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WHAT DO LAW STUDENTS NEED, AND WHAT PROBLEMS THEY EXPERIENCED IN LEARNING ENGLISH? INSIGHT FROM STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

by

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Abstract:

Many scholars addressed how English was essential to master in many fields. However, only some scholars addressed what content of English was required by significant law students. This article proposes a little investigation: the problem law students encounter in mastering English, the basic skills, and materials considered fundamental to be taught in the learning process. Descriptive quantitative was applied to gather the data. Seven-four second-semester students and alums majoring in Law were taken as samples. The researchers collected the data and analyzed them using Microsoft Excel. The findings of the first research question revealed that listening was the most difficult skill to be perceived by the students majoring in Law. Moreover, the finding of the second research question claimed that speaking was assumed as the most necessary skill to be taught. Furthermore, formal and informal English languages were expected to be involved in English learning materials. By looking at the findings of this research, the practitioners can be used as a reference for the betterment of designing materials for Law students. The study implies that students frequently encounter the essential skills and materials to be taught.

Keywords: Need analysis, difficult skill, an essential skill, and learning materials.

Abstrak:

Banyak peneliti membahas bagaimana bahasa Inggris sangat penting untuk dikuasai di banyak bidang. Namun, hanya sedikit peneliti yang membahas konten bahasa Inggris apa yang diperlukan oleh kebanyakan mahasiswa hukum. Oleh karena itu, artikel ini membahas sedikit penyelidikan: masalah yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa hukum dalam menguasai bahasa Inggris, keterampilan dasar, dan materi yang dianggap mendasar untuk diajarkan dalam proses pembelajaran. Kuantitatif deskriptif diterapkan untuk mengumpulkan data. Tujuh puluh-empat mahasiswa semester dua dan alumni jurusan Hukum diambil sebagai sampel. Para peneliti mengumpulkan data dan menganalisisnya menggunakan Microsoft Excel. Temuan pertanyaan penelitian pertama mengungkapkan bahwa menyimak adalah keterampilan yang paling sulit dirasakan oleh mahasiswa jurusan Hukum. Selain itu, temuan pertanyaan penelitian kedua mengklaim bahwa berbicara diasumsikan sebagai keterampilan yang paling penting untuk diajarkan. Selain itu, bahasa Inggris formal dan informal diharapkan dapat terlibat dalam materi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Dengan melihat temuan penelitian ini, para praktisi dapat menjadikan acuan untuk perbaikan bahan perancangan bagi mahasiswa Ilmu Hukum. Studi ini menyiratkan bahwa kesulitan mahasiswa menemukan keterampilan dan materi penting yang diperlukan untuk diajarkan.

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Kata kunci: Analisis kebutuhan, keterampilan sulit, keterampilan penting, dan materi pembelajaran.

INTRODUCTION

The research about ESP needs analysis of law students had been universally investigated by previous researchers. Rumalessin and Farah (2021) confirmed that law students expect the ESP learning process, which concerns their future professional job most. Research conducted by Samsudin and Sukarismanti (2020) claimed that most law students considered speaking, the most challenging skill, to be the primary focus of the learning process. The lecturer must teach the basic materials related to professional jobs. Research conducted by Nurie (2017) also revealed that productive skills were the most crucial skills needed to receive more attention for the learning process. Nevertheless, receptive skills must still be taught to support the student's success in productive skills. Law students proposed nine legal topics consisting of a career in Law, remission, case law, legal issues, brach, Constitutional Law, International Law, Law changing, and good government to be involved in English-speaking teaching materials with LiWrReS (Listen to it, Write what you listen, Read it out loud, and Speak it out in repetition) as the learning model (Arung & Roslina, 2018a).

Thoroughly reading, those previous research only focused on investigating law students' needs in terms of learning materials. This issue can be proven by previous research that analyzed the correlation between gaining work experience and the level of importance attached to areas of Law studied (Rumalessin & Farah, 2021). The study integrated the concepts of English skills and the genuine academic concern of students' learning needs (Nurie, 2017), determining the expected materials and preparing relevant teaching materials to improve the ability to speak English (Samsudin & Sukarismanti, 2020). In addition, the research focused on involving active students majoring in Law to collect the data needed. Few previous research involved more educational practitioners, for instance, teachers or alums. Answering the issue and investigating law students' needs by involving the alums as the research subject is essential to be conducted. Therefore, detailed and more valid information can be gathered.

Current research findings shared several positive sides for the lecturers, active students majoring in Law, and future research. For the lecturers, the findings of this study can be used as their consideration to choose the best solution to help active students fix the problems

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encountered in mastering English. Hence, the students can enjoy learning English more and quickly reach the learning objectives. The students can learn language and content simultaneously (Farah, 2018). Moreover, the lecturers also need to pay attention to the basic skills and materials that need to be taught to law students. As stated in this research, they can start developing the learning materials based on the students' needs. In the development process, the lecturers must be more creative to create learning tasks for the students that relate to real-life situations, such as discussing recent issues (Samsudin & Sukarismanti, 2020). Therefore, the students can quickly master the basic skills and receive the material precious for their future real life.

For the students, the findings of this research can be used as their guidelines to understand the problem frequently encountered by most law students in mastering the English language. Hence, they can quickly look for the solution to their problem, including consulting their lecturers. Moreover, the findings related to the basic skills and materials shared valuable insights for the students to focus on their English learning (Samsudin & Sukarismanti, 2020) related to their needs (Hidayat, 2018). They also have a chance to look much learning materials outside the classroom rather than only become passive students who are waiting and receiving the sources from the lecturers. It is also possible for the students to recommend the sources that they get to the lecturers. Hence, the lecturers can easily share it with other students, and the materials can be discussed in the class forum.

Finally, for future research, the findings of this research provided more detailed information that fills the gap of the previous research. This research not only focuses on the learning material necessary to be taught but also discusses the problem encountered by the students in learning English and the basic materials that the students need (Hidayat, 2018; Rumalessin & Farah, 2021)(Hidayat, 2018). Therefore, this information can be used by future research to strengthen the idea of their investigation, especially in the same field of study. Moreover, the limitation of the research design being applied and the participants being involved in this research can be used as the future research consideration to apply another research design and involve more research participants. Thus, more valid and reliable information can be gathered to strengthen the findings.

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Some researchers have conducted some previous research in the area of need analysis. Lukica and Kaldonek (2011) evaluated the needs of three groups of ELP students: first-year Law, graduate law students, and practicing lawyers at a specialized language school with 161 students. The outcomes confirmed their initial hypothesis: a strong correlation exists between gaining work experience and the level of importance attached to areas of Law studied in ELP courses. Their study has proven that knowledge and experience are assertive factors that affect awareness of learning needs. It shows a positive correlation between gaining knowledge and increasing awareness of needs. Besides, Nurie (Nurie, 2017) tried to reinforce cross-departmental understanding by integrating concepts of English skills and the genuine academic concern of students' learning needs. She distributed the adapting questionnaire to forty-two EFL Law students and four English language instructors. This study investigated the students' perception of English skills by focusing on each skill in detail. The findings showed discrepancies and similarities in perceptions between students and instructors regarding English skills and learning needs.

Moreover, Wigati and Iman (2018) determined that the need for analysis of ESP in the faculty of Law concerned the undergraduates' point of view. The data were gained from interviews and documentation, and it found that the expected materials are communication skills, especially speaking and writing, to prepare themselves to serve their clients. At the same time, grammar focus and pronunciation drilling are less attractive because active learning activities are more engaging than passive learning. However, Wigati and Iman (Wigati & Iman, 2018) also said that their study found that every interviewee had a different opinion related to their needs. Therefore, this case still needs to be explored more.

Furthermore, Arung and Roslina (2018a) provided relevant teaching materials to improve the ability to speak English for Law students. It is to make their scientific messages communicate English convey correctly. The six persons selected purposively consisted of two Faculty of Law students, a Law Faculty Lecturer, an employee or a high-ranking prosecutor, and two employees of Jail Kolaka. In-depth interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentation were used to collect the data. The results showed that some legal topics, such as Legal Issues, Good Governance, International Law, Remission, Case Law, Brach, Law Changing, Constitutional Law, and Career in Law, could be ideal for English learners. This study also suggested a learning model teach Law students known as LiWReS (Listen to it,

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Write what you listened to, Read it out loud, and Speak it out in repetition) as cited (Arung & Roslina, 2018a). In addition, Rumalessin and Farah (Rumalessin & Farah, 2021) investigated the students' target needs in learning ESP Speaking of Law department students. The adapted version of Aliakbari & Boghayeri's (2018b) and Alsamadani's (2017) questionnaire was used to understand the 45 students' perceptions about their needs in learning ESP speaking course, and interviews were implemented with senior students to get deeper investigation about students' target needs. It revealed that most students' needs concern their future professional job, especially using English in their fields. In line with this, Samsudin and Sukarismanti (Samsudin & Sukarismanti, 2020) wanted to find out (1) the problematic skills faced by students of law faculty in mastering the English Language and (2) the basic skills and materials that are considered necessary and unnecessary to be taught to law faculty. The result showed that most students regard listening as the most challenging skill of English, and speaking skills are more urgent to teach than others. Moreover, English materials related to Law are considered necessary to teach Law: vocabulary, meeting people, custom law in Indonesia, general election practice using English, and games relating to English Law.

In response to the previous research explained above, this current research focused on investigating the most difficult skills (the problems) to be perceived by law students and the basic skills and materials considered fundamental to be taught. The active students are chosen because they are still encountering the English learning process, so the information related to their needs and expectations can be gathered easily (Anwar, 2018). Besides, alums who had experience finding a job or professional work in the workplace are expected to give detailed information on actual English needs (Turner et al., 2019). Therefore, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What problem is law students encountering in mastering the English language?
2. What fundamental basic skills are needed to be taught to law students?
3. What fundamental materials are needed to be taught to law students?

METHOD

Design

This research applied a quantitative research approach with a survey procedure. In this

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regard, the researchers employed survey research to gather data on the students' problems, needs, and fundamental skills that law students need. Therefore, this research belongs to survey research. This issue is supported by Creswell (2009), quantitative is an appropriate method to analyze and present numerical data. In addition, the researchers applied the survey technique with questionnaire guidelines to gather the data. The researchers distributed questionnaires related to the student's needs, problems, and fundamental skills that law students need to the participants.

Participant

The subjects comprised Fifty-four second-semester students and twenty-one alums majoring in Law at one of the private Universities in East Java. The active students were chosen because they were still in the English learning process, and alum as the ones who had experience finding a job or professional work position in the workplace. Cluster random sampling was used to select the participants in the population, and the researchers grouped the participants into students and alums majoring in Law. As stated by Latief (2014), we can randomly select the participants from the existing group by applying cluster sampling.

Instrument

A questionnaire was used to gather data in this research. The questionnaire guideline was developed into 25 statements about students' demographic information, English proficiency, target situations, learning situations, and evaluation—18 statements about alums' demographic information, workplace situation, English learning experiences, and recommendations. The questionnaire developed was adapted from Samsudin and Sukarismanti's (Samsudin & Sukarismanti, 2020) research under the title A Need Analysis in Learning English for Law Faculty Students at II SBUD SAMAWA REA. English lecturers validated the questionnaire development at one of the public universities in East Java teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for more than ten years.

Data collecting technique

The data were collected by implementing survey techniques such as a close-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to the participants through Google Forms. Google Forms was chosen as the medium to distribute the questionnaire due to its ease and ease of access. Moreover, there was no limited number of participants to respond to it. In this

regard, the researchers distributed the questionnaire in Indonesian because the participants needed to major in English. Therefore, in order to avoid misunderstanding among participants, the Indonesian language was appropriate to be used.

Data analysis technique

The data collected were analyzed statically by the researchers. Sugiyama, Kato, and Sakamoto (2018) argue that quantitative data collected can be analyzed by calculating the percentage of each statement or question in the questionnaire. The researchers implemented this theory to analyze the data. The students' responses to each question were calculated using Microsoft Excel.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presents the analysis result of the questionnaire distributed to the students and alums majoring in Law at a Private university in East Java. The data analysis results are presented based on the research questions and discussed with the related theories.

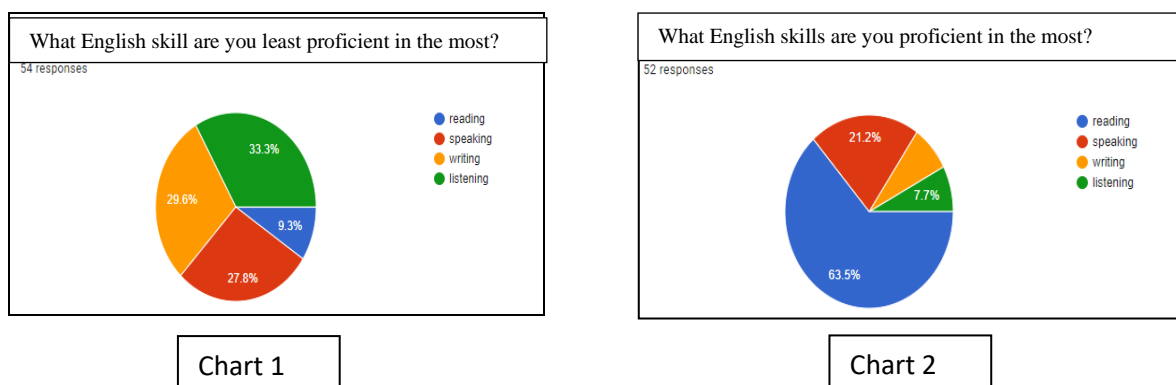


Figure 1 Problems encountered by law students in mastering the English language

According to the data analysis result, it can be illustrated that 33.3% of law students experienced problems with listening skills. In addition, 29.6% of the students experienced problems in mastering writing, 27.8% with speaking, and 9.3% with reading skills. The second chart also confirmed the findings in the first chart: 63.3% of the students tended to be easier in mastering reading, 21.2% mastering speaking, 7.7% mastering listening, and 7.6% mastering writing.

From these findings, it can be revealed that mastering listening skill is the problem encountered by most law students, while reading was the easiest to master.

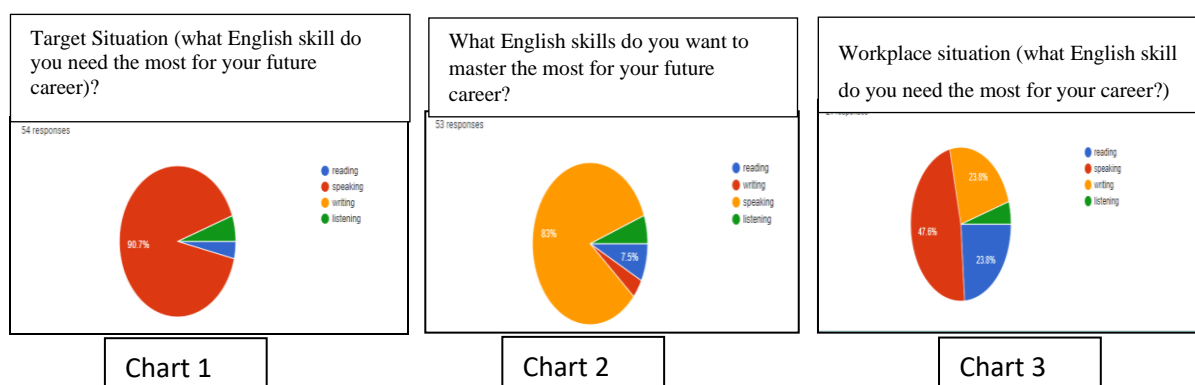


Figure 2 Fundamental basic skills that are needed to be taught to law students

In order to get precise information related to fundamental basic skills that needed to be taught to law students, the researcher provided two questions for active students of Law and one question for the alums. The questionnaire analysis result in Chart 1 described that 90.7% of active students majoring in Law assumed that speaking is the skill that will be needed the most in their future careers. Therefore, it can be seen in chart two that 83% of law students also agreed that they expected to be able to master speaking skills in their future careers. The questionnaire analysis result of the alums strengthened those students' answers. 47.6% of the alums majoring in Law claimed that speaking is the most vital skill in their workplace.

Following the data above, they displayed students' and alums' responses to the three questions in the questionnaire guideline. The questions cover "What are the most crucial skills that must be mastered in the future career?" what skills do they expect to be able to master in their future career?" "and What skills do they need the most in the career?." Therefore, speaking is an essential skill considered fundamental to be taught to law students.

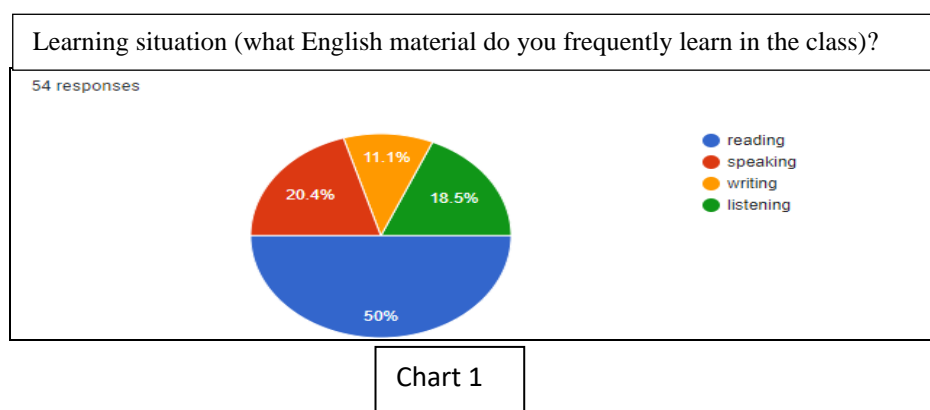


Figure 3 Fundamental materials that are needed to be taught to law students

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To gather the information related to fundamental materials that law students need to be taught, the researchers provided two questions for active students of Law: What English material do you usually study in class; what type of English will you need in a career/job? The questionnaire analysis result in chart one confirmed that 50% of the students answered that reading was the most common material being learned. However, 20.4% of the students answered speaking, 18.5% answered listening, and 11.1% answered writing as the most common material learned in English class. Thus, it implied that reading was the typical English material the lecturer usually taught. The questionnaire analysis result referring to the second question can be seen in the following chart.

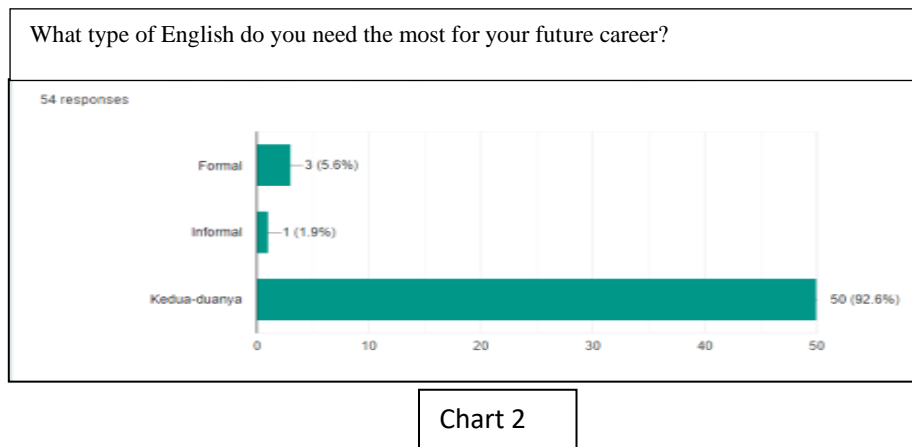


Figure 4 type of English for their future career

Based on Chart two above, 92.5% of the students they were predicted that formal and informal English language types would be needed for their future careers. Meanwhile, 5.6% indicated that formal English would be needed in their future career, and only 1.9% of the students thought informal English would be needed in their future careers. Regarding the data obtained from the students above, both formal and informal English assumed would be needed by the students in their future careers.

Besides providing two questions for the active students, the researchers also provided two questions for the alums majoring in Law: "Is the English material being studied in undergraduate suitable for your need in the workplace?"; "and What English material should be taught more by the lecturer?" The analysis result of the alum response can be seen in Chart Three and Chart 4.

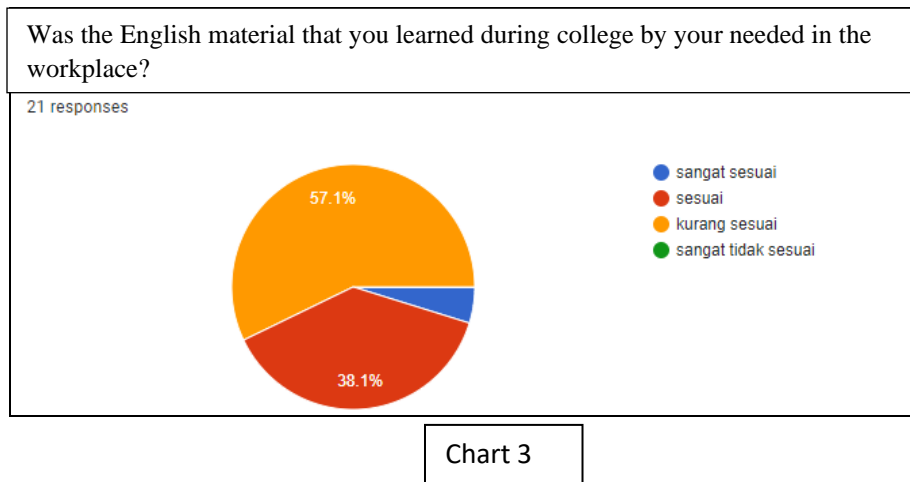


Figure 5 Appropriate English material provided by Campus

From the alum responses in chart three, it can be concluded that 57.1% of them claimed that the learning materials received from undergraduate English classes were not appropriate for the actual situation in their career. However, 38.1 % tended to respond that the learning materials received from English classes were appropriate to the actual situation in their career. Furthermore, 4.8% of alums indicated that the learning materials received from English classes as an undergraduate were appropriate to the actual situation in their career. Thus, most alums agreed that the learning materials received in undergraduate English classes were not appropriate for the career situation demand in the workplace.

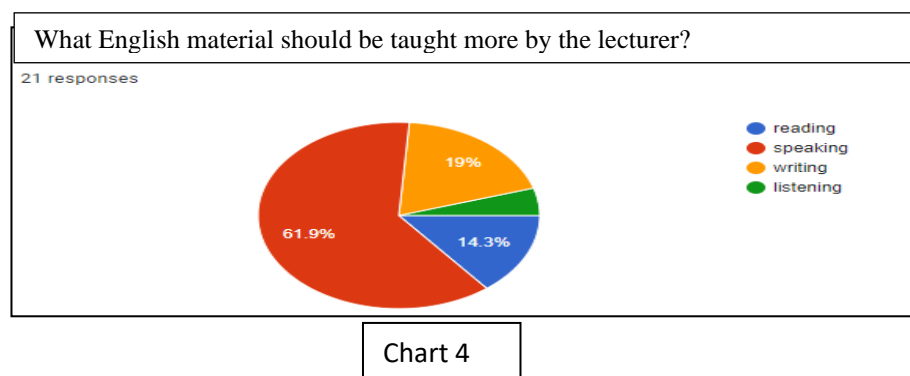


Figure 6 The needed material for university students

In line with chart four above, it showed that the majority of alums in total 61% suggested that the speaking skill materials should be taught more by the lecturer for the students since this skill was crucial in the career situation. Meanwhile, 19% of the alums suggested writing, 14.3% suggested reading, and 4.8% suggested listening as the English

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material should teach more in the class. Therefore, it is confirmed that speaking is the English material needed in the workplace of their future career.

Considering the presented data, it can be explained that most active students majoring in Law implied that reading was the typical English material usually learned in English class. In addition, most students agreed that they would need formal and informal English to deal with their future careers. On the other hand, most alumni confirmed that the learning materials taught by the lecturer in undergraduate English classes needed to be more appropriate for the actual career situation. Therefore, most alumni suggested that materials related to speaking skills must be provided and taught more by the lecturer so that the graduate students majoring in Law would be ready to face the situation in the workplace.

It displayed students' responses to the three questions in the questionnaire guideline such as: What English material do you usually study in class, what type of English will you need in a career/job, is the English material being studied in undergraduate suitable with your need in the workplace, and what English material should teach more by the lecturer. Thus, it revealed that reading became one of the skills commonly taught. However, the alumni argued it could have been more effective because they need more speaking skills than reading in their workplace/future careers. Furthermore, students and alums also inferred that formal and informal English was essential and needed in their future careers.

Despite the above findings, the questionnaire analysis result distributed to the students also shared additional information. 88.9% of the students explained that the lecturer frequently provided them with digital sources of learning materials. This case aligned with students' answers in the other part; 55.6% of the students confirmed that the lecturer rarely provided them with printed learning materials. In addition, the printed materials commonly distributed by the lecturer were in a different form than magazines, books, or newspapers. It can be seen from the number of answers; 66.7% claimed that other materials they got were not in the form of newspapers, magazines, or books.

Regarding the assessment, 57.4% of the students revealed that theory was the most frequent assessment type given by the lecturer rather than practical assessment. Positively, 55.6% agreed that the lecturer provided feedback through the students' assessment results in

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the form of oral feedback. This kind of feedback was proven by 75.9% of the student's responses to the questionnaire.

On the other hand, the researcher's questionnaire analysis of the alums showed several recommendations for the English teaching and learning process situation. Firstly, 85.7% of the alums suggested that the lecturer provide digital learning materials, and 90.5% of the respondents preferred that formal English language materials must be taught frequently. On the assessment side, 90.5% of the alums recommended the lecturer to give the formal assessment, and 81% agreed that the lecturer provided oral feedback for the student's assessment results.

That additional information can be used as a guideline for educational practitioners in developing a syllabus for students majoring in Law. In addition, it can be insightful regarding sources, learning material, assessment, and feedback. Thus, the developed syllabus can meet the students' workplace needs nowadays.

Discussion

The first finding answered the first research question. It was about the students' problem with which the most difficult skills to be perceived by law students. The questionnaire analysis revealed that most law students considered listening to the most challenging skill to be perceived, and reading was the easiest. Reading becomes the easiest because the words stay while the word in listening is spoken. Therefore, students need to concentrate on what the speaker said. This finding contrasts with the study conducted by Salma (2015), who argued that writing is the most difficult skill to be perceived. In addition to that, Ampa & Quraisy (2018) claimed that productive skills (speaking and writing) are the most difficult compared to receptive skills (listening and reading).

Moreover, Nurie (Nurie, 2017) also stated that productive skills are considered difficult rather than receptive skills. However, in this case, most students believe that listening is the most difficult skill to be mastered for their major. This case might be affected by factors such as the material, students, environment, etc. Thus, the first finding in this research revealed that receptive skills also could be complex skills to be mastered by Law students. It differs from Ampa & Quraisy (Tenri Ampa & Quraisy, 2018). Thus, it can be a reference for the English lecturer and curriculum developer, and soon that receptive skills are also needed

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to be considered. The difference might happen because of the research sample or the research site. As Lukica and Kaldonek (Lukica & Kaldonek, 2011) state, first-year students tended to express their needs unclearly, while graduate students expressed their needs more clearly because of their more excellent knowledge of a given subject.

The second finding answered the second research question about the fundamental basic skills is needed to be taught to law students. The first was about the basic skills which considered fundamental to be taught to law students in mastering English related to law subjects. The data analysis shows that most students agreed that speaking was an essential skill to be taught. The thing behind this finding was the students' expectation of having good speaking skills in their future careers. From the above findings, the lecturer, in this case, should relay that speaking skills are the most crucial skills that need to be learned by the students. Hosni (2014) defines speaking as one of the productive skills which dominant students frequently face many difficulties in mastering due to complex demands, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. In addition, social terms that deal with all the norms, rules, and habits that exist in society must be considered by the students while speaking (Marriam Bashir; Muhammad Azeem; Ashiq Hussain Dogar, 2016). Thus, the lecturer should focus on teaching and learning process design to teach speaking skills frequently and fix the students' problems in mastering speaking. However, Arung and Roslina (Arung & Roslina, 2018a) found that teaching legal issues must start with listening.

Moreover, for the other case, it depends on the context of the topic. In response to this finding, the researchers also correlate it with a previous study by a scholar (Nurie, 2017) stating that productive skills are more difficult than receptive skills. Productive skills are writing and speaking, one of the productive skills requiring more work. Therefore, in this study, most students believe that is the fundamental skill to be taught in their major.

The third finding was about the fundamental materials to be taught to law students in mastering English related to law subjects. The questionnaire analysis results on three questions, such as: What English material do you usually study in class, what type of English will you need in a career/job, is the English material being studied as an undergraduate suitable with your need at work, and what English material should lecturer teachers more. Thus, it revealed that reading became one of the skills commonly taught. However, the alumni

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argued it could have been more effective because they need more speaking than reading in their workplace/future career. Toshmatov (2021) describes that law students need to master English skills, especially speaking, to deal with the demand of their future careers.

Furthermore, both students and alums also inferred that both formal and informal English were essential and needed in their future careers. As Akhmad and Amiri (2018) affirmed, students' understanding of formal and informal English is necessary to face the challenge of the world. From the additional findings in materials, it can be concluded that educational practitioners also need to be aware of using digital materials sources. Ahmad (2012) states that in this digital era, various types of digital learning materials, including visual, audio, or audio-visual material, can be easily found and accessed through the technology teachers use to facilitate the teaching process. Besides, Rumalessin and Farah (2021) also state that provisioning Law students with ESP speaking can assist them in achieving their short-term goals, understanding international articles, and achieving long-term goals, have better communication skills for future jobs) (Rumalessin & Farah, 2021).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

According to the result of the need analysis on students and alums majoring in Law at a Private university in East Java, listening was considered the most difficult skill to be mastered. However, most students and alums agreed that speaking was assumed to be the most fundamental skill to be taught. Moreover, they also agreed that formal and informal English languages were expected to be involved in the materials. Regarding those findings, the English educational practitioners are suggested to develop a speaking course syllabus to cater to the need of the students by providing materials related to their future careers. Furthermore, the materials must be supported by various types of attractive digital learning materials. The consideration, digital learning materials, including visual, audio, or audio-visual material, can be easily found and accessed through the technology that exists to be utilized by the lecturer to facilitate the teaching process. Involving large numbers of stakeholders, for instance, curriculum developers, lecturers, and professional workers in Law

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are recommended for future research to gather more valid information regarding the students' need to major in Law in learning English.

Limitation

This current research has a limitation in data collection; the researchers only employed a questionnaire. Besides, the researchers also realize that the number of participants also needs to be expanded, and those limitations must be considered to strengthen the findings.

Implication

The practitioners can use the findings of this current research as a reference for the betterment in designing materials for Law students based on the problems that the students frequently encounter and the essential skill and materials that are necessary to be taught.

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