

## **Factors Affecting Students' Readiness in Studying English for Specific Purposes**

**Fitriani**

[fitriani@gmail.com](mailto:fitriani@gmail.com)

Universitas Negeri Makassar

**Riny Jefri**

[riny.jefri@unm.ac.id](mailto:riny.jefri@unm.ac.id)

Universitas Negeri Makassar

**Fatimah Hidayahni Amin\***

[fatimah.hidayahni@unm.ac.id](mailto:fatimah.hidayahni@unm.ac.id)

Universitas Negeri Makassar

\*corresponding author

**Seny Luhriyani**

[seny.luhriyanifbs@unm.ac.id](mailto:seny.luhriyanifbs@unm.ac.id)

Universitas Negeri Makassar

**Nurharsya Khaer Hanafie**

[nurharsya.khaer@unm.ac.id](mailto:nurharsya.khaer@unm.ac.id)

Universitas Negeri Makassar

### **Abstract**

*This study aimed to identify and describe factors affecting the students' readiness in studying English for Specific Purposes at the Business English Communication Program. This study used a descriptive qualitative method. The informants in this study were four students at the Business English Communication Program who were selected purposively. This study used interview questions to collect the data. Based on the research results, there are three factors affecting the students' learning readiness, namely physical conditions (including a healthy diet and regular exercise), learning motivation (career development and the importance of feeling comfortable and confident are the biggest motivations for students in participating in ESP learning), and learning materials (searching for additional information and sources, as well as applying learning materials in real-life contexts in each student's field). It can be concluded that physical and mental health, a high motivation to learn, and active seeking for additional resources are required to apply in learning courses of English for Specific Purposes.*

**Keywords:** *English for Specific Purposes, Students' readiness, ESP learning*

## INTRODUCTION

Proficiency has become a crucial requirement in various fields, particularly in the business world. As a means of communication between multinational companies worldwide, possessing English language skills is essential for students who wish to compete in the global job market. Hamidah, FN, & Yanuarmawan, D. (2019) stated that the purpose of teaching English in Indonesia, according to the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 096 of 1967 dated December 12, 1967, is to enhance the students' abilities.

One way to achieve this goal is by enrolling in Bahasa Inggris Sarjana Terapan Study Program, also known as Business English Communication, which is one of the programs in the English Department, Faculty of Languages and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar. This is the only study program in Eastern Indonesia that focuses on English language study in Applied Linguistics, offering students a modern and relevant education that meets the demands of today's global market. With a comprehensive curriculum and innovative teaching, this study program is committed to preparing students to become highly competitive professionals ready to face the world of work challenges.

Specific Purpose is a succinct statement indicating what the speaker wants to achieve with the presentation (Beebe & Beebe 2019). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) refers to the teaching and learning of English for a particular purpose. This purpose could be related to a specific profession, field of study, or job. The ESP approach aims to develop the vocabulary and language skills that are necessary to communicate effectively in academic and professional settings.

Basturkmen (2010) defined English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as teaching English that is designed with specific objectives and aims to provide learning to students regarding communicative abilities in the context of professional or academic activities. In another sense, the ESP approach is a form of learning English that focuses on specific materials related to scientific disciplines or professions so that students are ready to face the challenges of the world of work and academics in the future. Basturkmen added that ESP helps students improve job prospects and job mobility because they are able to communicate effectively in a particular work context. In addition, ESP helps students develop communication skills that are important in the work environment, such as negotiation, presentation and report writing.

Anthony (2018) stated that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a teaching approach that targets the language needs of students for their academic or work-related requirements. With a focus on developing the language, genre, and skills required to meet those needs, the approach helps students acquire the necessary proficiency and knowledge to succeed in their chosen field. The goal of ESP is to equip students with the linguistic tools essential to excel in their specific area of study or profession. By using teaching methods and specific materials in accordance with certain disciplines or jobs, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can help students or workers meet their needs. The ESP approach is designed to prepare students to be able to communicate and function well in academic and professional environments that are specific to their field of study or profession.

According to Zaswita & Meladina (2020), English for specific purposes (ESP) is a type of English teaching aimed at students or people who are already working, with the aim of helping them acquire the vocabulary and skills needed for certain jobs or professions.

Bahasa Inggris Program Sarjana Terapan Program or Business English Communication (BEC) program provides several ESP courses. The following are the ESP courses taught and programmed in the study program:

Table 1. The List of ESP Courses in BEC

No.	Subject
1	English for Correspondence
2	English for Marketing and Advertising
3	English for Accounting
4	English for Banking and Finance
5	English for Hotel & Restaurant
6	English for Journalism
7	English for Meetings and Negotiations
8	English for Tourism

In BEC program, ESP is a learning approach that focuses on specific fields applicable to work contexts. It aims to meet the special needs of students by equipping them with the vocabulary and skills required for a particular profession.

To learn and apply the courses, learning readiness is a crucial concept in the field of education. It refers to an individual's willingness to learn and how well they understand the learning material. According to Slameto (2010), readiness is the ability and willingness to respond or react. Willingness comes from within a person and is also linked to maturity, as maturity means being prepared to carry out skills. It is important to consider this readiness in the learning process because if students are ready and willing to learn, they are likely to achieve better learning outcomes.

Learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP) requires students to be adequately prepared and ready to acquire language skills that are relevant to their specific field or domain. Students' readiness to learn English for Specific Purposes is influenced by multiple factors. Purposes is their level of proficiency in English. Students who have a strongly basic English skills will find it easier to understand concepts and vocabulary related to the particular field they choose (Swales, 2011).

The next factor is habit in a particular field. Previous knowledge or experience in a specific field related to English for Specific Purposes will influence student readiness. Students who have prior knowledge or experience about the material to be studied will find it easier to understand the language and specific concepts related to their field (Basturkmen, 2010).

A research conducted by Agustiani, Gumartifa, & Yaman (2022) found that maturity, intelligence, and motivation are factors that affect one's ability to learn. Being prepared can lead to an active, self-directed learner, increase learning outcomes and accomplishments, develop responsibility for learning, and affect students' engagement with the material. Djamarah (2002) also explained that readiness factors include:

- a. **Physical readiness**  
Being physically fit and healthy is crucial to one's social and academic success. Physical well-being entails having a body that is not in a state of sickness or lethargy. A person's ability to learn can be negatively affected if their body lacks essential vitamins and energy due to poor health. This can ultimately influence their learning outcomes.
- b. **Psychological readiness**  
Psychological factors, such as the desire to learn, ability to concentrate, and intrinsic motivation, should also be considered in relation to learning achievement, in addition to physical conditions.
- c. **Material readiness**  
When someone is learning a subject, they need to have materials to study or work on. These materials can include books, textbooks, and relevant references that can be used as learning resources, as well as notes and other resources. Having access to various reading materials will give students knowledge and help them answer questions related to learning asked by their teachers.

Based on the three factors above, it can be concluded that learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP) requires proper student preparation and readiness to be effective in acquiring language skills that are relevant to a particular field or domain. Factors such as previous English proficiency and experience in a particular field will influence the readiness condition of students in learning ESP. In addition, another factor such as the availability of subject matter also influence the teaching and learning process.

## **METHOD**

The research employed a descriptive qualitative method and relied on primary data. Primary data refers to the data collected directly from the source, such as through interviews or questionnaires conducted in the field. This method ensures that the information gathered is clear and directly relevant to the object being studied. Research subjects are sources of data that will be taken according to research information. They were selected purposively considering their availability undertaking the research and their high passion in learning courses of ESP. Data analysis is the method used by the researchers to analyze and organize data. Qualitative data analysis consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Factors affecting students' readiness to study English for Specific Purposes**

The researchers found that there are several factors that influence a student's readiness to learn, including physical conditions, motivation to learn, and learning materials.

a. Physical Condition

Based on the responses in the interviews, most students felt that they had prepared themselves well regarding physical condition in taking the English for Specific Purposes course. Not only physically, one respondent understood that health also includes mental and emotional health. There are two students who attract attention. The first student chose to prepare physically by maintaining a healthy diet, exercising such as taking an evening walk to refresh the brain. He realized that physical health is very important in supporting the ability to face the English for Specific Purpose course. Meanwhile, the second student chose to focus on other than physical readiness, namely mental and psychological. She realized that mental and emotional preparation was also important in taking ESP courses. The following are the students' responses:

Response 1:

*Menurut saya, sehat dan kuat berarti memiliki kondisi fisik yang baik, bebas dari penyakit atau gangguan kesehatan, serta memiliki kekuatan dan stamina yang memadai untuk menjalani aktivitas sehari-hari. (Q1, S1)*

English translation:

In my opinion, being healthy and strong means having good physical condition, being free from disease or health problems, and having sufficient strength and stamina to carry out daily activities.

Response 2:

*Definisi sehat menurut saya ketika jasmani dan rohani mendukung untuk setiap aktivitas, dan kuat itu memiliki daya tahan tubuh yang sehat. (Q2, S1)*

English translation:

In my opinion, the definition of health is when the physical and spiritual support for every activity, and being strong means having a healthy immune system.

Response 3:

*Saya jarang berolahraga secara teratur tetapi mengikuti pola makan yang sehat untuk mempersiapkan fisik dalam belajar. Selain itu, saya juga melakukan sering jalan-jalan sore untuk merefresh otak setelah pembelajaran. (Q3, S1)*

English translation:

I rarely exercise regularly but follow a healthy diet to prepare physically for studying. Apart from that, I also often take evening walks to refresh my brain after studying.

b. Learning Motivation

In terms of learning motivation, the first student realized that motivation was the main role in taking this ESP course. With this motivation, students have ambitions about the importance of having and developing English language skills aimed at career development in the future. Apart from that, a student must have a sense of comfort and confidence in participating in ESP learning, such as thorough preparation, high interest in the field of study, and support received from the

academic environment, including lecturers and classmates. Meanwhile for the second student, her motivation was based on ESP material which was quite broad and varied, such as banking, business and hospitality. Apart from that, the materials in the ESP course are in accordance with the student's interests which makes learning more enjoyable and useful. The following are the students' responses:

Response 4:

*Saya termotivasi untuk mengikuti pembelajaran MK ESP karena memahami pentingnya kemampuan berbahasa Inggris yang spesifik dalam bidang yang saya minati. Selain itu, saya memiliki ambisi untuk mengembangkan diri dan meningkatkan peluang karir saya. (Q4, S3)*

English translation:

I am motivated to take part in ESP learning because I understand the importance of specific English language skills in the field of my interest. In addition, I have the ambition to develop myself and increase my career opportunities.

Response 5:

*Rasa nyaman dan tidak khawatir dalam mengikuti pembelajaran MK ESP didukung oleh keyakinan bahwa saya telah mempersiapkan diri dengan baik, memiliki minat yang kuat dalam bidang tersebut, dan mendapatkan dukungan dari dosen dan teman sekelas. (Q5, S3)*

English translation:

The feeling of comfort and not worrying about taking part in MK ESP learning is supported by the belief that I have prepared myself well, have a strong interest in this field, and have received support from lecturers and classmates.

Response 6:

*Untuk menghadapi tantangan mental, saya akan mengatur waktu dengan baik, membuat jadwal belajar yang efektif, memecah materi menjadi bagian-bagian yang lebih kecil, dan menggunakan teknik pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan gaya belajar saya. Tantangan dalam pembelajaran MK ESP mungkin termasuk kompleksitas materi dan tuntutan yang tinggi dalam penggunaan bahasa Inggris yang spesifik. (Q6, S3)*

English translation:

To face mental challenges, I will manage my time well, create an effective study schedule, break the material into smaller parts, and use learning techniques that suit my learning style. Challenges in learning MK ESP may include the complexity of the material and high demands on specific uses of English.

Response 7:

*Untuk mempersiapkan diri untuk MK ESP ini lebih ke kesiapan mental dan psikis karena ini lebih penting menurut saya. (Q3, S4)*

English translation:

To prepare yourself for MK ESP is more about mental and psychological readiness because this is more important in my opinion.

Response 8:

*Untuk MK ESP ini cakupannya luas, saya termotivasi karena di sini ada banyak bidang bahasa inggris yang saya pelajari seperti perbankan, business, hospitality, dan masih banyak lagi. (Q4, S4)*

English translation:

For the ESP course, the scope is broad, I am motivated because there are many areas of English that I can study here, such as banking, business, hospitality, and many more.

Response 9:

*Yang membuat nyaman pertama karena motivasi saya sendiri untuk mempelajari MK ini dan juga ini merupakan passion saya jadi saya cukup nyaman. (Q5, S4)*

English translation:

What makes me comfortable is firstly because of my own motivation to study this MK and also this is my passion so I am quite comfortable.

Response 10:

*Tantangannya itu berupa tantangan mental, tentang bagaimana mencerna materi dan juga selain itu saya bertemu teman yang lebih ambisi jadi itu sangat mempengaruhi saya. (Q6, S4)*

English translation:

The challenges were in the form of mental challenges, about how to digest the material and also apart from that I met friends who were more ambitious so that really influenced me.

### c. Learning Material

In terms of material readiness, students were quite active in seeking additional information from outside regarding ESP learning, making notebooks, and even making videos as a form of improvement. Students actively connect the knowledge gained with relevant contexts in their field. The students studied and practiced ESP learning materials according to the context of its use. For example, when making reports or internship presentations, use the correct English structure. Meanwhile, the students were more active in looking for references related to the topics being studied, compiling summaries to understand the learning, and making examples of applying the material to make it easier to remember. Apart from that, the students also shared their learning results on online platforms such as social media. The following are the students' responses:

Response 11:

*Saya menerapkan materi pembelajaran MK ESP yang dikuasai sesuai dengan konteks penggunaannya dengan mengaitkannya dengan situasi atau konteks yang relevan dalam bidang*

*spesifik. Misalnya, menggunakan kosakata dan struktur bahasa yang sesuai dalam penulisan laporan atau presentasi dalam tempat magang. (Q7, S1)*

English translation:

I apply the MK ESP learning material that I have mastered according to the context of its use by relating it to relevant situations or contexts in a specific field. For example, using appropriate vocabulary and language structures in writing reports or presentations in internship settings.

Response 12:

*Saya melakukan kegiatan seperti mencari referensi terkait topik, menyusun rangkuman atau catatan, membuat contoh penerapan materi, atau menghasilkan materi pendukung lainnya seperti infografis atau video tutorial. (Q8, S1)*

English translation:

I carry out activities such as looking for references related to the topic, compiling summaries or notes, making examples of application of the material, or producing other supporting materials such as infographics or video tutorials.

Response 13:

*Untuk berbagi hasil penugasan MK ESP, saya dapat mempresentasikan hasil kepada teman sekelas atau mengadakan diskusi di dalam dan luar kelas. Saya juga dapat membagikan materi melalui akun media sosial atau platform pembelajaran online untuk mendapatkan umpan balik dari orang lain dan memperluas dampak pembelajaran. Materinya bisa berupa presentasi, makalah, atau hasil karya kreatif yang terkait dengan bidang spesifik. (Q9, S1)*

English translation:

To share the results of ESP assignment, I can present the results to classmates or hold discussions inside and outside the classroom. I may also share materials via social media accounts or online learning platforms to get feedback from others and expand the impact of learning. The material can be in the form of presentations, papers, or creative work related to a specific field.

Response 14:

*Saya menerapkan materi yang dikuasai sesuai dengan konteks penggunaannya dan relevan dalam berbagai bidang. (Q7, S3)*

English translation:

I apply the material mastered according to the context of its use and is relevant in various fields.

Response 15:

*Saya biasanya mencari referensi di Internet, menyusun rangkuman, membuat infografis atau video tutorial. (Q8, S3)*

English translation:

I usually look for references on the Internet, compile summaries, make infographics or video tutorials.

Response 16:

*Biasanya saya mempertasikan hasil untuk teman kelas, melakukan diskusi di dalam atau di luar kelas, membagikan materi melalui media sosial atau platform belajar online agar mendapatkan feedback. (Q9,S3)*

English translation:

Usually, I present the results to my classmates, hold discussions inside or outside the classroom, share material via social media or online learning platforms to get feedback.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Based on the research results above, it can be concluded that physical condition, learning motivation, and learning materials are driving factors in learning English for Specific Purpose. This is relevant to the research conducted by Sefani and Latifah (2017) who found that students with good learning readiness including physical, psychological, material and knowledge conditions will have good learning motivation because from the start they have been ready to take part in learning activities.

Physically condition, most students in this study showed that they were aware of the importance of maintaining physical health to support their academic careers in ESP courses. Some students explained that they maintain their physical condition in various ways, one of which is by maintaining a diet and exercising. In addition, they also maintain their psychological condition in order to carry out learning well. This is relevant to research conducted by Sulistyowati, et al., (2023) who found that physical readiness was the most dominant factor that affected offline learning readiness. A research conducted by Jumasrin (2020) has shown that physical readiness is closely linked to health, which can in turn impact learning outcomes and social adjustment. Students with poor health may lack the energy needed to study effectively. Physical readiness can be demonstrated through a healthy body, alertness, and lack of lethargy. Students with good physical readiness are more likely to comprehend and retain new information.

Learning motivation is one thing that students realize is the most dominant in influencing the learning process and career. This is relevant to the study conducted by Gunawan (2018) which shows that learning motivation has a positive and significant impact on improving learning outcomes. This is also in line with the study from Romadhoni, Wiharna, & Mubarok (2019) that learning motivation can make a good contribution to improving learning outcomes for students at SMKN 8 Bandung.

Learning material was one of the students' focuses. Many students are actively looking for additional material, compiling notes, and making videos as a form of student improvement. This is in line with research conducted by Theobald (2021) who found that self-organized learning training programs have a positive impact on student academic achievement because they tend to achieve better learning outcomes

## CONCLUSIONS

Students' learning readiness is very much needed in the learning process in the classroom. From the research that has been done, the results show there are three factors affecting the students' learning readiness, namely physical conditions: including a healthy diet and regular exercise, learning motivation: career development and the importance of feeling comfortable and confident are the biggest motivations for students in participating in ESP learning, and learning materials include searching for additional information and sources, as well as applying learning materials in real-life contexts in each student's field. It can be concluded that students should prioritize their physical and mental health, have a strong motivation to learn, and actively seek additional resources to apply learned material to real-life situations.

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