



ENGLISH NEED ANALYSIS FOR MATARAM CHILDREN FORUM IN MATARAM CITY

Alda Nurul Haliza¹, Sudirman Wilian², Santi Farmasari³, I Made Sujana⁴
¹²³⁴English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
University of Mataram, Indonesia
aldanurul1814@gmail.com

Abstract: As an international language, English has become highly important in supporting Mataram Children Forum (MCF) members' participation in raising children's voices at the national and international levels. However, there is no program that can help to develop their understanding of English skills. This research aims to find out the English levels and English needs of MCF members, the population of which were all members of the MCF while the samples are all the 15 active members with 3 additional samples from facilitators selected through a purposive sampling technique. All data were collected using triangulation techniques, including tests with the CEFR guideline, interviews, and questionnaires. They are then analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively based on the data specifications. The research reveals that (i) the members' level of English was still low (7% at the pre-beginner level, 47% at the beginner level, 33% at the elementary level, and 13% at the intermediate level); (ii) their basic need is to be able to communicate orally in order to participate in the fulfillment of children's rights; (iii) their desire is to be able to communicate and understand English not just for organizational purposes, but also to help them in achieving their future goals; (iv) they tend to have issues in English comprehension, particularly at speaking and listening skills, which limits their level of participation. Therefore, it is recommended that the MCF members make an English learning program that could help meets their needs and function in raising children voice.

Keywords: English, english for specific purposes, mataram children forum, need analysis, target needs

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology, information, and communication has increased human interaction to the point where it is now possible to speak with people worldwide for various reasons. This phenomenon has produced positive interactions between global and local factors. As a result of the globalization process and worldwide exchange, English has established itself as a means of communication (Lamri & Hamzaoui, 2018). It is an invaluable language when it comes to connecting interactions between people all over the world. Sujana, Fitriana, and Syahrial (2016) argue that since English holds such a strong place, learning it is an essential need; otherwise, the people would face challenges if they are unable to communicate effectively in English. It is considered that the majority of people nowadays seek to be fluent in English since they want to have specific opportunities in a variety of ways (Abrejo et al., 2019).

The need to understand English is also felt by the Mataram Children Forum (henceforth MCF) members. This organization was established by some children in Mataram city from all social and economic backgrounds to coordinate all the issues affecting children in Mataram City and speak up for them in front of the government/stakeholders. Unfortunately, while an

awareness of the English language is required to extend members' participation, they have not yet learned English language skills required in MCF organization.

The concept of English for Specific Purposes (henceforth ESP) may help learners achieve their goals in specific areas of competency. According to Duka, Sujana, and Melanie (2020), nowadays, the application of the English learning process is not only for English Study Program students but also for certain specific purposes. Learning ESP is available not just at schools or colleges but also in businesses, institutions, and organizations that need English to fulfil their purposes. Karimi & Sanavi (2014) stated that ESP courses should be relevant to learners' fields of interest. It consists of language that a specific group of learners needs to know in order to function effectively in a specific context.

To find out the English levels and English needs of the MCF members, conducting need analysis is required to ensure the things that are crucial to be learned have a real impact. According to Sari, Wienanda, and Nugraheni (2020), the process of examining learners' needs in a course during the development of English for Specific Purposes is known as need analysis. It is a technique for gathering information regarding the needs of learners. Finding a gap between the abilities of learners and the skills they need to have are the goals of needs analysis. Due to the complexities of the meanings of need, analyzing information and determining program decisions based on the results of need analysis is a challenging process (Sujana et al, 2019).

Along with that, Brown (2016) stated that need analysis refers to the process of determining the language needs of an individual learner or a group of learners and then classifying those needs based on their level of priority. In the same vein, Sujana, Waluyo, Fitriana, and Suryani (2020) claim that when developing courses to teach English using an ESP approach, the needs analysis becomes an essential and main part in the process. According to Mickan & Wallace (2019), analyzing needs should be considered as a negotiation of the goals, needs, and intentions of many organizations and stakeholders. Therefore, the current research is aimed to find out the English levels and English needs of MCF members.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a case study with a mixed-method approach. A case study is a detailed analysis of a bounded subject (Creswell and Guetterman, 2019). An online based test using an android application called Englishscore was conducted to measure English level of MCF members following the CEFR (Common European Framework of References for Languages) model. The CEFR organizes language proficiency in six levels, A1 to C2, which can be regrouped into three general levels: Basic User, Independent User, and Proficient User. In-depth interviews have also been conducted with the participants before asking them to complete a questionnaire on the Mataram Children Forum members' English language needs.

The population of this study were all members of the MCF and the sample consisted of 15 active members with 3 additional sample from facilitators selected through a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a technique of selecting sample that is considered to be representative of a specific community, also known as judgment sampling. In other words, the researcher chooses the sample based on their previous experience and understanding of the population to be studied (Mills & Gay, 2019). The sample of this study consist of the chairman of Mataram Children Forum and 14 MCF members with additional sample consist of the head of Mataram Child Protection Institution and 2 MCF facilitators in order to gain comprehensive data. So, the total number of sample were 15 members with 3 additional participants.

The data for this research were CEFR test results, interviews transcripts, and questionnaires responses. CEFR test was implied to measure learners' language ability in accordance with the CEFR guidelines. This test ranks learners' language proficiency based on their mastery of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, speaking, writing, reading, and listening. This test was used as a reference tool not as an assessment tool. Besides conducting the test, there were also interview and questionnaire. During the interview, the researcher asked about the members' target needs for English at MCF, for example, what is the reason why MCF members need English? have you ever experienced difficulty in using English? For the questionnaire, it was divided into two sections, for members and facilitators. The form contained questions related to MCF members' English language needs as well as suggestions about their English language needs.

Thus, it was crucial to reduce data by summarizing and focusing on what was important based on the information that was most needed. The data was displayed by the researcher after it had been reduced. It was presented in a structured narrative style to make it easier to understand. The researcher then develops conclusions as a result of a novel discovery about the English needs of children's organizations. Some of the data has been analyzed quantitatively to determine the English level of the MCF members using a score and to examine the percentage of the data collected through a questionnaire. The researcher used likert scale to determine the percentage of questionnaire responses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is a globally accepted standard for measuring and comparing language abilities of learners of various backgrounds and languages. This test is implied to measure a learner's language ability in accordance with the CEFR Guidelines. The CEFR test ranks a learner's language proficiency based on their mastery of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, speaking, writing, reading, and listening. CEFR test only be used as a reference tool and not as an assessment tool.

Table 1 Members' Level on CEFR Test

CEFR Level	Score Range	Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
C2	> 599	Proficiency	0	0%
C1	500 - 599	Advanced	0	0%
B2	400 - 499	Upper Intermediate	0	0%
B1	300 - 399	Intermediate	2	13%
A2	200 - 299	Elementary	5	33%
A1	100 - 199	Beginner	7	47%

Pre-A1	0 – 99	Pre-Beginner	1	7%
Total			15	100%

The table shows that the English level of MCF members is still low. It is found that 1 person (13%) is at the pre-beginner level which is very low, 7 people (47%) are at the beginner level, 5 people (33%) are at the elementary level, and 2 people (13%) at intermediate level.

Necessities

Based on interviews with MCF members and facilitators, English is considered as an international language that has huge importance for effective interaction, especially among people from different countries. 1 out of three members stated that:

“In my opinion, English is important since nowadays, it has evolved as an international language. As a result, regardless of where we are, there are people who communicate English, encouraging conversation and establishing partnerships.”

The number of activities requiring MCF members to comprehend English emphasizes the importance of learning this language. Members also look forward to actively promoting children's views. This is intended to bring the attention of important stakeholders to the fulfilment of children's rights.

“The Mataram Children Forum has collaborated in research related to child marriage and gender-based violence. So, on two occasions, we met with two native English speakers.....”

Several conditions in the MCF organization require members to participate in activities that need English skills. Based on the priority scale, the members believe that speaking is the most important ability since they are more frequently involved in activities that require them to communicate effectively to express their aspirations or voice as agents of change. The second priority is listening in order to develop communication.

“In my opinion, the first is speaking, the second is listening, the third is writing, and the fourth is reading. Those are the most important sequences.”

Wants

The members argue that English will be very important for achieving future goals since several jobs need English language abilities, for example as a programmer, English skills are necessary to understand programming languages; as an influencer, English skills are necessary for educating followers who may not only speak Indonesian but also English; and as an International NGO volunteers involved in the fulfillment of children's rights, English is essential for effective communication with staff and for facilitating participation in international-level activities.

“Because there are many partnerships and volunteers in NGOs that I see in my environment, I wish to be a member of an NGO too. Working at an NGO guarantees access to new places and people, including interactions with those who most likely speak English as their first language.”

Lacks

Based on the results from interviews with MCF members, they had problems comprehending English. The problem happens when they hear a speaker especially with a British accent and when the speaker speaks too quickly. Furthermore, the members lack confidence in speaking since they are worried about making mistakes. As acknowledged by one of the MCF member.

“...especially those with a British accent, because we rarely listen to the British. Then, even if it is not British, if they speak too quickly and those who speak are really professional, it is a little difficult to comprehend...”

The interviews with the facilitators revealed several situations where members encountered challenges in English language preparation while expressing their desire to pursue further education. For instance, because of the lack of experience using English language, some members have trouble writing letters of recommendation and study plans in order to apply for scholarships.

“I have seen a number of members who wanted to continue studies but faced difficulties by English during their preparation. For example, when members need letters of recommendation and make study plans. They are often constrained with the requirements of English.”

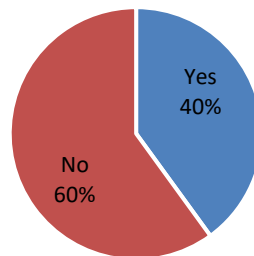


Figure 2 Members' English Course

From the data that are showed in figure 2, six members (40%) stated they had taken an English course besides learning at school, while nine members (60%) claimed they had never attended an English course. This data shows the higher percentage of members are not taking any courses to improve their English skills.

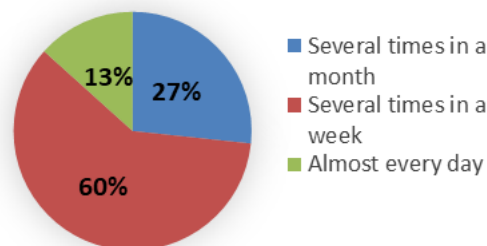


Figure 3 Frequency of Using English

There are several differences in the frequency of learning English at schools and organizations based on figure 3. Four members (26.7%) answered that they use English several times a month, nine members (60%) answered they use English several times a week, and two members (13.3%) answered they use English almost every day. Moreover, none of them said anything about learning English every day or not studying at all. The results presented indicates a diverse frequency of English language interest among the members, emphasizing the importance of English in their daily communication and activities.

Members were asked to rate their proficiency on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing "very bad" and 5 representing "very good." The distribution of responses indicates the most of members considering themselves to have good enough ability in various aspects of language skills.

Related the most needed priority of English skills and aspects, six members (40%) answered that MCF members needed English proficiency because it made it easier for members to communicate when participating in events that use English, while nine people (60%) answered a combination of reasons, such as increasing member participation at a higher level, making it easier for members to communicate when participating in events that use English, and preparing members to continue their education/find jobs. None of them chose specifically the reason for enhancing their participation at International scale and preparing for study abroad/work.

Based on the results of the information analysis related to the individual priority goals of learning English, the main goal is to improve speaking skills in English, then continue studying, followed by improving reading skills in English, improving writing skills in English, and lastly being able to participate in international scale activities. This data demonstrates the importance of English proficiency in modern age.

From the priority data on English language skills that are most needed, eight members (53.3%) prioritized speaking as their top priority in terms of English skills. Nine members (60%) also believed listening was equally important as the second priority. Following that, eight members chose reading as the third priority, followed by writing. Overall, it is clear that speaking and listening are the most crucial English abilities for the members, with most of them rating those skills as first and second priority, respectively.

Facilitator Perspective

The three facilitators answered that there were some activities that required MCF members' English skills. Moreover, they answered that the dominant role of the MCF members was as participants rather than as speakers or committees. In line with that, from the data that shows the most needed priority of English skills, they stated that the top priority for MCF members are speaking and listening, followed by reading, then writing. This is based on the needs of MCF members who must speak up to convey their aspirations so that they can be heard by stakeholders

The biggest reason MCF members need English is to improve communication at events that use English to communicate with a total of 2 votes. The second reason is to prepare the members to study abroad/work with a total of 1 vote. None of the facilitators chose reasons to increase participation at a higher level, create activity programs using English, or build relationships with international organizations. From this data, it can be concluded that the main reasons MCF members need English are to improve communication at events that use English and to prepare the members to study abroad/work.

The facilitator's expectations of MCF members regarding their English skills are to be able to listen to speakers who use English, can speak in English on the activities they participate in, and can listen to speakers and interact with a total of 1 vote each. In conclusion, MCF members are expected to possess basic English skills such as listening, speaking, and interacting in English in order to participate in activities.

After answering the questions, the facilitators made recommendations for the MCF members' English language needs. The ideas include the need for an innovative measurable program to fulfill the needs of the English language, particularly to increase the capacity of members to speak English so that they may become representatives to the ASEAN level in communicating the voice of Indonesian children.

Discussion

Based on the findings, the majority of the MCF members were at the beginner and elementary (A1 and A2) levels. This indicates that they need to develop their English language skills to effectively support them in fulfilling their aspirations as an agent of changes and be the voice of the children within their respective communities. From the data collected through questionnaires and interviews, the requirement over English for MCF members is to be able to take an active role in any activities that are engaged in English communication. Thus, all members recognize the importance of English in supporting their participation (Farmasari, 2022) in realizing children's voices and becoming agents of change. This is supported by their need to improve their speaking and listening skills. Conducting programs that can improve their English language abilities becomes crucial in order to help them meet their goals. Throughout the suggestion section in questionnaire, the participants also expressed this viewpoint. They indicated a need for activities that promote English communication as well as training sessions that present essential concepts required for English comprehension.

Related to the lacks of the participants, Hutchinson & Waters (1987) state that the language skills that lacks refers to the skills that learner does not have. This is clearly shown by the results of the CEFR test and interview. The members have shows their participation in various activities with NGOs speakers from abroad (e.g. Nigeria and USA) to talk about fulfilling children's rights, but they have not been optimal because there are still many members who do not comprehend English properly. Apart from looking at the necessities and lacks, this research also analyzes the wants of the MCF members regarding English based on the personal desires of each member

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, the members' English proficiency is categorized at the low level (47% at the beginner level and 33% at the elementary level). From the result of the analysis of necessities; wants; and lacks, the members were able to identify their English needs in order to assess further actions that may be implemented to meet those needs. A programs that can support MCF members develop their English skills based on their needs are required to fulfill the need to speak English fluently and to support their specific goals in the future.

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