

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to offer a clear understanding of how the present study is carried out. It covers several topics, including the research background, problem, objectives, significance, scope and limitations, and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

English has become a universally acknowledged language for communication, widely utilized in multiple nations and across diverse professional fields. This growing significance has led to the expansion of a specific area within English Language Teaching (ELT) known as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Bouabdallah & Bouyacoub, 2017). As stated by Setyowati et al., (2023), the main objective of ESP is to provide a targeted and efficient learning experience for individuals seeking to develop their English language skills. By concentrating on vocabulary, terminology, and communication strategies specific to various industries, ESP helps learners gain the language skills they need to thrive in their fields. This targeted learning approach aims to simplify language acquisition, making it more attainable and useful for those aiming for professional development.

Despite the growing demand for ESP teaching, its practical application remains challenging. Research undertaken by Poedjiastutie (2017) reveals that some students expressed dissatisfaction with their ESP teacher's selection of materials. For instance, some students noted that the ESP teachers utilized teaching materials that closely resembled those employed by the English Department for General English (GE) instruction. Furthermore, the results of the study conducted by Iswati & Triastuti (2021) also reveal that a lack of proper needs analysis is one of the problems faced by ESP teachers in non-English departments. Insufficient needs analysis leads to ESP teachers bearing an unrealistic workload of syllabus design and material selection without institutional collaboration. Some teachers take the initiative to conduct surveys independently to gather information about students' learning needs. However, it is very challenging to directly obtain

information from students to identify their actual needs, as opposed to just their preferences.

In Indonesia, the food and beverage sector presently plays a notable role in contributing to the economy (Ragimun & Sri Widodo, 2019). Further, these two researchers explain that the growth of the food and beverage industry can be attributed mainly to the emergence of new investments, increased consumer purchasing power, and population growth—averaging 1.49 percent annually over the past decade, as reported by Statistics Indonesia (BPS) in 2018. Recent data from BPS also show that the food and beverage industry recorded a GDP growth of 4.62% (year-on-year) in the second quarter of 2023, slightly lower than the 5.35% recorded in the previous quarter. Despite this slight decline, the sector remained the main driver of the manufacturing industry, contributing 34% to the manufacturing sector's GDP in the same period (Mustajab, 2023). Given the economic significance and ongoing development of this sector, professionals in the food and beverage industry including future graduates of Food Technology are expected to engage in international collaboration, trade and access to global information. This condition emphasizes the importance of English proficiency as a key skill and therefore it is necessary to explore the English language needs of students in the Food Technology Department.

In the context of Indonesia, numerous researchers have conducted studies focusing on the needs analysis of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) across various academic disciplines. For instance, Saputro & Hima (2018) conducted a study on International Relations students, Maisaroh (2016) examined Biology students, and Saragih (2014) investigated students in the field of Nursing. These studies aimed to determine the appropriate objectives, subjects, and learning methods for each study program, enabling students to acquire the necessary English skills for their future endeavors. However, there is a scarcity of research discussing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for students in Agricultural Faculties, particularly within the Food Technology program. This gap exists in terms of both identifying their needs and designing a suitable syllabus.

Based on the situation described, the researcher recognizes the importance of exploring the specific English needs required by Food Technology students. This research aims to help English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers in Indonesia by identifying effective teaching methods and appropriate English materials tailored to the needs of Food Technology students. The results of the needs analysis conducted in this study will contribute to form the basis for developing the course syllabus.

1.2 Research Problem

1. What are the actual English needs of Food Technology students?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to explore and determine the specific English language needs of students in the Food Technology program.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on exploring the English language needs of students in the Food Technology Department at a private university in Malang, Indonesia. The participants include all students, both those who are currently taking the ESP course and those who have completed it. The data were gathered using questionnaires and interviews, without including any formal English proficiency tests. Because the research was carried out within a limited time, its coverage was also limited. Therefore, the results may not fully represent students from other departments or universities.

1.5 Research Significant

The findings of this research attempt to contribute to ESP lecturers, Food Technology department students, and future researchers. For the ESP lecturers, the findings of this study are expected to help ESP lecturers in choosing the proper teaching material and method for food technology department students. For the students, this study can be a reference in finding out what their English needs during

the learning process and future career. For future researchers, this study can serve a valuable reference point, providing a foundation to explore further research questions related to Food Technology English needs.

1.6 The Definition of Key Terms

1. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a program designed to meet the specific needs of learners based on their field of study or future profession.
2. Needs analysis is a systematic and continuous process of identifying students' learning needs, analyzing the collected data, and making informed instructional decisions to effectively address those needs.
3. Food Technology is a field of science focused on using technological methods to process, preserve, package, and distribute food materials so they become safe, nutritious, high-quality products.

