

A STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS FOR NURSING STUDENTS AT STIKES INTAN MARTAPURA

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Abstract: *English is commonly offered as a general subject in universities for students outside the English major, such as those in the Nursing Department at STIKes Intan Martapura. However, it would be more effective if the material were adapted to suit the specific discipline, a practice known as English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Understanding the perspectives of different stakeholders is crucial to determine the significance of English in a nursing career and to identify the most suitable content. This study aimed to explore the English language needs of Nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura, focusing on ESP materials. The research employed a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. Participants included sixth-semester Nursing students from the academic year 2024/2025, with a total population of 90 students divided into three classes. From this number, 20% were selected as samples, resulting in 18 students participating across the classes. The findings reveal that students recognize the vital role of English in the Nursing field. Although English instruction currently follows a general curriculum, students expressed a strong desire for materials more closely aligned with their practical duties and professional demands. The results are expected to assist ESP instructors and other related parties in designing more relevant and practical English programs for Nursing students.*

Keywords: *ESP; English Subject; Needs Analysis; Learners' Needs*

Abstrak: Bahasa Inggris umumnya diajarkan sebagai mata kuliah umum di perguruan tinggi bagi mahasiswa non-jurusan Bahasa Inggris, seperti mahasiswa Keperawatan di STIKes Intan Martapura. Namun, pembelajaran akan lebih efektif jika materi disesuaikan dengan disiplin ilmu tertentu, yang dikenal sebagai *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP). Memahami perspektif para pemangku kepentingan sangat penting untuk mengetahui sejauh mana peran bahasa Inggris dalam karier keperawatan dan untuk mengidentifikasi materi yang paling sesuai. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi kebutuhan bahasa Inggris mahasiswa Keperawatan di STIKes Intan Martapura, dengan fokus pada materi ESP. Instrumen utama yang digunakan dalam pengumpulan data adalah kuesioner. Partisipan merupakan mahasiswa semester enam program studi Keperawatan tahun akademik 2024/2025, dengan total populasi sebanyak 90 mahasiswa yang terbagi dalam tiga kelas. Dari jumlah tersebut, 20% dipilih sebagai sampel, sehingga menghasilkan 18 mahasiswa dari berbagai kelas. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa menyadari pentingnya peran bahasa Inggris dalam bidang Keperawatan. Meskipun pembelajaran saat ini masih menggunakan kurikulum umum, para mahasiswa menyatakan keinginan kuat untuk mendapatkan materi yang lebih relevan dengan tugas praktis dan tuntutan profesional mereka. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat membantu pengajar ESP dan pihak terkait lainnya dalam merancang program bahasa Inggris yang lebih relevan dan aplikatif bagi mahasiswa Keperawatan.

Kata kunci: *ESP; English Subject; Needs Analysis; Learners' Needs*



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INTRODUCTION

The demands of global competition, especially following the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 and the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement in 2020, call for a workforce that is not only skilled in their respective fields but also capable of effective communication in English. As a global lingua franca, English plays a crucial role that every young individual, including those in Indonesia, needs to master. According to Nunan (2003), English significantly influences educational policies and practices. In the context of globalization, particularly within the AEC framework, English proficiency is essential for international communication. Therefore, graduates from any academic discipline who are proficient in English are more likely to gain a competitive edge in the global job market.

As English has established itself as a global language, mastering it has become increasingly essential. To address these global demands, the Indonesian government has implemented continuous English instruction from junior high school through higher education. English is a compulsory subject for nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura. The course aims to develop students' language proficiency through materials relevant to the nursing profession. This approach is designed to prepare them with the communication skills required for their future roles in healthcare settings. Consequently, the need for English mastery among nursing students is both urgent and significant.

However, initial findings indicate that the English learning materials currently used in the Nursing Department at STIKes Intan Martapura are not yet aligned with the actual language needs of nursing professionals. The instructional content tends to focus on general English rather than medical or nursing-specific language that students are expected to master in clinical settings. Furthermore, commercially available teaching resources often fall short in addressing the unique demands of ESP learners, as they rarely reflect the specific contexts, tasks, and communication challenges faced by nursing students. English for nursing, as part of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), includes terminology and expressions unique to the healthcare field. These terms often carry complex meanings and require a deep understanding, as they are directly linked to real-world applications in medical practice. Therefore, identifying and analyzing learners' needs is essential in designing context-relevant materials that support students' future professional roles. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasized that English instruction tailored to specific groups should be based on an in-depth analysis of the linguistic features of their occupational field.

In this regard, students' specific needs must be placed at the core of ESP-based learning approaches. By focusing on learner-centered instruction, educators can ensure that the course content and learning outcomes are aligned with the actual requirements of the workplace, leading to more effective and efficient language acquisition (Febriyanti, 2018). ESP, as a branch of applied linguistics, continues to evolve within educational settings by aligning English usage with the specific domains of knowledge and professional practice, including science, technology, healthcare, and engineering. According to Nodoushan (2020), ESP materials are crafted to equip students and professionals with English skills tailored to their disciplines, enabling them to function effectively in academic or occupational environments. Consequently, ESP is particularly relevant for higher education students and professionals preparing to enter specialized

fields. Given these challenges, it is crucial to conduct a thorough needs analysis regarding ESP materials for nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura. The findings from this research are expected to serve as a foundation for developing a more suitable syllabus and designing effective ESP instructional materials for non-English major students

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive research design, applying a structured approach to collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative data related to the English language needs of nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura. The participants in this research were sixth-semester students from the Nursing Department during the 2024/2025 academic year, totaling 90 students across three different classes. From this population, the researchers selected a representative sample of 20%, which amounted to 18 students. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire specifically developed to gather insights into the students' perceptions of their English language needs in the context of their nursing education and future professional roles. The questionnaire consisted of ten multiple-choice items, designed to cover various aspects of students' English learning goals, current proficiency, course expectations, and preferred instructional approaches.

To gather relevant data on the English language needs of nursing students, this study employed a structured questionnaire as the primary research instrument. The questionnaire was developed based on the principles of needs analysis in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), drawing insights from Hutchinson and Waters (1987), who emphasized that a successful ESP course must begin with a careful analysis of learners' needs. The instrument was designed to assess students' motivations, self-perceived language proficiency, preferred instructional approaches, course expectations, and the perceived importance of English in their academic and professional contexts.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 multiple-choice items, each aligned with a specific purpose in identifying the students' English learning needs. The questions covered various domains such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for learning English, the importance of different language skills in the nursing profession, course satisfaction, and preferred learning environments. The items were constructed in a clear and concise manner to ensure ease of understanding, with answer choices standardized across a four-point scale to facilitate quantification and comparison.

To ensure content relevance and clarity, the questionnaire was reviewed and adapted from existing ESP needs analysis frameworks (Graves, 2000; Basturkmen, 2010) and was validated by two English lecturers experienced in teaching English for Nursing.

Table 2. Reserch Instrument

No.	Question	Options	Purpose
1	What is your main reason for learning English?	a. To improve oral and written communication skills b. For academic or research purposes c. For job-seeking purposes	To identify the students' intrinsic or extrinsic motivation for learning English.

		d. To study or travel abroad	
2	How would you rate your current English listening skills?	a. Very good b. Good c. Fair d. Poor	To identify the students' perspectives about themselves
3	How would you rate your current English speaking skills?	a. Very good b. Good c. Fair d. Poor	To identify the students' perspectives about themselves
4	How would you rate your current English reading skills?	a. Very good b. Good c. Fair d. Poor	To identify the students' perspectives about themselves
5	How would you rate your current English writing skills?	a. Very good b. Good c. Fair d. Poor	To identify the students' perspectives about themselves
6	Which English skill do you think is the most important for your future career as a nurse?	a. Listening b. Speaking c. Reading d. Writing	To prioritize ESP content development based on perceived workplace relevance.
7	What type of English course do you prefer?	a. English for Specific Purposes (focused on nursing topics) b. General English c. Not sure	To assess demand for ESP-focused curriculum.
8	What kind of classroom activities do you prefer for learning English?	a. Group discussions and collaborative projects b. Interactive, activity-based lessons (e.g., role-play, simulations) c. Lecture-based teaching d. Self-paced independent study	To align teaching methods with learner preferences.
9	To what extent do the English courses you've taken meet your expectations?	a. Very much b. To some extent c. Fairly meet d. Did not meet	To measure the perceived relevance and effectiveness of the current English curriculum.
10	How often do you use English in your daily academic or personal life?	a. Very often b. Occasionally c. Rarely d. Never	

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Results

Table 2. Result

Question Number	Question Item	Options	N	%
1	Main reason for learning English	Oral & written communication	11	61.1%
		Academic/research purposes	5	27.8%
		Job-seeking purposes	2	11.1%
		Study/travel abroad	0	0%
2	Self-rated listening skill	Very good	2	11.1%
		Good	8	44.4%
		Fair	5	27.8%
		Poor	3	16.7%
3	Self-rated speaking skill	Very good	1	5.6%
		Good	7	38.9%
		Fair	5	27.8%
		Poor	2	11.1%
4	Self-rated reading skill	Very good	1	5.6%
		Good	12	66.7%
		Fair	2	11.1%
		Poor	3	16.7%
5	Self-rated writing skill	Very good	1	5.6%
		Good	8	44.4%
		Fair	6	33.3%
		Poor	3	16.7%
6	Most important English skill for nursing career	Speaking	17	94.4%
		Writing	1	5.6%
		Listening	0	0%
		Reading	0	0%
7	Preferred course type	English for Specific Purposes (ESP)	16	88.9%
		General English	2	11.1%
		Not sure	0	0%
8	Preferred classroom activity	Group discussion/project	9	50%
		Interactive/roleplay	9	50%

		Lecture-based	0	0%
		Self-paced learning	0	0%
		Very much	1	5.6%
9	How well English course met expectations	To some extent	12	66.7%
		Fairly meet	2	11.1%
		Did not meet	2	11.1%
		Very often	0	0%
10	Frequency of English usage	Occasionally	6	33.3%
		Rarely	11	61.1%
		Never	1	5.6%

Findings

This section presents the results of the questionnaire distributed to sixth-semester nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura to identify their English language needs, preferences, and perceptions. Regarding their primary motivation for learning English, the majority of students (60%) reported that their main goal was to enhance their oral and written communication skills. This was followed by 27% who stated academic or research purposes as their motivation. A smaller portion (13%) indicated that learning English was important for job-seeking purposes, and none of the students selected study or travel abroad as their primary reason. In terms of English proficiency, students rated themselves across four key language skills. For listening, 2 students considered their skills to be very good, 8 students rated themselves as good, and the remaining 5 as fair. No students indicated poor listening skills. For speaking, 1 student reported very good ability, 7 rated themselves as good, 5 as fair, and 2 as poor. In the case of reading, 1 student claimed very good proficiency, 12 marked good, and 2 marked fair. For writing, 1 student selected very good, 8 reported good, and 6 considered themselves to have fair writing ability. This suggests that while reading and listening are relatively strong areas, speaking remains a skill that many students find more challenging.

When asked about the most essential English skill for their future nursing career, an overwhelming 93% of students identified speaking as the most important, while 7% chose writing. No respondents selected listening or reading as the most critical skill. This emphasizes the students' awareness of the necessity of verbal communication in clinical practice. Concerning course relevance, 7% of students felt the English courses they had taken were “very much” aligned with their expectations, 67% responded “to some extent,” 13% selected “fairly meet,” and another 13% stated that the courses did not meet their expectations. These results indicate that although most students found the courses somewhat satisfactory, there is still room for improvement to better match their specific learning needs. In terms of the perceived importance of English in the nursing field, 40% of the students considered English to be very important, and 60% viewed it as important. None of the participants rated it as only fairly important or not important, confirming the belief that English plays a vital role in the healthcare profession, especially in understanding medical terminology and engaging in patient communication. Regarding the impact of English proficiency on academic performance, 67% of students believed

that English positively influenced their studies, while 33% indicated that it strongly affected their academic success. None of the respondents selected “little impact” or “no impact,” showing that English is considered a valuable asset for academic achievement.

In terms of preferred classroom environment, students showed a clear preference for practical and collaborative approaches. All participants favored either group discussions and projects or interactive activity-based sessions. No students preferred lecture-based or self-paced learning, which reflects a desire for more hands-on, communicative language instruction. With regard to preferred English content, 87% of the students expressed a preference for English for Specific Purposes (ESP), especially materials related to nursing, while 13% preferred general English. None of the students were unsure about their choice, indicating a clear need for profession-oriented language learning. When asked how often they use English, 33% of students reported using English occasionally in both oral and written contexts, 60% said they rarely used English, and 7% admitted to never using it. No respondents claimed to use English very often. These results highlight the limited use of English in daily life, suggesting the need to create a more English-rich academic environment. Lastly, in terms of preferred credit hours, 80% of students believed that two credit hours per week (equivalent to 100 minutes) were sufficient. 13% of students preferred four credits, and 7% selected three credits. None selected only one credit hour, indicating that students are aware of the importance of dedicating enough time to English language learning. Overall, the findings demonstrate that nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura are highly aware of the importance of English in their academic and professional development and express a strong preference for practical, skill-based, and nursing-specific English instruction.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

In conclusion, the discussion emphasizes that ESP instruction for nursing students must prioritize speaking and other communicative skills, adopt learner-centered teaching methods, and be supported by curriculum developers who understand the linguistic demands of the nursing field. These strategies will ensure that students are not only competent English users but also confident professionals in healthcare settings.

Suggestions

Based on the findings and discussions, the following suggestions are proposed to enhance English language instruction for nursing students at STIKes Intan Martapura:

1. Integrate More Speaking-Focused Activities

Given that the majority of students identified speaking as the most essential skill for their future profession, English courses should emphasize oral communication. Role plays, simulations of nurse-patient dialogues, and case-based discussions can effectively build fluency and confidence in professional settings.

2. Revise the Curriculum to Include ESP Content

With 87% of students preferring English for Specific Purposes (ESP) related to nursing, curriculum designers should incorporate materials that reflect real-life hospital contexts. Topics such as medical procedures, patient interaction, emergency response language, and documentation practices should be included.

3. Apply Communicative and Learner-Centered Approaches

Since students clearly favored interactive and collaborative learning environments, English classes should reduce lecture-based instruction and instead use task-based learning, group projects, and practical assignments to foster deeper engagement.

4. Increase Exposure to English Inside the Classroom

As most students rarely use English in their daily lives, classroom time should be optimized to provide immersive exposure. This could include English-only zones, the use of multimedia (videos, medical podcasts), and English-speaking guest lecturers from the health sector.

5. Encourage Collaboration Between English and Nursing Departments

A coordinated effort between the language and subject departments can ensure that English instruction aligns with clinical needs. Jointly developed modules can reflect actual nursing tasks, making learning more relevant and purposeful.

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