

## Strategic Imperatives: A Rigorous Examination of Needs Analysis in ESP Law Education for Optimal Learning Outcomes

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### Abstract:

There are 2 major categories in the field of English language teaching according to learning objectives and who the students are targeted for, namely *General English* and *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*. In ESP teaching, one of the pillars that plays a vital role is needs analysis as a basis for preparing or changing the curriculum. In the context of English learning at the Faculty of Law, research in the form of a needs analysis was carried out to find out whether the learning carried out was in accordance with the needs of the world of work (stakeholders) and the needs of the students. The results of this research become the basis for whether or not it is necessary to review and update the curriculum or English for Law learning system at Unmer Pasuruan. The research was conducted with three informants: legal practitioners as representatives of the stakeholders, alumni of the Faculty of Law, and active students of the Faculty of Law. The instruments used were semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The results of interviews stated that the materials and methods for learning English for Law were in accordance with the faculty curriculum and the objectives of the study. Students experience an increase in their English language skills, both passively and actively. They also realize that mastering English for Law will be useful in their real life. Alumni, stakeholders, and practitioners suggest that there should be an added focus on learning *speaking* and *writing*, including through case analysis presentations in English.

**Keywords:** *Needs Analysis, stakeholders, student needs, English for Law*

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## Introduction

In the field of English language teaching, there are 2 (two) major divisions according to the category of learning objectives and who the students are targeted at. The first is General English which teaches English to the general public to build or improve their English skills in terms of *listening, reading, writing, and speaking*, as well as *grammar* and *vocabulary*, for daily communication needs. The second category is *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*. Here, English is taught for communication purposes specific to the needs of students, whether they are students or professionals. Therefore, the learning methods and materials used must be in accordance with the needs of students according to their field or work they are pursuing. Students who take ESP class are those who take other field of study other than English Language and/or Literature. Therefore, the skills and competencies taught, as well as the type of reference used, will vary depending on the discipline studied by the learners. Some further

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categories of ESP are Tourism English (*English for Tourism*), Medical English, English for Law (*Legal English*), and Business English (*English for Business*) (Rachmawati et al., 2021, 2022).

Łuczak (2017) states that the characteristics of ESP are that it is designed to meet the needs of students, is related to the core material of the discipline that the student is studying, focuses on linguistic aspects that are relevant to that discipline, and is different from General English. When designing learning materials with an ESP framework, teachers must pay attention to the four pillars of ESP, namely needs analysis, learning objectives, materials and methods, and evaluation. These four pillars form a rotating cycle that is connected to each other and has a reciprocal relationship between the pillars. This indicates that there is a continuous process so that English learning is always relevant to the latest trends in the disciplines that students are studying. That way, teachers must reflect continuously.

Figure 1. 4 Pillars of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)



The first pillar, needs analysis, is absolutely necessary because this is the starting point for determining whether or not English language learning is necessary for students of certain departments or staff of certain departments. If this pillar is not carried out well or even at all, it is very likely that the objectives, methods, materials and learning assessments that are then prepared will be deemed irrelevant (Mahbub, 2018). In the dynamic landscape of education, the significance of conducting a thorough needs analysis cannot be overstated. This process, commonly referred to as need analysis, serves as a foundational pillar in the development and refinement of educational programs, ensuring they are not only effective but also tailored to the specific requirements of learners. Need analysis is a strategic approach that involves a systematic examination of the objectives, expectations, and challenges within a particular educational context (Supriyadi et al., 2019). Whether applied in language instruction, vocational training, or specialized courses such as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in law, the necessity of need analysis becomes increasingly apparent.

English courses themselves are almost always available in every faculty and department or study program as part of a series of several general (basic) courses (MKU/MKDU). This is also the case with Law Faculties in various higher education institutions in Indonesia. Ai et al. (2020) stated that mastery of English is important for Law Faculty students, especially so they can absorb information from various literature and be involved in legal discussions on an international scale. Apart from that, English language skills are *soft skill* which is useful when dealing with foreign clients, for example.

The Faculty of Law, Unmer Pasuruan is one of the four faculties at this private university. Its vision is to become a superior and competitive Faculty of Law, and its missions are (1) to provide quality and good education and teaching, research and community service, and (2) to collaborate with parties related to legal science to support the tri dharma universities

[3]. As part of the curriculum, FH Unmer Pasuruan presents an English for Law course for students in the second semester.

Like the process of developing curriculum or other instructional materials, a class with an ESP approach also follows a generally similar path. The initial step in building or updating a curriculum or instructional material is a needs analysis (*doing needs analysis*), then followed by research into the learner's specific environmental context (*investigating specialist discourse*), and the curriculum development process (*developing the curriculum*) (Meristo & López Arias, 2020). In addition, needs analysis that can be carried out to identify learning objectives and content includes target situation analysis (identification of learning outcomes), discourse analysis, analysis of students' current situation, analysis of learner factors (motivation, perception and way of learning), and analysis teaching context (Salehi et al., 2015). In this research, the analysis will focus on the target situation and learner factors. This is due to limited time and other resources, so these two factors are considered to be the first step in understanding the needs of students, namely students at the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan. Target situation analysis can be carried out by specifically identifying market needs, namely users of FH graduates from Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan. One of the graduate users is a legal practitioner who lives and practices in Pasuruan.

In the context of learning English at FH Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan, the needs analysis stage and the investigation stage of the student's special environment (*specialist discourse*) can simultaneously take place. In other words, for example, if an English teacher wants to provide reading skills material (*reading*) related to civil law, then he must be able to know what kind of texts students will read when they enter the world of the civil law profession. With the various considerations and conditions above, it can be stated the problems to be discussed in this study. That is, is learning English for Law at FH Unmer Pasuruan in line with market needs (graduate users) and student needs? From what perspective does the conformity/incongruity originate?

This research was conducted taking into account the condition that learning carried out in higher education institutions must always refer to the National Education System and be in accordance with the current education framework. In this case, the presentation of English courses is expected to support student competence, especially *soft skills*, in the field of communication which can later help them when entering the real-world situation or business. Therefore, from a practical perspective, the results of this research can be developed further by developing a curriculum that is more appropriate to the current conditions in the real world and students. In this way, there is a strong empirical basis regarding whether or not English language teaching, especially at the Faculty of Law, Unmer Pasuruan, needs to be reviewed and updated.

By understanding the specific needs, goals, and expectations of learners, educators can design courses that address these requirements effectively. In fields such as English for Specific Purposes (ESP), including law classes, this ensures that the curriculum aligns precisely with the linguistic and contextual demands of the profession. By identifying the critical areas of focus and potential challenges within a particular educational domain, institutions can allocate funds, faculty, and time judiciously. This not only maximizes the impact of resources but also ensures a cost-effective and efficient educational delivery. Education does not exist in a static environment, and need analysis acknowledges this reality. It sets the stage for continuous improvement by allowing educational institutions to adapt and evolve in response to changing trends, emerging technologies, and evolving industry demands. This adaptability ensures that educational programs remain current and produce graduates equipped for the challenges of the contemporary world.

## Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach because it aims to explore the meaning that each informant has regarding certain issues (Yin, 2016), namely regarding market and student needs for English language teaching at the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan. A qualitative approach was also appropriate in order to conduct in-depth analysis to the opinion of the informants regarding English language learning. The informants in this research consisted of legal practitioners in Pasuruan as representatives of users who graduated from the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan, alumni of the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan, and second year students of the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan who had taken ESP course, more precisely. This study uses purposive sampling to select the participants, according to the objectives of this research.

To spread the questionnaire to the students, the researchers used Google Forms questionnaire. At the time the research was conducted, there were 20 active students from the class of 2022/2023 (8 people in the regular class and 12 people in the employee class). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews (for legal practitioner informants in Pasuruan and alumni of FH Unmer Pasuruan) and a 5-Likert scale questionnaire for respondents who were active students of FH Unmer Pasuruan.

The preparation of instruments in the form of interviews and 5-Likert scale questionnaires begins with the formulation of blueprint basis for preparing statements in questionnaires and interview guides. Then, the researcher conducted pilot test for interview guides and questionnaires before both instruments are ready to be used. Interviews with legal practitioners are conducted face-to-face or offline, while interviews with alumni are conducted online. Meanwhile, questionnaires were distributed to the intended students via the Google Forms platform. Data obtained from interviews and Likert scale questionnaires were processed and analyzed qualitatively (Creswell, 2014). Data from interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques and data from questionnaires were analyzed descriptively.

## Results and Discussion

From interviews with legal practitioners, information was obtained that in the world of law, English is mainly used in the context of communication with foreign clients, both spoken and written. The form is in the form of writing a letter of agreement in two languages (Indonesian and English) or interpreting when dealing with verbal communication with clients. In Indonesian law itself, the foreign language that is widely adopted and helps shape the concept of the existing legal system is Dutch. This is natural because the legal system in Indonesia is a legacy of the Dutch legal system (Fadel & Rajab, 2017).

Thus, not all legal practitioners will come into contact with English when carrying out their duties. Agreement letters are mostly handled by notaries, so they are more likely to use English for Law in writing if there is a letter of agreement between an Indonesian company or individual and a foreign company or individual (Serafini et al., 2015). Other practitioners who use English are advocates/lawyers who have to handle cases involving foreign clients.

However, Indonesian legal practitioners (whose system adheres to civil law such as the Netherlands) continue to hone their insights and compare the principles that apply in Indonesia with the principles that are applied in other countries with different systems (including the common law) (Zhu & Liu, 2014). Because the country adheres to the system common law generally speaking English, Indonesian legal practitioners must also be able to understand the terms Typical legal terms and concepts common law in English.

Based on the practitioner informant's study history, English for Law and Dutch are included in the curriculum of the Law Faculty where the participant studied. However, in its development, English for Law received more attention so that learning Dutch was put aside. In the learning process, English for Law contains a lot of material vocabulary and legal terminology. It is felt that this is enough for students to prepare themselves when they face foreign clients in various legal systems in the future (Mohammadi & Mousavi, 2013).

Practitioner informants provide input so that there is an agreement between higher education institutions. Thus, all universities provide material that is in accordance with the curriculum and needs of the field of study. The second input from the participants was to focus on writing and speaking skills required for the field of writing contracts or agreements in English as well as oral communication with foreign clients.

Interviews were also conducted with alumni who also work as legal consultants in property companies and entrepreneurs. According to the informant, one of the duties was to write contracts in English and the English for Law lessons learned at college were very useful in this regard (Nimasari, 2018). This task is carried out quite often so the frequency of use of English is high. However, this cannot be generalized to all alumni because most of the alumni's professions do not require them to use English, their English for Law skills will only be considered if the participants want to advance their career path to handle international cases.

In terms of the learning that informants have undergone at FH Unmer Pasuruan, the learning materials and methods are considered adequate, help students' understanding because they are applicable, and motivate students with input from lecturers about the importance of mastering English for Law in the future in the real world. Specifically, regarding the evaluation of learning outcomes, the alumnus informant suggested to practice speaking which requires students analyze international cases and present them in English.

Meanwhile, the questionnaire for active students is divided into four broad categories, namely student motivation in learning English for Law, student perceptions regarding learning English for Law, student preferences for the English for Law learning system, and targets for learning English for Law. The following is a summary of the questionnaire results from each category.

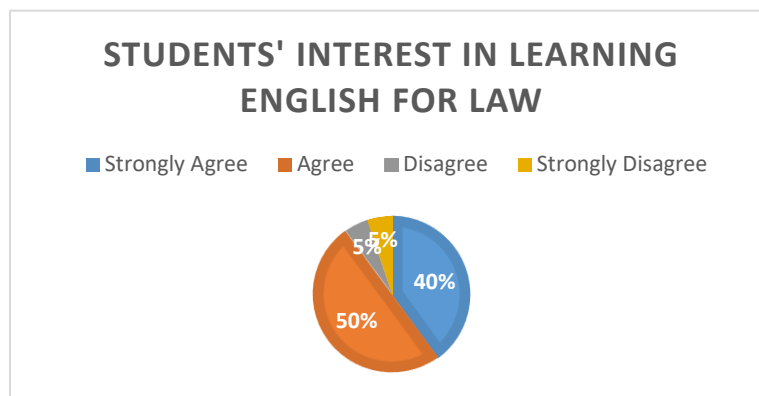


Figure 2. Response to the statement "I am interested to learn English"

Regarding student motivation, if faced with two choices, namely reading books and/or scientific works in English or Indonesian, 50% of respondents agreed and 40% strongly agreed with the statement "I am interested in learning English". This is supported by the enthusiasm of the respondents, all of whom stated that they actively participate in English for Law learning activities and always complete the assigned tasks well and on time. In terms of

factors in student participation in English for Law courses, most of the respondents stated that they would continue to take English for Law lessons even if the learning was not mandatory. Moreover, most of respondents thought that English for Law should be made a compulsory subject for them. Thus, it can be concluded that law students do have high motivation in studying English for Law, not only as a fulfillment of their lecture obligations.

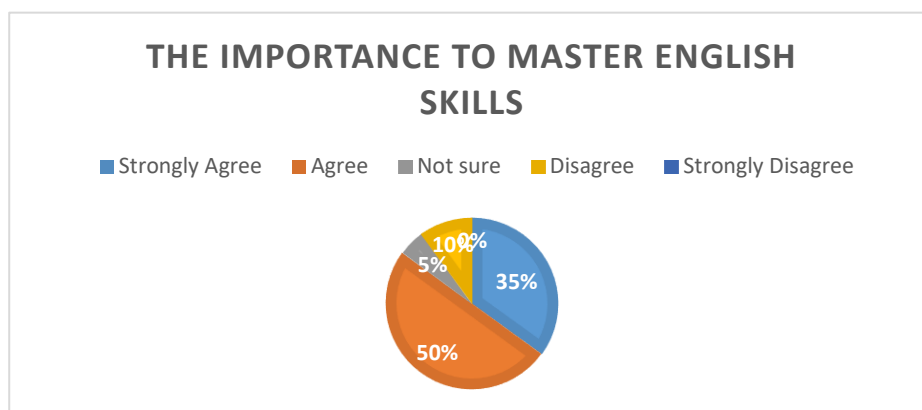


Figure 3. Responses to the statement "In my opinion, English for law is important to be mastered by Law students"

Respondents perceive English for Law as something important. Figure 3 illustrates that when asked the statement "In my opinion, students have to master English for Law skills", the respondents stated that they need to master English for law for their job or their future work. It is proved because 50% students stated that learning English for Law is important for them. Considering the important role of English for Law, the choice of learning method used must be appropriate.

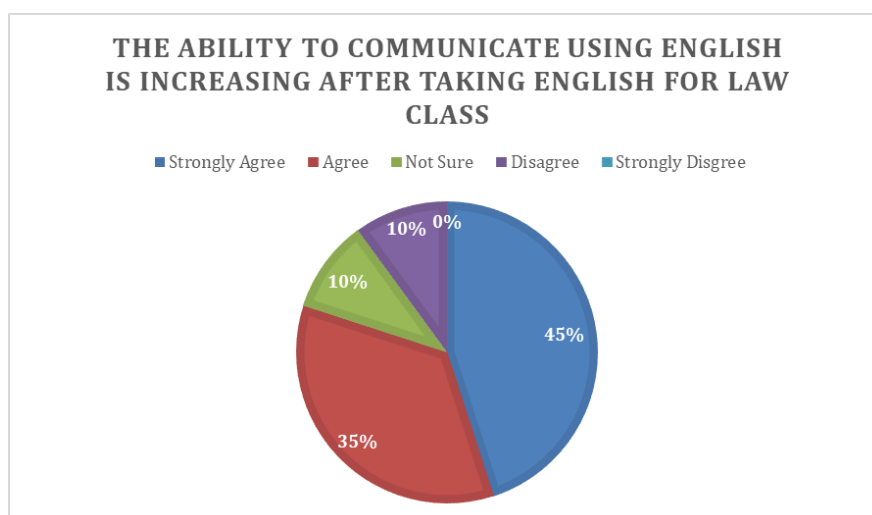


Figure 4. Responses to the statement "After taking the English for Law course, I feel that my ability to communicate using English has increased"

After participating in English for Law subject, 45% of respondents strongly agreed and 35% agreed that there was an increase in their ability to communicate in English after learning English for Law course, as shown in Figure 4. Most of the students did not find it difficult to understand the latest information about Legal Studies in English. Apart from that, the

respondents were able to see the connection and continuity of learning English for Law with the study program curriculum and they understood the importance of English for Law for them in the real-world situation and for their future.

## Conclusion

From the results of this study with legal practitioners and alumni of the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan, as well as questionnaires among active students of the faculty, it can be concluded that the materials and methods for learning English for Law at the faculty are in accordance with the overall faculty curriculum and existing learning objectives. In terms of suitability to market needs (graduate users), the learning system is also adequate because it is considered applicable and motivating for students, even though the level of use of English in the legal world will be greatly influenced by the field of work and each individual's career advancement plans.

Active students feel there are benefits in improving their ability to use English both passively and actively. They also feel that mastering English for Law will be useful for their future work. The obstacles felt were only technical in nature, and only some students felt them. In this way, it can be concluded that learning English at Faculty of Law, Unmer Pasuruan is sufficient to meet student needs.

There are a number of valuable inputs regarding the implementation of English for Law learning in the faculty of law environment. Firstly, it is hoped that there will be an agreement made by higher education institutions so that English for Law learning in all institutions is in line with the needs of their real world and the Law Faculty curriculum in general. Second, it is necessary to carry out learning activities that focus on writing skill (example: writing an agreement letter in English) and speaking skill (communicate orally in English in a legal context). International case analysis presentations can also be carried out using English. This activity also functions as an evaluation of student learning.

Despite various limitations, it is hoped that this research will be a good initial basis for improving English for Law learning, especially at the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan. A similar needs analysis can be carried out in other faculties within the same university, or in other law faculties, in order to strengthen the basis for preparing a curriculum that is in accordance with national standards and the needs of various stakeholders' element. From the results of this study with legal practitioners and alumni of the Faculty of Law, Universitas Merdeka Pasuruan, as well as questionnaires among active students of the faculty, it can be concluded that the materials and methods for learning English for Law at the faculty are in accordance with the overall faculty curriculum and existing learning objectives. In terms of suitability to market needs (graduate users), the learning system is also adequate because it is considered applicable and motivating for students, even though the level of use of English in the legal world will be greatly influenced by the field of work and each individual's career advancement plans.

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