

TEACHING ENGLISH IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES CONTEXT: CHALLENGES IN ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Understanding the principles and methods of Islamic finance and company management is crucial in today's global economy. Sharia Business Management, rooted in Islamic ethics, requires strong English proficiency for effective communication. Addressing the unique ESP challenges faced by students can enhance their professional success and improve education quality at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. This finding depicts teaching challenges in English for Business Management. Through interviews and observations conducted at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, specific difficulties faced by both teachers and students were identified. The primary finding of the research highlights several key challenges in learning and teaching ESP within the Sharia Business Management program. Students struggle with language proficiency, particularly with specialized vocabulary and complex ideas related to Sharia-compliant business practices, which hinders their academic and professional development. The research also identifies the need for contextualized English materials and improved course duration and facilities to enhance ESP education. Both lecturers and students recognize the significance of ESP for professional success in a globalized Sharia business environment, emphasizing the importance of mastering Islamic finance principles, legal terminology, cross-cultural communication, and specialized business documentation in English.

Keywords: ESP; Sharia Business Management; Islamic finance; Challenges

INTRODUCTION

Hutchinson et al (2017) stated that ESP is language teaching approach that is the content and method are based on the what learners reason to learn language. Furthermore, Anthony (2018) claimed that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a kind of language learning that focuses on professional or academic objectives. ESP learners will concentrate on certain skills or genres to meet their requirements, utilizing specific or broad teaching materials and methods.

The context of English for Special Purposes (ESP) learning in economics is characterized by a unique set of needs that are distinct from those of general English language learners. Economics students require specialized language skills to effectively communicate and navigate the complexities of their field, which involves a wide range of technical terms, concepts, and methodologies. This specialized language is essential for students to understand and apply economic theories, analyze data, and communicate complex ideas to both academic and professional audiences.

The significance of ESP in economics lies in its ability to bridge the gap between general English proficiency and the specific linguistic demands of the field. By honing skills such as report writing, data presentation, and critical analysis, ESP courses not only enhance academic performance but also prepare students and professionals for the global marketplace. As economic activities become increasingly interconnected across borders, the role of ESP in economics education is crucial for fostering effective communication and professional success.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learning is pivotal in both business management and economics, yet the focus and application of ESP in these fields differ significantly. Some people are now convinced that learning ESP and general English are substantially different because of the implementation of ESP (Hillalliyati, 2020). In business management, ESP courses are designed to develop communication skills pertinent to corporate environments, such as leadership, negotiation, project management, and strategic decision-making (Alharbi, 2022). These courses emphasize practical language use in business contexts, including drafting business plans, delivering presentations, and engaging in meetings, which are essential for effective management and organizational success.

In contrast, ESP learning in economics concentrates on the specialized terminology and analytical skills required to understand economic theories, conduct research, and interpret data. While both fields require proficiency in English, the linguistic demands in economics are more oriented towards academic discourse, critical analysis of economic texts, and the ability to communicate complex concepts in reports and policy briefs (Danial et al, 2023). Thus, while ESP in business management equips learners with the tools for immediate application in corporate settings, ESP in economics focuses on the theoretical and research-based language skills necessary for academic and professional excellence in the field of economics.

There has been a great deal of research done recently on the subject of teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in business management. According to Wulandari (2023), students studying business management have a critical need for speaking, grammar, and vocabulary, underscoring the significance of specialized language instruction. In order to develop successful ESP courses, Jitpanich, Leong, and Ismail (2022) emphasized the unique writing requirements of business students. Likewise, despite focusing on nursing, Pradana, Yunita, and Diani's (2022) study offered insightful analyses of ESP needs analysis methodologies, demonstrating the methods' wide applicability.

Foundational course development strategies for ESP were presented by Basturkmen (2010) and are crucial in business management contexts. Garcia-Ponce (2020) emphasized that improving language competency through needs analysis is essential for students studying business management.

The current research aims to fill gaps identified in previous studies by focusing specifically on the challenges faced by students and teachers in delivering ESP for business management. Unlike earlier works, which primarily focused on student needs and course development, this study will explore the pedagogical difficulties and strategies for overcoming them, providing a comprehensive view of teaching English in an ESP context for business management.

To equip Sharia Business Management students for the demands of the global Islamic finance industry, this study aims to investigate the challenges faced by teachers and students in learning and teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) within the Sharia Business Management program. The study will explore the perceptions of both lecturers and students regarding the significance and relevance of ESP in Sharia Business Management, highlighting the importance of mastering specific ESP content areas related to Sharia Business Management for achieving professional success. By understanding these challenges and perceptions, the study aims to provide insights that can inform the development of effective ESP teaching methods and materials tailored to the needs of Sharia Business Management students, ultimately enhancing their language proficiency and career readiness in the global Islamic finance industry.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach to investigate the difficulties encountered by ESP teachers and students in higher education. Contextualizing data is crucial for qualitative research (Yin, 2015). The data analysis was conducted in accordance with Sugiyono (2010),

which included data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The following sections cover participants, the research instrument, data collection and analysis.

Participants

The participants in this research include two lecturers who teach English for semester 2 in the Sharia Business Management study program at UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta. Additionally, the study involves students majoring in Sharia Business Management, specifically second-semester students who are taking English lessons. These students are divided into six classes, each with 40 students. From the student's population, 10% is taken to be used as a sample. The research also examines the teaching materials used in the Sharia Business Management curriculum to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of English lessons within the program.

Research Instruments

The research employs two primary instruments to obtain qualitative data: Observation Checklist and Interviews. The Observation Checklist is designed to facilitate direct observation by listing specific criteria and behaviours related to integrating English lessons into the Sharia Business Management curriculum. It helps analyze classroom dynamics, teaching strategies, and student participation, ensuring observations are consistent and focused (Ria et al, 2020). Additionally, interviews are conducted with both students and lecturers. According to Birmingham and Wilkinson (2003), this method of data collection provides rich results and in-depth interviews by allowing participants to freely communicate on the same topic. Students from the second semester of the Sharia Business Management program and their English lecturers are interviewed to gain insights into the challenges, importance, and effectiveness of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in their studies. These instruments collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and efficacy of English instruction within this context. The instrument of this research were observation and interview. And interview was used to collect more information from the observation.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection and analysis in this study involved two main phases. Initially, the researcher conducted qualitative observations in the classroom to assess the current state of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching and learning. Detailed notes were taken on teaching strategies, student participation, communication styles, and other relevant observations. The interactions between teachers, students, and instructional materials were documented to understand the educational dynamics. In the second phase, 24 students were randomly selected for interviews, where open-ended questions were used to gather in-depth qualitative data on their experiences. Data analysis involved processing observation notes, interview transcripts, and documents. Observation data were documented in journals and verified through triangulation. Interview data were transcribed, described, and classified according to research questions to provide comprehensive answers. This methodical approach ensured accurate and meaningful conclusions about the ESP teaching and learning process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the result of data analysis with Sharia Business Management teachers and students highlight several significant challenges and needs in the learning and teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Students consistently pointed out difficulties in some case. First, learning and memorizing specialized economic terminology in English can be difficult. Second,

reading and comprehending complex academic texts and articles in economics, which frequently contain dense language and advanced concepts, can be challenging. Third, writing essays and reports in English necessitates not only language proficiency but also the ability to articulate complex economic concepts clearly and accurately. Finally, interpreting and analyzing data, charts, and graphs presented in English adds an additional layer of difficulty because it necessitates both language skills and a thorough understanding of economic principles. Two English teachers who teach ESP to Sharia Business Management students also revealed the difficulties they experienced. Firstly, ensuring students grasp the complex and specialized economic vocabulary can be difficult, especially when they are not familiar with the terminology in their native language. Secondly, designing lessons that effectively integrate business and sharia concepts with language learning can be demanding, as it requires a deep understanding of both subjects. Thirdly, engaging students in real-world economic discussions in English can be challenging, particularly if they lack confidence or fluency in the language. Finally, keeping students motivated and interested in both the language and the subject matter requires creativity and careful planning. Further discussion regarding each challenge will be discussed in this section. Several statements of the participants are quoted by translating their words to support the findings.

Learning and memorizing specialized economic terminology in English can be difficult

Learning and memorizing specialized economic terminology in English can present significant challenges, particularly for individuals whose native language is not English. This difficulty is compounded when dealing with complex concepts like those found in Sharia business terms such as 'mudharabah', 'murabahah', and 'sukuk'. Participant 1's experience reflects this challenge, as they struggle to accurately recall and use these specific terms in English contexts, which can lead to confusion during assignments or conversations related to Sharia business practices.

Student 1: "Saya kesulitan menemukan kata-kata bahasa Inggris yang tepat untuk istilah-istilah bisnis syariah, seperti 'mudharabah', 'murabahah', dan 'sukuk'. Hal ini membuat saya bingung saat mengerjakan tugas atau berbicara dengan orang lain tentang bisnis syariah."

Reading and comprehending complex academic texts and articles in economics, which frequently contain dense language and advanced concepts, can be challenging

Reading and comprehending complex academic texts and articles in economics can be daunting due to their dense language and advanced concepts. This challenge is particularly pronounced when dealing with Sharia business material, which differs significantly from conventional business practices. For Participant 5, understanding this material in English poses additional difficulty, especially when engaging with scholarly journals or textbooks where the language and concepts may be highly specialized and nuanced. This can lead to a barrier in fully grasping and interpreting the content related to Sharia business practices.

Student 5: "Materi manajemen bisnis syariah cukup kompleks dan berbeda dari bisnis konvensional. Hal ini membuat saya kesulitan memahami materi dalam bahasa Inggris, terutama saat membaca jurnal atau buku teks."

Writing essays and reports in English necessitates not only language proficiency but also the ability to articulate complex economic concepts clearly and accurately

Writing essays and reports in English requires not only proficiency in the language but also the ability to articulate complex economic concepts clearly and accurately. This task can

be particularly challenging for those like Participant 3, who are still developing their English language skills and grappling with understanding intricate economic management concepts. The difficulty lies not just in translating ideas into English but also in ensuring that the nuances and complexities of economic theories and principles are conveyed effectively in written form. Thus, the process involves both linguistic competence and a deep understanding of economic concepts to produce coherent and insightful academic work

Student 3: “Ketika saya ingin menulis artikel atau laporan tentang manajemen dalam Bahasa Inggris, saya mengalami kesulitan dan kebingungan karena saya belum mahir Bahasa Inggris ditambah pula memahami konsep-konsep manajemen ekonomi”.

Interpreting and analysing data, charts, and graphs presented in English adds an additional layer of difficulty because it necessitates both language skills and a thorough understanding of economic principles

Interpreting and analyzing data, charts, and graphs presented in English can be particularly challenging because it requires a combination of language proficiency and a thorough understanding of economic principles. This means not only recognizing and comprehending specific terms used in these visual formats but also applying economic theories to make sense of the information and draw accurate conclusions. Participant 2's opinion aligns with this statement, as they express difficulty with the specialized vocabulary used in economic data and graphics. Terms like "correlation," "regression analysis," and "causality" may be directly translated into English, but understanding their differences and applications to specific data requires a deeper grasp of economic theory and practice, beyond just knowing the words in English.

Student 2: “Salah satu kendala saya ketika belajar ESP adalah Salah satu tantangan utama terletak pada kosakata khusus yang digunakan dalam data dan grafik ekonomi. Istilah-istilah seperti "korelasi", "analisis regresi", dan "kausalitas" mungkin diterjemahkan langsung ke dalam bahasa Inggris, namun memahami perbedaannya dan penerapannya pada data spesifik yang disajikan bisa jadi rumit. Hal ini memerlukan pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang teori dan praktik ekonomi lebih dari sekedar mengetahui kata-kata dalam bahasa Inggris.

Ensuring students grasp the complex and specialized economic vocabulary can be difficult, especially when they are not familiar with the terminology in their native language

Ensuring students grasp complex and specialized economic vocabulary can be difficult, particularly when they are not familiar with the terminology in their native language. This challenge becomes more pronounced when teaching concepts that have specific meanings and implications within economic contexts, such as Sharia business terms. Students may struggle to understand these terms in English, leading to confusion and difficulty in retaining the information. This is especially true when the terminology involves nuanced or culturally specific concepts that do not have direct equivalents in their native language.

Absolutely, teacher 1's experience aligns perfectly with this challenge. They specifically highlight the difficulty of explaining specialized Sharia business terminology, such as "riba," "mudharabah," and "zakah," and the students' struggle to comprehend and retain these terms in English. Both the general statement and teacher 1's experience underscore the compounded difficulty students face when encountering unfamiliar economic concepts in a foreign language.

Teacher 1: “One of the main challenges I face in teaching English for Sharia Business Management is explaining the specialized terminology associated with Sharia business concepts such as "riba" (usury), "mudharabah" (profit-sharing partnership), and "zakah" (almsgiving). Students often struggle to understand and remember these terms in English.

Designing lessons that effectively integrate business and sharia concepts with language learning can be demanding, as it requires a deep understanding of both subjects

Designing lessons that effectively integrate business and sharia concepts with language learning is particularly demanding because it requires a deep understanding of both subjects. Educators must not only be proficient in English language teaching but also have a solid grasp of economic, management, business, and sharia principles. This dual expertise is necessary to create materials that are both linguistically accessible and conceptually accurate, ensuring that students can learn the language in a context that is relevant and meaningful to their field of study.

Teacher 1: “Designing ESP teaching materials for sharia management is also a tough challenge because it has to combine business and sharia and then adapt it to English. As a teacher with an educational background in English, I have to work double duty because I also have to understand terms in economics, management, business and sharia.”

Engaging students in real-world economic discussions in English can be challenging, particularly if they lack confidence or fluency in the language

Engaging students in real-world economic discussions in English presents a significant challenge, particularly for those lacking confidence or fluency in the language. Imagine being expected to debate complex economic issues while still struggling to express yourself clearly and concisely in English. This can lead to feelings of self-consciousness and a reluctance to participate, hindering their ability to develop crucial communication skills in a business context.

Absolutely, Teacher 2's experience aligns with this challenge. The teacher specifically mentions the difficulty of engaging students in discussions about Sharia business nuances, particularly when students lack confidence in their English abilities. The teacher also expresses the concern that students haven't yet mastered general English, further highlighting the need for a strong foundation in the language before diving into complex economic discussions. Both the statement and Teacher 2's experience emphasize the importance of addressing student confidence and fluency in English to facilitate effective participation in real-world economic discussions.

Teacher 2: “It is also a challenge for me as an English teacher to involve students in interacting with the nuances of sharia business, especially if students' self-confidence is not very high. They are still ashamed of their abilities. It's like they haven't mastered General English yet”.

Keeping students motivated and interested in both the language and the subject matter requires creativity and careful planning

Keeping students motivated and interested in both the language and the subject matter requires creativity and careful planning. This involves designing engaging lessons that not only teach the necessary language skills but also make the subject matter relevant and exciting. Teachers need to find ways to connect the material to students' real-world experiences and future careers, using interactive activities, practical examples, and diverse resources. Balancing the dual goals of language acquisition and subject comprehension demands innovative approaches to maintain student interest and enthusiasm throughout the learning process.

Teacher 2: “Building and maintaining student motivation to continue to be enthusiastic about learning ESP is also not easy. You have to think about what kind of creative learning can be applied and accepted by students easily. Teachers implement activities like debates, role-playing exercises, and group projects. This fosters a more dynamic learning environment that encourages participation and collaboration.

Discussion

The findings from the analysis of data collected from Sharia Business Management teachers and students highlight significant challenges and needs in learning and teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Teaching English for specific purposes remains potentials and challenges in the recent years (Nugroho et al., 2019). Dewi (2014) claims that a lack of understanding of the importance of ESP is the root of the issue in Indonesia, especially at Islamic universities. These challenges are multifaceted, reflecting both linguistic and conceptual difficulties. One primary issue is the difficulty in learning and memorizing specialized economic terminology in English. This is particularly problematic for non-native English speakers who must grapple with terms like 'mudharabah,' 'murabahah,' and 'sukuk,' which are complex even in their native context. The inability to accurately recall and use these terms can lead to confusion in both assignments and discussions. Additionally, students face considerable obstacles in reading and comprehending complex academic texts and articles in economics. These texts often contain dense language and advanced concepts, making it particularly challenging to grasp Sharia business materials, which differ significantly from conventional business practices. According to (Khoshhal, 2018), instructional materials must be directly related to the target need of the students. Put differently, the resources offer significant benefits to students. Ideally, it is designed by considering many things, such as relevant topics to its major, level of difficulty, contextual, etc (Nuraeningsih, 2019).

Writing essays and reports in English presents another layer of difficulty. It requires not only language proficiency but also the ability to clearly and accurately articulate complex economic concepts. Students who are still developing their English skills and understanding of economic management concepts find this especially challenging. Moreover, interpreting and analyzing data, charts, and graphs in English necessitates both language proficiency and a thorough understanding of economic principles. Specialized vocabulary used in these visual formats adds to the complexity, requiring students to apply economic theories to make sense of the information presented.

Teachers also face substantial difficulties in ensuring students grasp complex and specialized economic vocabulary, especially when students are unfamiliar with the terminology in their native language. This issue is compounded when the vocabulary involves nuanced or culturally specific concepts that do not have direct equivalents in the students' first language. Designing lessons that effectively integrate business and Sharia concepts with language learning demands a deep understanding of both subjects. This dual expertise is essential for creating materials that are both linguistically accessible and conceptually accurate.

Engaging students in real-world economic discussions in English is particularly challenging when students lack confidence or fluency in the language. This lack of confidence can hinder participation and the development of crucial communication skills. Teachers highlight the importance of addressing student confidence and fluency in English to facilitate effective participation in discussions. Finally, keeping students motivated and interested in both the language and the subject matter requires creativity and careful planning. Teachers must design engaging lessons that connect the material to students' real-world experiences and future careers. This involves using interactive activities, practical examples, and diverse resources to maintain student interest and enthusiasm throughout the learning process. Moreover, based on

the interview and observation, it was found that the skills that have met the students' needs are specific vocabulary and speaking skill. Overall, the study underscores the need for innovative and tailored approaches to address the unique challenges faced by Sharia Business Management students in ESP courses.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study confirms that Sharia Business Management students face several significant challenges in learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP). These challenges include difficulties in learning and memorizing specialized economic terminology, reading and comprehending complex academic texts, writing essays and reports, and interpreting and analyzing data, charts, and graphs. These linguistic and conceptual difficulties are compounded by the unique nature of Sharia business practices, which differ from conventional business practices. Additionally, teachers face substantial challenges in ensuring students grasp complex vocabulary, designing integrated lessons, engaging students in discussions, and keeping them motivated. Addressing these challenges requires innovative and tailored approaches that connect language learning to students' real-world experiences and future careers. This study highlights the need for a comprehensive strategy that involves both linguistic and conceptual support to enhance the learning and teaching of ESP for Sharia Business Management students.

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