



J. Holistics

JURNAL HOLISTICS

HOSPITALITY AND LINGUISTICS

Volume 3 Nomor 6 Desember 2011

PELINDUNG

Direktur Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya (R.D. Kasumaeto, S.T., M.M.)

PENGARAH

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Pembantu Direktur I | (H. Firdaus, ST., M.T.) |
| 2. Pembantu Direktur II | (H. L. Suhairi Haziema, S.E., M.Si.) |
| 3. Pembantu Direktur III | (Ir. A. Bahri Joni Mulyani) |
| 4. Pembantu Direktur IV | (H. Yohandri Bow, S.T., M.S.) |

PENANGGUNG JAWAB

1. Ketua Jurusan Bahasa Inggris (Dra. Tiur Simanjuntak, M.Ed.M.)
2. Sekretaris Jurusan Bahasa Inggris (Drs. M. Nadjmuddin, M.A.)

Ketua Redaksi : Dra. Nurul Aryanti, M.Pd.

Ketua Dewan Penyunting : Dra. Risnawati, M.Pd.

Penyunting :

1. Dra. Murwani Ujihanti, M.Pd.
2. Drs. Zakaria, M.Pd.
3. Drs. Suherman Yani, M.Pd.I.
4. Dra. Evi Agustina Sari, M.Pd.
5. Dra. Nurul Aryanti, M.Pd.

Tata Usaha :

1. Suwarti
2. Eviliana, S.Pd.

Redaksi menerima tulisan hasil penelitian atau kajian ilmiah yang berhubungan dengan ilmu kebahasaan, ilmu pengajaran bahasa dan kepariwisataan yang belum pernah dimuat pada majalah atau jurnal lain. Redaksi berhak mengubah naskah tanpa mengurangi makna isinya. Isi tulisan merupakan tanggung jawab penulis.

Alamat Redaksi :

Kampus Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya
(Ruang Jurusan Bahasa Inggris)
Jalan Srijaya Negara-Bukit Besar, Palembang 30139
Telp. 0711-353414

ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES (EAP): A BRIDGE TO SUCCESSFUL STUDY IN A FOREIGN UNIVERSITY

Muslih Hambali

English Department Sriwijaya University

Email : muslih.hambali@yahoo.com

Abstract: This paper aims at discussing the role of EAP in preparing students planning to study overseas based on Indonesian context. The success of one's study in a foreign university where English is as a medium of instructions can be determined by how well his capability to use both spoken and written English. We might often find a student, though, in fact, smart in his discipline, get unsatisfactory result, or even fail in completing his studies because of English. Normally if one has good English performance during EAP program, he might have no trouble facing his future studies in English. Previous experience of conducting EAP program has proved how the program could contribute to the overseas studies of the EAP participants. Therefore, EAP program needs to be well prepared for the needs of academic purposes. The major concern to address to the students is the study of English skills. Since the EAP program should begin with General English (GE) and then Academic English (AE), the language level of learners, course length, target, and materials should be considered. If the average of baseline TOEFL score of students is above 450 as a reference for example, the number of hours for AE should be much bigger.

Keywords: language level of learners, course length, EAP target, EAP materials

Introduction

The need of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has been booming in English Language Teaching (ELT) since the last few decades. In Indonesia for example, it began in 1984 in which the government started sending their employees including university employees abroad for furthering their studies (Pusbindiklatren, 2006). At the language Institute of Sriwijaya University of Palembang, Indonesia for example, the EAP program in cooperation with Bappenas (National Development and Planning Board) started conducting EAP program called OTO (Overseas Training Organization) Bappenas at that time for university lecturers in 1985. Since then, the program has been running from period to period serving a variety of EAP users from the Department of National Education, Bappenas as well as other state and local institutions. Moreover, with the development of science and technology in the era of global market, the demand of EAP is becoming more and more not only among government employees but also among the public including senior high school learners planning to gain knowledge in a foreign university where English is as a medium of instructions. Because of the increase demand of EAP and to fulfill the demand of EAP among its users, EAP courses are available not only in universities but also elsewhere in the society. Private educational institutions in some big cities in Indonesia for example, are now offering EAP program. Apart from whether or not the EAP program succeeds in serving the demand of users, in fact both universities and private educational institutions are still popular places where people hunt for EAP. In addition to preparing qualified EAP instructors, they are busy preparing good facilities for the program such as providing classrooms and lab equipped with multimedia or providing access for different kinds of standardized proficiency tests used to complete the program such as TOEFL, IELTS, TOEIC, etc.

EAP Overview

It is interesting to discuss an overview of what actually EAP means before coming to the real discussion of the topic. The terms EAP and ESP might confuse learners or people sometimes. The term ESP is more familiar to most people of the university or college community in Indonesia since there have been many books published and used in universities and higher educational institutions. Basically, EAP is a part of English for

Specific Purposes (ESP) in language teaching. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divide ESP into EAP and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Both EAP and EOP serve for the same related field of study. The difference is that EAP usually more focuses on academic purposes in which the users need English for the purposes of their main study program. When we refer to the language skills, all language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in addition to language components, are really needed by the EAP users. Meanwhile, EOP serves for a certain language skill depending on the needs of ESP users. For example, hotel receptionists need speaking skill more rather than other language skills since they need to communicate with their customers directly. In addition to materials, some other differences that might have between EAP and EOP are such as length of program, type of users, target needs, etc. These will not be further discussed in the following. In addition, it should be noted that the terms *students*, *learners*, and *participants* are interchangeably used to suit the context in the description of the topic.

Since EAP is a branch of ESP in language teaching, it should also be noted that EAP users are mostly adults. In http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_for_specific_purposes it is mentioned that one of the characteristics of ESP is that ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution (the learners could also be at the secondary school level) or in a professional work situation. Meanwhile, Robinson (1980, p. 9) states that “for most people the learner of ESP is an adult or near adult.” From this description it could be said that EAP users can be classified into two major types: students (majority tertiary students, but could be senior vocational high school students) and professional employees. At the university level in Indonesia for example, students, lecturers and even administrative employees can be the users of EAP. Students are actually the major users of EAP since they use English for their studies and have to take English subject included in their study program. In this case, it could be distinguished the division of the two types of EAP program offered by Sriwijaya University of Palembang, Indonesia, *regular* and *non-regular*.

a) Regular EAP Program

The regular EAP program basically refers to the EAP which serves for English course included in the curriculum of students' study program. Again, as it has previously been mentioned, this course is more commonly recognized as ESP to most people since the teaching English focuses on one specific field of study. However, the English teaching is sometimes ineffective as the allocation of time is insufficient. A few study programs or departments at Sriwijaya University offer two or three semesters for the English subject. At the Nursing Study Program of Faculty of Medicine for example, English subject is included in the curriculum for two semesters, so English is taught more likely to be ESP rather than EAP as the materials taught concentrate on a specific field of study, i.e. related to nursing. Meanwhile, some others such as at the Faculties of Agriculture, Engineering, or Math & Natural Science includes English in their curriculum for one semester. With one semester (in an average of sixteen meetings equal to 32 teaching hours) it might be insufficient or unfair that EAP could be well implemented and could serve the need of its users. Therefore, the teaching material much focuses on a certain skill such as academic reading only. Reading skill is more highly demanded by students as they need to read some additional information written in English for their studies. Pang, et al., in <http://www.cutin.edu.au/curtin/dept/smec/iae> say that one of the purposes for a person to read texts to find information

b) Non Regular EAP Program

The other type of EAP, the non-regular program is meant that the EAP program that is intensively offered to those preparing studies overseas. The participants of this program

are usually university lecturers, students, and government employees. At the Graduate School of Sriwijaya University for example, the participants of EAP program are mostly Graduate School students to take double masters degree program overseas. This program usually provides hundreds of teaching hours, and usually meets the demand of users, and therefore, the design of EAP should be well prepared as it is a bridge for learners to get a successful study in a foreign university. This program will be further discussed in the following.

How EAP is prepared

The success of study in foreign universities where English is as a foreign language can be measured by how well one could maintain his or her current English proficiency. It is often found that a student might fail in completing his or her studies because of English language. To achieve good English proficiency in order to survive in academic studies, it is necessary that the learners should take EAP program before entering foreign universities concerned. The EAP program normally provides courses on language proficiency mastery covering the four language skills as well as language components in which the language could later be used as a means of spoken and written communication during the students' life in universities. Therefore, every language skill and language component must be owned by EAP learners for their foreign university survival. Robinson (1991, p. 68) states that "a skill has to be mastered: it cannot simply be explained, but must also be extensively practice."

Based on the writer's experience in conducting EAP program at the Graduate School of Sriwijaya University, there are at least four major points to consider in the preparation of EAP program: level of learner, course length, target, and materials which represent study skills. They are related to each other and will be discussed in turn.

Language Level of Learners

Language level of learners refers to the present learner's proficiency of English language measured by a certain standard of English test. This is usually based on the result of placement test before entering EAP program. The placement test which is commonly used to measure learner's ability is TOEFL ITP (Institutional Testing Program) which is a product of ETS (English Testing Service), the holder of TOEFL in New Jersey, USA. The use of TOEFL ITP for placement test is made as it is not really costly and is accessible in many places which have link with IIEF Jakarta, a branch of ETS corporation, so that EAP users don't need to travel further for the test. At the Graduate School of Sriwijaya University, for example, EAP program does not accept participants whose baseline of paper-based TOEFL ITP score is below 450. A score of below 450 requires participants to take BEAP (Basic English for Academic Purposes) or BELT (Basic English Language Training). The minimum score of TOEFL ITP 450 is a standard entry requirement for EAP participants. With the minimum score, it is assumed that the participants have been familiar with some basic English language skills or components, and they are on the right course. This means it is not necessary to teach them those sorts of basic skills or components in more detail when the EAP program begins.

Course Length

Course Length is also a part of consideration in conducting EAP program. Normally EAP participants' baseline of TOEFL ITP score will determine the length of time for EAP program. If for example, the average TOEFL ITP score of participants is ≥ 500 or ≤ 520 , a three to four-month program might be enough. However, if their average baseline TOEFL score is below 500, the EAP program will usually take four to five months of study. At the

Graduate School of Sriwijaya University, the EAP program takes totally five months though the participants' score are various between 450 and 547 or even higher. The five-month course has been chosen because of the following considerations. First, the number of students is usually small between 10-15 participants, so it will be efficient and save energy to have one class though in fact a few participants already have high entry TOEFL score. Second, the program itself has been set up by the government sending the EAP participants, and it normally depends on the budget allocated for the whole program and the whole participants. Third, a high score of paper-based TOEFL does not guarantee that someone has mastered the language skills since the paper-based TOEFL only measures two language skills, listening and reading, and one language component, structure. Again, in this case the course length for EAP program also usually depends on the target needs of EAP.

EAP Target

Again, EAP program is prepared for those who are planning to study overseas at foreign universities using English instructions or it could be at local universities which conduct bilingual classes. The universities require English proficiency proved by standardized tests. Some universities require TOEFL scores, some others IELTS scores, and so on. Since the target of TOEFL or IELTS scores required by universities may vary among universities, the EAP target should accommodate the demand of the university concerned. At the Language Lab of Graduate School of Sriwijaya University, the minimum EAP target that must be achieved by students is iBT-based TOEFL score of 81, paper-based TOEFL score of 550 or IELTS score of 6.0 depending on what field of study and which universities are addressed to. For example, students planning to study masters program at Mie University in Japan for Food Production or at UNESCO-IHE Netherland for Civil Engineering are required to have a minimum score of TOEFL ≥ 550 or IELTS ≥ 6.0 , while University of Utrecht requires score ≥ 580 in TOEFL pbt, ≥ 80 in TOEFL iBT, or ≥ 6.5 in IELTS for students entering masters program in Mathematics Education. In short, in addition to having both receptive and productive language skills the target of EAP is basically to achieve the minimum requirement score of TOEFL or IELTS to enter a foreign university where English is used as a medium of instructions.

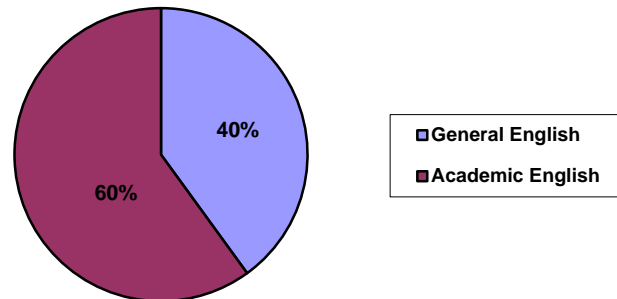
EAP Materials

Preparing EAP materials is the most complex one to consider. In preparing the materials, it is necessary to learn the previous items – time, level of learners, and the target achieved – as they determine the material design. Time determines how much of the materials should be prepared for the whole program. Level of learners also determines if the materials should begin with intermediate level or more intermediate one depending on the average baseline of students' English proficiency. The target of EAP is another crucial point involved in the designing of EAP materials. The higher the target of EAP the more and higher the materials should be prepared. Besides, different types of proficiency test required may cause to vary the materials. For example, if a university requires TOEFL or IELTS, this means both materials of TOEFL or IELTS should be introduced and provided in the EAP program. In addition, the materials must meet or reflect the needs of both general and academic English.

In the EAP program, we generally divide the course into two types; General English (GE) and Academic English (AE). Since the baseline of students' TOEFL score is ≥ 450 in TOEFL for example, the distribution of GE and AE is usually made in the ratio of 40 and 60. This means 40% of the total number of hours is for General English and the rest (60%) for Academic English. 40% has been chosen for GE since it is assumed that the participants have already been familiar to basic general English such as basic grammar

(use of be, verb tense, noun, phrase, etc.) and reading (scanning, skimming, finding topics, etc.). However, these, in fact, can be introduced at once during the implementation of EAP program. The following figure shows the time distribution of both GE and AE.

Figure 1
Time Distribution of General and Academic English
Total number of teaching hours = 700-800 hours



Both GE and AE involve the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and language components such as structure and vocabulary. The materials for GE basically refer to general topic or theme related to daily life or activities such as making introduction, asking for directions, making request, etc. in speaking or previewing, identifying patterns of organization, discovering topics of paragraphs, etc. in general reading. Meanwhile, those for academic English should accommodate various academic topics that of course represent academic events such as critically evaluating information in listening or developing complex ideas within a complete essay in writing. Since EAP covers various topics and themes of language skills and components, the EAP teacher should prepare and vary the materials. Reading material for example, can be taken from authentic text or adapted one. In choosing the text materials, the teacher can actually use the four types of text materials, genuine, adapted, synthesized, and created Trimble (1985, p. 27-40). The first two types are commonly adopted as they are mostly available in most EAP books used. Furthermore, Cox and Hill (2007, p. xiv-xvii, 2004, p. x-xi) offer contents map for both GE and AE materials which could be adopted in designing EAP program.

Again, the percentage of each language skill or language component in terms of teaching hours in both GE and AE may vary depending on what skill or component needs more time to focus, and this is usually based on which areas of language skills or components in average the participants are weak in. If for example, the result of placement test or progress test shows that the average score of reading is low whereas that of listening or structure is much higher, there will be more hours allocated for reading skill and vocabulary and fewer hours for listening or structure. This means the number of teaching hours for each skill or component to be taught might change from time to time within the EAP program.

Program Target and Related Study Results

As mentioned earlier, Graduate School of Sriwijaya University has been running an EAP program for Graduate School students. One of the classes of EAP program is for DD-ILM (Double Degree in Integrated Lowland management) program, a program for double masters degree in low land management conducted by UNSRI (Sriwijaya University) – UNESCO-IHE, Netherlands in cooperation with Bappenas Indonesia . Double masters program means the program offering double degrees made in both local and foreign universities. Both universities are in cooperation to conduct the program. Students

entering this program will take a year of study in a local university and the other year in a foreign university, and both universities give different degrees. For example, students taking DD-ILM program will get M.Si degree from Sriwijaya University, and M.Sc degree from UNESCO-IHE. The EAP program, also in cooperation with Bappenas, has been running for four years. The target of EAP program is that by the end of the program the participants have an English proficiency mastery proved by a minimum score of either TOEFL pbt 550, TOEFL iBt 80 or IELTS 6.0 as required by the university addressed to (UNESCO-IHE).

Based on the experience of conducting EAP program for the first two groups (2007 and 2008) of DD-ILM UNSRI – UNESCO-IHE, the EAP target generally showed that there had been a good correlation between students' achievement in EAP program and their academic achievement during their studies overseas. In the first group (2007), out of nine EAP participants, eight took masters program in UNESCO-IHE as they could achieve the required standard English proficiency mastery. The eight students could successfully complete the courses with double masters degree and have been back to work in Indonesia. The second group consisting of ten students has already completed their studies successfully in UNESCO-IHE waiting for their graduation.

Apart from whether or not the students are actually good at mastering their field of study because of their previous and present knowledge, at least it could be concluded that English language is not a problem for those who have already taken EAP program which really gives a great benefit. By having a good command of English for both oral and written communication, the survival of academic studies in a university with English instructions can successfully be managed. The following tables show the results of TOEFL scores of both groups of DD-ILM UNSRI – UNESCO-IHE conducted at the Language Lab of Graduate School of Sriwijaya University.

Table 1. Participants' Achievement of EAP Program 2007

No	Participants	TOEFL pbt EAP Entry (≥450)	Required TOEFL pbt University Entry (≥550)	Remarks
1	Participant A	483	577	Completed DD*
2	Participant B	503	553	Completed DD*
3	Participant C	537	580	Completed DD*
4	Participant D	460	577	Completed DD*
5	Participant E	480	560	Completed DD*
6	Participant F	480	557	Completed DD*
7	Participant G	460	563	Completed DD*
8	Participant H	487	570	Completed DD*

Table 2. Participants' Achievement of EAP Program 2008

No	Participants	TOEFL pbt EAP Entry (≥450)	Required TOEFL pbt University Entry (≥550)	Remarks
1	Participant A	567	650	Completed DD**
2	Participant B	550	600	Completed DD**
3	Participant C	513	587	Completed DD**
4	Participant D	490	550	Completed DD**

5	Participant E	497	613	Completed DD**
6	Participant F	507	580	Completed DD**
7	Participant G	503	557	Completed DD**
8	Participant H	483	590	Completed DD**
9	Participant I	473	603	Completed DD**
10	Participant J	453	613	Completed DD**

* The participants have already completed double masters degree program both in Indonesia and in Netherlands and have been back to their workplace.

** The participants have already completed double masters degree program both in Indonesia and in Netherlands waiting for their graduation.

From both tables, it could be seen that each participant's TOEFL score increased such number of points during EAP program.

Conclusion

Successful learners studying in a foreign university where English is as a medium of instructions could be determined by whether or not they could achieve the target need of EAP program. The target need is usually based on the required entry of the foreign university to attend, which requires English language proficiency proved by a minimum score of standardized test such as TOEFL or IELTS. The four major points, level of learners, course length, target, and materials are related to each other, and need to be considered in the preparing of EAP course program. These must be learned and well prepared so that they will result in a good product in which the EAP participants could possess English knowledge to survive in the foreign university concerned. Some experiences have shown that one with successful completion of EAP program will be successful or survive in completing his or her studies overseas. English language has become an important role for non-native speakers of English studying overseas. Without a good command of English, one might fail in his or her studies though in fact he or she has a good mastery of his or her discipline. Therefore, it is advisable that EAP program be kept and well managed as it is a bridge to successful study in a foreign university.

REFERENCES

- Hutchinson, Tom and Alan. (1989). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centered Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kox, K. Kathy. & David, Hill. (2004). *EAP, English for Academic Purposes*. Australia: Person Education.
- Kox, Kathy. & David, Hill. (2007). *EAP, English for Academic Purposes: Preliminary*. Australia: Person Education.
- Pang, E.S., Muaka, A., Bernhardt, E.B., & Kamil, M.L. 2003. *Teaching Reading in International Academy of Education-IAE*. Brussels, Belgium. Retrieved from <http://www.cutin.edu.au/curtin/dept/smec/iae>.
- Robinson Pauline. (1981). *ESP (English for Specific Purposes)*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Trimble, Louis., 1985. *English for Science Technology: A Discourse Approach*. New York: Cambridge University Press.,
- Pusbindiklatren. 2006. <http://pusbindiklatren.bappenas.go.id/konten.php?nama=profil@op=history>. Accessed on August 27, 2010.
- Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia. *English for Specific Purpose*. in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_for_specific_purposes Accessed on October 29, 2010.