

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

English has shown a very significant position in this era of globalization. It is widely used in every walk of life such as for education, communication, information, and especially in the job market. To fulfill the requirements for the middle-up positions, fluency of spoken and written English is a major requirement. Even, those people who wish to work overseas will require a certain amount of knowledge of English in order to 'survive' in the wide force.

As a means of communication, English has been one of the prestigious languages used for many years almost all over the world. It has been accepted as the international language of technology and commerce. Thus, more and more people are motivated to learn English, and in its development, English is learnt for different purposes, which is especially based on the field of one's work as the reason for them to study the language. For this reason, there are learners who learn Business English, Medical English, Technical English, etc, and it is known as English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

ESP is based on needs analysis, which is aimed at specifying what exactly the needs of the students are in studying English. In order to meet the learners' needs, a course designer is required to contribute her skill to design a specific syllabus and

materials for the specific purpose of learning English. This is likely to give an optimal result to achieve the intended goals.

Developments in the theoretical bases of language teaching indicates a need to pay more attention to the individual learner, and at the same time the world of commerce and technology are producing a host of people with specific language learning needs. A demand is generated as a result for courses, which would equip particular learners with the necessary skills to carry out particular tasks in English (or any other specified language). These same pressures have generated an equally strong need for a more open and coherent approach to evaluation.

Any language teaching course has certain evaluation requirements, but in ESP these requirements are brought sharply into focus by the fact that the ESP course normally has specified objectives. ESP is accountable teaching. ESP learners and sponsors are investors in the ESP course and they want to see a return on their investment of time and/or money. The managers of the ESP course are accountable to these investors. This accountability has produced a demand for more and better evaluation procedures. Two levels of evaluation have thus been brought into prominence: learner assessment and course evaluation. These two forms of evaluation are not always distinct. Evaluation of the learners reflects not just the learners' performance but to some extent the effectiveness or otherwise of the course too. An ESP course is, after all, supposed to be successful: it is set up in order to enable particular learners to do particular things with language. If it consistently fails to meet this objective, then something must be wrong with the course design: the objectives

may be too ambitious given the resources available; the analysis of the learners' initial competence may be wrong; the methodology may be inappropriate. Evaluation of the learners is unlikely to indicate exactly where a fault lies, but it will at least indicate the existence of a fault somewhere.

The explanation above reminds the writer about the teaching-learning process when she attended English for biology subject in S1 program. In this situation she needs to clarify that she was graduated from Biology Department of State University of Medan. When she continued her study at the English Applied Linguistics Study Program she realizes that English for biology subject is a part of ESP. The objective of the subject was the ability to comprehend the text material about biology in English; but till the end of the semester she couldn't achieve the objective. This condition made her curious to take it as a problem to be investigated. That is the reason why she chosen the title "An Evaluation of ESP Course Design for Biology Students".

1.2 The Problems of the Study

In relation to the background of the study, there are three problems to be identified namely:

1. How is the ESP course design for Biology students planned?
2. How is the ESP course design for Biology students implemented?
3. How do the planning and the implementation of ESP course design for Biology students match the theoretical requirements?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are formulated as the following:

1. To find out how the ESP course design for Biology students is planned.
2. To find out how the ESP course design for Biology students is implemented.
3. To find out how the planning and the implementation of ESP course design for Biology students match the theoretical requirements.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

ESP is a major activity around the world today. It is an enterprise involving education, training and practice, and drawing upon three major realms of knowledge: language, pedagogy and the participants' specialist areas of interest. There are two types of ESP, namely English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). Realizing the importance of ESP today, the writer assumes that it is necessary to discuss EAP. The study is mainly focused on ESP course design for Biology students, which is done by the three lecturers in Biology Department.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

A study that is designed to discover some intended results should have some significance. In this study, it is hoped that it will give some relevant contributions to:

1. English for Biology lecturers as an input for them in designing ESP course design in the future.
2. Other writers or readers who want to continue this study in the form of designing the appropriate course design that can be meet the needs of Biology students.