Designing Syllabus and Instructional Materials for ESP Students of Online English Conversation Course

Pengembangan Silabus dan Materi Pembelajaran bagi Mahasiswa *ESP* pada Mata Kuliah Daring Percakapan Bahasa Inggris

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Abstract

Online learning is believed to have many benefits for both the students and instructors. It is highly possible for an English conversation course for ESP students to perform the teaching and learning processes virtually. This study was carried out to design the syllabus and instructional materials for an online English conversation course for the ESP students of the business administration program. The initial step was performing needs analysis by using a questionnaire as the instrument. The results attained from the needs analysis was strengthened by interviewing the students. From the results of the needs analysis and interview, eight business-related topics were selected for 14 meetings. The learnings activities focused on the students' oral business communication skills and focused on their written business communication skills. Visual aids in the form of videos and pictures were used to accompany the instructions given to the students. Expert validation was also carried out as a review of the designed syllabus and instructional materials. Students' final feedback in the form questionnaire was also performed to get their perceptions on several aspects of the developed materials, learning activities, and assignments. The final product of the syllabus and instructional materials were published on the university's LMS.

Keywords: syllabus, instructional materials, English for Specific Purposes, online English conversation course

Abstrak

Banyak manfaat dapat diperoleh dari pembelajaran daring baik untuk mahasiswa maupun dosen. Sangat dimungkinkan bagi mata kuliah Percakapan Bahasa Inggris untuk melakukan pembelajaran secara daring. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mendesain silabus dan materi pembelajaran untuk kelas daring mata kuliah Percakapan Bahasa Inggris bagi mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris Profesi *(ESP)* program studi Administrasi Bisnis. Langkah pertama adalah melakukan analisis kebutuhan dengan kuesioner sebagai instrumen. Hasil yang diperoleh dari analisis kebutuhan diperkuat dengan pelaksanaan wawancara terhadap mahasiswa. Dari hasil analisis kebutuhan dan wawancara, dikembangkan delapan topik terkait bisnis untuk 14 kali

pertemuan. Aktivitas pembelajaran tidak hanya difokuskan pada peningkatan kompetensi komunikasi bisnis secara lisan, namun juga pada peningkatan kompetensi komunikasi bisnis secara tertulis. Alat bantu visual berupa video dan gambar digunakan untuk menyertai instruksi yang diberikan kepada mahasiswa. Validasi ahli dilakukan sebagai bentuk tinjauan atas silabus dan materi pembelajaran yang dikembangkan. Masukan akhir dari mahasiswa berupa kuesioner juga dilakukan untuk mengetahui persepsi tentang beberapa aspek dari materi, kegiatan pembelajaran, dan tugas yang dikembangkan. Produk akhir dari penelitian ini dipublikasikan pada Sistem Manajemen Pembelajaran *(LMS)* universitas.

Kata kunci: *silabus, materi pembelajaran, Bahasa Inggris Profesi, Mata Kulliah Daring Percakapan Bahasa Inggris*

INTRODUCTION

Online learning is about students using the Internet to access the materials, interacting with the content, instructor, and other students to gain knowledge, construct meaning and grow from the learning experience (Ally, 2004). This statement indicates that performing online learning is not merely passing the materials and instructing some assignments to the students. Instructors are supposed to engage the students through various virtual media during the teaching and learning processes. Online learning is believed to bring many advantages for both students and instructors. It is deemed that online learning as part of specialized delivery technologies can provide students with efficient and convenient access to the materials and practices (Ally, 2004; Setiawan, 2018). Students can freely access the materials and perform the appropriate practices anytime and anywhere in an online learning. As the students possess the flexibility in accessing the materials, the learning processes may be carried out more efficiently and effectively.

Besides that, it is also supposed that online learning can reach many students of different communities (Setiawan, 2018). It minimizes the impacts of geographical borders for the students as there is no limitation of space for them to attain new knowledge. Students can also have more independence in online learning as they can also situate their learning suitable to their needs and interests (Setiawan, 2018). Thus, the students can personalise their learning in a sense that they can match what they need to learn and their level of proficiency to the learning objectives.

Bearing those advantages, online learning is highly possible to be performed in English conversation classes for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students to appease common problems found in ESP classes. Wu, et al. (2011) mention that students are often not internally, integratively, motivated to pursue their study of English of which results in lower proficiency. Their lack of interest toward the learning of English may happen due to the lack of presentations of authentic materials and meaningful activities.

Online learning has the possibility of engaging the learners for it provides authentic materials and meaningful activities through various learning media. For example, some commercial online conversation programs in Japan were successful in developing business staffs' speaking proficiency in English-speaking environments (Lawn & Lawn, 2015). Nakaya and Murota (2013) revealed that the topics based on the interests and lives of learners are effective for talking in English in a relaxed situation and for talking with motivation, while a pseudo-interactive and agreeable English conversation style works well in helping learners evaluate themselves to speak more fluently, express themselves better, and speak in a more relaxed manner

as they continue to practice speaking. Those are evidences that online learning can bring better results to the students' English-speaking ability.

Needs analysis is also vital to be performed in addressing the needs of the ESP students for presenting authentic materials and providing meaningful activities to the students. It bears an important function in identifying the students' goals and objectives in learning a language as the first step to be completed in designing syllabus (Ismagilova & Polyakova, 2014). Needs analysis is also useful in evaluating an existing program, and if there is any deficiency found, it can help in establishing the need for introducing a change and what kind of change may appropriately match the needs of the students and simultaneously be acceptable to instructors (Boroujeni & Fard, 2013). These statements signal the cruciality of performing needs analysis in designing an ESP program.

Some previous studies have been performed related to conducting needs analysis and designing instructional materials. One of the recent studies is a developmental study attempting to explore a practical model to teach English speaking in distance courses via video-conferencing technology (Sritulanon, et al., 2018). The researchers try to develop an English-Speaking Teaching Model (ESTM) by using the Dick and Carey instructional model design. The ESTM as the final product comprises teaching activities in six stages: (1) a speaking pre-test at the beginning of the course; (2) study before class; (3) teaching and practice time in class; (4) lesson review after class; (5) a speaking mid-test during the course; and (6) a speaking post-test at the end of the course. This study is intended for English students in general, not specifically projected for ESP students who have different learning situations and goals. The current study, on the other hand, focuses solely on designing model of learning activities for ESP students, particularly for students of a Business Administration program. Another study was performed by Benavent and and Sanchez-Reyes (2015) on designing a syllabus for teaching English to trainee police officers in Spain as they were required to use English. From the target situation analysis, it was discovered that most of the situations occurred in oral contexts and speaking is the principal skill, although written practices must not be neglected. Benavent and Sanchez-Reyes (2015) designed the syllabus aimed for activities performed within classrooms for the ESP students, whereas the current study attempts to design the syllabus to be applied for performing stivities in online classes.

The current study attempts to develop instructional materials for an online English conversation course that is suitable to ESP students by making use of needs analysis. Specifically, the study was performed to find (1) what kinds of materials fit to the students' needs and (2) what kinds of learning activities fit to the students' needs. It is projected that the instructional materials developed from the current study can help the instructors of online English conversation classes for ESP students in providing materials and learning activities which are appropriate to the students' needs. It is also expected that the ESP students can engage more in the study of English. As a result, the students have bigger possibilities to gain maximum learning experiences in order to improve their proficiency. Moreover, from the current study, other researchers may also obtain more insights into the importance of conducting needs and situations analysis for ESP students, especially in online classes. Thus, more studies of the same interest are possible to be performed.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design
The current study is development research that aims to design the syllabus and instructional materials for *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris*, an online English conversation course at the Business Administration program of the University of Islam Malang. Latief (2009) states that development study tries to produce some products related to learning, such as syllabus, learning materials, learning media, and many others. Both qualitative and quantitave approaches are employed in analysing the data. The qualitative approach is applied to analyse the data which are in the forms of the results of an interview, the descriptive feedback from the students, and the descriptive feedback given by the experts. Meanwhile, the quantitative approach is performed to analyse the results of the need analaysis, the feedback from the students, and the validations of the developed instructional materials from the experts.

Participants
The participants of this study were the students of the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course academic year 2020/2021 of the Business Administration program of the Faculty of Administrative Science of the University of Islam Malang. There were 90 students from three classes. 87 students participated in answering the questions in the questionnaire for the need analysis, 17 students took part in the interview, and 34 students joined in answering the questions in the questionnaire for the students' final feedback.

Data Collection
The data were collected by using questionnaires and interviews as the instruments of the study. Consent forms was given to the students for their participations in answering the questions in the questionnaires and interview. Prior to designing the syllabus and instructional materials, needs analysis was performed by giving questionnaire to the students. The results of the questionnaire for the needs analysis became the basis for designing the syllabus and instructional materials. After the fourth meeting of the course, an interview was carried out to obtain the students' initial feedback on the designed syllabus and instructional materials. Quota sampling technique was used to select the students who joined the interview. The results of the interview were used as the rationale to revise the syllabus and instructional materials. Next, expert validations were conducted by a lecturer of English on the designed syllabus and instructional materials. The feedback from the expert was used to revise the syllabus and instructional mateials. Last, the final feedback from the students were obtained in the form of a questionnaire.

Data Analysis
The collected data were then analysed quantitively and qualitatively. The data which were analysed quantitively were the data attained from (1) the questionnaire for the needs analysis and (2) the questionnaire for the final feedback from the students. There were 20 items in the questionnaire for the needs analysis, of which 16 items were valid. SPSS program was used to test the validity of the items with correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) and at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). For the final feedback from the students, there were 20 items, of which 14 items were valid, and the other six items were related to descriptive comments and suggestions from the students. SPSS program was also used to the validity of the items in the questionnaire for the students' final feedback with correlation is significant at the

0.05 level (2-tailed) and at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Meanwhile, the data which were analysed qualitatively were obtained from (1) the interview with the students on the feedback of the syllabus and (2) the feedback from the expert on the syllabus and instructional materials.

RESULTS

The findings of the study are presented into several sub-headings. They are about the findings of the (1) needs analysis; (2) students' interview; (3) syllabus and instructional materials; and (4) students' final feedback.

Needs Analysis

Questionnaire was used as the instrument to perform the needs analysis. There were 87 students who filled in the questionnaire. There were two sections of the questionnaire; they were (1) the students' perceptions on performing the online English conversation course and (2) the topics chosen by the students for the online English conversation course.

In the first section of the questionnaire, the students gave their responses to the given 16 statements. The statements were related to (1) if the students were comfortable in joining the online English conversation course; (2) the students' learning styles during the online English conversation course; (3) the learning media used in the online English conversation course; and (4) students' perception of challenges faced in the online English conversation course.

Table 1. Students' Comfort in Online English Conversation Course

No.	Statement	Very Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Very Disagree (%)
1	My experience in learning English will help me in the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* class.	10.8	72.3	16.9	0
2	I feel more confident to communicate in English through video conferences than inside the class.	6	43.4	48.2	2.4
3	I'm more comfortable to communicate online through text messages than video conferences.	20.5	60.2	18.1	1.2

From the table, it can be seen that the majority of the students believed that their experiences in learning English might help them during the course. They also thought that they were going to be more confident to communicate in English virtually, both through video conferences and text messages, than to do so inside a class.

Table 2. Students' Learning Styles in Online English Conversation Course

No.	Statement	Very Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Very Disagree (%)
1	I can understand the materials of the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course independently.	13.3	50.6	34.9	1.2

No.	Statement				
2	I need to have an inside the class meeting with the lecturer to understand the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* materials.	38.6	54.2	7.2	0
3	I can understand the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* materials with the lecturer's help through online platforms, without meeting face-to-face inside the classroom.	12	57.8	27.7	2.4
4	I will ask questions to the lecturer if I don't understand something directly during a video conference or through text messages.	19.3	78.3	2.4	0

Related to the students' learning styles, most of them believed that they were independent enough to understand the materials although the level of dependency to the instructor was still high. They assumed that they were independent enough in learning since they were willing to ask questions to the instructor through various online platforms when they cannot understand something. However, the students also stated that they prefer to have a face-to-face meeting with the instructor inside the classroom than virtual meetings.

Table 3. Preferences of Learning Media in Online English Conversation Course

No.	Statement	Very Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Very Disagree (%)
1	I refuse to often have video conferences for the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	6	63.9	28.9	1.2
2	It's fine for me to have video conferences once in few weeks for the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	8.4	74.7	16.9	0
3	I have a good Internet connection to support having video conferences fo the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	7.2	56.6	27.7	8.4
4	I can always/often join the chatting forum of the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	6	75.9	18.1	0
5	I can complete group assignments of the online *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	18.1	73.5	8.4	0
6	I prefer to do individual assignments for the online	3.6	45.8	45.8	4.8

No.	Statement				
	Percakapan Bahasa Inggris course.				
7	I'm willing to complete assignments in the form of audio/video recordings for the online *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	1.2	38.6	50.6	9.6
8	I'm not really capable of making audio/video recordings.	27.7	57.8	14.5	0

It can be described from the table that the students did not prefer to often have video conferences as a media to perform the teaching and learning process though most of them did not suffer from problems on getting good Internet connection. Instead, the students mentioned that they were ready to do join the chatting forum as an alternate way to do the learning process. Related to completing assignments, more students opted working in groups rather than working individually. Yet, more students did not favour the idea of creating audio/video recordings as a part of their assignments because they viewed themselves to be lack of capability in making the recordings.

Table 4. Perception of Challenges Faced in the Online English Conversation Course

No.	Statement	Very Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Very Disagree (%)
1	I feel I'm going to be fine having online classes for most of the courses, but I feel I'm going to have some problems in the online *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course.	12	66.3	21.7	0

From the table, a good number of students assumed that they would not encounter many obstacles in performing online courses, yet, it was different when they joined the online English conversation course. The result was in contrast with their belief that they can independently learn the materials as well as their eagerness to consult the instructor when they have inquiries about their learning. It also conflicted the students' idea that their experience in learning English prior to joining the online English conversation course might help their performance in the course. However, such believe on the possibility of finding many challenges during the online course might exist also due to the students' hardships in their previous English learning. Sally and Pradana (2019) found that among eight alumni of a business program, grammar, listening, and speaking became the most difficult component and skills to grasped when they learnt English in their ESP class. The students of the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course predicted similar difficulties they would face during the online English conversation course.

The second part of the questionnaire was about the topics covered in the online English conversation course. The students were asked to choose five of the 15 provided topics considered to be suitable with their major and needed by them. The choices of the topics were limited to prevent outnumbered choices from the students

as well as to make the topics in line with their needs as Business Administration students.

Table 5. Lists of Topics Chosen by the Students

No.	Meeting Topics	Amount (%)
1	Performing job interview simulation	94.1
2	Doing academic and business presentations	58.8
3	Promoting items or services	58.8
4	Introducing oneself or other people	50
5	Making and receiving telephone calls	47.1
6	Describing physical appearances and personalities	35.3
7	Describing places	32.4
8	Going shopping	32.4
9	Filing and responding to complaints	32.4
10	Asking for and giving directions	32.4
11	Making and receiving reservations (hotel, transpotation, etc.)	32.4
12	Planning activities	29.4
13	Giving opinions and advice	26.5
14	Describing hobbies or preferences	17.6
15	Describing lifestyles	11.8

The table shows that there were four topics chosen by more than 40% of the students participated in filling the questionnaire; they were (1) performing job interview simulation; (2) doing academic and business presentations; (3) promoting items or services; and (4) introducing oneself or other people. From these four topics, three of them were specific to Business Administration program, while the other one is a general topic in English conversation courses. Among 15 topics offered to the students, only two topics which were chosen by less than 20% of the students; they were (1) describing hobbies or preferences and (2) describing lifestyles.

Students' Interview

The interview was performed after the fourth meeting of the online English conversation course. The goal of the interview is as feedback on the topics, activities, and media agreed at the initial meeting of the course. There were seven questions presented to 17 students during the interview through a video conference. It was performed virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The first question was about learning applications that the students had in their gadgets. Only one of them mentioned to have more applications for learning than for fun activities. However, the students stated that they commonly use their Social Networking Sites (SNSs) for the purpose of learning in their online courses. The second question related to communications between the instructor and the students. Most of the students believed that face-to-face communication to be more effective in delivering their messages to the instructor than virtual communication. However, they said that they were more willing to interact with the instructor virtually as they were more actively involved in performing online than offline learning activities due to being able to focus more during online courses.

Next, the students were asked about their dependence to their instructor in understanding the materials. The students strengthened their previous answer by describing that offline interaction with the instructor was more preferred than the virtual interaction as they could directly grasp the explanations from the instructor.

The fourth question revolved around using video conferences as the media of instruction. Unlike the result attained from the questionnaire, the students who joined the interview mostly agreed to often perform video conferences in the online English conversation course. One of the reasons for this answer was they could practice their speaking skill and how to pronounce an English word directly, as well as to a way for improving their confidence to speak in public.

The fifth question was about their willingness in creating audio/video recordings as the media for their assignments. Despite the fact that they found some problems during completing their first assignment in creating an audio recording, most of the students said that the challenges made them keen to find the solutions to solve their difficulties. This result was also in contrast to the result of the questionnaire. For the sixth question, the students were asked about their predictions on the challenges they would find in the online English conversation course. All of them stated that it was highly possible for them to find difficulties due to several reasons; they were (1) being constantly speaking in English; (2) being ashamed of speaking English in front of their classmates; and (3) being unfamiliar with the instructor. The last question related to the topics they have selected in the questionnaire. There was no objection on the selected topics, yet, they wanted to have not only practicing oral communication, but also written communication through letters or emails in the online English conversation course.

Syllabus and Instructional Materials

The syllabus for the *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* course was designed for 14 regular meetings. There are eight topics covered for the whole meetings which were developed from the topics selected by the students at the needs analysis stage.

Table 6. List of the Topics and Learning Activities

No.	Topics	Meetings	Learning Activities
1	Greetings and Introduction	1-2	a. Understanding written and video examples of ways of self-introduction in English b. Introducing oneself in English in a video conference c. Understanding written and video examples of describing physical appearances and personalities d. Having a game on describing classmates' physical appearance and personalities through a video conference
2	Describing Places and Showing Directions	3-4	a. Understanding examples of using adjectives for describing tourism spots b. Creating video recordings of describing local tourism spots c. Selecting the best video d. Understanding examples of asking for and giving directions in English e. Showing the directions of certain locations on the provided maps in a video conference
3	Making and Answering a Telephone Call	5	a. Understanding examples of repeating and clarifying information b. Understanding video examples of conversing through telephone at work c. Creating audio recordings of conversing through telephone based on provided working situations
4	Going	6-7	a. Understanding examples of English expressions used

	Shopping			for offering items and expressing preferences
			b.	Watching videos in English about shopping
			c.	Having role-plays about shopping as buyers and sellers through a video conference
			d.	Creating audio recordings about making and accepting orders through telephone
5	Writing Business Letters	8-9	a.	Understanding structures and formats of business letters in English
			b.	Finding differences of the structures of business letters in English and in Bahasa Indonesia
			c.	Creating imaginary companies in groups and selecting the role of each member in each company
			d.	Creating videos of presenting the company profile in English
6	Promoting Business Products	10-11	a.	Understanding the structure and content of a sales letter in English
			b.	Creating a sales letter for promoting one of the products of the imaginary company
			c.	Discussing the structure and content of the developed sales letter with the instructor and other classmates during a video conference
			d.	Selecting the best sales letter that has the most suitable content and can attract the interest of the class
7	Filing and Responding to Complaints	12	a.	Understanding the structure and ways of filing and responding to complaints in English through emails
			b.	Filing a complaint to one of the imaginary companies in the class through an email
			c.	Responding to the received complaint through emails
			d.	Discussing the contents of the complaint emails through a video conference
8	Simulating Job Interview	13-14	a.	Opening job vacancies for each imaginary company
			b.	Creating lists of requirements for the positions offered and of the questions answered during job interviews
			c.	Making job application letters and resumes to be given to another company in the class
			d.	Performing job interview simulation

The instructional materials of the syllabus were posted on the university's Learning Management System (LMS) called *Daring Unisma*. Videos were the media used mostly to provide explanations of the topics. The videos were selected carefully from native sources of English YouTube videos, such as from the channels of BBC English Learning, Oxford Online English, and others. Besides in the forms of videos, the materials were also selected from some URL pages and electronic files which were converted into flipbooks. As seen on the picture below, the video material was embedded onto the LMS by mentioning its copyright and putting short description about the content of the video.

Picture 1. The Appearance of a Video Material on the LMS

From the results of the interview with the students regarding the types of the assignments given to them, the students were asked to create some audio or video recordings as the assignments of several topics. It is also due to the reason that students were regarded to own high level of preparedness for skills related to the use of technology and Internet (Parkes et al., 2014). A picture accompanying the instruction of an assignment was also attached to make the appearance of an assignment on the LMS more interesting. The pictures attached to the instructions were designed appropriate to the activities and the topic.

Picture 2. The Appearance of an Assignment on the LMS

The designed syllabus and instructional materials were validated by an expert in EFL, specifically in the teaching of speaking. There were four aspects of a syllabus and instructional materials which were reviewed by the expert; they were the aspect of (1) materials; (2) teaching and learning; (3) language; and (4) display. The first aspect of materials consisted of five indicators. Among the five indicators, three indicators were scored "5" as very good and the other two indicators were scored "4" as good. One of the indicators given the score "5" was about compatibility between the syllabus and instructional materials. For the second aspect related to teaching and learning, there were seven indicators to be reviewed. Five indicators were given the score "4" as good. Two other indicators given the scores "5" as very good were related to clarity of the assignment and clarity of the learning indicators.

The third aspect about language comprised of four indicators. The indicator about the ability to arouse the students' curiosity was scored "5" as very good by the expert. The other three indicators earned the score "4" as good. For the last aspect concerning the display of the instructional materials, the expert gave the score "5" for three among nine indicators. They were about (1) order of material presentation in each topic; (2) order of assignment presentation in each topic; and (3) clarity of the

instructions in assignments. The other indicators of this aspect were given score "4" as good by the expert.

Related to the strengths of the designed syllabus and instructional materials, the expert believed that the topics have been arranged appropriately and the materials have been selected and prepared carefully to suit with the objectives carefully. Meanwhile, the expert pointed one weakness, which was related to the title of the course. The suggestion for this weakness is to change the title of the course from *Percakapan Bahasa Inggris* into English Business Communication since the topics covered in the course were only revolving around oral communication, but also written communication. However, it needs the agreement from all of the stakeholders of the Business Administration program of the Faculty of Administrative Science, University of Islam Malang, to change the title of the course.

Students' Final Feedback

The students' final feedback was performed to obtain their thoughts of the implementation of the designed syllabus and instructional materials. There were 34 students who participated in answering the questions in the quessionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into 20 questions related to the (1) overall implementation of the course; (2) provided materials; (3) performed learning activities; (3) completed assignments; and (4) personal gain from joining the online English conversation course. Concerning the implementation of the course, 70.6% of the students felt satisfied with how the course was executed and only 11.8% of the students thought that the course was relatively met their expectations prior to joining it.

Five questions were given to the students related to the provided materials of which they are about (1) the quality of the materials; (2) the suitability of the materials with the topics and learning activities; (3) the level of difficulty of the materials; (4) the variety of the format of the materials; and (5) the students' suggestions on the materials. 50% of the students considered that the materials were of very good quality and 38.2% of others thought of them to be of good quality. For the suitability of the materials with the topics and learning activities, 50% of the students deemed that they were very suitable and 47.1% of them believed that the materials were suitable with the topics and learning activities. 50% of the students felt that the materials were pretty difficult, while 14.7% of them found the materials to be difficult and very difficult. About the variety of the format of the materials, none of the students supposed that the formats were unvaried. For the suggestions related to the materials, the students expected to have more challenging materials which are more into business related aspects.

There were five questions related to the performed learning activities in the questionnaire. About the suitability of the learning activities with the students' expectations, 97.1% of the students felt that the performed learning activities met with their expectations. For the second question on the choices of the virtual platforms for performing learning activities, 94.1% of the students chose to use video conferences, and only 5.9% of them chose to use chatting platforms. Related to the students' ability to participate actively during the learning activities, 32.4% of them stated they could participate very actively, 47.1% of others mentioned they could participate actively, and the last 20.6% of the students mentioned they could participate pretty actively. One of the reasons for the students' active participations in performing the learning activities was because the meetings were mostly used video conferences as the media. As for the suggestions, most of the students would like to have more games performed virtually when having video conferences.

Concerning the completed assignments, the students were asked four questions. About the suitability between the assignments and the topics, 61.8% of the students believed that the assignments given to the students were very suitable with the topics. 52.9% of them felt that the assignments were easy to be completed, and only 5.9% of the students believed that they were hard to be completed. The types of the assignments were also judged to be various as 50% of the students' choices were "very various" and 35.3% of their choices were "various". One of the suggestions from the students on the assignments was to give more individual assignments so that the proficiency of each student could be more accurately assessed.

The last four questions were about what the students' gain from joining the course. All students agreed that the course was very useful for them. Specific business-related topics, such as writing business letters, promoting business products, and simulating job interview, became the students' favourites. 52.9% of the students considered themselves to be more confident to speak in English, and 76.5% of them believed that they have become more proficient in English after joining the online course.

DISCUSSION

From the answers given to the questionnaire and interview related to the students' perceptions of performing the online English conversation course, the majority of the students supposed that they were comfortable to performing the online English conversation course. Their experiences in learning English might influence their presumption on their feelings of joining the English conversation course. Blakenship and Atkinson (2010) also believe that students' background and experiences are useful for their studies of which such background and experiences might contribute to their feelings of comfort in learning. Besides, the students' answers also show that the virtual interactions give them a more comfortable feeling in learning so that they assume they are more confident to communicate in English virtually than doing so inside a classroom. However, the data attained from the questionnaire and interview indicate that classroom meetings are still more preferable to the students than online classes. Similarly, Rahman Hz and Daulay (2021) mention that students are more comfortable with face-to face meetings than with online learning, and that online learning is performed only to support the face-to-face meetings.

Related to learning styles, the answers to the questions show that the students thought to be able to learn independently although they prefer to have some supports from the instructor in understanding the materials. Whisler (in Gülbahar and Alper, 2011) suggests the students who join online courses to measure their self-efficacy, interaction behaviours, and time management skill to seek their chance of success in joining an online course. Learners' awareness of their abilities is getting more important in online learning as this learning environment relies heavily on self-control and self-regulation (Gülbahar and Alper, 2011). Knowing that the students regard themselves to be independent enough for joining the online English conversation course, indicates that they are prepared to joining the online course.

Concerning the learning media, the students ultimately chose video conference to be the most suitable one for the online English conversation course. They believed that they can have a better practice on their pronunciation as well as their speaking fluency and accuracy in a real-time practice. Rahman Hz and Daulay (2021) also state that students participated in their study chose Zoom as the most proper media for their public speaking course as they can perform the speaking tasks and show their

presentation media easily. Video conference is assumed to be the precise media to use in an online course that focuses on developing students' speaking ability for it simplify the virtual communication flow between the students and instructors. Besides, video conference as a learning media offers the possibility for the students to experience communicating orally, of which it is essential for an English conversation course. Building experiences for the students, both inside and outside of the classroom, can develop their learning variables such as motivation, confidence, and ability (Wu, et al., 2011).

As the study is performed particularly for designing syllabus and instructional materials appropriate for Business administration students, the topics chosen by the students to be included in the syllabus are business-related topics. 94% of the students are keen to have the topic of performing job interview simulation in the course. Such preference is sensible since the online English conversation course is offered to the seventh semester students. Another topic which is also of the students' interest is doing academic and business presentation. Zaidoune and Chroqui (2020) have similar finding of which that 53% of their students were eager to improve their presentation skills. This reflects that performing presentations is basic skill needed by the Business Administration students.

The topics selected by the students and the data attained from the questionnaire as well as from the interview become the basis for designing the syllabus and instructional materials suitable to the students' needs and preferences. The explanations of the topics are mostly presented in videos as the use of audio-video as media of learning is believed to be able to promote the students' learning through variety of techniques and to support language learning (Yükselir and Kömür, 2017). Besides making use of videos, the appearance of each material posted on the university's LMS is accompanied with a picture. Pictures were attached to instructions on the LMS not only when giving an assignment, but also when instructing other learning activities to make the students more interested to be actively involved in performing the activities. Shabiralyani et al. (2015) concluded that utilizing visual aids in a classroom promotes students' thinking and makes the learning environment better as it lessens monotonous way of learning. For online classes, pictures serve as one of the visual aids besides videos.

CONCLUSION

Designing a syllabus and instructional materials for ESP students whose needs and goals are different from EFL or ESL students needs to be based on data attained from needs analysis to provide more precise learning materials to be delivered to and activities to be performed by the students. The data attained from the needs analysis show that although the course is initially intended to improve the students' oral business communication skill, the students also wish for developing their written business communication skill in this online course, such as writing business letters and emails. The data also show the students' preferences on the learning media and give the instructor some hints on their learning styles to determine the learning activities to be performed virtually. Video conferences become the media preferred by most students for the online English conversation course. This preference indicates that the students enjoy using audio-visual media for performing the learning activities, especially those which enable them to have direct interactions with their peers and instructor. In line to such preference, pictures can also be used for complementing the instructions of the learning activities posted in the Learning Management System (LMS) believing that the pictures may attract the students'

interest in performing the activities. Concerning the designed learning activities, it is suggested for other researchers to design activities that can assess individual competence more accurately since the learning activities designed in the current research are deemed to lack doing so as shown by a suggestion given in the students' final feedback. Other researchers may also broaden their study in designing a more precise syllabus for ESP students of business administration program that cover more specific business-related topics with advance use of technology as the learning media, such as making use of virtual-reality (VR) and augmented-reality (AR) applications so that the materials can be more authentic and the students' learning activites can be more meaningful.

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