Needs analysis on task-based English for occupational purposes model: A case of English for civil engineering in Bali State polytechnic

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the criteria for a task-based English for Occupational Purposes model at Bali State Polytechnic's Civil Engineering Department. The current English syllabus does not match the civil engineering industry's particular communicative and professional criteria. Thus, a needs analysis was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, combining surveys and interviews with instructors, students, and course coordinators, and analyzing the curricular materials. Data was analyzed in three stages: reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The results revealed flaws in the current curriculum, including outdated pedagogical methods, poor use of discipline-specific terminology, lack of student-centered events, and insufficient instructional tools. Students showed inadequate mastery of basic English skills, particularly in completing assignments related to their disciplines. Moreover, teachers and students understood how unsuccessful traditional teaching strategies were, including passive lectures and inadequately used peer evaluations. These shortcomings highlight the need for a more contextualized, interactive, and task-oriented English learning strategy. It concludes that a task-based English curriculum, including real-world engineering projects, varied learning materials, and group activities, will better meet students' academic and professional needs. Thus, the institution should review and change the syllabi by including industry-relevant capabilities to enable students to communicate in English effectively.

Keywords: Civil engineering, Curriculum development, English for occupational purposes, Needs analysis, Task-based learning.

1. Introduction

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has long influenced second and foreign language acquisition by emphasizing real-life communication and student-centered learning. However, as global communication impacts job expectations, language education has to change to fit particular occupational environments, especially for students in vocational and professional courses like civil engineering. Particularly in English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), a rising issue in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is the discrepancy between the English education given and the real communicative activities students would encounter in their future occupations. This discrepancy usually comes from the ongoing use of generic syllabi that fail to meet technical sector students' particular linguistic and task-based needs. As such, teachers and students battle with the application and relevancy of the content presented in the classroom.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) presents a pedagogical alternative that stresses real-world language use through meaningful tasks, bridging this gap. Students in disciplines like civil engineering, where communication is not just intellectual but also practical and professional, should especially pay attention to this method. TBLT helps students acquire linguistic abilities through exercises reflecting

real-life engineering situations, fostering deeper learning and skill transferability. Creating a TBLT-based curriculum requires first doing a task-based needs analysis (NA). Long [1] defines a thorough NA as having three levels: (1) identifying real-world tasks (goal tasks) performed in the target occupation, (2) classifying them into more general task types for curriculum development, and (3) translating these into pedagogical tasks fit for classroom use. Many schools lack methodical systems for using NA results for TBLT-based syllabus design, even with developments in this sector [2].

Given the Civil Engineering Study Program of Bali State Polytechnic, where English education is sometimes seen as too broad and detached from the actual communication needs in civil engineering practice, this research is urgently relevant. Stakeholder comments and past document studies show that current syllabi do not reflect students' needs, wants, or learning preferences. Moreover, education stays teacher-centered and mostly depends on conventional approaches and obsolete tools, restricting student involvement and the pragmatic value of classroom learning.

The uniqueness of this study is its concentrated integration of a task-based requirements analysis that is especially suited to the civil engineering context in an Indonesian polytechnic environment. Unlike other research with generic TBLT models, this one offers a thorough, context-sensitive evaluation of the linguistic and task requirements experienced by civil engineering students. It generates a grounded and practical TBLT syllabus model by combining ideas from curriculum developers, teachers, and students. Specifically, this research attempts to list the communicative chores needed in the professional civil engineering environment (necessities) and examine the present gaps between the syllabus and the needs of the pupils (lacks). This study is expected to improve ESP policies in vocational education by ensuring that English language instruction guarantees students' academic achievement and professional preparation for civil engineering.

2. Literature Review

Needs analysis (NA) is essential for educators as it enables them to identify requirements for the instructional process [3]. A need is defined as the disparity between the present and desired states in learning. Padmadewi, et al. [3] asserted that all educational endeavors, training, and performance enhancement must commence with a needs analysis, which is essential for instructors to determine students' requirements. Needs analysis is crucial for students and educators, facilitating teachers in assessing students' target and learning requirements [4, 5]. Research and publications on TBLT have been conducted extensively. Some scholarly studies presented an unfavorable perspective, while others yielded positive commentary. The perspectives varied by the objectives the learner aims to achieve.

Sato [6] evaluated the suitability of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in facilitating English language acquisition among students in Japan. The study concluded that TBLT was ineffective for learning, particularly regarding students' exam performance. Consistent with this failure, Bruton [7] and Swan [8] identified a common rationale for the tendency of Japanese learners to disregard TBLT. These considerations mostly pertain to learner needs, target audience, cultural background, and learning objectives. TBLT was distinct from Japanese learners, who prioritized acquiring grammar to excel in English tests while neglecting communication skills. Japanese learners assert that form-focused training is significantly more advantageous than meaning-focused instruction. Moreover, culturally, Japanese students are influenced by Confucian beliefs that ascribe greater authority to instructors than to learners, resulting in a pedagogical approach that is predominantly teacher-centered rather than learner-centered [6, 8, 9].

Ellis [10] explains that TBLT has several challenges in Asian contexts, including teachers' limited proficiency in the target language, lack of confidence, and difficulty managing tasks in large classes. Besides, he also believes that students may be unprepared for TBLT due to their focus on explicit language learning and lack of experience using language communicatively. Additionally, rigid curricula and test systems prioritizing grammar and accuracy over communication hinder effective TBLT implementation. Furthermore, Widdowson [11] discovered that TBLT overlooked semantic meaning, rendering English learning indistinguishable from typical learning activities. Finally, Swan [8]

observed that TBLT presents uncertain linguistic objectives and excludes certain grammatical elements from its curriculum. Despite those failures, TBLT was regarded as a successful learning strategy by several scholars.

Ellis [12] and Edwards and Willis [13] asserted that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) can enhance learners' communicative competence, a capability that form-focused training does not provide. TBLT facilitates effective second language acquisition (SLA) for several reasons: it promotes reliance on communicative language teaching (CLT), addresses the shortcomings of the test-teach-test (TTT) and presentation-practice-production (PPP) models, treats language as a medium rather than a mere learning object, and engages students in the practical use of language. Furthermore, Samuda and Bygate [14] posited a favorable assertion regarding TBLT, suggesting that tasks engage learners comprehensively to attain non-linguistic objectives. Hashemi, et al. [15] and Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu [16] asserted that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is beneficial for several reasons: it enables learners to acquire authentic language, facilitates genuine learner output, enhances communicative competence through comprehensible input, encourages meaningful language use, and demonstrates significant adaptability.

Moreover, TBLT is highly effective when incorporated into meaningful language activities such as problem-solving, project completion, decision-making, and solution-finding through group discussions Seyyedi and Ismail [17]. Rahimpour [18] contends that this approach must be accompanied by an analytical syllabus that offers tasks for learners to accomplish in the target language. Consequently, learners will undoubtedly discover that TBLT is significant. Another sort of syllabus that enhances TBLT performance is the procedural syllabus, which emphasizes meaning. Unconscious learning via the 'focus-on-meaning' strategy will expedite learners' language acquisition and proficiency [19]. Language acquisition in learners can be augmented by presenting tasks that incorporate authentic, suitable, and effective language use. This initiative will undoubtedly improve learners' pragmatic competency, specifically the ability to use language functionally and contextually accurately [20]. To do this, they assert that educators must provide students with intelligible input. Consequently, the inputs must be explicit. The clearer the inputs, the more readily they are processed in the learner's brain, facilitating adequate intake and improving output. In this instance, educators must enable students to observe as effectively as possible [21, 22]. TBLT has been chosen for its successful use in several pedagogical interventions at Politeknik Negeri Bali, particularly in the Tourism and Administration Department classes [23, 24]. These accomplishments improved the application of TBLT to restructure the writing curriculum through a blended learning methodology. This study will employ task-based language teaching (TBLT) to produce educational resources for the civil engineering department of Bali State Polytechnic students.

3. Method

The method of this study was a descriptive qualitative one. Qualitative research involves comprehending social processes using human cognition [25]. The project took place at Bali State Polytechnic. Two English professors teaching English for Civil Engineering and thirty-fourth-semesters from the Civil Engineering program comprised the participants. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants; they were immediately engaged in the English learning process and could offer pertinent observations about language acquisition requirements. Three approaches to data collecting exist, namely:

Table 1.
Techniques of Data Collection Used in the Study.

Techniques	Aims
Documentation	The aim is to analyze the syllabus used in the Civil Engineering program.
Interviews	It is for lectures and students. Data was used to emphasize the analysis of syllabus needs.
Questioners	It has some questions that are asked to lecture students about the syllabus needed for English Civil Engineering material.

The data analysis consisted of three major phases based on the interactive data analysis model by Miles, et al. [26]. First, condensing the gathered data through filtering and simplification will help concentrate information pertinent to the needs analysis. Second, displaying the data by organizing data into categories according to the NA framework, goal tasks, task kinds, and educational activities helps one better understand it. Third, conclusions were made based on the displayed data, and the findings were presented using descriptions stressing the kinds of work, necessary language abilities, and alignment with civil engineering professional settings. To guarantee validity and dependability, cross-checked the information gathered from questionnaires, interviews, and documentation.

4. Findings

The findings of this study, based on a task-based needs analysis framework, reveal the subjective needs of students and lecturers in the English for Civil Engineering course at Bali State Polytechnic. These needs are categorized into two main areas: necessities and lack, particularly students' ability to perform goal-oriented language tasks relevant to their future civil engineering professions.

4.1. Necessities Needs Analysis

Examine the essential elements pertinent to leaders, course coordinators, and lecturers. The data collection procedure for requirements analysis necessitates elements of the interview. The initial step is acquiring English through a curriculum. The English for Civil Engineering program was conducted according to the syllabus established by the faculty responsible for the English Civil Engineering courses. Secondly, it is acknowledged that the English language teaching team has developed the curriculum for English language acquisition under the supervision of the head subject coordinator. This indicates that certain instructors have not participated directly in developing the syllabus. They have not been fully engaged in developing a syllabus that specifies learning outcomes. The syllabus, established based on the needs analysis, has deficiencies, as shown by the document analysis, as it fails to fulfill the objectives for learning English specifically tailored for civil engineering. The fourth aspect is that the syllabus employed is communicative. English instruction for civil engineering students aims to enhance communicative competencies. The sixth factor is the requirement for students to possess specific obligatory texts and assignments. The study program has mandated that pupils possess a specific textbook. The sixth edition textbook includes a manual for instructors, facilitating ease of implementation. The seventh English learning technique in the syllabus includes discussion, lecture, practice, direct method, translation method, and grammar. This teaching technique is still considered tedious or traditional, centering on the teacher. The learning media is still suboptimal in facilitating the teaching and learning process. Ninth constitutes a form of learning assessment.

The book is predominantly broad yet encompasses certain aspects of Civil Engineering. The role of textbooks designed for specific objectives is not yet established. This aligns with the eleventh question, indicating that English textbooks tailored for civil engineering have not been developed or supplied by the curriculum's intended learning outcomes. The thirteenth question indicates that this English course is a mandatory subject. The fourteenth pertains to inquiries regarding the requisite course credits for compulsory courses for civil engineering students. The fifteenth indicates that two instructors are teaching English for Civil Engineering. The final report indicated that the teaching faculty at the Civil Engineering Department of Bali State Polytechnic consists of permanent professors with a background in English instruction.

4.2. Lacks Needs Analysis

First, it is known that the mastery of four English language skills is still difficult for students. This aligns with the syllabus orientation concept used when interviewing the needs analysis aspects of necessity. The purpose of the syllabus is to focus on communication. So, it is difficult to achieve other English skills. Thus, it impacts the mastery of knowledge, attitudes, and skills, especially in using English learning resources. However, some students have been able to use textbooks relevant to English. The ability of students to spell written assignments is still low, and it is difficult to digest the assessment process given by the lecturer. The analysis results from the lecturer showed that the two lecturers who taught this learning thought the same as the students. The level of achievement of learning goals that have been set is still low. Because a disjointed learning concept has been set, the goals have not touched the essence of the needs of students and the industry.

After the researcher analyzed the interview results, it was known that the learning activities differed in the context of learning English for Civil Engineering. This, of course, must be adjusted to the vocabulary in Civil Engineering. Therefore, the activities asked of students must be combined appropriately. The first activity is for the lecturer to correct the contents and errors of student tasks. Students and lecturers felt that this activity was strenuous. This means that the correction process carried out by lecturers is not optimal because of limited learning time, so the results of student tasks must be corrected at home in part. Therefore, correcting student practice must be regulated by class time. The second activity was a debate about their ability to speak. This activity does not motivate students because lecturers dominate the class, and students only act passively during the learning process in class. This activity makes it difficult to provide an understanding of the learning context. The third activity is peer assessment. This activity is rarely done, so the ability to evaluate student learning outcomes is still low.

The fourth activity is the lecturer leading the discussion process. Students see it as an activity that does not provide opportunities for students to lead discussions in class. The fifth activity is a group discussion, which is still not going well. This activity is less than optimal because students often carry out their ideas and activities without building team collaboration in groups. The seventh activity is doing the exercises in the book, which provides less opportunity to develop creativity in the classroom. The last activity is giving the results of student work reviews. This activity is still strenuous because the ability to self-reflect on student learning outcomes is still low.

Task-based models are still straightforward and, indeed, are often used in every learning process. Most learning resources that are rarely used are dictionaries, magazines, journals, and materials downloaded from the website. This is reinforced by the needs analysis results from lecturers who have stated that students only use books as the primary reference for learning. In contrast, other references are rarely used. Therefore, lecturers should motivate students so that they can utilize other learning resources. Learning resources are taken from textbooks and other sources such as websites, magazines, dictionaries, mass media, and so on. Thus, students will have broader knowledge and learning experience.

Some assignments still considered difficult for students are exercises to find the meaning of vocabulary, exercises to fill in information from worksheets, reports on the results of diagnoses, and projects about health. Thus, the concept of the type of task must be adjusted to the student's abilities. This aligns with the lecturers' opinions that many students had difficulty completing assignments. Therefore, lecturers must modify the types of assignments with learning media or other assignments. This is done to avoid boredom during the learning process in class. Moreover, the global era has demanded that lecturers become creative and innovative in teaching and learning.

5. Discussion

The results of this study show the great need to create an English syllabus catered to the particular requirements of civil engineering students. A well-organized syllabus acts as a road map covering the course's objectives, materials, and procedures for teachers and students. Within English for Specific

Purposes (ESP), the syllabus should include appropriate terminology, grammatical structures, and subjects related to the civil engineering discipline, as well as efficient teaching procedures and evaluation techniques. Adopting suitable teaching strategies is crucial since language acquisition is directly related to culture and must be acquired via practice and usage in real-life environments [27-29].

Using a task-based syllabus paradigm for ESP classes comes out as quite successful. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emphasizes meaningful, real-world activities at the center of education, improving student involvement and supporting the pragmatic use of language [30-32]. TBLT is described as a method whereby chores become the basic unit of planning and instruction, promoting real language use in pertinent situations [33, 34]. This method fits very nicely with ESP objectives, which seek to improve students' language competency in line with their capacity for professional performance in particular disciplines.

Empirical studies confirm how well TBLT improves learning results in ESP environments. In ESP classes, task-based instruction notably raised student motivation and involvement Jin [30]; Mudinillah, et al. [35]. Long [36] also contends that by forcing students to complete problems like those they will face professionally, task-based learning helps close the distance between classroom instruction and professional communication. In civil engineering, these could include tasks like team project talks, technical report drafting, and engineering blueprint interpretation.

Furthermore, underlined in Presidential Regulation No. 8 of 2012, the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework stresses the need to match educational qualifications with industry norms. By guaranteeing that graduates gain both technical knowledge and communicative competency in English, which is necessary for efficient cooperation and performance in worldwide engineering workplaces, a task-based English syllabus helps to promote this alignment. Besides, it is also essential for effectively applying a task-based curriculum and lecturers' contribution. Active instructor participation in syllabus design increases its relevance and application, according to Nunan [37] especially when assignments mirror the communicative demands of the learners' future workplaces. Consequently, ensuring the delivery of efficient and contextually relevant education depends critically on teacher training and professional development in TBLT methodology.

6. Conclusion

The current syllabus does not abide by learning outcomes, which is expected in the Higher Education National Standards. Therefore, the Task-based model is the solution to this problem. Most learning resources that are rarely used are dictionaries, magazines, journals, and material downloaded from the website. This is reinforced by the needs analysis results from lecturers who have stated that students only use books as the primary reference for learning. The curriculum aims to build equality in the quality of Indonesian human resources with foreign human resources in various sectors. The finding concluded that students and lecturers wanted an English Civil Engineering syllabus appropriate to the study program's needs and met global challenges.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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