

**DEVELOPING ESP (ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES) CURRICULA FOR FUTURE DIPLOMATS: A NEEDS-BASED APPROACH****Mambetova Kamola Norxon kizi**

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**Annotation:** This study explores the design and implementation of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curricula tailored to the unique communicative demands of future diplomats. As English continues to dominate international diplomacy, it is essential that aspiring diplomats are equipped not only with general language proficiency but with specialized skills for negotiation, formal writing, public speaking, and intercultural dialogue. This research adopts a needs-based approach to curriculum development, ensuring that the content, methodology, and assessment tools align closely with the real-world linguistic and pragmatic tasks diplomats face. The curriculum design is informed by task-based language teaching (TBLT) and communicative language teaching (CLT) frameworks, emphasizing authenticity, intercultural awareness, and strategic use of language. It also considers the integration of digital diplomacy skills, such as professional email etiquette and social media communication in global affairs.

Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the advancement of ESP pedagogy by providing a structured, research-based model for preparing learners in international relations programs to become linguistically competent, culturally sensitive, and diplomatically effective global communicators.

**Key words:** ESP (English for Specific Purposes), diplomatic communication, curriculum design, EDP (English for Diplomatic purposes)

The increasing demand for global mobility and cross-border employment opportunities has amplified the need for English proficiency among university graduates across various disciplines, including International Relations (IR). As globalization continues to shape professional landscapes, English serves as the primary medium for diplomacy, negotiations, and policy discussions (Chovancová, 2014; Xhemali, 2022). However, traditional General English (GE) courses often fail to equip students with the specific linguistic competencies required in professional IR settings (Dou et al, 2023). This gap has led to a shift towards English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which emphasizes language instruction tailored to students' professional and academic needs.

In context, the importance of English mastery is highlighted to play an integral role in international relation settings. It strengthens the position of English as a compulsory subject at higher education levels (Permatasari et al., 2021; Warda & Dalimunte, 2022). Moreover, proficiency in English is particularly crucial for graduates seeking international career opportunities. In this regard, the G to G (Government to Government) initiative facilitates employment abroad by providing Indonesian graduates with greater access to overseas job markets (Husna & Hindriyastuti, 2023). Despite the growing opportunity to work abroad, competing for a job globally is difficult due to low English proficiency ("Institusi Pendidikan", 2019). It becomes a concern because English competence is one of the primary prerequisites for

working overseas. As a result, there is an urgent need to provide university students with appropriate English abilities that will allow them to not only pass the prerequisites but also succeed in acquiring a job and use English in the workplace with ease. The emerging question is that if the limited time of English given to students in the university level is effective to help them mastering the language at the desired level.

In many universities, the compulsory English course for students is General English (GE), also known as Basic English. Since GE is designed as a broad, non-specialized course rather than being tailored to specific fields of study, its effectiveness in preparing students for professional communication remains limited (Ekayati et al., 2020). The course generally focuses on fundamental language skills rather than industry-specific requirements, which may prevent students from acquiring the targeted English proficiency needed for their future careers. Besides, GE does not cover what learners need to study in depth, limiting their exposure to relevant materials (Setyowati et al., 2023; Todea & Demarcsek, 2017). A more neutral argument is presented by Luo, (2018) who emphasizes that the primary goal of GE is to prepare students to communicate more effectively in English. While this is a valuable objective, it may not be sufficient for students aiming to compete in the workforce. In this regard, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses are considered a more suitable option, as they are designed to equip students with the specialized language skills needed for particular professional fields. ESP courses claim to provide learners with a targeted level of English proficiency aligned with real-world demands, ensuring they can use the language effectively in their specific areas of expertise (Agustina, 2014; Kolomiets et al., 2020; Meiristiani & Rosdiana, 2017; Ulfah et al., 2021).

**In order to design an ESP course**, need analysis of what students may need once they enter the working world can be a helpful tool to better prepare them. Through Need Analysis (NA), a suitable learning system and process can be created (Madkur, 2018; Poedjiastutie & Oliver, 2017; Rohmah, 2017; Wulandari, 2023). Need analysis can function as an effective tool to help teachers to make course-related decisions, and match the objectives with the projection need the employers may need from the graduates (Poedjiastutie & Oliver, 2017). Similarly, Bahri et al., (2023) & Pranoto & Suprayogi, (2020) explain that conducting NA is a way to understand the specific needs, challenges and opportunities.

Students' behavior can also be identified so that teachers can understand the teaching method students preferred and the learning styles they use. This analysis is the helpful not only to pick the materials but also determining the methods to deliver the material. Understanding these positive impacts that Need Analysis (NA) brings, conducting NA is considered a crucial step in course design (Finney, 2002; Hamp-Lyons, 2001). NA is even regarded as the "key essence of ESP" (Rahman, 2015, p.24). Consequently, awareness of the importance of NA in curriculum development within the Indonesian education system is increasing. The growing number of studies on NA and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) suggests that more ESP practitioners recognize its value in course design. However, research on NA in the field of International Relations (IR) remains limited. Over the past seven years, only three studies on NA have been conducted in this discipline (Duka et al., 2020; Hariyanti et al., 2024; Saputro & Hima, 2018). The scarcity of research in this area indicates that ESP practices in IR are less prevalent compared to other fields. To address this gap, this study was conducted to contribute to the growing body of research on ESP in IR and to support the development of more effective course designs tailored to students' needs.

Based on a need analysis-based syllabus in English for International Relations (EFIR) courses, a questionnaire checking current methods was observed by 36 participants. When these curricula: Debate materials, Business negotiation, Opinion paragraph and argumentative writing- Specific Topics: Gender Inequality in India, Interactive and fun learning method, Job interview

simulation, Football, Japanese wave, Oral presentation, Gastrodiplomacy, Writing report, specifically, 96% of students believed the materials were relevant to the course objectives, indicating a significant correlation between syllabus content and educational aims. This positive spirit was mirrored in the clear and comprehensive list of mandatory readings, which had been agreed upon by all students. The supplemental materials, such as articles, films, and websites, were also positively accepted, with 91% of students stating that they improved their grasp of course content, demonstrating the relevance of different resources in enriching learning experiences. Similarly, 96% of students believed that the course materials were up to date, reflecting current trends and expertise, which was critical for areas like International Relations that were always changing. The data also demonstrates students' satisfaction with the manageability and engagement of the course materials. A total of 92% of students found the amount of reading and material assigned to be reasonable within the course duration, indicating that the workload was acceptable and well-organized.

The above results showed that the advanced EFIR students preferred materials that had practical applicability, personal interest, and compelling content. Job interview and application simulations were the most popular, owing to their practical insights, engaging character, and preparatory benefits. In general, engaging, useful, and academically and professionally relevant materials were given top priority by both beginning and advanced EFIR students. Debate and business negotiation exercises were highly preferred by basic students, who felt that they helped them develop their critical thinking, speaking confidence, and argumentation abilities. Additionally, they valued particular topical conversations for their applicability to global concerns, such as the gender inequality.

### Conclusion

From a pedagogical perspective, this study advances the development of ESP syllabuses by highlighting the need of incorporating student-driven feedback into curriculum design. The results highlight how successful practice-based, interactive learning is in ESP classes. The updated curriculum also provides a contextualized approach to English for diplomacy, embracing new developments in the field including crisis negotiation and technology diplomacy. Students are guaranteed to acquire industry-specific skills pertinent to international affairs in addition to language fluency thanks to this customized approach. Finally, a long-term research looks at how changes to the ESP syllabus affect students' career prospects in international and diplomatic sectors would shed more light on the program's efficacy over time.

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