

STUDENTS' OPINION ON NON-ENGLISH SUBJECTS TAUGHT IN UNIVERSITY: A DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH

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Abstract

There is constant discussion in the English department regarding the study of non-English courses. The purpose of this study is to find out what the students think about taking non-English courses in the English department. This research used a descriptive qualitative research method involving 9 participants who were first-semester students in the English department at K.H. University. Abdul Chalim. The results of this research reveal that there are two parties, namely supporting and rejecting. Each party has its reasons. However, this research is limited in the variety of research participants. Therefore, it is recommended that future research be able to conduct similar research by increasing the variety of participants.

Keywords: English; Non-English Courses; Students' Opinion

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to the way higher education is implemented, particularly in terms of courses, KH Abdul Chalim University (UKHAC) is unique. Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah (Aswaja) is one of the schools of theological understanding (Aqiedah) of Islam (Dahri, 2021; Muttaqin et al., 2022; Rahmatika & Khoirullina, 2021). The Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah (Aswaja) stream of courses at UKHAC, which focuses primarily on character development and Islamic law-based abilities, is one of the university's unique selling points. These classes not only constitute a necessary component of the curriculum but also serve as a basis for enhancing the educational process and developing a comprehensive perspective.

At UKHAC, aswaja-based courses have a major positive influence on students' development of character. The University imparts justice, honesty, and ethics to its students by integrating Islamic values throughout all of its courses. For instance, the Aswaja course covers the ethics, history, and values of Islam that are relevant to modern society. This can assist kids in realizing that moral integrity and ethical behavior are just as important indicators of success as tangible accomplishments (Hamidaturrohmah et al., 2022; Rosyidin & Arifin, 2021).

Furthermore, UKHAC emphasizes the development of practical skills that are pertinent to the workplace from an Islamic standpoint. A greater understanding of Islamic moral and ethical principles can be gained by taking courses in accounting, IT, Arabic, and English. This gives UKHAC students a strong platform on which to build their entrepreneurship based on blessings and social justice (Neumeyer & Santos, 2023; Pergelova et al., 2023; Sudewa et al., 2023; Sukaatmadja et al., 2023). Additionally, religious classes like Aswaja and Fiqh serve as the cornerstone for a thorough comprehension of Islamic principles. Class discussions give students a platform to share their interpretations of Islam, hone their religious knowledge, and investigate how it could be applied to everyday life in a welcoming campus setting.

At UKHAC, courses with an Islamic focus enhance the educational experience by assisting students in enhancing their soft skills. Various courses incorporate learning that emphasizes productive cooperation, justice-based leadership, and effective communication. This teaches students how to apply Islamic beliefs in their interactions with people in the real world, in addition to giving them practical skills. UKHAC is aware that education involves more than just imparting knowledge—it also involves molding students' personalities to become people who make valuable contributions to society. As a result, UKHAC's Islamic-based courses significantly advance the development of social responsibility and awareness. Students learn how to critically analyze social, political, and economic problems and come up with solutions that adhere to Islamic values through the courses offered at UKHAC. Furthermore, UKHAC promotes the growth of a responsible leadership spirit among its students. Students are taught in Pancasila and Citizenship courses that leadership is about the service and responsibility of the leader, not just about power. This produces UKHAC graduates with strong morals and ethics who are prepared to take on leadership roles.

All things considered, UKHAC's Islamic-based courses offer not just academic information but also real-world applications and skills based on Islamic principles. This helps students develop become morally upright, responsible citizens in addition to skilled professionals. For students who want to become significant leaders and make positive contributions to society, UKHAC offers a solid foundation. The English Education Study Program at the University of KH Abdul Chalim (UKHAC) frequently places its students in situations where they must attend non-English courses to fulfill their curriculum requirements. Even if English is the primary language of instruction, non-English courses are nevertheless crucial for developing a comprehensive grasp and in-depth knowledge for a variety of reasons (Apidayani et al., 2023).

Students' perspectives are expanded by studying subjects other than English, even though learning English is the primary goal. A distinct viewpoint is offered by the abilities and information gained from classes like Accounting, Technology Science, and Arabic. This makes it easier for students to apply ideas from other disciplines to their English study. Taking classes in languages other than English aids in their knowledge expansion (Firmansyah et al., 2023; Ronsani Thamrin & Darsih, 2023; S et al., 2023). For instance, taking Technology Science classes enables one to comprehend how office programs work and some of their English-language features. Understanding Arabic grammar, which differs significantly from English grammar, is provided by Arabic courses. English students who have a multidisciplinary understanding are better prepared for a variety of vocations. Despite their linguistic emphasis, many professions demand cross-disciplinary abilities. For instance, knowledge of technology is necessary for an information technology translator.

English students who pursue non-English courses have the chance to collaborate with teams of people from other academic backgrounds. This enhances their educational experience and fosters the growth of their communication and collaboration across disciplines. English Education students get the chance to develop their interests and talents outside of the language classroom by taking non-English courses (Calafato & Simmonds, 2023; Hoang et al., 2023; Putra & Suparni, 2023; Sari, 2019; Ulpah Maspupah, 2022). An IT-interested English student, for instance, can enroll in a technology science course to gain a deeper understanding of the technology covered in English studies. Furthermore, taking non-English courses broadens students' professional and social networks. They engage with students pursuing diverse majors, forming connections that could be beneficial for their future professional endeavors. This makes it possible for people to collaborate on cross-disciplinary projects and have creative exchanges of ideas.

Students can also explore interests they may have outside of their primary subject of study by enrolling in non-English courses. This could present a chance for them to pick up new knowledge and improve their entire academic journey (Giri Aditama et al., 2023; Yani & Saleh,

2022). Therefore, even if they are unrelated to their primary subject of study, non-English courses are nonetheless beneficial to English majors. These learning experiences help them get ready for a successful career by widening their perspectives, developing their multidisciplinary skills, and growing their social and professional networks. They also provide them the opportunity to explore a variety of interests in their holistic self-development.

Following the advantages, English language learners may encounter difficulties when enrolled in non-English courses (Raheem, 2022; Yang, 2023). For instance, they'll likely struggle to comprehend various texts or get used to the specialized language of several specialties. Even though non-English classes can be difficult, the advantages are enormous. For students majoring in English, expanding one's horizons, developing multidisciplinary understanding, and becoming ready for a variety of jobs are all worthy investments. It demonstrates how having a comprehensive understanding benefits people in their many occupations and professional lives. Learning English on campus is crucial to provide students with the tools they need to succeed in the globalized world. Their ability to obtain up-to-date information is aided, and it also opens up new avenues for contact, employment, and knowledge sharing.

On a typical campus, English is taught as a core subject. English is taught across a range of areas, from general classes that are taught in it to English as a foreign language. (Abdul Rashid et al., 2022; Gautam, 2022; Rai, 2022) As a result, students acquire language skills and can use them in academic settings related to their study programs. Studying English on campus fosters good communication skills in addition to grammar and vocabulary. Pupils acquire English speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills. This facilitates their communication in both formal academic settings and day-to-day encounters in a global environment that is becoming more interconnected. Students can access intellectual resources, current research, and international information mostly through English. Students who are proficient in English can read and comprehend English-language books, periodicals, articles, and Internet materials. This is crucial for staying up to date on the most recent facts.

Proficiency in English language acquisition confers a competitive edge in the worldwide workforce. The College understands how critical it is to give students the skills required by the increasingly open global labor market. Proficiency in the English language is a crucial requirement for international businesses, institutions, and cross-border organizations. Students who study English in college are more equipped to handle global issues when they take advantage of international conferences, exchange programs, and international internship possibilities. English is essential for cross-border cooperation in research and international projects; it's not merely a language for conversation. Students have more opportunities to participate in cross-cultural interactions when they study English (Chowdhury et al., 2022). They can engage in cross-cultural interactions, gain insight into various cultural viewpoints, and extend their global perspective. This encourages students to be tolerant of and comprehend different cultures.

Even with all of its advantages, learning English has its drawbacks. Certain students could find it challenging to comprehend accents or adjust to new grammar. To help pupils overcome these obstacles, teachers must provide a more individualized approach and support. Acquiring proficiency in English on campus involves more than just language learning—it's creating opportunities. It enables students to broaden their knowledge, acquire skills that are in high demand in a labor market that is always evolving, and get ready for global problems (Adewoye, 2022; Rastgou, 2022). Therefore, funding on-campus English language instruction is a wise investment in students' future academic success.

The opinions of students regarding disciplines taught in universities other than English are the focus of two studies. The initial study is titled *Non-English Major Students Perception Toward the Teaching of English as a Compulsory Subject* (Bahar & Husain, 2021). The study's findings demonstrated that students' attitudes about English language instruction as a required subject

are generally good. One of the most significant findings is that students are more motivated to learn English when it is directly relevant to their major. The prior study, however, did not address the perspectives of English majors taking non-English courses. Consequently, more research on that is required.

The second research is entitled *Belief, perception, and Challenges of Non-English Department Students to Learn English in the Globalization Era* (Iftanti & Maunah, 2021). It reveals that English is perceived like a two-sided coin which on the one hand, is misperceived as a difficult subject because of its complicated rules to be memorized. On the other hand, it is thought to be joyful and meaningful they believe as a means of bringing educational, social, and economic success. Therefore, they are challenged to be proficient in English. This study is then pedagogically implemented by building positive beliefs and perceptions that learning English is fun and helpful. The prior study, however, did not address the perspectives of English majors taking non-English courses. Consequently, more research on that is required.

Previous research has indicated a research gap: no studies have examined students' opinions about subjects taught in universities other than English. Thus, the goal of this study is to close the research gap by investigating university students' opinions about subjects other than English. Two research questions are raised by this study. The following are the two research questions: (1) What are the opinions of students who support learning non-English subjects in the English department at UKHAC? (2) What are the opinions of students who are against learning non-English subjects in the English department at UKHAC?

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive design. Qualitative research methods can adapt data collection techniques to the context and situation of the research, such as interviews, observations, text analyses, or daily journals. This research method is used to reveal the responses of English language study program students at Abdul Chalim University regarding Students' Opinions on Non-English Subjects Taught at the University. The participants of this study were three students from the English study program at the University of KH. Abdul Chalim. The three participants were chosen because they had the potential to provide clearer explanations. The method of selecting participants in this interview is an unstructured review. Unstructured review was chosen due to the lack of participants in the English class.

The data from this study were obtained through interviews and observations. Meanwhile, the type chosen was an unstructured interview. Unstructured interviews were chosen to be used because the interviewer and interviewee can search for data without restrictions related to the topic discussed so that the data obtained becomes useful (Beiki et al., 2020; Ganapathi & Duggal, 2023; Simpson, 2017). Furthermore, the interview data was supported by observation data. Observations were made to get a direct picture of the behavior of English language study program students in non-enrolment courses (Bsharat & Hamarsha, 2023; Gupta et al., 2023; Susanti, 2023; Yeung et al., 2023). Firstly, the researcher must determine the research questions or objectives to be answered through the interviews. Next, the researcher selects participants who are likely to provide useful and relevant information. The sample size and recruitment process will depend on the research question and available resources. Once the participants are selected, the researcher prepares a list of interview questions designed to elicit the information needed from the interviewed participants. In addition, the researcher also considers how to structure the interview, including the order and structure of the questions. After conducting the interviews, the researcher needs to analyze the data, looking for patterns and themes that can help to answer the research questions.

Following that, four stages of data analysis were used to examine the study's data: data gathering, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). These steps are taken to get precise and comprehensive results about phenomena that are now occurring. Since not all of the data that is gathered is appropriate and meets the requirements to be used as data for this study, it is then reduced to be chosen and sorted as needed. this study. After the data is reduced, the data is then displayed more simply and systematically so that the data is more ordered and systematic. more methodical to improve organization and comprehension of the material. Finally, conclusions are produced based on the data that has been presented more effectively and represent the research's findings. which represent the research's conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study show that non-English courses are very important for students because subjects like accounting, IT, Arabic, Indonesian, and dasar pendidikan can give extra knowledge that will be helpful in specific situations, like the workplace for Arabic teachers or students studying IT and accounting, or in the Arab world in general. Regarding viewpoints, some people complain about non-English classes since they find it difficult to focus on English courses. Other perspectives, however, are in agreement about non-English classes, contending that they can provide useful extra information in the future and more information that will be beneficial.

Disagree

Some students are negatively impacted by this non-English subject. in this instance, connected to accountancy, IT, Arabic, and Indonesian. Some pupils struggle with concentration, which lowers their motivation to master certain subjects. This may cause students to become lazy while taking these classes.

RP1: *“Walaupun sebenarnya penting di pengetahuan kita, tapi dari banyaknya tugas dari mata kuliah umum tersebut membuat kita nggak bisa fokus terhadap mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris yang Dimana merupakan mata kuliah jurusan”*

E: *“Although it is important in our knowledge, the many assignments from these general courses, make us unable to focus on English courses which are major courses”*

The tasks that come from many general classes create problems that make it hard for us to fully focus on English courses, even though they generally have value in growing knowledge. Additionally, the emphasis of our major is directly related to the English courses. The burdensome nature of broad studies poses challenges that make it hard to devote enough time and focus to the subjects that are essential to our major. The dynamics of the ongoing workload in this setting partially undermine the significance of English classes.

Agree

Some students believe that this non-English course has advantages as well, such as enhancing future knowledge and understanding. Under this situation, courses like accounting and IT can be helpful in the workplace.

RP1: *“Ya kalau menurut saya nggak apa – apa kalau ada pelajaran selain Bahasa Inggris kan buat menambah ilmu pengetahuan serta mempelajari banyak ragam Bahasa guna mempermudah berkomunikasi misal jika kita berada di negara lain”*

E: *“Yes, I think it's okay if there are lessons other than English, it's for increasing knowledge and learning many kinds of languages to make it easier to communicate, for example, if we are in another country”*

He believes there is no issue with learning about subjects other than English. As an attempt to expand one's knowledge, on the other hand, it is perceived. We may expand our knowledge and deepen our understanding by studying a variety of subjects. Additionally, it's seen to be a useful ability to speak several languages. Communication in distant countries is easier when one has a varied set of linguistic abilities. Learning is important, but so is creating pathways to more in-depth encounters and comprehension of the many facets of this world's existence.

RP2: *“ya mungkin untuk kita yang masih semester satu itu penting soalnya masih awal – awal”*

E: *“Yes, maybe for those of us who are still in the first semester it is important because it is still early”*

Students majoring in English who are in their first semester should examine subjects other than English throughout the early parts of the semester. During this stage, they need to explore a variety of knowledge sources to lay a solid academic foundation. Engaging in pursuits outside English is vital, given that learning persists and diversity of understanding fosters personal growth. Students can develop a more comprehensive understanding, sharpen their abilities, and access chances for holistic growth outside the study of English by broadening their learning objectives.

One of the primary benefits of this research lies in its capacity to enhance the relevance of the English major curriculum. By delving into the reasons behind students' refusals or support for non-English subjects, educators can gain valuable insights into the alignment of coursework with students' interests and aspirations. This understanding enables institutions to refine and tailor their curriculum, ensuring that it remains dynamic and resonant with the evolving needs of English majors. As the academic landscape continues to diversify, a curriculum that strikes a balance between traditional English studies and interdisciplinary perspectives equips graduates with a broader skill set, preparing them for a multifaceted professional world.

Research on students' attitudes towards non-English subjects empowers educators to adopt informed pedagogical strategies. The insights garnered from students' perspectives offer guidance on how to effectively engage them in the learning process. By identifying potential challenges or areas of resistance, educators can implement innovative teaching methods, real-world applications, and cross-disciplinary connections that make non-English subjects more appealing and relevant. This informed approach to pedagogy not only enriches the learning experience for English majors but also equips them with a diverse set of skills that extends beyond traditional linguistic and literary boundaries.

Discussion

A crucial benefit of this research lies in its contribution to promoting cultural competence within the English major curriculum. Understanding why students may refuse or support non-English

subjects provides valuable insights into their perspectives on cultural diversity. By acknowledging and addressing these viewpoints, institutions can develop courses that celebrate linguistic and cultural pluralism. Exposure to non-English subjects not only broadens the cultural horizons of English majors but also fosters a heightened awareness of global interconnectedness. Graduates equipped with cultural competence are better prepared to navigate an increasingly diverse and international professional landscape.

Researching English majors' attitudes towards non-English subjects promotes an inclusive dialogue between students and academic institutions. By actively seeking and valuing student opinions, institutions signal a commitment to student-centric education. This approach fosters a sense of partnership between students and educators, creating an environment where diverse viewpoints are acknowledged and respected. The inclusivity embedded in this research not only strengthens the student-institution relationship but also cultivates a more collaborative and enriching educational community.

CONCLUSION

It is evident from the findings that students' perceptions of the English department's non-English courses vary. First off, the presence of non-English courses in the English department is disputed by the students. Some students struggle to concentrate in their core classes and are overburdened with tasks from these courses. Second, the presence of non-English courses in the English department is accepted by the students. Some students believe that non-English classes are very useful, particularly in the first semester as a way to broaden their knowledge, since they will be concentrating more on main courses in the second semester. Some said that taking classes other than English is beneficial for the future, for example, when traveling abroad or starting a career. Nonetheless, students who disagree will either stop studying altogether or, worse yet, refuse to participate in the course's learning process now that non-English courses are available. The study's findings also demonstrate that the reason why students enjoy or loathe a course is entirely up to them.

These results indicate that English majors have varying perspectives about learning non-English courses in the English department, with some agreeing and some opposing. It is intended that readers will be able to learn more from this research regarding the perspectives of English majors taking non-English courses. Lastly, it is advised that more studies be done to gain more knowledge, either by using various locations or a larger number of participants. To gather more detailed data on the attitudes of the students on taking non-English courses, more research can also employ more thorough interviewing techniques.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the participants who were willing to contribute their time and information as data for this research. Special thanks are also addressed to Abdul Chalim University for the financial support provided so that this research can be carried out well.

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