

STUDENTS' NEEDS ANALYSIS IN THE CONTENT OF VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK

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Abstract

Learning English in Vocational High School (SMK) is different from that in Senior High School. In SMK, the orientation is to prepare students to be able to take part in the business & industry work. Consequently, English teachers in vocational school are expected to have the ability to analyze the needs of the students so that they can design an appropriate teaching-learning process. The aim of this study was to identify some factual information about the needs of vocational students in learning English, especially in the English-language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and some of language components in English (Grammar & Vocabulary), and to analyze the appropriacy between the content of English textbooks with the vocational students' needs. The subjects in this study were the vocational school teachers and English textbooks of 7 (seven) SMK which has the TKJ department in Bandung and Cimahi. The results showed that the needs of students towards learning English is to meet the academic professions and the future needs of the students, which involved the skills of the language and some of the language components. Whereas in the case of appropriacy between the content of the English textbooks and the vocational students' needs, it was found that the English textbooks was more focused on describing the English language competences in general and not specifically focused on the Department of TKJ itself.

Keywords: analysis, students' needs, vocational school, textbook

A. BACKGROUND

Learning English in Vocational High School (SMK) is different from teaching English in High School. The orientation of the vocational high school known as SMK is to prepare students to be able to take part in the business & industry work. It is stipulated in Law no.20 of 2003 on National Education System. Previously, the Government Regulation No.29/1990 on Secondary Education Article 1, paragraph 3 which states that vocational education is education that promotes the development of students' ability to have special skills. Thus, the teaching of English in vocational schools is categorized as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) since the purpose of learning the English language is specific, related to their majors.

In learning English language, the materials are expected to meet the needs of students in each department. Needs in each of these departments should be covered because English used in speaking and writing differ from one context to another (Hutchinson & Waters, 1986). The needs of students in English language learning in a specific field can be covered through needs analysis (Richards, 2001) which required the analysis employed to develop the objectives and contents. Needs analysis also useful to evaluate the existing programs (Richards in Nunan, 1988)

Based on these phenomena, teachers of English in vocational schools are expected to have the ability to analyze the needs of the students so that they can design an appropriate teaching-learning process, especially in the English-language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) and some of the components in the language English (Grammar and Vocabulary). In other words, effective language learning can be achieved if teachers are aware of the needs of students based on need, ability,

potential, and preference in meeting the needs (Bada and Okan, 2000). A similar statement came from Brindley (1989, as cited in Bada and Okan, 2000), that the subject matter of English should include what is needed and what the students should be given by the teacher. These needs can be reflected in the syllabus.

It has become an important issue in education. In designing the syllabus, we need to know what are the students' needs and ways to choose a textbook. This is consistent with the purpose of the syllabus in accordance with the students' needs. As stated by Nunan (2001), "Syllabus is a specification of what is to be taught in a language program and the order in which it is to be taught". Additionally, Kavaliauskiene (2003) says that the decision of teachers in language teaching depends on various factors, which the most important is the purpose of learning the English language and needs of each student based on the methods and attitudes towards the importance of the various language skills.

Based on the observations in several vocational schools, the researchers suggest that although some teachers aware of the students' needs, but the opportunity to choose activities in English lessons which are appropriate for students is not sufficient. Not all teachers are able to apply the variation in teaching and learning that meet the needs and perceptions of students. This condition is consistent with the statements of Barkhuizen (1998) that the perception of teachers and students is very different. This was confirmed by Dr Imam Ghozali, a professor of linguistics of Wiyata Graduate University in Yogyakarta, that the English text books SMK does not comply with the necessary competence. As a result, many vocational students are ultimately difficult to develop their competences, especially communication skills needed in the business & industry world (www.suaramerdeka.com, 2011).

From the above description, it shows that the need of students in language learning is one of important aspects in creating effective language learning process for vocational students. The researchers conducting a study on this entitled "STUDENTS' NEEDS ANALYSIS IN THE CONTENT OF VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK"

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the background above, the researchers elaborate some the research questions as follow:

1. What are some factual information about the needs of vocational students in learning English?
2. How is the relevance between the content of English textbooks with the students' needs?

C. AIMS OF RESEARCH

The objectives of this study are:

1. Identifying some factual information about the needs of vocational students in learning English.
2. Analyzing the relevance between the content of English textbooks with the students' needs.

D. BENEFIT OF THE RESEARCH

This study is expected to provide the following advantages:

1. Knowing the criteria of good textbooks and the needs of students at vocational school.
2. Enrich the information of vocational education and understanding of the students' needs in the context of vocational schools that are still received little attention in the context of teaching and learning English in Indonesia.
3. Teachers can develop materials and teaching strategies that combine the needs of students in order to support the achievement of students in learning English.

E. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

1. Subjects were vocational school English textbooks, particularly the Department of Computer Engineering Network (Teknik Komputer Jaringan/TKJ).
2. With the assessment criteria include a comparis on between the English textbooks and aspects of content analysis based on the National Education Standards Agency (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan/BSNP) criteria

3. This study focused on the needs of vocational students in English language learning, especially the needs analysis developed by: Richards's (2001), Nunan (2001), learning English: Allwright (1979), Harmer (2007), and Brown (2001), and the theory of vocational students: Burgen & Amundson (1998), Harmer (2001), and Bada & Okan (2000). The theory of needs analysis, learning English, and students are three aspects that are the focus of this research.

F. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Needs Analysis

One of the basic assumptions of curriculum development is that all things related to English language learning should be based on the analysis of student' needs. Richards (2001) says that the procedures used to gather information about the needs of students known as Needs Analysis. One type of needs analysis is the student's need analysis (analysis of learner) (Nunan, 2001). Learner analysis is based on information about the student. This information can be used by teachers in making the syllabus, and methodology so they are better suited to the characteristics of the students.

In the students need analysis, there are two types of information that can be obtained, namely: objective and subjective information. Objective information is factual information that does not pay attention to the attitudes of the students, such as: age, nationality, daily language, etc, while subjective information reflects the priorities and perceptions of students. This includes information on why the student wants to learn another language (i.e. English), and assignments in class, as well as the preferred student activities. In other words, the subjective information reflects the priorities and perceptions of students about what to teach and how to teach. According to Nunan (2001), the information is often reflecting the perceptions of student learning styles.

Furthermore, analysis of learning needs of students requires that teachers can better understand the interests of students and begin the process of learning design with the information obtained from students, so that students' needs can be met (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

2. English Needs Analysis in ESP

Learning English in vocational schools are categorized as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and the purpose of learning English is depend on the department/student's major.

In line with this, Hutchinson & Waters (1987) distinguish between "General English" and "ESP". ESP implemented by adapting to the needs of students. Teaching and learning activities are usually focused on student learning as a primary consideration. In other words, teaching ESP implement student-centered approach. The needs of students are defined in terms of why they want to learn English and the kind of English that they will use or beneficial to their future.

In ESP, the student needs will differ from one context to another. Furthermore, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define ESP as an "approach to language learning, where all decisions are based on the reasons of students to learn." This means that the teaching ESP, once again, have to think about the needs of students in learning English.

In other words, ESP should consider the reasons students learn English. This is one of the concerns in this study, to analyze the needs of students of vocational schools. English will be the language needs of students in a particular discipline can be extracted through a needs analysis (Richards, 2001). Furthermore, this analysis used to develop the purpose and content, as well as evaluating existing programs (Richards at Nunan, 1988).

Although language can be used for specific purposes, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), it does not mean that it is a special form of different languages being used for other purposes. It is said that ESP does not only focus around specific vocabulary and grammar for a particular context, but also deals with language as a communication tool.

Robinson, as quoted in Supono (1991), proposes four important things related to ESP, namely:

- a. Goal-oriented,
- b. ESP's students usually adults who are learning English, either as a second language or foreign language,
- c. The majority of ESP's students are beginners who are just learning English,
- d. ESP teachers not only teach but also act as the author of the material.

To understand the material well and appropriate with the needs of the students, we should evaluate the teaching materials. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the process of evaluation of the ESP teaching materials includes the following steps :

a. Establishing criteria:

- 1). What is the basis for selecting the material?
- 2). Which criteria are more important?

b. Subjective analysis:

How is the realization of the criteria in the lesson?

c. Objective analysis:

How does the realization of the material to be evaluated according to the criteria?

d. Matching:

Which material meet the need of the students?

3. English Lesson

Learning is a conscious process where parts in the language studied and practiced (Krashen, 1980 as cited in Harmer, 2007). Krashen suggests that teachers should provide exposures of the right language. While Allwright (1979) perceives that when the purpose of learning English is to make students are able to communicate in English, so communicating while learning is the best way. Thus, an English teacher should provide students the opportunity to practice their English.

According to Harmer (2007) there are four skills in language learning, namely: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The four skills can be divided into two types: receptive skills and Productive skills.

Receptive skills is a term used for listening and reading skills, skills in which meaning is taken from the discourse. While productive skills are skills in speaking and writing, skills in which students actually have to generate their own language. Receptive and productive skills intertwined in some way. For example, what we talk or write is influenced by what we hear and see. The more English we see and hear, the better our English will be.

This study also discusses the need for vocational students to some of the components of learning English. Some components in learning involve language areas of morphology, syntax, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling. In this study, the main focus is on the structure (grammar) and vocabulary (vocabulary).

Different point of view can make a different definition of the grammar (grammar). Merriam Webster Dictionary states that grammar is the study of word class, inflection them, and their functions and relationships in the sentence. In a more general definition, grammar is also defined as a system of rules that defines the grammatical structure of the language (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/grammar>). Furthermore, it said that Grammar is one component of the English language that must be mastered by the learner of language.

Next, vocabulary. In some literature, there are several definitions of vocabulary. According to Kridalaksana (1993), the vocabulary is a component of language that maintains all information about the meaning and words used in the language. While in other literature, vocabulary is the number of words in the language (Hornby, 1995). From these definitions, it can be concluded that the vocabulary

is the language component and the number of words used by people, classes, professions, etc., in other contexts such as communication and trade, education, business, etc. Vocabulary is an important part to master English well.

Vocabulary is varies. Nobody can memorize all the vocabulary in any language, but it can increase the number of words possessed. The more vocabulary the students get, the more benefits obtained by them. Students' reading and writing skills will be increased if they learn new vocabulary. The more vocabulary they know, the better chance they respond well to a variety of questions related to vocabulary or tasks assigned at school. This is in line with Alexander (2013) that an understanding will increase when we know what the meaning of the words. When students can improve their vocabulary, their academic and social competence will increase as well. Therefore, it is very important for English teachers to help students master the vocabulary.

4. English Lesson Design Syllabus

Designing the syllabus is one of a series of activities in curriculum development. This statement is in line with Lim (1988) as cited in Richards (2001). He said that the curriculum development include needs analysis, goal setting, syllabus design, materials design, program design language, teacher preparation, implementation of the program in schools, monitoring and evaluation.

Related to the syllabus, the syllabus in ESP is influenced by three factors, namely: the theory of language, learning theory, and analysis needs (Hutchinson & Waters and Waters, 1987).

In developing the syllabus of ESP, a syllabus designer must analyze the needs of the students in learning English. In addition, techniques and procedures for collecting this information are used in designing the syllabus as a needs analysis (Nunan, 2001; Richards, 2001; Brown, 1995).

National Education Standards Agency (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan/BSNP) (2006) also establishes eight (8) principles that should be considered when developing the syllabus, as follows:

a. Scientific

Teaching materials and activities listed in the syllabus should be justified scientifically.

b. Relevant

The scope, depth, and degree of difficulty as well as orders in the syllabus should be relevant to the development of physical, intellectual, social, economic, and spiritual of the students.

c. Systematic

Component in the syllabus should be interlinked to achieve the standard of competence.

d. Consistent

There must be consistency between the competencies, indicators, main topics, learning activities, learning resources, and assessment systems.

e. Enough

The coverage indicators, subject matter, learning activities, learning resources, and assessment systems should be sufficient to achieve basic competency.

f. Actual and contextual

Coverage indicators, the main material, learning activities, learning resources, and assessment systems should be in line with developments in science, technology, and art that occurs in real life.

g. Flexible

All components in the syllabus should be able to accommodate the needs of students, teachers, and the dynamic changes that may occur both at school and the demands of society.

h. Complete

The component of the syllabus includes three domains of competencies: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

5. Using Textbooks in Lesson

A textbook is one of important aspects in the teaching-learning process. Textbook is one of the media that is often used by teachers and students. There are many types of books that are designed for students of all levels and ages. But, of course, not all categorized as good textbooks. As teachers, we should really understand about the needs, interests, abilities, and level of our students (Yochanna, 2011), so that the teacher can determine whether a particular book is suitable for students or not.

Therefore, teachers need to know how to use proper text books. In addition, the creativity in the use of textbooks is also necessary for learning in the classroom to be interesting. This is in line with Harmer's statement that the most important part in the use of text books for teachers is to adapt to the needs of the students (2007).

Furthermore, choosing the right book is one of the important tasks of teachers (Beare, 2011). Therefore, teachers should have the skills to consider the suitability of the language level, content/topic, activity, and the logical order of textbooks (Bertin, 2003). When all aspects are met, teachers can continue to use the textbook. However, if the teacher faced inaccuracies in the above aspects, teachers should decide alternative measures in the use of textbooks.

Creativity in the use of textbooks is one of the skills taught. Even when the textbook is good, the teacher still need personal ideas and personal experiences that can lead to the learning process better. Teachers should try and look critically, trying to find out the strengths and weaknesses to decide what things to do. It is not recommended if teachers and students rely too much on text books. For example, the teacher just uses textbooks as the sole source of learning, or teaching by following the order in the textbook. That is why the decisions taken by the teachers should be useful both for students and teachers. Harmer (2007) suggests the teacher should regard the book as an alternative source of learning, not the rules that must be followed precisely its sequence. In other words, in the teaching-learning process, teacher must be able to manage the use of textbooks appropriately based on the objectives and learning topics.

In other words, before deciding to use the specific textbooks, teacher needs to consider the learning objectives and characteristics of students who will be involved. It is difficult to do if the teacher does not know the purpose of learning and student's characteristics. In short, teachers must consider the selection of good textbooks and appropriacy to use, the creativity, so that the atmosphere of the teaching-learning process will be interesting and the students' needs of are met.

G. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used descriptive method. Descriptive method is the most common method used in educational research (Burns, 2000). Data were collected through questionnaires to teachers, interview the students and teachers, as well as a literature review.

1. Research Procedure

Some procedures were applied to the implementation of this study. First, researchers determined the background of the research. From the background, problem and research objectives identified. Then, literature underlying the topic being discussed in the problem was identified. Furthermore, the data and literature were analyzed and interpreted. Interpretation is done by using descriptive method. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were taken based on the findings.

2. Research Subjects

The subjects of this study were students and English textbooks used by 7 (seven) Vocational schools in Bandung and Cimahi in Network Computer Engineering Department (Teknik Komputer Jaringan/TKJ). TKJ is a department in the vocational school which learning computers and networks, such as how to create a PC, install the OS (Operating System), creating web, and the like.

The reason for choosing this research subject is because recently TKJ is the most favorite majors for vocational school students.

The researchers took samples of 7 SMK in Bandung and Cimahi, they are: SMKN 5 Bandung, Bandung SMK 11, SMK Informatika Bandung, Bandung Medikacom SMK, SMK 1 Cimahi, SMK IT Pembangunan, and SMK Darussurur Cimahi.

The English textbooks studied were:

1. "Communication Builder: English for Vocational School" written by Evi Kurniawan and Arief Kurniawan, published by the Ministry of National Education (Curriculum 2013).
2. "English for SMK" written by Maria Regina Dyah Pramesti et al, published by the Ministry of National Education (Curriculum 2013)..
3. "Bahasa Inggris Berbasis Pendidikan Karakter" written by Otong Setiawan Djuharie, published by Yrama Widya (Curriculum 2013).
4. "Get Along with English" written by Entin Sutinah et al, published by Erlangga (School Based Curriculum).
5. "Look Ahead: An English Course" written by M.Sudarwati and Eudia Grace, published by Erlangga (School Based Curriculum).

3. Method of Collecting Data

The data were collected through two stages: study the literature and analyze the textbooks. In analyzing the data obtained, the method used was descriptive. In this study, the data were collected through content analysis. Then the data were analyzed in terms of percentage. After that, descriptive analysis employed to obtain a picture of the needs of vocational students in learning English. Finally the data collection method was implemented in stages as follows:

1. Distributing the questionnaire to the English teachers in the vocational schools to find out the teacher responses toward the use of English textbooks.
2. Evaluating the English textbooks based on the criteria of the National Education Standards Agency (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan/BSNP), which were analyzed based on the feasibility of the content, language, and presentation.

The feasibility of the textbooks was analyzed using the following calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Scores answers}}{\text{The max. score}} \times 100\%$$

Then, the result was classified into the criteria below:

Percentage	Feasibility
80%	Very appropriate
60-79.9%	Appropriate
50-59,9%	Fairly appropriate
<50%	Less appropriate

- a. Analysis based on an evaluation process proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), which include: criteria, subjective analysis, and objective analysis, then scored as follow:
 - 0 = not suitable or not appropriate
 - 1 = partially appropriate
 - 2 = almost appropriate
- b. The results of the evaluation criteria then were analyzed to obtain a complete conclusion to answer the research questions.

H. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Students Needs in English Lessons

In terms of English proficiency, the data showed that almost all students in the Department of TKJ perceived that learning speaking in English is required because it will help students to do their jobs. However, on the other hand the English teacher also suggested that one of the problems in learning English is the reluctance of students to be actively involved in the classroom. It is also revealed by Harmer (2007) who states that it is not so easy to encourage students to speak in class. The main problem is the reluctance experienced by some students to speak and participate actively in class. This is in line with Beccy (2013) that the main factors make students reluctant to contribute in class were because they are afraid of losing face or become a joke in front of their classmates.

While in terms of the language component, the data showed that the majority of students believe that grammar is something that needed to be mastered in learning English. However, there are some students who feel that grammar is not something that is needed. From the interviews, the reason not to choose the English grammar as needed is from the experience when the students had the Internship/practice in the business & industry work. According to them, English does not often deal with English grammar, so they felt that English grammar is not really necessary to master. This phenomenon is supported by McWhorter (2012) that for many professions, grammar is not an important skill. In other words, the grammar may not be so important for the particular job. On the other hand, in the case of English vocabulary most of them stated they need to master enough vocabulary related to their work. They argue that knowing a lot of vocabulary in English can help them do the job. This is in line with the opinion of Alexander (2013) that understanding can be increased when someone masters a variety of vocabulary. Vocabulary improves communication skills, academic competence, even their social skills.

In other words, the expectations of students and the teaching situation can build English language learning meeting students' needs effectively, especially the language skills related to their profession and professional setting which involves communication and some of the language component.

2. Students Needs in Textbooks

The questionnaires were distributed, the result can be seen as follows:

- a. The English textbooks used in every school were different, but generally were published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.
- b. All teachers explained that there is no specific goal in teaching English at Vocational school for each department, but there is a general learning objective. Generally the English textbook is not really meet the students' need and train students' language skills because it generally rely more on reading and writing skills.
- c. In the teaching-learning process, the teachers were more student-centered and they tended to be more as a facilitator.
- d. Regarding the use of English textbooks, the teachers revealed that:
 - 1) The book has not met the four language skills competency. Furthermore, the teachers suggested that other language skills should also be given a considerable portion, the exercise to be more balanced, like: Listening and Speaking.

- 2) In general, the material does not meet the needs of the students and tend to be boring. Some creative teachers take teaching materials from the internet/other sources as supplementary or additional materials.
- 3) English textbook should contain TOEIC materials, rather than English materials for high school students in general.

Moreover, the analysis using the National Education Standards Agency (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan/BSNP) showed that: The book "Get Along with English" has the feasibility of 86.2%. Next, the book "Bahasa Inggris Berbasis Pendidikan Karakter" and the book "Communication Builder: English for SMK" has the feasibility of 83%. Meanwhile, the book "English for SMK" has the feasibility of 75%. Finally, the book "Look Ahead: An English Course" has feasibility of 69.4%.

This shows that:

- a. The relationship between the content of the textbooks and the English competency expected by students majoring in TKJ are not appropriate with the total score: 4 out of 8.
- b. There is no specific goal in teaching English to vocational students, and the textbooks do not meet and train students' four language skills in balance.
- c. Based on the interview with teachers, the books do not fully contain the materials related to the student's field, i.e. Computer Network. Therefore, 2 teachers added related Reading materials from various sources. While 5 other teachers teaching without additional material or other enrichment.
- d. The interviews also stated that the needs of vocational students majoring in TKJ is introducing students to the industrial world, the ability to communicate in public and industrial environments, as well as many vocabulary, particularly the terms, procedures, and vocational competence of Engineering Department of Computer Networks in general.

The description above shows that the teacher and the students hope English language learning meeting the needs of learners effectively. Among the issues raised was the need of the students towards learning English to meet the needs of the academic profession and the future of the students, which involves the ability of the language and some of the language component. These findings support previous research on the needs of students, such as those performed by Bada and Okan, 2000; Barkhuizen, 1998; Berkowitz and Nagy, 2013; and Kavaliauskiene 2003.

Some books tries to meet the needs of the students about the possibility of a future profession, such as "Looking for A Job", "Talking on the Phone", "Life at Work", "How do You Operate This Machine?" (as found in the book by Kurniawan and Kurniawan (2008); Pramesti Pramono, and Suherman (2008); Sutinah, et al (2010)). However, not all books discuss the same topic.

I. CONCLUSION& RECOMMENDATION

1. Conclusions.

This research was conducted to find some factual information about the needs of vocational students majoring in TKJ, and to determine the scope of textbooks used in facilitating the needs of vocational students in learning English. Based on the findings from this study, it reveals that:

- a. The need for vocational students majoring in Computer Network related to English language learning is relevant with the Standard of Competence made by the Government and the syllabus for Vocational student: Communicate in English at Novice level (Beginner). It means that communication requires a basic competency in English. The material in general communications, for example: greetings, leave a message, expressing feelings, and expresses regret indicate that the subject matter has not been determined based on specific majors at vocational schools (SMK). However, the interview stated that the needs of vocational students majoring in TKJ is widely introduce the industrial world, the ability to communicate on the general environment and industry, as well as many vocabulary particularly to the terms, procedures and competence of SMK majoring in Computer Network in general,

- b). Despite the relevance between the content of the English textbook used by the students, in terms of students' needs, the English text books is related to the teaching objectives formulated by the government, the teachers claimed that it is not focused on the specific materials needed by the students.

2. Recommendation

The following recommendations are addressed to English teachers, stakeholders, and researchers who are interested in conducting advanced research.

- a. By considering the needs of students who expect learning TKJ majoring in English to facilitate the needs of the academic profession and their future. Responding to this, the teacher who teaches English at vocational schools are advised started to develop English language teaching materials based on the needs of students. The relevance of the needs of students and the material taught will be useful to equip students for a career in their future.
- b. As stated above that the syllabus has taken consideration of the student's needs and goals and five books were used in this study is quite trying to meet the material that students need to know about their future profession. However, the same cannot be said as such for the content of the material contained in the text books. In other words, there are only a few materials that are suitable for students majoring in TKJ. Responding to this, the book developed specifically for each department is needed. Furthermore, the publisher and the author should consider the needs of students for whom the book was intended for that matter, content, and activities that meet the needs of students.
- c. It is suggested for further research to conduct the observation while teaching-learning process in the classroom as a means of collecting their data. However, further research is still necessary because the results can provide a more comprehensive information to the reader, especially educators related to this field, the needs of students in learning English.

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