# An Evaluation on English for Pharmacy Class:
## Students' Perception

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## ABSTRACT

English for Specific Purpose is a learning program specially designed to meet students' needs in a particular area. One such area is English for pharmacy, which is taught at the pharmacy academy. However, not many pieces of research are devoted to investigating the learners' needs in pharmacy. This research was aimed to evaluate the English for Specific Course conducted by exploring students' perceptions during the 1st half-semester, 2019/2020 academic year. A survey method was accomplished by distributing questionnaires and interviewing 160 participants in one of Tasikmalaya's public university. One hundred thirty-six submitted the online questionnaires in the google form. The result was transcribed and analyzed to get research findings. It covered the evaluation of learning objectives, content, and the learning process. From those components, students considered that learning objectives had met their hopes and needs, the course contents had given them much knowledge of English, and the learning process had run effectively and efficiently. Therefore for handling significantly few negative responses, the lecturer should consider them for future improvement.

*Keywords: Course evaluation, Course content, ESP, Learning objectives, Learning process*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the increasing need for English mastery for professional pharmacists (Filice & Sturino, 2002), English teaching for pharmacy presents some challenges. Voices from the classroom mention some obstacles such as students' lack of English ability, mixed-abilities students, course syllabus design. Besides, a debate on whether the ESP teachers have to focus on the content or the language skills continues.

Course evaluation is essential for the stakeholders, as it can identify the running course's weaknesses and strengths. In the end, they can improve performance, demonstrate what they have delivered promised, and justify why they should continue (Nixon & Salazar, 2015). In this perspective, the evaluation makes sure that the stakeholder can deliver all the learning programs and convince students' English ability upon graduation.

English for Specific Purposes is teaching and learning process which focuses on different teaching method and learning experience to general English (Rahman, 2015). Robinson stated three differences between general English and ESP. Those are (1) objective-oriented

learning activity, the students learn English is not because of the language itself but also for specific goals in an academic and professional field, (2) the course content is designed and developed based on students' need analysis, and (3) it is especially proposed to adult learners (Sari, Kuncoro, & Erlangga, 2019).

Besides, ESP is an effort or program that facilitates learners' English needs to run a specific role. The examples are English for engineering, English for pharmacy, English for the nurse, English for midwifery, English for management, English for tourism, English or accounting, and other fields. It does need appropriate and much-related content to a particular field (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

English for Specific Purposes is related to the raises of certain activities, movements, and subjects done in English in the whole world, considered from working or career demands (Steven, 1977, as cited in Harrabi, 2018). ESP assists language learners in handling certain language features in workplaces. Therefore, it promotes language skill improvement, which is not only oriented on sentence structure and word combination but also on word choices in various texts (Kitkauskiene, 2006) as

cited in (Khoirunnisa, Suparno, & Supriyadi, 2018). Furthermore, in the last learning activity, evaluation and assessment on the syllabus are carried out. It measures the entire performance to reach the goals (Umera-Okeke & Okeke, 2014).

Dudley Evans (1998, as cited in Ibrahim, 2016) stated that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is defined to fulfill the specific needs of students. It uses both methodology and activities which underlie a particular field of study. It is also centralized to language activities such as lexis, grammar, passage, and genre. ESP for adults commonly has Basic English skills, and they are learning to communicate concerning professional and career demands (Hutauruk, 2012). The characteristic of ESP is to fulfill specific learning needs (Javid, 2013). Besides, ESP teaching methodology is appropriate with another language teaching model. In other words, ESP shapes input, motivates students' desire in learning, manages learning strategy, and promotes its practices and uses (Stevens, 1988, as cited in Eddine, 2016).

Due to the above description, English for pharmacy is designed to provide students' knowledge of the pharmacy field. It is in line with the syllabus arranged by the lecturer. It covers English skills, such as speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Nevertheless, it is not limited to them because the learning activity is formulated to improve their critical thinking and vocabulary mastery.

Evaluation is an essential stage in every ESP course. This stage is inseparable from the course design, including need analysis, syllabus design, course content, teaching methodology, learning activities, and implementation, and assessment (Momeni & Rasekh, 2012, as cited in Celik & Topkaya, 2016). Hutchinson & Waters (1987, as cited in Hatam & Shafiei, 2012), declared four main aspects from ESP course evaluation. Those are (a) what should be evaluated? (b) How can the ESP course be evaluated? (c) Who will be engaged in the evaluation? (d) When should evaluation be taken?

The aspects mentioned above become a consideration since many teachers directly design the course and the materials. However, both tend to be irrelevant to students' specific needs (Baştürkmen, H., & Bocanegra-Valle, 2018). ESP forces teachers and course developers to investigate students' needs and course design (Basturkmen, 2010).

Given the significant roles of the course evaluation in ESP, this research aims to get students' perceptions of English for pharmacy and the lecturer's performance in teaching. Thus the result can establish whether English learning activity meets the students' expectations or not.

## 2. METHOD

This research is aimed to evaluate the learning objective, course content, and learning process in English for pharmacy class. Thus a survey method was taken in this research. Check and Schutt (2012, as cited in Ponto, 2015), stated that a survey is collecting information from individual sampling through the response to questions. Besides, this method is used to answer the proposed questions to assess needs and to decide objectives. (Isaac & Michael, 1997, as cited in Glasow, 2005). Kerlinger (1973, as cited in Mathiyazhagan & Nandan, 2010) classified the data collection method into a personal interview, questionnaire, a phone call, and observation.

Thus, in this research, the data was taken from questionnaires and interviews. Both data collections proposed the same instruments. The interview was conducted through a phone call. However, the participants had an opportunity to convey their opinions toward the response. There are 23 adopted items in the questionnaire (Yuvayapan, 2015). The first five are about learning objectives. The next 12 items are about the course content. Moreover, the rest is about the learning process. As many as 160 pharmacy students submitted the online questionnaires. The participants were selected since they learn ESP. Thus an evaluation of this class was possibly carried out. Six out of one hundred sixty participants were phoned to avoid misunderstanding about the questionnaire itself. The questions were in the form of close-ended questions by choosing the provided statements (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree). Then the total number of choices will be divided by the number of total participants. The result was automatically calculated in the Google form for percentage.

For the sake of understanding, the questionnaires were written in Bahasa Indonesia to convince that the participants understand each meaning of the questionnaire's statements. The questionnaires were distributed online, and the results were analyzed with statistical tools into a percentage. The researcher also got additional data by conducting interviews with specific participants who did not fill the questionnaire online. The results of the interviews were transcribed and checked for validation with the interviewee. The results were used to supplement the questionnaire data in terms of narrative.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The followings are findings and discussion in this research. It was reported based on the research categories, including learning objectives, course content, and the learning process. The English class description is also presented to provide a general overview of the course under study.

### 3.1 Course Overview

One of the public universities in Tasikmalaya provides an English course in the even semester with two credits. This general basic course served to complete students' English skills, emphasizing recognizing pharmaceutical terms. During the class, language aspects are integrated comprehensively due to the improvement of students' skills. The aspects are vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

The learning objectives are (1) students can enrich their knowledge in the pharmaceutical field, (2) students can improve their English skills by integrating language aspects completely, (3) students can implement their English skills for daily life.

From the above learning objectives, they are separated into specific objectives. Students are expected to be able in (1) understanding learning concept, general topics to learn, evaluation criteria, and other supporting components in teaching and learning process, as well as showing positive attitude on English, (2) knowing hospital departments and directing the appropriate ways to go, (3) recognizing about pharmacist and the responsibility as well as having good mastery on present continuous, (4) establishing general concept of pharmacy and specific terms related to the topic as well as knowing subject and predicate agreement in nominal sentence, (5) knowing types of pharmacist based on the passage as well as arranging sentences using resent tense well, (6) identifying OTC drugs as well as comprehending past tense, (7) classifying types of medicine from its shape as well as using present perfect tense correctly, (8) describing good pharmacist as well as understanding present continuous, (9) knowing the dose of administering medicine, (10) recognizing ways of administering medication, (11) describing frequency of administering medication and their standard abbreviations, (12) knowing the history of pharmaceutical company, (13) knowing tools in laboratory and their functions, and (14) reviewing the overall materials in the 2nd half semester.

In order to reach the above objectives and sub-objectives, the followings are the course materials to learn: Getting to know about hospital departments, A Pharmacy, Pharmacist, Pharmacist job description, Prescription & Over-the-counter (OTC) Drugs, Intelligence Pills, Medical Prescription, Confirming Measurements, Administering Medication, Describing Frequency of Administering Medication, Pharmaceutical Company, and Laboratory.

### 3.2 Learning objectives

In this category, there are five items. They are (1) the course met my expectations, (2) the course met my needs regarding listening skills, (3) the course met my needs regarding speaking skills, (4) the course met my needs regarding reading skills, (5) the course met my needs regarding writing skills. Figure 1 shows the diagram of students' perception of learning objectives of English for pharmacy class.
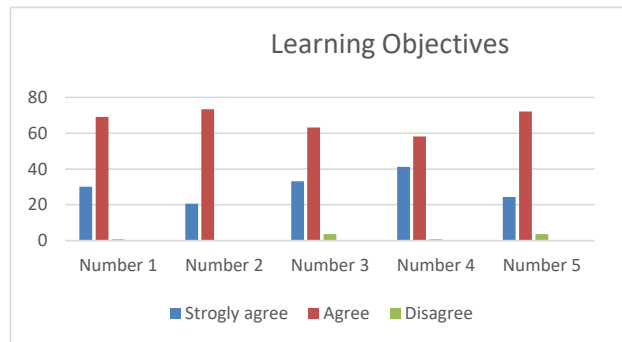


**Figure 1** Learning Objectives

The result for statement **number 1** showed that 41 students (30.1%) strongly agreed to the statement, 94 students (69.1%) agreed, and only one student (0.8%) disagreed. Statement **number 2** showed that 28 students (20.7%) strongly agreed to the statement, 99 students (73.3%) students agreed, and one student did not give any response. The result for statement **number 3** showed that 45 students (33.1%) strongly agreed to the statement, 86 students (63.2%) agreed, and five students (3.7%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 4** showed that 56 students (41.2%) strongly agreed to the statement, 79 students (58.1%) agreed, and only one student (0.7%) disagreed. While the result for statement **number 5** showed that 33 students (24.3%) strongly agreed to the statement, 98 students (72.1%) agreed, and five students (3,6%) disagreed.

Besides the result from the questionnaire, six participants conveyed their responses by phone call. Generally, they agreed that the course met their expectation, including the skill of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, reaching the objectives were challenging for a very few students, especially for those who had no adequate Basic English skill. So at the end of the session, it remained some confusion for them. They failed to reach the decided learning objectives.

Providing both diagram and percentage form is to assist readers in comprehending the data. In this category, generally, students had stated that the learning objectives were successfully reached. It was seen from every single percentage got. Meanwhile, very few students disagreed with them. Then the teacher needs to give additional time to those with inadequate Basic English skills.

### 3.3 Course Content

In this category, 12 statements were provided. Those are (1) the course materials provided me with what I needed to know or to do, (2) the course materials allowed vocabulary improvement, (3) the course

materials improved language skills, (4) the course materials provided an authentic situation in the learning process, (5) the course materials engaged students in classroom activity, (6) the curse materials were oriented to motivate students in learning independently, (7) the course materials were in line with course objectives, (8) the course materials and their structures were appropriate, (9) the course materials had variety, (10) the course materials were informative, (11) the course materials gave a better influence on students' ability, (12) the course materials were able to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. Figure 2 shows the diagram of students' perception of course content/materials of English for pharmacy class
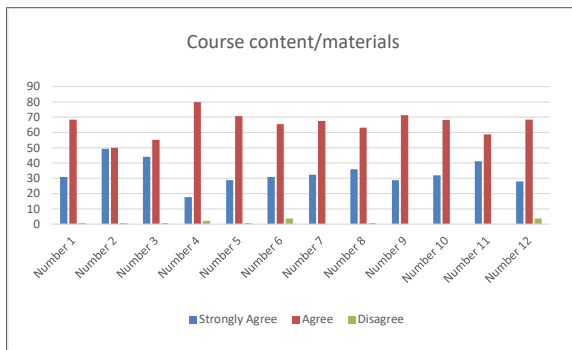


**Figure 2** Course Content/Materials

The result for statement **number 1** showed that 42 students (30.9%) strongly agreed to the statement, 93 students (68.4%) agreed, and only one student (0.7%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 2** showed that 67 students (49.3%) strongly agreed to the statement, 68 students (50%) agreed, and only one student (0.7%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 3** showed that 60 students (44.1%) strongly agreed to the statement, 75 students (55.1%) agreed, and only one student (0.8%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 4** showed that 24 students (17.6%) strongly agreed to the statement, 108 students (80%) agreed, three students (2.2%) disagreed, and one student (0.2%) did not give any response. The result for statement **number 5** showed that 39 students (28.7%) strongly agreed to the statement, 96 students (70.6%) agreed, and only one student (0.7%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 6** showed that 42 students (30.9%) strongly agreed to the statement, 89 students (65.4%) agreed, and five students (3.7%) disagreed. Statement **number 7** showed that 44 students (32.4%) strongly agreed to the statement, and 92 students (67.6%) agreed. The result for statement **number 8** showed that 49 students (36%) strongly agreed to the statement, 86 students (63.2%) agreed, and only one student (0.8%) disagreed. Statement **number 9** showed that 39 students (28.7%) strongly agreed to the statement, and 97 students (71.3%) agreed. The result for statement **number 10** showed that 43 students (31.9%) strongly agreed to the statement, 92 students (68.1%) agreed, and only one student didn't give any response. Statement

**number 11** showed that 56 students (41.2%) strongly agreed with the statement, 80 students (58.8%) agreed. The result for statement **number 12** showed that 38 students (27.9%) strongly agreed to the statement, 93 students (68.4%) agreed, four students (3.7%) disagreed, and one student did not give any response.

Some feedback is given from the interview; six participants generally agreed that course materials met their pharmacy students' needs. Materials were also delivered as its syllabus. The length of the study was something they want to be added. They expected English to learn not only in a single semester. Two semesters will fit more with their needs. One of the reasons is their different English learning backgrounds, while everyone was aware of English's importance for their future career.

In conclusion, it was known that course materials positively influence students' learning experience. It was concluded that course materials were in line with the learning objectives and positively impacted students' abilities.

### 3.4 Teaching and learning process

In this category, there are seven items. Those are (1) there was an effective and efficient use of time in class, (2) it was easy to follow the teacher, (3) there was an excellent student-teacher interaction in the course, (4) the students had a cooperative relationship with each other, (5) the teacher was teaching interestingly, (6) the teaching methodology of the teacher was influential in our learning, and (7) the teacher was encouraging us to participate in the lessons. Figure 3 shows the diagram of students' perception of the teaching and learning process of English for pharmacy class.
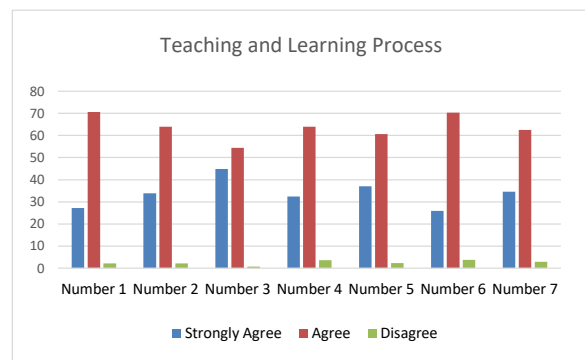


**Figure 3** Teaching and Learning Process

The result for statement **number 1** showed that 37 students (27.2%) strongly agreed to the statement, 96 students (70.6%) agreed, and three students (2.2%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 2** showed that 46 students (33.8%) strongly agreed to the statement, 87 students (64%) agreed, and three students (2.2%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 3** showed that 61 students (44.9%) strongly agreed to the statement, 74 students (54.4%) agreed, and only one student (0.7%)

disagreed. The result for statement **number 4** showed that 44 students (32.4%) strongly agreed to the statement, 87 students (64%) agreed, and five students (3.6%) disagreed. The result for statement **number 5** showed that 50 students (37%) strongly agreed to the statement, 82 students (60.7%) agreed, three students (2.3%) disagreed, and one student did not give any response. The result for statement **number 6** showed that 35 students (25.9%) strongly agreed to the statement, 95 students (70.4%) agreed, five students (3.7%) disagreed, and one student did not give any response. The result for statement **number 7** showed that 47 students (34.6%) strongly agreed to the statement, 85 students (62.5%) agreed, and four students (2.9%) disagreed.

The responses from the interview generally stated that the course had a positive impact on their English knowledge. The success of reaching learning objectives was not separated from the success of the teaching and learning process done by the teacher. However, very few students did not understand the teacher's explanation; it was influenced again by their English learning background and the number of students in the class, which reached 45-50. It affected to equal distribution of students' knowledge.

To sum up, this research's teaching and learning process looked very effective and efficient and easy to follow and understand. Thus the role of teacher or lecturer had been very optimal based on students' perception. Although very few students considered it less optimal, the lecturer should find the best solution. Thus all students were able to join the class effectively.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study evaluates English for Pharmacy class, an ESP subject conducted at one public health university in Tasikmalaya. The analyses cover three areas the learning objective, course content, and learning process. Course evaluation is essential because it provides empirical feedback on the teaching-learning process that can be used for course improvement in the following semester. This study concludes that the learning objectives determined by the lecturer, and in line with the institution's vision and the mission, had already been reached successfully. It met students' expectations of English courses and their language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Another finding is that course materials/content can enrich students' knowledge, improve their vocabulary mastery, develop their language skills, provide an authentic situation in the learning process, engage students in classroom activity, provide students to learn independently, have the appropriateness on course materials, have the appropriate material structure, have a variety of course materials, have informative course materials, give a better influence on learning, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of students. The last finding is that the teaching and learning English process was effective and efficient, easy to follow, had good student-teacher interactions, built cooperative relationships, had an exciting teaching process, had a practical methodology, and encouraged active participation.

Given the previous findings, it is recommended that the teachers give additional time to the students who have no adequate Basic English skills. Since they have a multi-level class to teach, differentiated learning can be applied to the class. To do this, teachers should prepare a different worksheet for different levels. Thus, each level can keep up with the class progress. Also, a smaller class with 20-25 students will be easier for the teachers to handle. For this purpose, each class, which usually consists of forty students, can be divided into two when they have an English class. In addition to smaller classes, teachers had better vary their teaching methods to keep students' motivated to maximize their learning outcome. Further research can investigate curriculum and material development based on students' necessities, lacks, and wants.

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