
Research Article

English For Specific Purposes in SMK – The Ambition Versus Reality

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Abstract: After the World War II, English has become the language of the world. It is used in various communications from business, culture, technology, education and world's politic. In education, it is extremely important for vocational school to learn ESP as the students are being prepared to enter the work force directly after graduation. However, researcher found that there is no ESP textbook available nor training is provided to teachers how to adjust the textbook to teach ESP. The textbooks produced either by the government and private publishers are general English and do not have ESP appropriate for each SMK major. There are over 18 majors in SMK and each require an ESP to help them acquire sufficient skill and knowledge relate to their field of study. The lack of ESP textbook for the students should become the concern of the Ministry of Education and all English educators. It is surprising to find that there is no formal ESP textbook available in the market. Producing qualified learning materials is crucial in preparing the SMK graduates to enter the workforce in the era of globalization.

Key Words: English; ESP; SMK; Job; Vocational School

Introduction

The progress of worldwide education is currently entering a new era of speeding technological innovation, thus demanding an adjustment of the education system is in line with the demands of the business world. In a fast growing, global world interdependent, education must change to prepare students for success in life. The modern global economy doesn't pay a person for what he or she knows because internet has more than what they know. The world economy pays people for what they can do with what they know. A big challenge is that young people lack opportunities outside of school to practice skills. In the workplace the youths are presented with real world opportunities to develop such skills as responsibility and independence (Levine, 2006: 56).

Education should provide the competencies and skills that enable people to participate in society and live a successful life. Competencies and skills change from time after time. Successful people in the 19th and 20th centuries were literate people letters, numeracy, scientific skills, and applying skills for mass production, their competencies will not be applicable in the 21st century. Competencies and skills of the 21st century arose due to the information and technology revolution, as a result of which people became interconnected from one another and offers opportunities for business and economic growth, capabilities accessing information, communicating, using language and creating new technology very important for labor productivity (Barber, M. Donnely, K. Rizvi: 105).

Vocational education established in Indonesia includes Vocational High Schools (SMK). It has been designed to help and prepare students or graduates who will be ready to enter the workforce and are able to develop professional attitudes in the vocational field. Vocational education graduates are expected to become productive individuals who are able to work as intermediate workers and have readiness to face job competition. The presence of SMK nowadays is increasingly coveted by the community, especially those who are directly involved in the business. With a note, that vocational education graduates do have qualifications as prospective workers who have certain vocational skills relate to their field of expertise.



The description of the quality of vocational education graduates is extracted from Finch and Crunkilton (1908), that: "The quality of vocational education applies a double measure, namely quality based on to school size or in-school success standards and quality related to community standards or out of school success standards". The first criterion covers the aspects of the success of students in fulfilling curricular demands that have been oriented towards the demands of the business world, while the second criterion includes the success of students who are shown on the ability to work in accordance with national or international competency standards after they are in the actual work field.

Efforts to achieve quality vocational education graduates that are in accordance with the demands of the business world to be based on a curriculum that is designed and developed in accordance with the needs of stakeholders. Specifically, the vocational education curriculum has a character that leads to the formation of graduate skills related to the implementation of certain job tasks. These skills have been accommodated in the SMK curriculum which includes the Normative, Adaptive and Productive groups.

Furthermore, Ministry of Education decision number 34-year 2018 has set forth competency standard for SMK graduates. It is targeted that the competency standards for SMK graduates are developed from the national education and graduate profiles in the formulation of competency areas. SMK is part of the national education system which has the goal of vocational education, namely to produce a workforce skilled who have the ability in accordance with the demands of the needs world of business/industry, as well as being able to develop their potential in adopting and adapting to the development of science, technology, and art. In detail, the English competency should me the following criteria:

1. Use polite spoken and written English to communicate and collaborate with interlocutors in the context of work, culture, and work situations. Understanding of words in English in sentences and contexts, both spoken and written to support literacy skills in various texts from the world of work and areas of expertise.
2. Social function, text structure, and linguistic elements for reports, procedures, negotiations, advertisements, announcements, letters, presentations, and simple written works.
3. Text-forming language units include language sounds, spellings, words, word classes, diction, phrases, clauses, core sentences, single sentences, and compound sentences.
4. Short and simple texts, authentic or semi-authentic for practical use in accordance with the field of expertise, accompanied by clear and reliable reference sources.

Curriculum development is a process that starts from thinking about curriculum ideas to how it is implemented in schools. Hasan (1988) states that aspects in curriculum development procedures are aspects of curriculum activities consisting of four dimensions that are interrelated with one another, namely: (1) Curriculum as an idea or conception, (2) Curriculum as an idea. A written plan, (3) the curriculum as an activity (process) and (4) the curriculum as a learning outcome.

Method

This research uses a descriptive method. The descriptive method is the most effective method commonly used in educational research (Burns, 2000). The source of data is a text and non-numerical data. It means that the researcher applies a set of procedures used for qualitative data. Moleong (2006:3), said that "in descriptive qualitative study, the data investigated by the researcher are in the form of oral or written words. It is qualitative since it is concerned with non-numeric data and it is descriptive since it aims at describing the facts of the analysis systematically based on actually, they are". Moleong (2006:13), stated that "The purpose of qualitative research is to understand something specifically, not always looking for the cause and effect of something and to deepen comprehension about something that studied". In other statement explained that this research is not intended to test a specific hypothesis but only describe as it is about a phenomenon or situation. Descriptive research usually used the literal of describing situation or events.

Further, this qualitative research uses inductive inquiry, which for data collection means that commences without hypothesis and statistic data. Tracy (2013:21), stated that "qualitative method often speak of understanding of the scene which means that behavior is described from the actor's view and its context specific". This research is begun with observing specifics interaction from actors in the film, analyzing the

context in finding characteristics of psychopaths and moral value based on the classification, arranging into the research instrument, making coding, scrutinizing systematically and describing objectively. Analysis involves working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing the, and sea reaching for patterns (Bogdan, 2007:159)

Results and Discussion

Results

1. English for General Purpose

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987: 53-54) explained, “English for General Purposes (EGP) refers to general content such as the school where special needs cannot be fully identified. It is more useful to consider that EGP is providing a basic foundation rather than a detailed and selective specification of goals like ESP”. Even though it has distinctive separation at the definition level there is an overlapping relation and proportion between them. In order to clarify their relation, Widdowson (1983) establishes distinctive features of ESP and EGP. In detail, Widdowson explains that the EGP features are:

- 1) The focus is often on education;
- 2) As the learners’ future needs are impossible to predict, the course content is more difficult to select;
- 3) Due to the above points it is important for the content to be built a foundation for further learning.

EGP covers learning of core grammatical rules, of expression including phonetics, general vocabulary and to prepare for more specific language studies. EGP covers a day-to-day communication, a social interaction without specific vocabulary. It is understood that most of the words used in communication, both general and special are common words. However, for many of specific work environments, certain vocabulary is not being used during social interaction and need to be learned separately. In summary, EGP prepares learners to build a foundation for further expansion on certain English competency, such as: Technical, business, finance, tourism, as so on.

2. English for Special Purpose (ESP)

ESP has become the subject of linguistic experts dated back four decades. As a program with intended to focus on the learners’ need, its main purpose is to prepare them to have adequate competency in their professional or vocational English communication skills both oral and written. In ESP courses, it is the analysis of learners’ need that determine in selecting the learning subject. The English language is taught according to the finding of need’s analysis. The ultimate goal is to use what has been learned immediately in the employment context. Therefore, the learning process should bring enthusiasm amongst the learners as what they learn will land them to getting job and make money. Potocar (2002) explained that ESP can be viewed as specific and special edition of EGP that combined the general and specific English competency for the successful accomplishment of professional field. Holme (1996 cited in Potocar, 2002) suggests that ESP will help students to acquire necessary language skill to utilize what they have learned and merged it with their personality and cultural knowledge.

3. The History of ESP

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) researched shown that “the origin of ESP went back to the end of World War II where the trade between countries began to flourish. Many nations saw that English is considered accepted international language”. Teodorescu (2010) “once said that non-native speakers saw the common ground in using English as a new lingua franca that serves their need of cross-cultural interaction, doing business and sharing information”.

Beginning 1960’s, the rising of the world trade has made ESP becomes a discipline. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:7) “gave their view that was due to the emergence of world’s economy, resulting from the development of technology, vast oil explorations and the increase of foreign students learning English in the speaking countries”. Johns and Dudley Evans (1991:301-302) stated “that the international community recognized the need in learning English to acquire the transfer of knowledge and communication. English became a neutral means of communication between countries”.



As more and more technology inventions happened, many scientific and technical writings were published. This has resulted the use of specific vocabulary that was rarely use before. Smoak (2003: 23) described that English instructors have an additional task to introduce those new words in each of different filed of profession. Dudley-Evans (2001: 22) commented, “Introduced the concept regarding language form to language use, making the usage of language as the main criterion in selecting ESP teaching materials”. This uprising of ESP prioritized rhetorical role of language over the grammatical and lexical properties.

In the 70’s ESP continue to make its progress. Needs analysis was introduced to create a definite target of learning. These efforts believe it was not enough only to teach how language works, the language learning should help the learners to transfer what is being learned to the real-life interaction. Consequently, the learners’ aim of learning the target language with specific technical specifications became the most pivotal activity and bringing needs analysis into the development of learning syllabus.

In the last twenty years, the interest of ESP around the world has increased dramatically. Hewings (2002) a co-editor of English for Specific Purpose Journal has found the increase of number of studies outside U.S. and U.K. such as: South and Central America, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea, mostly at the new manufacturing hub with new technology. This shows the growing acceptance of ESP as an academic discipline. Further studies created towards specificity of ESP into English for Academic Purpose (EAP) and English for Vocational Purpose (EVP). ESP has become a separate branch of language teaching. From its beginning on only focusing on technical and scientific publications on vocabulary and texts to rhetorical use of language in specific discourses.

4. Definition of ESP

Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) gave three of the widely recognized definitions in their book: Development of ESP: A Multi-disciplinary Approach. First: ESP is viewed as an approach not a product, therefore it is not involving a certain kind of language, teaching materials nor methodology. Second: ESP is distinguished by its variables and absolute characteristics. The absolute features come from the relationship with other disciplinary subjects and occupations by using their methodologies and activities. The variables characteristics due to the restrictive skills to be learned and lack of pre-established methodology. Third: ESP is a goal-directed approach usually aims on the learners’ needs. In detail those experts explained ESP the following:

Based on the absolute characteristics are:

- 1) ESP address the learner’s particular needs;
- 2) ESP makes the use of primary methodology and activities of the subject it serves;
- 3) ESP is focused on the language (grammar, lexical, and syntax), skills, discourses, and appropriate genre for those activities.

According to variable characteristics:

- 1) ESP may be designed and related certain disciplines;
- 2) ESP may be used, in particular situation, a different methodology;
- 3) ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners.
- 4) ESP in general is to be designed for intermediate and advance learners.

Peter Stevens (1988: 1-2) presented a different idea on the absolute and variable characteristics are as follows:

Absolute characteristics:

- 1) Designed to suit the special needs of learners;
- 2) Connect content, themes and topics with the particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
- 3) Centered on language appropriateness for those activities in syntax, lexis, semantics and discourses.

Variable characteristics of ESP maybe:

- 1) Restriction to the language skills to be studied;
- 2) Not using teaching methodology.

Robinson (1991) presenting the definition of ESP into two basic criteria:

- 1) ESP is usually goal directed;
- 2) ESP courses is developed from needs analysis which focus to specify what the learners have to do through the medium of English.

With various theories and arguments, all of the ESP experts come to the conclusion that “in ESP ... the purpose of learning is solely targeted and related to the learners’ needs to use English in their day-to-day job’s communications (Harding:2007). We have seen the evolving definition of ESP as time goes by. All the theories, research findings and practitioners have a common element that embrace ESP’s purpose in meeting the very specific needs for a very specific group of learners.

5. The Purpose of ESP

It is agreed that the main purpose of ESP is delivering English teaching to meet the needs of learners obtained from the need analysis. Prior to learning ESP, students need to have basic general English. The ability to communicate in daily activity, asking and answering general questions, basic grammatical structure, appropriate selection of words and its precise meaning Teaching ESP is designed by different – professional/occupation and other needs of learner. This includes specialized programs, teaching materials and methodology to develop communicative use of English for specific branch of science, job and technology. Knowing the general vocabulary will not be enough to have a competence to speak English in a professional subject. It is well understood that in general vocabulary there are a lot of technical words in it. However, there are many technical words that are not use in daily conversation. Students who are learning ESP require not only learning language of science and technology, they also need to master the subject itself. Although teaching/learning ESP is targeted to professional training, it also covers a lot of information on everyday life, the culture of targeted language. Therefore, teaching ESP is to develop both linguistic and professional skills in knowledge and competence as well.

6. Need Analysis

Need analysis is intended to create a set of procedures to set a boundary of a course of study (Nunan: 988). Need is referred to the job requirement when the students completed their study and enter into the workforce. Richards (2001:52) explained in detail how need analysis can be used in a number of different ways:

- 1) To find out what language skills a learner needs in order to perform a particular role, such sales manager, tour guide or other profession;
- 2) To help determine if an existing course adequately addresses the need of potential students;
- 3) To determine which students from a group are most in need of training in particular language skills;
- 4) Identify a change of direction that people feel is important.
- 5) To identify a gap between what the students are able to do and what are expected them do;
- 6) To gather information what particular problem are facing.

Hutchinson & Waters (1993) offer clearer distinction that needs comprise of two things namely target needs and learning needs. Target needs convey with what learners need to do in the target situation. Target needs cover three useful terms that is necessities, lacks, and wants. Necessities will be determined by the demands of the target situation. It means that what learners need to know is how to function effectively in the target situation. Lacks are the different between the target proficiency and the existing proficiency of learners. Lacks can be arranged only after teachers or course designers already knew the needs of learners. Want concerns with the awareness of needs that specify the ESP situation. Awareness is a type of perception which may vary between one’s viewpoint. When learners have a clear idea of the necessities of the target situation, and they already have a particular view of their lacks, it does not automatically suit with the perceptions of other interested groups like teachers, course designers or sponsors. Therefore, ideal wants

must reflect all the groups interested in implementing ESP. Learning needs refer to what knowledge and abilities learners will need in target situation. If the starting point in ESP is called “lacks” and the destination is necessities and wants, the way to go from the starting point to destination is called learning needs. Based on all the above definitions, learners take place as the core of any program. They are the subject of any instruction, no longer the object. Their needs will determine the specification of syllabus content including considerations on such things as language skills, structures, functions, notions, topics, themes, situations, and interlocutors. Since, the selection is done according to the needs of learners, there is likely to be some variations from learner group to learner group. Different types of learner needs will be treated differently. Particularly, again, in the light of needs for the reasons why they are learning English are based on. Needs analysis is usually conducted before or at the very beginning of a course. The first task in conducting needs analysis is to decide on what data need to be collected, when they should be collected, by whom, through what means and for what purposes.

Prior to conducting need analysis, it suggested that the purpose or purposes should be well defined and understood. Richards (2001) took the example of restaurant employees’ needs to determine further English training to be given to them. The analysis purposes will be as follows:

- 1) To determine English proficiency of the workers;
- 2) To determine how many workers do need English training.
- 3) To identify senior staff perception of the language problem among the workers;
- 4) To identify workers’ perception on language difficulty they face in the job;
- 5) To identify type of transactions workers typically perform in English.
- 6) To assess how far any current program/s if any help the workers.

In most cases, learner’s language needs can be easily identified if they decide to learn in a very specific purpose. SMK offers specific field of studies. In general, SMKs offer various subjects such as food and beverage, hotel and tourism, clerical office, chemical industry, chemical analysis, auto mechanic, graphic design, computer hardware maintenance, and so forth. Needs may also come forth during the course of study for many reasons. One possible reason is the rapid acceleration of technology especially in technical fields.

Target population for needs analysis is actually more than just the learners itself Richards (2001). Richards further mentioned that the needs information can come from the following resources:

- a. Policy maker
- b. government officials
- c. teachers
- d. students
- e. academics
- f. employers
- g. parents
- h. influential individuals and pressure groups
- i. community agencies

Wherever the source of needs analysis come, the ultimate goals is to prepare learners be competence in their English fluency at the work place.

Discussion

1. The English textbook used in SMK

Researcher found that all SMK majors use the same English textbook. The textbook itself is so general that there is no connection with any of the specific major in SMK. No ESP is presented in the textbook. The textbook used in SMK is the same for all majors. Automotive engineering, Hotel and Tourism, Computer networking, etc., use the same one. The one that is being used has the following table of content:

Chapter 1,	Let’s visit Seattle
Chapter 2,	What does it mean
Chapter 3,	Have a look at life under water

Chapter 4,	I can't believe it
Chapter 5,	Do you know how to apply for job?
Chapter 6,	What do they look like?
Chapter 7,	Read the nature
Chapter 8,	Students Don't Bully
Chapter 9,	Do you know How Potteries are Made?
Chapter 10,	What Can We Learn from Baduy People
Chapter 11,	Who Was Involved?
Chapter 12,	What's the news?
Chapter 13,	It's Garbage In Art Works Out
Chapter 14,	Tell Me How
Chapter 15,	Do it Carefully
Chapter 16,	Let's Make a Better World for All

2. Teacher, teaching ESP in SMK

During the class observations, the researcher notice that the teacher did not modify the textbook to suit the ESP purpose. The reason is that they never been trained to do it nor to have sufficient experience on ESP.

3. ESP Prototype – Module 1, Automotive Engineering

Finding in the field that no ESP textbook is available for teachers, the researcher heads up a team with a few of Ma'arif teachers to develop a prototype for automotive engineering. Module1 is specifically dedicated to learn hand tools in what, why, and how hand-tolls are being used. The module covers the four skills in language learning, namely: listening, reading, speaking and writing. The complete module is attached to this thesis (attachment 1).

4. ESP Pre And Post-Test

Two separate classroom tests were conducted to obtain feedback from students and teachers. They were very happy to see the module. The students commented that the module is what they are looking for and will benefit them when they go out looking for job and work. To capture their knowledge on ESP, prep and post tests were conducted both on site and online to obtain sufficient number of students to meet the sampling requirement. The test comprise of twelve “fill in the blank – names of hand tools” and ten listening tests on hand tools. Sixty students took part and the result is attached (attachment 2). As a summary, the total questions for sixty students are 1,320. Pre-test correct answer is 322 or 25,15%. After module 1 being taught and post-test was conducted, the total correct answer is 707 or 53.56%. An increase of 28.41%. It shows the success of our prototype module's content and delivery. eo conversation animations, online quizzes and so on which make it easier to plan B. English lessons after the pandemic. In addition to the positive impacts above, there are several negative impacts of learning during a pandemic that must be anticipated immediately during face-to-face learning, these impacts include: student learning motivation sometimes decreases because it is influenced by social media or online games, teachers and students have difficulty managing time because they are used to online learning, and not all learning plans and goals can be achieved optimally because they are still in a transition or new normal transition.

Conclusions

Based on the findings and discussion presented above, the conclusions are drawn as follows:

1. The textbook is an important component in language learning. In addition to textbook, the teachers should have sufficient knowledge of ESP and fluency in speaking, otherwise the students will not be able to gain enough competency as they graduate.
2. The ministry of education mandated too many competencies (32 KDs) and ideal target and yet no resources are being given to teachers. The textbooks produced either by the government and private publishers do not have ESP appropriate for each SMK majors. There are over 18 majors in SMK and each require an ESP to help them acquire sufficient skill and knowledge relate to their field of study.



3. The non-ESP textbook existence prompted researcher and a several English teachers from SMK Ma'arif assisted by a few US educators develop an ESP prototype on automotive engineering. A special training on how to develop an effective learning material was conducted in early March with Professor emeritus William Neal, former head of MBA program of Utah Valley University.
4. Most English teachers are lack of speaking skill. Many of their pronunciations are not correct. This is very disturbing. There are thousands of SMK students pronouncing English words incorrectly because their teachers do not teach them properly. In order to address this problem, researcher initiated a weekly "Thursday English Talk" started in March taught by native speakers. It is an intensive program as one native teacher only be with 3-5 teachers.

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