



English Needs Analysis for Sharia Bank Employees

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to look into the English needs of Sharia bank employees in Semarang, Central Java. Qualitative research was used as the design research of this research. The subject of this research was 30 bank employees in one sharia bank in Semarang. Research data was collected by using interviews and questionnaires. The result of this research showed that: (1) Speaking and listening skills are more needed in their work especially as customer service than reading and writing skills; (2) Sharia bank employees also need English material especially in the terms of banking, accounting, and also computer programs. The employees need more about special terms relate to their jobs. Besides that, they also need skills in writing business correspondence for back-office positions.

Keywords: English needs, ESP, sharia bank employees

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INTRODUCTION

Employees are expected to master occupation-specific skills; grasp information-processing skills, including literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving; and possess generic skills, such as communication, self-management, and the ability to learn, to adapt to the ever-changing labor market requirements. Julian, Malana, & Calanoga, 2019 stated that communication skills, critical thinking skills, and human relations skills are the primary competencies that are useful and relevant in the workplace – with communication skills being the most important.

In business English is the “lingua franca”. It means that English is a tool for

communicating, negotiating, and carrying out employees' duties and responsibilities towards their managers, coworkers, clients, and stakeholders is important for various industries. According to Sakitri (2017), English is required for successful business transactions with customers, marketing products and services, and business development. As a result, having a workforce that is fluent in English is a competitive requirement.

Good communication is the important key for bank employees. They have to master all the important policies and procedures because they have to make the clients understand what they said. These policies and procedures

contain terms and concepts in English which may be difficult to understand. So, However, English skills are a necessity for sharia bank employees to support their job. Salameh and Olfat (2015) found out that in a bank's work, English is a crucial thing in many aspects; dealing with foreign customers, understanding administration requirements, and dealing with English documents. Mohammdzadeh, Barati & Fatemi (2015) also stated because of the development of technology nowadays, banks are moving toward the electronic world so bank employees need to know English if they want to improve their products and compete with other banks.

Bank employees believe that English skills are necessary to support their jobs, but they also believe that their English ability is limit. Mohammdzadeh, Barati & Fatemi (2015) stated from their research, shows that bank employees of Saderat bank in Mashhad said that all English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) were very difficult for them. Chew (2005) reported that the sources of difficulty of bank employees in carrying out their work tasks were financial content and language demand. All written input and output are in English. The stem of their writing difficulty is from the use of English. Then, other bank employees must work with English extensively because in addition to the customary banking practice of writing memos and reports in English. They also have to translate oral information in their native language into English.

According to Adewumi & Owoyemi (2012), "working in the financial service sector, particularly the

banking sector, necessitates a high level of interaction by the roles, functions, and responsibilities of Junior Banking Officers and Middle Management Staff of the banks." As a result, bank employees at all levels must be fluent in the English language. This study was prompted by a gap in the existing literature or research on the need to incorporate English language training into bank employee training programs. Several studies in areas related to the focus of this study have been conducted by educators and researchers. Some are analytical, while others are evaluative, comparative, or both evaluative and analytical, or evaluative, analytical, and comparative.

Another research was conducted by Karimi&Sanavi (2014). Based on this research, "need analysis affects the individuals' educational life while studying and their future life in terms of their future careers and affairs." In ESP courses, need analysis is even more important. Courses in ESP should be closely related to the field in which students are being trained. As the name implies, ESPs are defined as "specific parts of the language that a specific group of learners must know to perform appropriately in the appropriate context."

According to research done by some researchers on the English needs of bankers in some well-known banks, the majority of the new employees have graduated from prestigious universities. Their majors range from Economics to Accounting, Banking, Finance, Engineering, Computer Science, Chemistry, Law, and English. Investigations revealed that these members received 6 months of training

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at a bank training center because they lacked banking efficiency. It was discovered that the bank's training program did not teach any useful aspects of the English language. Based on these investigations, it is clear that it is necessary to identify new employees' English language needs for them to be more successful in their jobs. In this study, the researcher administered two research questions:

1. To what extent do bank employees of Sharia Bank need to use English?
2. What difficulties that Sharia Bank employees meet in the use of the English Language in their field of work?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design that is used in this study is based on the work of Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Dudley-Evans and Jo ST John (1998), who define needs as "target needs" (what the learner must do in the target situation) and "learning needs" (what the learner must do to learn). The focus of this work is on the target needs, which are further subdivided into the workers' necessities, wants, and deficiencies. To better understand these three elements, an attempt will be made here to examine workers' attitudes toward English in general and English for specific purposes in particular.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Dudley-Evans and Jo ST John (1998), the best methodology for studying the target needs of any specific group of workers is to use methods such as questionnaires, follow-up interviews, collection of authentic workplace texts, and workplace visits. The participants of

this study were 30 sharia bank employees. It was taken from one sharia bank in Semarang, BNI Sharia, branch office Semarang. They are from different departments. The purpose sampling is used in choosing participants because this research aims to find out the target needs of the usage of the English language.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

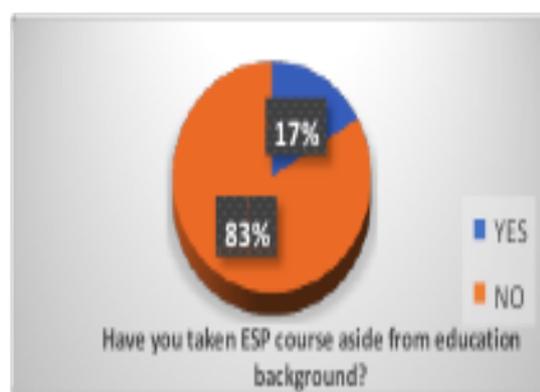


Figure-1: Have the employee's taken ESP courses aside from educational background?

Figure 1 shows the survey about "have you taken ESP course aside from education background?". It shows that 17% of all the participants said "yes". It means that they have taken English course aside from education background. In other responses, 83% of participants answered "no". When the participants who answer "yes" were asked "why are you take ESP course aside from education background?", there were some statements about it.

Some of the answers are, (1) they want to improve their English skills, especially their communication skill (2) They take English courses that are needed for their future carrier, and (3) They want to improve their confidence. On the other hand, there are some

reasons why the other participants haven't taken ESP courses aside from their educational background. One of the reasons is they have limited time to take the course. There are many works to be done in their workplace.

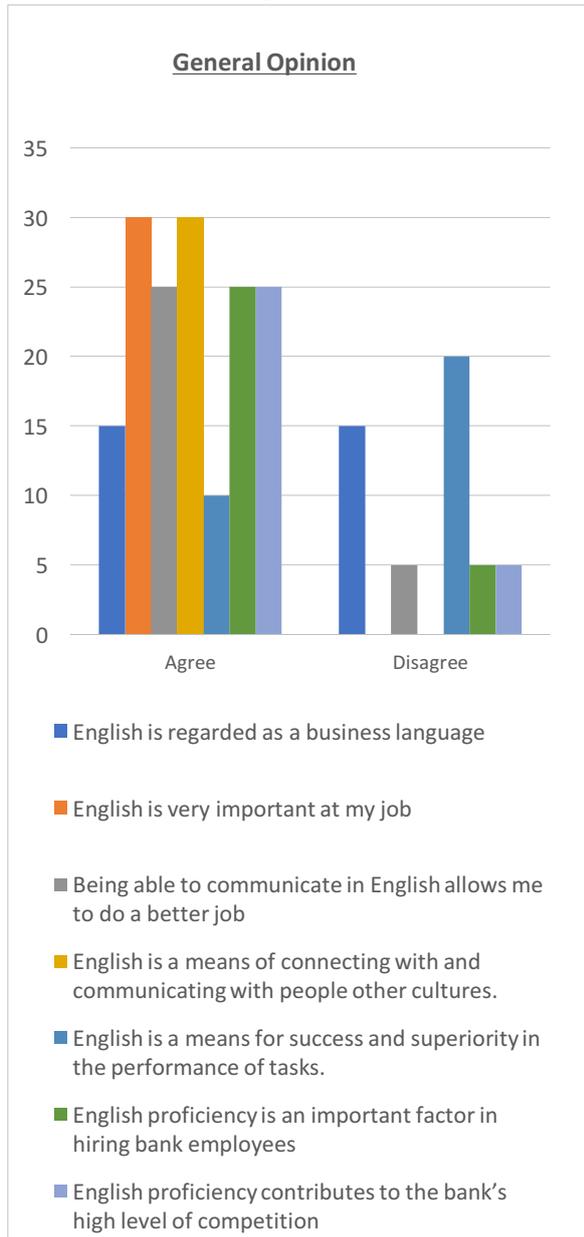


Figure-2 General Opinion

Figure 2 shows the general opinion of the participants about the usage of English in their workplace. The first statement is “English is regarded as a business language, 50% agree about this statement and 50% disagree with this statement. The second statement

“English is very important in my job”, 100% or 30 participants agree with this statement. The third statement “Being able to communicate in English allows me to do a better job”, 25 participants agree with this statement, and the rest about 5 participants disagree with it. The fourth statement “English is a means of connecting with and communicating with people of other cultures”, 100% or all of the participants agree with this statement.

The next statement is “English is a means for success and superiority in the performance of tasks, around 10 participants agree with this statement and around 20 participants disagree with it. Next statement, “English proficiency is an important factor in hiring bank employees”, around 24 participants agree with it and the rest around 6 participants disagree. In the last statement, “English proficiency contributes to the bank’s high level of competition”, around 25 participants agree and the rest around 5 participants disagree with this statement.

This chart shows that English is important in the workplace. All the participants agree with the statement “English is important in my job”. Consciously, they need English to support their job but there are also some problems or difficulties that they faced to learn English. English is also important to contribute to the bank’s high level of competition. It means that if they want to expand their company to go international, the employees must master English skills to support their carrier.

Needs of English Language for Sharia Bank Employees

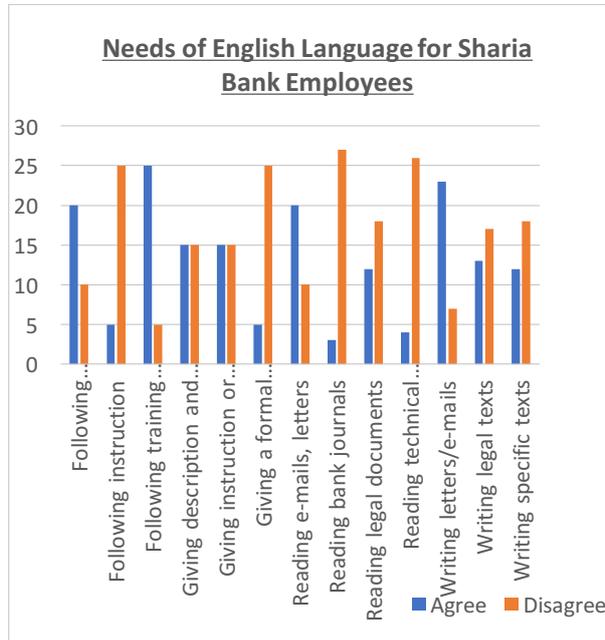


Figure-3 Needs of English Language for Sharia Bank Employees

Figure 3 shows the needs of the English Language for Sharia Bank Employees. Thirteen statements that showed in the figure above are based on four categories. These categories are four skills of the English Language; listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Following presentation/ talks, following instruction, following training sessions belongs to listening skills. Giving description and explanation, giving instruction or doing a task, and giving a formal presentation talking on the phone belong to speaking skills. Reading e-mails/ letters, reading bank journals, reading legal documents, and reading technical documents/manuals belongs to reading skills. Writing letters/ emails, writing legal texts, and writing specific texts belong to writing skills. From the figure above, it can be concluded that speaking skills are the most needed for bank employees. Following training

sessions is the most needed by them to improve their English skills.

Difficulties that Sharia Bank Employees meet in the usage of English at their workplace.

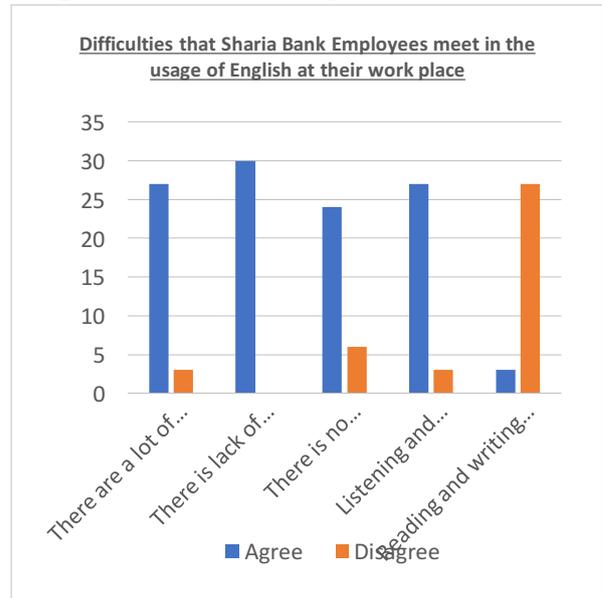


Figure -4 Difficulties that Sharia Bank Employees meet in the usage of English at their workplace.

Figure 4 shows the difficulties that Sharia Bank Employees meet in the usage of English at their workplace. From the chart, it can be seen that lack of practices in the work place is the most difficulties that they face. Besides that, there are a lot of special terms in Sharia Bank that must be mastered by the employees. Special terms in Sharia Bank are different than a conventional bank. So, they must work hard to remember each term. Sharia Bank employees also conveyed that listening and speaking are two important skills that have to be mastered in the usage of English in their workplace, especially those who are in the front office. They are directly meet the customer. So, they have to master listening and speaking skills.

CONCLUSION

If bank employees want to develop their products and compete with other banks, they have to master the English language. Bank employees should read current financial trading books and magazines to keep their knowledge of the banking profession up to date. Nowadays, banks are moving toward an electronic world, which necessitates the knowledge of English. A formal need analysis has never been carried out before. As a result, this study seeks to investigate the English language requirements of bank employees at BNI Sharia. Banking professionals have become more aware of the need for improved English communication skills because of the rise of marketing and trading.

This study of bank employees' language needs was conducted to improve the match between the actual use of foreign language in their working environment. This study is based on information gathered from the BNI Sharia in Semarang, Central Java. A need analysis questionnaire was created to identify the English language needs of bank employees. When asked what English language skills bank employees needed, they said they needed a lot of speaking, reading, writing, and listening. They only require listening and speaking. When asked if they had any difficulties using English at work, the participants stated that they had all of them. The most serious issue they faced was a lack of communication practices among their employees. Finally, they stated that the bank should provide English language training courses for them and set aside

one day specifically for them to communicate in English.

Finally, this study was carried out to provide insight into the need for and difficulties with English use among bank employees. The current study, however, does not represent all bank employees; rather, it is a sample. The findings also revealed a high demand for the English language in banking professions. This conveys the impression that useful English language instruction is critical to do the job effectively.

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