

ESP Needs Analysis for Marketing Students in an Indonesian Vocational School: Insights from Strategy Analysis

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Abstract

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is essential in vocational education, tailoring language learning to meet professional needs. This research employed strategy analysis to explore ESP needs among 50 marketing students at SMKN 1 Bone, Indonesia. The data were collected using a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms during class hours and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings revealed strong preferences for interactive and career-oriented learning methods, emphasizing practical language applications. Students prioritized materials on product management and marketing strategy, favored group work, and highlighted reading as the most crucial sub-skill. Motivations for learning English included personal growth, career advancement, and international opportunities, underscoring the need to align curriculum with student preferences. Therefore, integrating student-centered approaches into ESP curriculum development is crucial for enhancing relevance and effectiveness. Future research is expected to explore longitudinal studies tracking language proficiency, comparative analyses across vocational schools for cultural insights, and evaluations of learning activities and motivational factors to enhance ESP education, ensuring students acquire essential language skills for global success.

Keywords: ESP, Marketing Students, Needs Analysis, Strategy Analysis, Vocational School

Abstrak

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) sangatlah penting dalam pendidikan kejuruan melalui penyesuaian pembelajaran bahasa untuk memenuhi kebutuhan profesional. Penelitian ini menggunakan *strategy analysis* untuk mengeksplorasi kebutuhan ESP di antara 50 siswa jurusan pemasaran di SMKN 1 Bone, Indonesia. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner yang dibagikan melalui Google Forms selama jam pelajaran dan dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan preferensi kuat untuk metode pembelajaran interaktif dan berorientasi karier, dengan penekanan pada pengaplikasian bahasa yang praktis. Siswa memprioritaskan materi tentang manajemen produk dan strategi pemasaran, lebih menyukai kerja kelompok, dan menyoroti membaca sebagai keterampilan yang paling penting. Motivasi untuk belajar bahasa Inggris mereka mencakup keperluan untuk pengembangan diri, kemajuan karier, dan peluang internasional, yang menegaskan perlunya menyelaraskan kurikulum dengan preferensi siswa. Oleh karena itu, mengintegrasikan pendekatan yang berpusat pada siswa dalam pengembangan kurikulum ESP sangat penting untuk meningkatkan relevansi dan efektivitas. Penelitian di masa depan diharapkan dapat mengeksplorasi studi longitudinal untuk melacak perkembangan keterampilan bahasa, analisis komparatif di berbagai sekolah kejuruan untuk mendapatkan wawasan budaya, dan evaluasi aktivitas pembelajaran serta faktor motivasi untuk meningkatkan pendidikan ESP, memastikan siswa memperoleh keterampilan bahasa yang penting untuk kesuksesan global.

Kata kunci: ESP, Siswa Jurusan Pemasaran, Needs Analysis, Strategy Analysis, Sekolah Kejuruan

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INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become a pivotal element in language education, tailored to meet the particular needs of learners in various professional fields. ESP focuses on teaching English language skills tailored to the requirements of a particular profession or discipline, enhancing learners' ability to communicate effectively in their specific context. This approach is essential in

today's globalized world where language proficiency is vital for success in many fields, including business, academia, and other professional settings (Bankole et al., 2023; Hosseini & Shokrpour, n.d.; Wulandari, 2023). The importance of ESP is especially pronounced in vocational education as it prepares students with the necessary language tools to excel in their chosen fields, enhancing their employability and career prospects. By emphasizing practical applications, professional needs, and effective teaching methods, ESP plays a vital role in equipping students with the skills they need to succeed in their future careers (Chao-na, 2015; Mahmood, 2024; Sèna, 2022; Xiuli, 2012).

In Indonesia, vocational schools play a critical role in preparing students for the workforce by providing them with practical skills and knowledge pertinent to their areas of study. They are designed to bridge the gap between academic programs and workforce requirements, providing students with practical skills and knowledge that are highly valued by industries (Jaedun et al., 2020). Marketing students, in particular, face a globalized market where English proficiency is indispensable. They need to communicate effectively with a diverse customer base, which includes people from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds (R. Wang, 2023). Thus, English proficiency helps them understand and effectively communicate with these customers, affecting their overall business performance. Therefore, tailored ESP courses that address the specific linguistic demands of the marketing profession are crucial for these students.

One of the approaches to need analysis is Strategy Analysis (SA). It involves observing not only methods of teaching but also methods of learning, preferred topics or materials, learning styles, and strategies of students. Incorporating strategy analysis into the needs analysis process allows educators to better understand how students learn and what strategies they use to achieve their learning goals. This information can then be used to design more effective teaching methods that align with students' learning styles and preferences, ultimately enhancing the overall learning experience (Mou et al., 2021; Sudarmo et al., 2021). In other words, this approach goes beyond identifying what learners need to know, delving into how they prefer to learn it (West, 1998). By employing Strategy Analysis, this research aims to uncover the learning preferences and strategies of marketing students at an Indonesian vocational school. The insights gained will be instrumental in designing effective ESP curricula that align with the students' needs and preferences.

Research on ESP highlights its importance in equipping students with language skills pertinent to specific disciplines (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Studies on needs analysis in ESP contexts emphasize the significance of aligning curricula with students' real-life requirements and learning preferences (Brown, 2009; West, 1998). However, targeted research on marketing students in Indonesian vocational schools remains scarce. For instance, existing studies have been conducted by Dewanto et al. (2024), Hidayatulloh (2022), and Hajar & Triastuti (2021) which focus on assessing and enhancing the educational experiences of marketing students in Indonesian vocational schools. They explore the relevance of ESP materials, emphasize the development of communicative competence and specialized vocabulary, and advocate for innovative

teaching models. Thus, this research seeks to contribute by providing detailed insights into the specific needs and preferences of marketing students that have not been comprehensively addressed in existing literature.

The primary objective of this research was to conduct a comprehensive needs analysis of ESP for marketing students at SMKN 1 Bone, an Indonesian vocational school, utilizing Strategy Analysis to identify their specific needs and preferences. This research sought to address the following research questions:

1. What are the preferred learning materials, methods, and activities of marketing students at SMKN 1 Bone?
2. What are the primary motivations of these students in learning English?
3. What specific sub-skills (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) are considered most important by these students?

This research holds significant implications for vocational education in Indonesia. By identifying the specific needs and preferences of marketing students, the findings will inform the development of tailored ESP curricula. These insights will be valuable for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of ESP programs and better preparing students for their professional careers.

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive and qualitative approach. The specific methods used included the collection of data through questionnaires and the analysis of this data using descriptive statistics to present it in the form of numbers and percentages. The qualitative component involved interpreting the patterns and trends in the data to gain deeper insights into the students' needs and preferences. This combined approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of the ESP needs of marketing students in an Indonesia vocational school.

Participants

The participants in this research were marketing students enrolled in a vocational school in Indonesia, specifically SMKN 1 Bone. A total of 50 students voluntarily participated in the survey. These students were all majoring in marketing and were in grade XI during the academic year 2023/2024. Each participant had completed the English subject in grade X prior to the commencement of this research.

Instrument

A questionnaire was developed to collect data on students' preferred learning materials, methods, activities, motivations, and perceptions of the importance of various sub-skills (speaking, reading, writing, and listening). The questionnaire comprised three sets. The first set included 6 items to identify preferences for learning materials, methods, and activities across the four language skills. The second set had 1 item focusing on students' primary motivations for learning English. These sets

were semi-closed questionnaires with 7 enumerated questions, allowing respondents to select options and provide their own answers. Meanwhile, the third set contained 1 item assessing the importance of specific sub-skills using a 1-5 rating scale (1=very unimportant, 5=very important), with results averaged to determine the importance of each sub-skill.

Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed to marketing students at SMKN 1 Bone during class hours. Utilizing Google Forms, students were provided with a link to access the questionnaire electronically. They were allotted 60 minutes to complete the survey, during which they could submit their responses online. The data collected through Google Forms were compiled and analyzed to investigate students' preferences for learning materials, methods, activities, motivations, and perceptions of sub-skill importance.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns in the students' preferences and needs. This process included data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2010). These analytical steps enabled a comprehensive examination of students' preferences for learning materials, methods, activities, motivations, and perceptions of sub-skill importance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research were analyzed to address the research questions regarding the preferred learning materials, methods, and activities of marketing students in an Indonesian vocational school; their primary motivations for learning English; and the specific sub-skills they consider most important. The findings were discussed in relation to the needs analysis approach, specifically strategy analysis, which focused on understanding the learners' specific needs and preferences.

Findings

1. Preferred Learning Materials, Methods, and Activities of Marketing Students

a. Preferred Learning Materials

The first questionnaire element was designed to observe the preferred materials that are needed by students. The following table illustrates the frequency and percentage of students' preferences for different learning materials. The results can be seen in Table 1 below:

Tabel 1. Preferred Learning Materials

Learning Material	Frequency	Percentage
Product management (advertising, branding, product development, and innovation)	26	52%

Marketing strategy for the products or service Offered	26	52%
Sales management	19	38%
International marketing	17	34%
Analyzing and identifying market needs (market research)	17	34%
Digital marketing	15	30%
Brand management	9	18%
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	9	18%

Table 1 above shows the students' preferred materials about marketing. It can be seen that the majority of students were interested in learning materials about product management (advertising, branding, product development, and innovation) (52%), marketing strategy for the products or service offered (52%) and sales management (38%). The data indicates that students had a strong preference for learning materials concerning product management and marketing strategy, which received the highest percentages of interest. Sales management, international marketing, and market research also garnered substantial interest. Digital marketing was considered important by a significant portion of students, whereas brand management and CRM were less prioritized.

b. Preferred Learning Methods

The table 2 below shows the frequency and percentage of students who prefer various learning methods, such as group work, individual work, whole class instruction, outdoor work, and pair work. This questionnaire element was designed to discover the learning methods that are needed by students. The results can be seen in Table 2 below:

Tabel 2. Preferred Learning Methods

Learning Methods	Frequency	Percentage
Group work	40	80%
Individual work	36	72%
Whole Class	34	68%
Outdoor work	27	54%
Pair work	24	48%

The data indicates that students had a strong preference for group work (80%), followed by individual work (72%) and whole class instruction (68%). Outdoor work (54%) and pair work (48%) were less preferred but still significant, showing that students appreciated a variety of learning methods to suit different tasks and contexts.

c. Preferred Learning Activities

Understanding students' preferences for different learning activities can significantly enhance the effectiveness of instruction and engagement in the classroom. To gather insights into these preferences, a survey was conducted focusing on key language skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. The aim was to identify which activities within these skill areas

are most favored by students, allowing educators to design their lessons to better suit student interests and learning styles.

The Table 3 to 6 below present the frequency and percentage of students' preferences for various activities associated with each of these language skills. By examining these preferences, educators can better tailor their instructional strategies to create a more dynamic and responsive learning environment.

Tabel 3. Preferred Reading Activities

Reading Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Reading to find information	30	60%
Reading emails, marketing documents, journals, and news	19	38%
Reading the text aloud with correct pronunciation and intonation	18	36%
Analyzing the meaning of new vocabulary based on its context	18	36%
Answering questions about the text	9	18%
Reading memorable and fun text	1	2%

The data indicates that students predominantly preferred reading activities that are practical and informative, such as reading to find information (60%) and reading professional texts (38%). Activities that involve active engagement with the text, such as reading aloud (36%) and analyzing vocabulary (36%), were also favored by a significant portion of students. Answering questions about the text (18%) and reading for enjoyment (2%) were less popular.

Tabel 4. Preferred Listening Activities

Listening Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Listening and following instructions	30	60%
Listening to information at meetings and presentations	23	46%
Understanding speakers with different accents	22	44%
Identifying specific information	14	28%
Receiving phone cell messages	7	14%
Searching for song's meaning/significance, watching films without subtitles	1	2%

The data indicates that students predominantly preferred listening activities that are practical and directly applicable to real-world scenarios, such as following instructions (60%) and understanding information in meetings and presentations (46%). Understanding different accents (44%) was also highly valued, reflecting the importance of diverse listening comprehension skills. Identifying specific information (28%) and receiving phone call messages (14%) were less popular, and searching for song meanings or watching films without subtitles (2%) was the least preferred.

Tabel 5. Preferred Speaking Activities

Speaking Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Presentation	27	54%
Creating business/marketing presentations	22	44%
Practicing oral fluently, namely by practicing dialogue in front of class in pairs	18	36%
Speaking at the meeting or conference	12	24%
Discussing certain topics/problems	11	22%
Making an agreement	8	16%
Role play	6	12%
Making a phone call	3	6%

The data indicates that students predominantly preferred speaking activities that involve formal presentations (54%) and creating business or marketing presentations (44%). Practicing oral fluency through dialogues (36%) and speaking at meetings or conferences (24%) were also valued by a significant portion of students. Activities such as discussing topics or problems (22%), making agreements (16%), role play (12%), and making phone calls (6%) were less popular.

Tabel 6. Preferred Writing Activities

Writing Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Writing marketing related documents	28	56%
Practicing proper use of vocabulary and grammar	24	48%
Summarizing or rewriting the contents of the text	23	46%
Writing articles	11	22%
Developing an argument	11	22%

The data indicates that students predominantly preferred writing activities that are practical and directly applicable to professional settings, such as writing marketing-related documents (56%). Practicing vocabulary and grammar (48%) and summarizing or rewriting texts (46%) were also highly valued, reflecting the importance of these fundamental writing skills. Writing articles (22%) and developing arguments (22%) were less popular.

The survey results showed that students had distinct preferences for different activities across the four language skills. Practical and professionally relevant activities were generally the most preferred, such as writing marketing documents, giving presentations, and listening to instructions. Fundamental skills like practicing vocabulary and grammar, and understanding diverse accents were also valued. Activities perceived as less directly applicable to professional contexts, such as role-playing or searching for song meanings, were the least preferred.

2. The Primary Motivations of Marketing Students for Learning English

The data from the questionnaire below shows the number of students and the percentage of those who have different motivations for learning English. This questionnaire element was designed

to discover the learning methods that are needed by students. The results can be seen in Table 7 below:

Tabel 7. Motivations for Learning English

Motivation	Frequency	Percentage
Communicate fluently both orally and in writing in English	45	90%
Prepare for a career as a professional (self-development)	26	52%
Increase employment opportunities	25	50%
Want to go abroad	24	48%
Improve cross-cultural communication skills	22	44%
Increase international labor market competitiveness	16	32%
Expand access to global literature, research and resources	16	32%
Educational Needs (Getting a Scholarship)	11	22%
Favorite subject	7	14%
Studying TOEFL	5	10%

The data indicates that students had a variety of motivations for learning English, with the most common being the desire to communicate fluently (90%). Professional development (52%), increased employment opportunities (50%), and the aspiration to go abroad (48%) were also significant motivators. Cross-cultural communication (44%), competitiveness in the international labor market (32%), and access to global resources (32%) were important for a notable portion of students. Educational needs (22%) and personal interests, such as favorite subjects (14%) and studying for TOEFL (10%), were less common.

3. The Importance of Sub-Skills Perceived by Marketing Students

The table shows the average ratings of the perceived importance of different sub-skills on a scale of 1 to 5. The results can be seen in the Table 8 below:

Tabel 8. Importance of Sub-skills

Rank	Sub-skill	Average Rating
1	Reading	4.20
2	Speaking	4.10
3	Listening	4.06
4	Writing	3.96

The data indicates that while all four sub-skills are considered important by students, reading is viewed as the most crucial, followed by speaking and listening, with writing slightly behind.

The findings revealed that students had a strong preference for interactive and practical learning methods, particularly group work, and emphasize the importance of materials related to career-oriented topics like product management and marketing strategy. Preferred activities included reading for information, listening to instructions, giving presentations, and writing marketing documents. The primary motivations for learning English were to communicate fluently, prepare for professional careers, and enhance employment opportunities. Among the four sub-skills, reading was considered

the most important, followed by speaking, listening, and writing, reflecting the students' focus on practical application and proficiency in English for personal and professional growth.

Discussion

The findings of this research provided the insights into the specific needs and preferences of marketing students in an Indonesian vocational school regarding English language learning. The emphasis on materials related to practical and career-oriented topics like product management and marketing strategy reflected students' aspirations to acquire skills directly applicable to their future careers. By aligning the curriculum with practical and career-oriented topics, educators can better equip students with the essential language skills and knowledge needed for success in their future professions. These findings align with the perspectives of Dewi et al. (2023) dan Wardaya (2021), who emphasized the critical role of relevant materials in enhancing students' proficiency and readiness for their respective career paths in ESP programs.

Students' aspirations to acquire practical skills for their future careers were closely linked to their motivations to communicate fluently, prepare for professional development, and increase employment opportunities. This connection indicated that students viewed English proficiency as essential for career success and mobility, both locally and internationally. This observation aligned with previous studies emphasizing the importance of English proficiency for students' career advancement, especially in fields where English is widely used (Huang et al., 2023; Rana & Shaikh, 2024; Rose et al., 2020; Y. Wang et al., 2023). These studies highlighted that language proficiency played a crucial role in enhancing career prospects by providing targeted language support and employing effective teaching methods. English proficiency should be prioritized by educators in order to better prepare students for professional growth and more job prospects in a worldwide labor market.

The strong preference for interactive and collaborative learning methods, such as group work and pair work, underscores the importance of social interaction and peer engagement in educational settings. These methods not only enhance students' language proficiency but also foster teamwork and communication skills, which are crucial in professional environments. Group work and pair work encourage students to actively participate in discussions, share ideas, and learn from one another. This increased engagement leads to a more immersive and interactive learning environment (Hanselman & Liu, 2021; Lee et al., 2015). Social interactions in educational settings help students develop essential communication skills, such as active listening, clear expression of thoughts, and effective feedback. These skills are vital for both academic and professional success (Tsamitrou & Plumet, 2024). Consequently, incorporating interactive and collaborative learning strategies in English language education can significantly contribute to the holistic development of students, preparing them for the demands of the modern workplace.

Regarding learning activities, students' preferences for activities such as reading for information, listening to instructions, giving presentations, and writing marketing documents highlighted their recognition of the practical applications of language skills. These activities correspond well with their

perceptions of the importance of sub-skills, where reading was rated highest, followed closely by speaking, listening, and writing. This ranking indicated that students prioritized skills that enable effective comprehension, communication, and interaction in various contexts.

The significance of these sub-skills in professional settings is well-supported by previous research. For example, Good et al. (2019) concluded that effective reading skills are essential for understanding and processing information in various industries, while Muhammad et al. (2021) found that good speaking and listening skills enable employees to convey information clearly and efficiently, leading to increased productivity and better decision-making. Additionally, a study by Rozario and Orillos (2016) confirmed that strong writing skills are necessary to produce professional documents effectively, which is crucial for demonstrating expertise and achieving career goals. These studies collectively affirm the students' preferences and highlight the practical relevance of their prioritized language skills.

The alignment between preferred activities and the perceived importance of sub-skills underscores the relevance of tailored instructional approaches that cater to both student preferences and educational objectives. A curriculum tailored to students' professional aspirations can indeed lead to better preparation for the workforce. For instance, a study comparing the professional aspirations of students in different curricula found that different curricula led to varying levels of student knowledge and aspirations, highlighting the importance of curriculum alignment with students' future goals (Yedzhayak, 2020). In this case, educators can leverage these insights to design curriculum and teaching strategies that not only engage students but also effectively develop their language proficiency and readiness for professional settings.

Furthermore, this research revealed a nuanced understanding of students' motivations for learning English, emphasizing personal growth, career advancement, and international opportunities. These motivations underscored the multifaceted benefits of English language proficiency beyond academic requirements, encompassing broader socio-economic aspirations and global connectivity. This aligns with findings from Akther (2022), emphasizing the essential role of English language proficiency in career advancement, enabling effective job interviews and facilitating professional interactions within the global business community. Therefore, the findings demonstrated how English language competency influences students' goals for both their personal and professional lives and emphasizes its critical role in career advancement and meaningful worldwide contacts.

Thus, this research presented a comprehensive exploration of vocational school marketing students' attitudes towards ESP learning, focusing on their preferences for interactive methods, career-relevant materials, and practical activities. By integrating these insights into ESP educational practices, institutions can enhance the quality and relevance of English language education, effectively preparing students for their future endeavors in an increasingly interconnected global landscape.

CONCLUSION

This research has yielded insightful information through a strategy analysis into the specific needs and preferences of marketing students in an Indonesian vocational school regarding English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learning. It highlighted students' strong preferences for interactive and career-oriented learning methods, emphasizing the practical applications of language skills in their future professions. These findings underscored the importance of aligning curriculum and teaching strategies with students' motivations for learning English, including personal growth, career advancement, and international opportunities. By integrating these insights into ESP educational practices, institutions can effectively equip students with essential language skills and prepare them for the demands of the modern workplace and global job market. This research significantly contributes to understanding ESP needs in vocational education settings and emphasizes the critical role of English proficiency in students' professional development and global connectivity.

Furthermore, future research could benefit from longitudinal studies to track language proficiency development over time, comparative studies across different regions to understand cultural influences, and investigations into the effectiveness of specific learning activities and motivational factors. These endeavors will deepen our understanding and contribute to optimizing English language education in vocational schools, equipping students with the skills necessary for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

It is important to note that this research focuses on a single vocational school and relies solely on questionnaire data. The findings may not be generalizable to all vocational schools or disciplines. Further research incorporating multiple schools and mixed methods is recommended to enrich our insights into ESP learning in diverse educational contexts.

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