Revising an ESP Syllabus for International Relations: A Need Analysis-Based Study

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Abstract

In an increasingly globalized world, knowledge of English has become critical for university graduates of all majors. English proficiency is not only required to access these opportunities, but it is also a prerequisite for competing in the international labour market. Despite its relevance, many graduates suffer difficulties as a result of their lack of English proficiency. Even though General English (GE) classes are widely available, they may not fully educate students for the unique demands of their future employment. This emphasizes the importance of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses, which are tailored to address the specific needs of students based on the Need Analysis (NA). However, in subjects such as International Relations (IR), research on ESP and NA remains limited. This study investigated students' perceptions of the current English for International Relations (EFIR) syllabus and gathered feedback for its improvement. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed as part of a Research and Development (R&D) study. Data were collected through questionnaires (n=60) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (n=15). The study discovered that, while both basic (92%) and advanced EFIR students (96%) were generally satisfied with the syllabus, advanced students suggested adding more modern diplomatic themes, practical experiences, and interactive learning methodologies to increase engagement and knowledge. This study underscored the necessity of refining ESP syllabus based on student feedback to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Future research should explore the long-term impact of these syllabus modifications on students' professional readiness.

INTRODUCTION

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; Xhemaili, 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 the Indonesian context, the importance of English mastery is highlighted in Act of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 on National Education System (2003) which states that English is an international language that has a substantial role to enable people interact globally. 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 Indonesian 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 oppportunities. After considering the need of the students, the materials can be tailored so that it can meet the real need of the students themselves.

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.

This study was part of a broader research and development (R&D) project aimed at developing an ESP syllabus prototype through a structured NA process. R&D serves as a tool to assess the effectiveness of specific learning materials (Okpatrioka, 2023; Slamet, 2022). As the final research outcome was an ESP syllabus for IR, this study focuses on revising the existing syllabus based on student feedback following its implementation in both basic and advanced English for International Relations (EFIR) classes.

This research seeks to answer the following questions:
1. How do students studying International Relations perceive the current ESP syllabus?
2. What feedback do students provide regarding the implementation of the current ESP syllabus?

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive research design as a part of a broader research and development (R&D) project. Desriptive research aims to systematically capture existing phenomena under study (Atmowardoyo, 2018). Specifically, this research sought to obtain descriptive information regarding the implementation of a need analysis-based syllabus in English for International Relations (EFIR) courses.

The research utilized two primary instruments: a questionnaire and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms after the course was completed and consisted of 15 Likert-scale questions and two open-ended questions. The Likert-scale questions measured students' perceptions of the syllabus, while the open-ended questions allowed them to specify their preferred course materials and provide justifications for their choices. The questionnaire was used to efficiently collect data from a larger group of participants and provide quantifiable insights into student satisfaction. After analysing the questionnaire responses, further detailed information was needed, particularly regarding materials used in collective online classes. To address this, some students were invited to participate in an FGD. According to Babbie (2021), FGDs provide a comfortable environment for discussions among 5 to 15 participants. In this study, FGD participants were selected as representatives from three performance-based groups: high achievers, middle achievers, and low achievers. This classification was determined based on students' final scores in the EFIR course, ensuring diverse perspectives. The inclusion of FGDs was crucial for data triangulation,

allowing for deeper exploration of questionnaire findings and clarification of ambiguous responses.

The EFIR course was offered at two levels: basic and advanced. Consequently, two groups of students participated in this research. The basic EFIR course was a compulsory subject taken by second-semester students, whereas the advanced EFIR course was an elective for sixth-semester students. There were 36 participants from the basic EFIR course and 24 from the advanced course. The disparity in class sizes resulted from the mandatory nature of the basic course and the elective status of the advanced course. Additionally, students were required to complete the basic EFIR course before enrolling in the advanced level. Prior to data collection, all participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, adhering to ethical research considerations that ensured confidentiality, in line with international research standards ("Ethical Principles", 2012).

Data analysis followed a systematic multi-step approach. The initial stage involved collecting questionnaire data and transcribing the FGD discussions. The transcriptions were then organized to identify patterns and connections among responses. In the transcription process, coding was applied to categorize words, sentences, and "meaning units" (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Coding was also used to anonymize respondent names, ensuring confidentiality. The data were subsequently summarized and analysed to address the research questions. The summarization process helped to generalize key insights from the open-ended questionnaire responses, while statistical analysis was applied to Likert-scale data to identify trends and patterns. As part of research triangulation, the combination of questionnaire and FGD data was used to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings (Bhandari, 2023; Guion et al., 2011). The feedback obtained from this research was used to revise the current syllabus, which in turn served as the foundation for developing new instructional materials for the EFIR course.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To gather the quantitative data, students were asked to complete a questionnaire based on the following questions.

Table 1. The Questionnaire Questions for EFIR students

No	The Questions
1.	The materials listed in the syllabus are relevant to the course objectives.
2.	The syllabus provides a clear and comprehensive list of required readings.
3.	The supplementary materials (e.g., articles, videos, websites) enhance my understanding of the course content.
4.	The course materials are up-to-date and reflect current trends and knowledge in International Relations.
5.	The amount of reading and material assigned is manageable within the time frame of the
6.	course.
7.	The materials provided are engaging and maintain my interest in the subject matter.
8.	The instructions for utilizing the materials (e.g., reading schedules, assignment guidelines) are clear and easy to follow.
9.	The syllabus materials are accessible (e.g., available online on Leads and offline (PPT).
10.	The materials provided in the syllabus are appropriately challenging for the course level.
11.	The variety of materials (e.g. textbooks, articles, multimedia) supports learning.
12.	The materials listed in the syllabus contribute significantly to my overall learning experience.
13.	The syllabus clearly explains how the materials will be used in assessments and assignments.

14.	I feel well-prepared for exams and assignments based on the materials provided in the
15.	syllabus.
	The materials in the syllabus are well-organized and logically structured.
	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality and relevance of the materials provided in the syllabus.

The above questions were given two students from both EFIR classes, the basic and the advanced one.

Table 2. Basic EFIR Students' Response Based on the above Questionnaire (n=36)

No	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	18	15	3	0	0
2.	15	17	4	0	0
3.	23	10	3	0	0
4.	17	14	5	0	0
5.	11	19	6	0	0
6.	13	18	5	0	0
7.	15	16	5	0	0
8.	21	11	4	0	0
9.	13	18	5	0	0
10.	16	18	2	0	0
11.	14	19	3	0	0
12.	15	16	5	0	0
13.	9	16	10	0	0
14.	16	17	3	0	0
15.	18	13	5	0	0

According to the survey results, the majority of students believed that the course materials were really beneficial to their learning process. 92% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the materials listed in the syllabus were relevant to the course objectives, indicating that the course content and intended outcomes were aligned. Additionally, 89% of students believed that the prescribed readings were clearly and fully listed, laying a solid basis for their study. Supplementary materials, such as articles and videos, were also highly valued, with 92% of students reporting that they improved their grasp of course content. This finding showed that having a varied set of resources was critical for enhancing students' understanding and keeping them engaged.

Furthermore, 86% of the students believed the course materials were up to date, showing that the curriculum matched current trends and expertise, which was critical for staying relevant in an ever-changing sector. Students also liked how easy it was to manage and organize the course materials. Approximately 84% of the students considered the amount of reading was feasible within the course period, and 86% found the materials entertaining and capable of keeping their attention. 86% of respondents agreed on clear directions for using the materials, underscoring the importance of well-structured assistance in promoting effective learning. Access to materials was judged adequate by 89% of students, which was critical for inclusive and efficient learning experiences.

Getting the same questions as the basic EFIR students, the result of the advanced EFIR students were slightly different from the basic ones. The advanced level student gave a more positive perception as seen from the following results.

Table 3. Basic EFIR Students' Response Based on the above Questionnaire (n=24)

No	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	11	12	1	0	0
2.	9	15	0	0	0
3.	14	8	2	0	0
4.	9	14	1	0	0
5.	11	11	2	0	0
6.	11	10	3	0	0
7.	12	12	5	0	0
8.	14	10	4	0	0
9.	7	12	5	0	0
10.	10	14	0	0	0
11.	9	14	1	0	0
12.	11	12	1	0	0
13.	8	15	1	0	0
14.	5	18	1	0	0
15.	12	12	0	0	0

The results showed that the advanced level students had a generally good attitude toward the course contents included in the syllabus, with the majority agreeing or strongly agreeing on their relevance and quality. 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. Student engagement was likewise high, with 88% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the resources kept them interested in the subject. Furthermore, all students considered the directions for using the resources clear and simple to understand, which was critical for efficient learning and assignment completion. All respondents expressed satisfaction with the accessibility of curriculum materials, both online and offline. Furthermore, 79% of students believed that the materials were adequately hard for their course level, with 21% remaining neutral, indicating a generally appropriate level of difficulty. The range of materials facilitated different learning styles, with 100% agreement, underscoring the value of diverse instructional tools. Overall, 100% of students were satisfied with the quality and relevancy of the syllabus materials, demonstrating the course's success in satisfying student expectations and promoting academic advancement.

In addition, the questionnaire also revealed students' preference towards certain course materials. The following is the preferred course materials mentioned by the basic-level students.

Table 4. Basic EFIR Students' Response on the Preferred Course Materials

No	Preferred Course Materials	Frequency
1.	Debate materials	22
2.	Business negotiation	6
3.	Opinion paragraph and argumentative writing	8
4.	Specific Topics: Rohingnya and Gender Inequality in India	5
5.	Interactive and fun learning method	1

The data indicated that debate materials were overwhelmingly the most favored among the students, cited for their role in skill development, engagement, and practical application. The same positive feedback on the debate material could also be found from the answer of the open-ended question in the questionnaire as follow.

> I like debate course because we can improve our opinion and we can know others' opinion, we can learn and practice so we will know the best opinion when talking something, this practice can increase our ability to give opinion. (Student NK)
> Of all the materials, I like the debate material, it trains to speak and also improves pronounce skills. (Student RA)
> Debates, because the topic are still easily found and we can practice to give our own arguments and try to convince the audience that we have strong statements. Also, we practice the debates offline so it's fun and interesting. (Student AI)
> Debate is one of the most materials that I like, but I still need to learn more and make my argument strong enough. (Student SF)

Business negotiation and argumentative writing also rank highly due to their practicality and clarity. Specific topical discussions and interactive learning methods were appreciated for their relevance and enjoyment factor as it was expressed in the following excerpt.

> The materials I like the most are business negotiation because I got a lot of new info about negotiations skills. (Student MF)
> I really like the business negotiation, argumentative writing, and introduction to debate materials because the material presented is very clear and light, and the practice is also very enjoyable. (Student SR)

Overall, students tended to favour materials that are interactive, practically applicable, and provide opportunities for skill development and personal expression.

Table 5. Basic EFIR Students' Response on the Preferred Course Materials

No	Preferred Course Materials	Frequency
1.	Job interview simulation	8
2.	Football	6
3.	Korean wave	4
4.	Oral presentation	3
5.	Gastrodiplomacy	3
6.	Writing report	3

7.	UNEP	2

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. Football was also a popular and praised for their relatability, entertainment value, and cultural insights. Students interested in Korean culture preferred the Korean Wave due to its relevance and informative content, which was highlighted four times. Oral presentations and group learning received three comments for encouraging engagement and improving public speaking skills. Similarly, gastrodiplomacy and writing/report materials, each receiving three mentions, were praised for their relevance to students' interests, practical applications, and engaging activities. UNEP as a topic was mentioned as it equipped students with valuable environmental knowledge. Overall, students prioritized useful and engaging information, compatibility with own interests, and interactive learning experiences.

The distributed questionnaire also allowed students to give any recommendations for the betterment of EFIR class, but none mentioned about the recommended materials. Therefore, the FGDs was implemented to fill the missing information. The FGDs were conducted twice to both basic and advanced EFIR students. There were 15 students who joined the FGDs, nine students for the basic EFIR students' FGD and six for the advanced one. Students representing three different categories including high, medium and low achiever students participated in the discussion with five representatives for each category.

The majority of the basic level students argued that the materials given to them were suitable and manageable. One of low achiever students stated that she struggled but she could still bear the difficulties in understanding the content as she said in the following excerpt.

> I think the material is appropriate even though it is still a bit difficult for me to understand it because the material is delivered in English but it is still tolerable. That is why, there are some materials that I still can't master (Student IN)

Different from basic EFIR students who did not propose any new material recommendations, the advanced students proposed some materials for the betterment of EFIR implementation. The first is Diplomacy Evolution. As one of the lecturers who taught EFIR classes was a former diplomat, there were a few meetings in which students were given materials about diplomacy. Instead of discussing merely about the history of diplomacy, students expected to see the evolution of it. Discussing the new trends of diplomacy such as Technology diplomacy and Vaccine Diplomacy will make the class more interesting to follow as student ED stated in the following excerpt.

> I think some of the materials that should have been changed is maybe about the history of a diplomatic itself because I think it's already been done with other uh classes with other subjects and it should not be a repetitive material for me personally but I don't know about the others. And I think he can get more into how the diplomatic has been changed towards generation to generation. For example, about the technology diplomatic, but the vaccine diplomatic that we have over a few years ago. And rather than to discuss about the traditional diplomatic. We are more linked into the traditional diplomatic, like military diplomatic and also like economic diplomatic while actually we have some more various diplomatics that should have been covered within the classes. (Student ED)

Secondly, students expected to receive a holistic understanding of a diplomat life. One of the students explained that he appreciated if the practitioner, in this case the former diplomat, could share his life experience as a diplomat as he explained in the following excerpt.

> What I said earlier was more about how he can explain or tell his light experiences, yes, related to the life of a diplomat, then things that may not have been exposed, not only things that are based on theory, concepts but there are on the other side of diplomats that we can learn. (Student MT)
>
> It seems like diplomats are probably hard to reach out too, their lives, for example, what do they do, not necessarily day by day, but like what do they do every month? What meetings do they have, what is the month? What meetings do they have? What do they discuss? What problems do they face? (Student SY)

Another thing that was highlighted by the advanced EFIR students was material deepening by adding more case studies, especially in the online session. Students themselves explained that the nature of the online class made it challenging for them to engage in the learning process. Therefore, they hoped that there will be more case studies given as a discussion starter. They also hoped that they will be given more rooms to practice more. One of the students proposed a class in which real-life scenarios and challenges faced by diplomats should be incorporated into the curriculum for a more immersive experience. Further, students suggested to have role-playing activity so that they could have a better picture of the things happen in real life. Interestingly, the basic EFIR students highlighted the same thing. They were eager to have more practical session through role-playing activity as they explained in the following excerpt.

> More often to do like a role play since this is class for English for a professional proposes so it's not just about the being a diplomatic but like other professionals also so like we are doing a role playing. In the online session, some breakout rooms should be provided so we can enter it based on the professional areas that we are role playing we are interested in so we can perform and showcase our ability and our knowledge during that sessions on the breakout room with a certain group that uh have a common interest with us. (Student FN)
>
> Yes, that's it, but for me it's still quite general. I want more practices, like the person has to negotiate and roleplaying the activity that involves until he the agreement can be achieved. (Student FA)
>
> For the sixth semester, it should be more about what diplomacy is like. What is diplomacy like? So it's the practice, right? Is it possible to imagine the situation of diplomacy if there is a problem? it will be different when a practitioner teaches a diplomat how to do this, when they have a certain purpose, for example for dinner, etc. (Student AL)

The practice session was expected in some other materials like diplomatic correspondence in which students eager to get a higher exposure through the writing process as they explained in the following excerpt.

> In my opinion, it would be nice if there were maybe a training session too, not an assignment but practice for writing. (Student AI)
>
> About the MoU section like uhm I mean it is really important right as like in the final examination, we were asked on how to type the sentence correctly using the reference of words like honor bestow. Yes it is already on the on the material but I don't think it was addressed to us directly so I think. So, how to use the word in written not just verbal. (Student FN)

For basic EFIR students, debate materials were overwhelmingly the most favored, with 22 mentions. Students cited the development of critical thinking, public speaking, and argumentation skills as key reasons for their preference. Students argued that debates helped them craft their arguments and improved their speaking confidence. Business negotiation and opinion paragraph/argumentative writing followed, with six and eight mentions respectively, appreciated for their practical applications and clarity. Students believed that business negotiation practice that was directly applicable to real-life situation made the learning process very practical. Specific topical discussions, such as the Rohingya crisis and gender inequality in India, along with interactive and fun learning methods, were also valued for their relevance and engaging nature. These preferences underline the importance of materials that not only educate but also resonate with students' real-world experiences and interests.

For advanced EFIR students, the data showed a preference for materials that blended practical applicability with personal interests. Job interview simulations were the most popular, with eight mentions, valued for their practical insights and engaging nature. One student highlighted, "The practice is really fun and give some insight to real world situations during jobseeking" (Student AC). Football, cited six times, was favored for its relatability and entertainment value, with a student noting, "I like the football material so much, because football is my hobby and based on the material I know the football so much from the history and the meaning of football" (Student IZ). The Korean Wave, with four mentions, was appreciated for its relevance and informative content, appealing to students interested in Korean culture. Oral presentations and group learning activities, each with three mentions, were valued for encouraging engagement and improving public speaking skills. Gastrodiplomacy and writing/report materials were praised for their practical applications and engaging activities. UNEP topics, mentioned twice, provided valuable knowledge about environmental issues.

Taking into account students' feedback towards the implementation of prototype syllabus from Hariyanti et al., (2024), the revision was made by changing some learning materials and adding some new topics as follow.

Basic EFIR Syllabus

Week	Topics
[Week 1]	Course semester plan discussion, general overview on GE and ESP, class contract
[Week 2]	English in International Relations, specifically in the field of diplomacy
[Week 3]	Diplomatic communication: writing a diplomatic note
[Week 4]	Argument in international forum/meeting
[Week 5]	IR Topic I: Rohingnya
[Week 6]	IR Topic II: Gender inequality in India
[Week 7]	Oral presentation
[Week 8]	Mid exam
[Week 9]	Potential career as IR graduates: role playing
[Week 10]	Diplomatic negotiation skills: role playing
[Week 11]	International business negotiation
[Week 12]	Introduction to debate
[Week 13]	Debate practice
[Week 14]	Paraphrasing, summarizing, opinion paragraph
[Week 15]	Argumentative essay writing
[Week 16]	Final exam

Advanced EFIR Syllabus

Week	Topic
[Week 1]	Course semester plan discussion & class contract
[Week 2]	Life as a diplomat: the fun and the challenges
[Week 3]	The evolution of diplomacy: the history of diplomacy to technology and vaccine diplomacy
[Week 4]	IR topic I: soccer
[Week 5]	IR topic II: UN organization
[Week 6]	IR topic III: Korean wave
[Week 7]	Group oral presentation
[Week 8]	Mid exam
[Week 9]	Advanced diplomatic writing
[Week 10]	Crisis management in diplomacy: case study
[Week 11]	IR topic IV: gastrodiplomacy
[Week 12]	Field trip
[Week 13]	Report writing
[Week 14]	Career preparation: cover letter, CV, and job interview
[Week 15]	Job interview simulation
[Week 16]	Final exam

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 Rohingya crisis and gender inequality. Advanced students, on the other hand, showed a stronger interest in career-oriented material, including simulated job interviews, diplomatic letters, and report writing, because they felt these subjects would better prepare them for professional jobs. These results are consistent with earlier studies that show ESP courses need to go beyond general English competency in order to meet students' unique linguistic and professional needs (Poedjiastutie & Oliver, 2017). Chovancová (2014) found that ESP learners are more engaged when the materials are contextually relevant and replicate real-world situations. This finding is further supported by the need for interactive and hands-on learning. Studies have demonstrated that argumentative speaking tasks enhance critical thinking and practical communication skills in ESP contexts (Duka et al., 2020), which is consistent with basic EFIR students' preference for debate and negotiation exercises.

Further, the questionnaire and focus group discussion results both emphasize the necessity of an ESP curriculum that changes as students' academic careers do. The flexible curriculum model (Finney, 2002) suggests that ESP courses should be designed gradually, adapting to students' changing linguistic and career needs. Basic students benefit most from structured skill-building activities, but advanced students need more exposure to real-world professional challenges. But in contrast to earlier studies that mostly concentrate on business and technical ESP domains, this offers insights into the creation of ESP curricula for

International Relations, which is still a neglected field in ESP research (Hariyanti et al., 2024; Saputro & Hima, 2018).

In addition, the feedback from advanced students highlights the need for a revised curriculum that takes into account the most recent developments in diplomacy. Realizing the need to comprehend contemporary diplomatic dynamics beyond conventional theories, they indicated a desire for subjects like technological diplomacy, vaccination diplomacy, and crisis management. This backs up Meiristiani & Rosdiana's (2017) claim that in order to maintain long-term relevance, ESP courses need to take into account current industrial developments. Students also stressed the value of learning from actual professionals, stating that first-hand knowledge from diplomats might improve their comprehension of international negotiations, a subject that is still mostly theoretical in many ESP courses.

Taking into account these findings and student feedback, the EFIR syllabus was revised to better align with their needs. To improve relevance and interest, new subjects were added and certain materials were swapped out. In contrast to earlier research that primarily focused on language learning in ESP classes, this study addresses the disconnect between academic learning and practical diplomatic practice by highlighting the incorporation of professional training into ESP syllabus design. The revised curriculum reflects a move toward more professional and participatory learning, guaranteeing that students acquire the analytical and practical abilities required for their future employment in International Relations in addition to linguistic proficiency.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study, which looked at the efficacy of an ESP curriculum for students studying International Relations, showed that while overall satisfaction was good, the curriculum needed to be improved, especially at the advanced level. The curriculum was generally well received by basic EFIR students, but advanced students indicated that more case studies, contemporary diplomatic subjects, and hands-on learning exercises like role-playing were needed. These results demonstrate the dynamic character of ESP requirements and stress the significance of matching course material to actual professional requirements.

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.

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. First, the majority of the data included in the study are student self-reports, which could add subjectivity and response bias. Future studies could take into account the opinions of employers and instructors to offer a more comprehensive assessment of the efficacy of ESP curricula. Second, because the study was only carried out at one university, its conclusions might not accurately reflect how ESP is implemented in other academic environments. Further validation of the findings could be achieved by comparative studies conducted in various institutions and cultural contexts. 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.

To sum up, improving language instruction in International Relations requires ESP curricula to be improved through student involvement, practical application, and flexibility in response to industry trends. ESP courses can better prepare students with the language and diplomatic skills needed in today's globalized world by using interactive approaches and materials tailored to a particular career.

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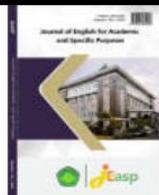
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