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**AN ANALYSIS OF MEDICAL SCIENCE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD
THEIR NEEDS IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN UNIVERSITY OF MATARAM**

ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016



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**AN ANALYSIS OF MEDICAL SCIENCE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION
TOWARD THEIR NEEDS IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN MATARAM
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Abstract

This study entitled “An Analysis of Medical Science Students’ Perception toward Their Needs in Learning English in University of Mataram Academic Year 2015/2016” was aimed to identify medical science students’ necessities, wants and lacks and their perception towards English program in fulfilling their wants in learning English. This study used qualitative descriptive method. The sampling technique of this study was population sampling (all population involved as sample; 81 students). In gathering the data, this study used questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire consists of questions related to demographic information, necessities, wants, lacks and perception toward English program in fulfilling the students’ wants. Meanwhile, semi-structured interview was used to strengthen the data from questionnaire. The findings of this study show that medical science students’ necessity was learning English to use in their future career. Furthermore, most of the students wanted to be able to read medical journals and articles at the end of the English course. Moreover, it was revealed that most of them lacked on speaking skill and medical science vocabulary. In terms of students’ perception, it was found that medical science students considered English program had fulfilled their wants because they were provided some strategies to read medical journals.

Keyword: Students’ Perception, Medical Science Students’ Needs, Needs Analysis, English.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berjudul “Analisis Persepsi Mahasiswa Kedokteran Terhadap Kebutuhan Mereka dalam Belajar Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Mataram Tahun Akademik 2015-2016” bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi kebutuhan, keinginan dan kekurangan mahasiswa kedokteran dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris dan persepsi mereka terhadap program Bahasa Inggris dalam memenuhi keinginan mereka dalam belajar Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini dilakukan di Fakultas Kedokteran, Universitas Mataram. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengambilan sampel dari penelitian ini adalah sampel populasi (semua populasi terlibat sebagai sampel; 81 mahasiswa). Dalam pengumpulan data, penelitian ini menggunakan kuesioner dan wawancara. Kuesioner terdiri dari pertanyaan yang berkaitan dengan informasi demografis, kebutuhan, keinginan, kekurangan dan persepsi mahasiswa kedokteran terhadap program Bahasa Inggris dalam memenuhi keinginan siswa. Sementara itu, wawancara semi-terstruktur digunakan untuk memperkuat data dari kuesioner. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kebutuhan mahasiswa kedokteran adalah belajar Bahasa Inggris untuk digunakan dalam karir masa depan mereka. Selanjutnya, sebagian besar siswa ingin bisa membaca jurnal medis dan artikel di akhir pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, terungkap bahwa sebagian besar dari mereka kurang dalam kemampuan berbicara dan kosakata kedokteran dalam Bahasa Inggris. Dalam hal persepsi siswa, ditemukan bahwa mahasiswa kedokteran menganggap program Bahasa Inggris telah memenuhi keinginan mereka karena mereka diberikan beberapa strategi untuk membaca jurnal medis.

Keyword: Persepsi siswa, Kebutuhan Mahasiswa Kedokteran, Analisis Kebutuhan, Bahasa Inggris.

A. Introduction

English has become one of the compulsory subjects in Indonesian college curriculum both in Non-English Department or English Department. There are several Non-English Departments namely Tourism, Medical Science, Pharmacy, Law, Economic and many others. The context of English for medical science department differs from context of English for tourism department which also needs different language items and sub skills.

For instance, the students of medical science need to focus on their learning of reading skill rather than other skills because of the demands to read a large amount of science publication. Sajadi and Oghabi (2011) argue that reading is the most important skill in medical science. They point out that English text is seen as an important tool to obtain information. On the other hand, tourism students will need to focus on enhancing speaking skill because they will get involved in interaction with the foreigners on their future occupation.

Based on pre-interview conducted with one of four-semester students at medical science department in University of Mataram stated that English is important to learn. As they are instructed to read three journals or articles related to medical science. Moreover medical science students in university of Mataram also have to make a review from those three journals. It indicates that English is very important for them to learn because they are frequently asked to read a number of journals.

Meanwhile, for another non-English department might need to learn certain material or language skill in order to reach their goal in target language. Consequently, as the needs in different departments are varied, then, different needs have to be identified.

Needs analysis plays a crucial role in English for specific purposes (ESP) particularly in Medical Science Department. Evans and Johns (1987, in Tasci, 2007) believe that needs analysis can be used as a guidance to develop curriculum, to design syllabi, to make lesson plan and to adopt materials effectively. Therefore, by

conducting needs analysis, the lecturer can construct suitable goals and objectives which meet the students' needs.

Graves (2007) assumes that a teaching methodology which implements on needs analysis allows the learners to better evaluate their learning process and to be more aware of their needs. Thus, the learners get what they really want to learn and control their learning process. Hence, considering the learners, their learning needs and their learning motivation is very important, therefore needs analysis should be conducted. Consequently, by knowing these, the teachers, administrators and students have clear direction related to the language teaching in ESP classroom.

As mentioned earlier that medical science students highly need English to read many science publications which are mostly written in English. Reading text for medical science has specific terminology (jargons) and structures which relates on its field. However, Tasci (2007) argues that besides increasing reading skill, medical science learners are also demanded to improve writing and speaking skill. As result, they are required to write medical papers and to talk for medical meeting or presentation. Nevertheless, teaching four language skills intensively to medical science students seem irrelevant because of the other main subjects that students' need to learn.

Consequently, the issues cause various perception from the students related to the English program in fulfilling the students' needs, especially their wants. There are two possible perceptions namely positive and negative perception. The perception is considered as positive when the ESP program has fulfilled the students' wants whereas the perception is considered negative if their wants have not been fulfilled. Therefore, this phenomenon inspires the researcher to conduct the study pertaining to the analysis of Medical Science students' perception toward their needs in learning English. Besides, there is no researcher who conducted the study about this field in University of Mataram.

B. Review of Related Literature

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated that ESP can be defined as an approach that designs the method and the materials of the course based on the learners' reasons for learning. They further asserted that ESP belongs to approach of language teaching in which all decisions as all content and method are based on the learners' reason for learning. In other words, ESP should be designed by putting attention on what learners need as the main focus of ESP. From all of the definitions provided by the experts above, it can be seen that ESP emphasizes on learners' needs and purpose of learning.

Regarding to the basis context of language requirements (needs), Sujana (2006) argue that English for Specific Purpose (ESP) and English for General Purposes (EGP) are different. It is very obvious since in general course the purpose is not specified which means the materials provided in the syllabus will be very general as the substantive needs of students are unable to reveal. Meanwhile in ESP, since the needs of students are used as the basis of designing syllabus (Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998), the material provided in it must be specifically based on the real need of the learners. They asserted that ESP generally has a different methodology from that of EGP. It is obvious since the learners in ESP class usually bring their specialist knowledge they got from their occupational or educational fields. Thus, the ESP teachers/instructors are demanded to be adaptable and flexible in adjusting their methodology to the learners' changing needs.

The example of ESP can be seen on the demand for medical English at university level. According to Gylys and Wedding (1983 as cited in Yang, 2005), medical terminology is a specific one that usually used to make communication in the health care field become more effective. The language used in medicine and health care is quite unique complex. This uniqueness demanded learners to spend quite much time to study that specific terminology in a meaningful and contextual ways if they want to fully understand it. As a result, it requires a needs analysis to identify and understand the specifics of this terminology and the ways it will be used in a

particular context. In addition, Tasci (2007), based on his research, stated that reading skill is the most frequently needed and the most important skill for medical students (Sajadi and Oghabi, 2011). Since medical science students were demanded to read many science publications such as articles and journals as well as medical books written in English which also has specific terminology in it.

In short, ESP, especially in term of its implementation in classroom, is an approach that specially facilitates learners with everything they need, want, and desire. ESP is like a path which lead learners' way to achieve what they really need and want. Thus, learners, in ESP, must be the centre of the learning process by which the materials, method, and everything in course should totally reflect their true needs.

It is believed that ESP as one of language teaching approaches should start with an analysis of students' needs. Richards (cited in Tasci, 2007) points out those different types of students have different language needs and what are taught should be on what they need. Thus, the analysis of students' needs aims to produce information which when act upon makes courses better adapted to students' needs.

Graves (2000 cited in Tasci 2007) defines a needs analysis as an on-going and systematic process of gathering information about students' needs and preferences, interpreting the information and then making course decisions in order to meet those needs. She insists that needs assessment need to be conducted before start designing the curriculum. Moreover, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) remind us that needs analysis as an activity that not enough to be conducted only a once and for all but it should be a continuing process. In other words, analysis procedures should conduct not only in the initial stages of the course but also continuously throughout the courses which means it should be a continuous activity.

Furthermore, Brown (1995 cited in Tasci, 2007) states that needs analysis involves some activities in which in these activities the necessary information are gathered from the students. The purpose of gathering that information is to help the instructors in ESP in designing an effective curriculum which is able to meet the needs of the students.

Nunan (1988) states that the first very crucial step that need to be done when conducting a needs analysis is to decide on what kinds of data that need to be collected. In addition to kinds of data that need to be collected, other important thing is to decide when the data should be collected, by whom, and for what purposes. In gathering information during need analysis, according to Tasci (2007), the common methods of data collection used are questionnaires, discussions, interviews, observations, and assessments.

Furthermore, Nunan (1988) consider the learners' biographical data as the point for developing a learner-centred curriculum. He claims that in learner-centred curriculum design, concerning the learner's needs and motivations which are relevant to the respond of their needs are very important. Thus, learning is seen as a process in which learners should participate in the designing process of courses. Nunan (1988) also claims that the success of learner-centred curriculum is influenced by the participation of program administrators, the collaborative work of teachers, and the involvement of many students in the process of developing the curriculum.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguish needs into two namely *target needs* and *learning needs*. Target needs refers to what learners require to do in the target situation effectively whereas learning needs deals with what learners required to do in order to learn the language effectively (Tasci, 2007). In regard to the target needs, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) provided a few questions that can be used to identify them in which involves the question about reason, the way it will do, the areas it will cover, the participants, and the place and time the language are able to use.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) further comment that target needs cover the terms of *necessities*, *lacks* and *wants*. Necessities are the types of needs which involve the desires of the target situation. It is specifically about what learners crucially need to know in order to function effectively in the target situation. In addition, the term of 'lacks' is used to refer to the gaps between the learners' current proficiency and their target proficiency. Beside necessities and lacks, Hutchinson and

Waters also used the term of 'wants' to refer to students' subjective needs. They further explain that those three terms cannot be underestimated since they have a great impact on learners' motivation in the learning process.

Learning needs, on the other hand, involve the current knowledge the students had, their current skills, problems, and perceptions. Learning needs play crucial role to assist instructors to determine the suitable materials for the learners. As previously stated that learning needs involves learners' current level, skills, problems. Current level, for instance. By knowing the level of the students, the instructors will be easier to adjust the materials that are not too easy and not too hard for them. It is crucial since when the materials are too easy, the learner will feel unchallenging but when it is too hard, the learner will feel unconfident. Thus, the ESP instructors are demanded to fulfill this duty.

To sum up, needs analysis is a systematic and continuous process which involves activity of collecting necessary data to reflect the significance profile of the learners' needs. The analysis of learners' needs is conducted in order to help the ESP instructors in designing and adjusting the content of a curriculum which will fulfill those identified needs. Need analysis is said as a cyclical and on-going process since the fact that there is possibility in which the learners' needs may vary over time. Thus, it is expected that need analysis can take place all of the course time (before, during and after the courses). Based on ESP researchers, needs are divided into target needs and learning needs. Target needs involves students' necessities, lacks and wants whereas learning needs covers the current knowledge and skills that they already had. Therefore these elements are important to be identified in order to meet the students' needs.

The word perception is a noun derive from word perceive which means feeling about something. Perception itself, according to Collins COBUILD Dictionary (2006), is "the recognition of things using your senses, especially the sense of sight." Perception commonly used to judge something which is unclear based on our own perspective.

In perception, since it is an activity of judging something, the possible result must be positive and negative. Moreover, Cristal (2008) explains that perception is the general sense of term which can be found in psycholinguistics. He further comments that this term refers to the process of receiving and decoding spoken, written or signed input. It means, by using perception we will be able to recognize many things based on our sense. Slameto (2013) argues that in teaching and learning process, avoiding misunderstanding caused by wrong perception toward learning must be done by a teacher as it will make students' learning process irrelevant.

To conclude, term of perception will be used in this study to see students' point of view about their needs especially wants. This study will try to see whether the students had positive or negative perception toward the fulfilling of their wants in learning English. As previously stated that the goal of perception is to sense and recognize something. Thus, students are expected to be able to perceive their wants.

C. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to:

1. Examine medical science students' necessities, lacks and wants in learning English
2. Analyze medical science students' perception toward the ESP program in fulfilling their wants in learning English.

D. Research Method

Since this study aims to reveal medical science students perceptions toward their needs in learning English, descriptive method will be used. This study used qualitative approach that is used to collect the information. It can be obtained through interview in order to make the data from questionnaire powerful.

The population of this study was all of fourth-semester students at Medical Science Faculty in University of Mataram, academic year of 2015-2016. The total number of all students is 81 students.

In this study, since the population was less than 100 respondents, then, all the population was taken as the sample i.e. 81 students.

E. Method of Data Analysis

In the collecting the data, the researcher distributed questionnaires to the respondents. The interview session was held when all of the questionnaires had returned. It aimed to strengthen the data from questionnaire. There were four respondents involved in interview.

The questionnaire is adapted from Minasie Gessesse (2009) *Identifying Students' Language Needs in Private Medical Colleges in Bahir Dar*. It consists of nine items in five parts as follows:

1. Students' demographic information covers three items namely student's sex, age and English language experience in form of multiple responses. It aimed to identify the students' background and their language experience in order to give adequate information about the subject of study.
2. Students' necessities include one item relates to purposes of learning English and several teaching aspects like content of teaching learning, evaluation method, learning activities and school environment. The items were designed in *Likert scale* from scale 1 (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (disagree) and 4 (strongly disagree).
3. Students' wants consist of three items namely students' preferences of learning language skills, students' preferences of learning language sub-skill and the aspects that students want to achieve in the end of English program. The items on preferences of language skills and language sub skills were also constructed in *Likert scale* from scale 1 (very important), 2 (important), 3 (important) and 4 (not

important). Whereas for aspects of English that the students want to achieve were in multiple responses.

4. Students' lacks consist of two items about language skills and language items that the students are lacked of. There are two items of this part which are in form of multiple responses and *Likert scale*. The use of multiple responses is to indicate the difficulty in four language skills that the students face. It is also possible to choose more than one skill.
5. Students' perception toward English program in fulfilling their wants. It consisted of one item that asked whether their wants have been fulfilled or not. The students were allowed to choose only one response between fulfilled or unfulfilled.

Interview was conducted after the questionnaires had been distributed based on the agreement with the respondents. The interview was in form of semi-structured interview. It aims to gain more data about learners' perception toward language program in fulfilling their wants. The construction of questions for interview was based on the result of questionnaire so that it was not beyond the topic.

F. Method of data analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the questionnaire which was about students' needs in learning English and their perception towards the English program in fulfilling their wants.

In questionnaire, there are two kinds of data namely data close-ended questions and data from open-ended questions. The data from close-ended questions was tabulated in five classifications; students' demographic information, necessities, wants, lacks and their perception about English program. The classification of students' needs was taken from Hutchinson and Waters (1987).

Meanwhile, data from open-ended questions contain students' opinion about the other aspects that have not mentioned in necessities, wants and lacks. Besides, open-ended question also include students' reason that chose fulfilled or unfulfilled

that related to the fulfillment of students' wants. Students' opinion and reason, then, would be transcribed into English and tabulated based on how many it was stated.

The tabulated data was illustrated in frequencies and percentage. To determine the percentage of students' responses from each item, the formula used as follows:

After determining the percentage and frequencies, the data were discussed to reveal the students' needs and how they perceive the English program in fulfilling their wants.

The data from interview was transcribed and reduced to remove unnecessary information. It was described based on students' perception toward English program by following the item from second questionnaire.

Afterwards, those two kinds of the data were depicted in the discussion section. Finally, the conclusion was drawn in attempting to answer the statement of problem.

G. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis of this study, the conclusion would be presented in the elaboration bellow.

1. In terms of students' necessities in learning English, most of four-semester of medical science students learning English for their future occupation. It was represented by 98.77% of students' responses.
2. Concerning their wants in studying English, the students preferred to practice reading skill and reading module of English program as their language sub skill. These results were represented by 98.76% and 97.52% of positive responses, respectively. Furthermore, they also wanted to be able to read medical articles and journals, represented by 90.12% of students' responses. The elements in students' wants which related one another indicated that the students were aware of what they want to achieve after learning English.
3. Meanwhile, as regard to the lacks of language skills in learning English, medical science students decided to choose speaking as the skill they were lacked of,

represented by 40.74% negative responses as the highest responses. Moreover, for language items, it was found that 74.07% of students agreed that they had less medical science vocabulary.

4. For the last question, medical science students had positive perception toward English program in fulfilling their wants. In other words, their wants in learning English have been fulfilled after taking English program. It was represented by 65.43% of students' responses. As English program provided the students the strategies to cope with medical articles and journals written in English, mentioned by the highest group of students. The other reason why their wants were fulfilled because English lecturer provided the students reading references like books and articles other than module.

H. Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher provides suggestion for the future researcher who wants to conduct a research related to this study.

1. This study only focused on students' perception toward their wants in learning English. Therefore, further researcher needs to include another variable in learning needs proposed by Hutchinson and Water (1987) in order to get the result completely. It means the data is not too emphasized on one variable but whole variable. Therefore the data will be more powerful and valid.
2. Regarding to the data collection from interview, this study only conducted interview with the students without involving English lecturer and stakeholder of medical science faculty. To get more objective data, it is better to include more than one subject beside students.
3. Concerning technique of sampling, the researcher suggests to anyone to use more than one techniques of data collection like observation, interview and pre-test in. Those suggestions were given in order to improve the validity of data and gain deeper analysis related the study

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