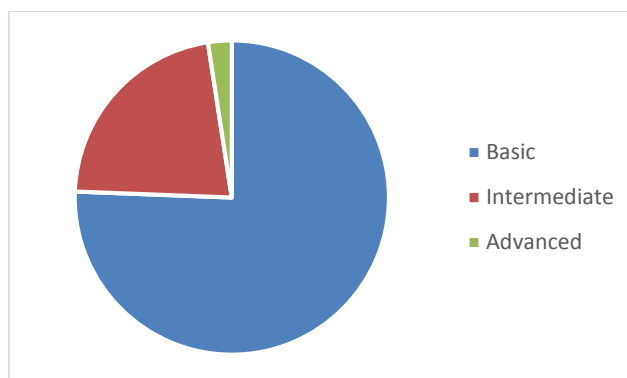
### 4. Results and Discussion

The researcher in this research mostly used descriptive statistics. She analyzed the data from the questionnaires by using SPSS program. She explained the mean, the percent, the frequency and the standard deviation based on the result of the questioners about the students' problem and also result from English lecturer's interview related to the problem faced both students and lecturers. The researcher tried to see the students' problem in three different parts by giving such an evaluation paper to them. This paper includes four options preceded by its statement; they were very good, good, bad, and very bad. The students will give cross-check on one of the options given. The first part is about the content of the ESP lesson which provides 17 statements. The second section is about the lecturer's competence in teaching ESP based on students' perspective which provides 13 statements. And the last section is about the main problem of the students. The researcher provides 5 statements related to the main problem which mostly faced by all of the ESP students. Besides giving close questions to the students, the researcher also provides such an open question in order to get deep data and varied answer from the students related to their problems.

Based on the students' answers related to their level of English proficiency, there are 75.6% or 31 students classified themselves still in the basic level. The rest is 22.0% or 9 students categorized themselves in the intermediate level. There is only 2.4% student who confessed being in advanced level which means only one student placed his/her proficiency in advanced level. The data obtained have a valid number of students who filled the questions. The total of students is 41 and there is no missing.

Table 1. The Levels of students' English Proficiency

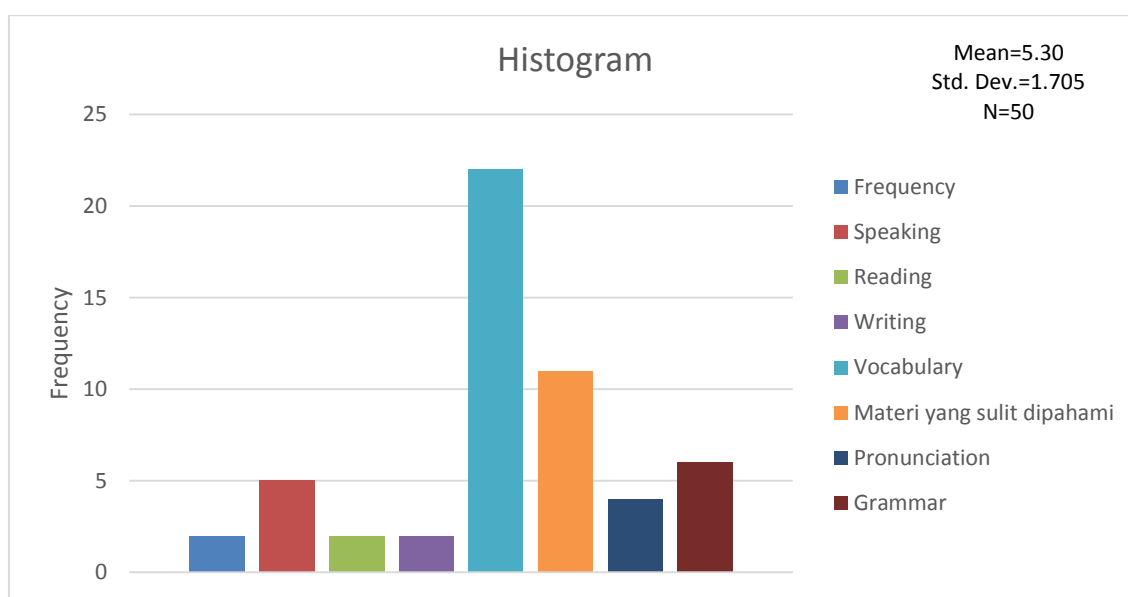
Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Basic	31	75.6	75.6	75.6
Intermediate	9	22.0	22.0	97.6
Advanced	1	2.4	2.4	100.0
Total	41	100.0	100.0	



Graph 1. The Levels of students' English Proficiency

Based on the data above, it means that most of the students have low level of English proficiency.

Based on the students' perspective, the first result based on the open questionnaires show that mostly the content of material taught by English lecturers are stressed on speaking skill and writing skill. The second result is related to the students' necessity in studying English especially for occupational needs; most of the students think that speaking skill is the most important skill that can influence their future career. Based on these two results, materials and activities that are provided by lecturers have already encountered with the students' needs in learning ESP. The problems appear in the third result of the open questionnaires. Look at the following data.



Graph 2: The frequency of the problems related to the skills and the difficult materials

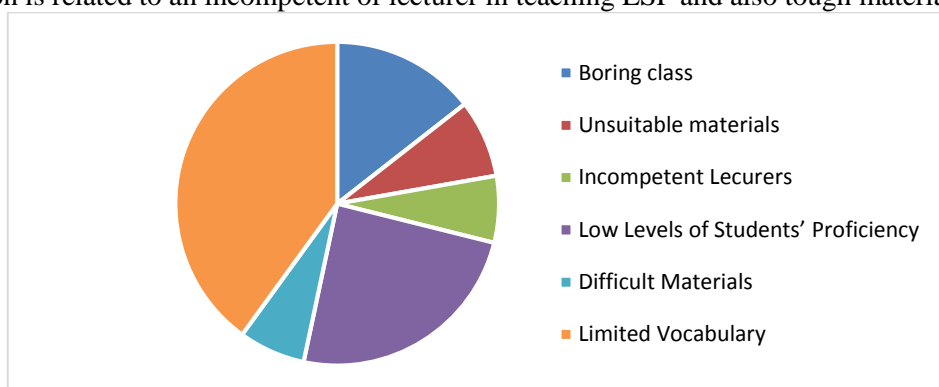
The histogram chart above shows that the most problem faced by the students is vocabulary with the percentage 42.0%, the second problem is about material with 22.0%, the third position with the percentage 12.0% is grammar problem.

The result from the open questionnaire is very close to the result from the close questionnaires. The students were asked to give a checklist based on their own experience related to their problem. There are six options were given and the students freely to give a mark in these options. Look at the following table.

Table 2. The Students' Perception on their problems in ESP Classes

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Boring class	13	14.4	14.4	14.4
Unsuitable materials	7	7.8	7.8	22.2
Incompetent Lecurers	6	6.7	6.7	28.9
Low Levels of Students' Proficiency	22	24.4	24.4	53.3
Difficult Materials	6	6.7	6.7	60.0
Limited Vocabulary	36	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Based on the result of the close questionnaires, the first position is number six that is limited vocabulary that becomes the most problem of the students. Then, the second position followed by the lacks of students' English skill. The third place is about boring class. Next is about unsuitable material which is given to the students. And the last position is related to an incompetent of lecturer in teaching ESP and also tough material.



Graph 3: The Students' Perception on their problems in ESP Classes

The pie chart above shows that the first problems that are faced by the students in ESP classes are related to limited vocabulary (40.0%), the second position (24.4%) is addressed to the lacks of students' language skills, the next position is boring class (14.4%), some students also believe that 7.8% of problems is related to the teaching materials (course contents) that the lecturers used which are not suitable with their needs. Finally, the last position of problems ranked by the students is concerned with the incompatibility of lecturers, including materials with a high level of difficulty (6.7%).

Specifically problems related to teaching and learning material based on the perspective of students are as follows:

- The statement is "*results of midterm exam (mid-test), assignments, etc. Once assessed / checked returned to the student*", then most of the students rate this statement with '*not good*'. So, it means that the lectures need to give a comment and return the result of midterm (mid-test) as well as students' assignment to the students. According to them, by getting the feedback from the lecturers, they will know the weaknesses that they have to improve.
- The statement is "*interesting content display of the book*" some students rate this statement with '*not good*'. So, it is very important to improve the display of ESP materials. There are a lot of teaching materials which can be obtained from internet. Alternatively, the lecturers can used authentic materials from you tube, newspapers, videos, pictures, etcetera.
- The statement is "*the appropriateness between the learning activities with size of the class (number of students)*". Mostly students rate this statement with '*not good*'. This problem is relevant with the statement of the lecturer who say that the size of the class also becomes the main problems both lecturers and students. This can be done by having group works.
- The statement is "*The activities / exercises contained in the textbook can be used for independent learning (without lecturers)*" And "*the material has been suitable with what students want*". Mostly students rate this statement with '*not good*'. So, it means that the lecturers and all sides who are involved in designing the ESP materials must pay much attention to the practicality of the materials.

Besides the researcher recorded the students' perspective, she also interviewed English lecturers in order to get complete data related to the students' problems. The results of interview with English lecturers in STAIN Pekalongan indicate that:

- a. In general, the first problem faced by the students is low competence of language skills. This is indicated by low involvement in a teaching and learning process.
- b. The second students' problem is specifically limited vocabulary and it influences their speaking ability. Due to limited vocabulary, the students cannot produce English fluently both in speaking and writing.
- c. The third is related to the low motivation of students in learning English. Low motivation seems the basic problem. It is assumed that low motivation cannot make people have high spirit in pursuing goals.
- d. In addition, the problems faced by the lecturer itself are limited time allocation in teaching English and also overcrowded class.
- e. The challenging of the lecturers is how to find an innovative media in the instructional process in order to attract the students' interest and meet their needs in ESP class.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the result of the open questioner about students' problem that was ranked by using SPSS program, it can be concluded that ESP problems that are faced by the students mostly are first vocabulary problem 42.0%, followed by material problem 22.0%, the third position is grammar problem with the percentage 12.0%.

The result from the close questionnaires indicates that the main problem is limited vocabulary, then, followed by the lacks of students' English skill. Boring class also becomes one of the problems. Some students also chose unsuitable material as the problem faced by them. The rest of students believe that incompetent of lecturer in teaching ESP and tough material are two problems sometimes faced in learning ESP.

Besides those problems above, the students also were asked to give an evaluation based on their perspective related to teaching and learning material. The result is that most of the students gave ticks on "Not Good" to the following statements: (1) results of midterm exam (mid-test), assignments, etc., once assessed / checked returned to the student, (2) interesting content display of the book, (3) the appropriateness between the learning activities with size of the class (number of students), (4) the activities / exercises contained in the textbook can be used for independent learning (without lecturers), and (5) the material has been suitable with what students want.

With respect to the interviews with lectures' interview, the lecturers who teach ESP believe that language skill becomes the main problem faced by the students mostly, the second problem is limited vocabulary. The next is related to the lacks of students' motivation in learning English. Besides, the lecturers themselves have a problem related to limited time allocation in teaching English and big class.

It is therefore recommended that the existing curriculum or syllabus for ESP at Islamic Economics Students of STAIN Pekalongan should be redesigned in order that the curriculum or syllabus can meet both the students' and lecturers' needs. The recommendations will be related to course content which matches to the Islamic economics study, teaching method which can motivate the students to be active and to develop vocabulary mastery, teaching materials which are interesting, classroom management which can encourage the students to work in groups, feedback from the lecturers that can make the students know the weaknesses to improve, and textbooks which can help the students work outside the classroom.

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