

NON-ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS: THE USE OF ENGLISH IN ENGLISH SUBJECT LEARNING

Yurike Suhertian Poyungi

Informatics Management Study Program, AMIK Luwuk Banggai, Indonesia
yurikesuhertian@gmail.com

Submitted: 2025-05-28
Accepted: 2025-06-09

Published: 2025-06-14
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70210/amrj.v3i2.134>

Abstract

As an English lecturer who presents and explains material using English in the class, it is important to know the students' perceptions about this method. This article aims to discover students' perceptions of the use of English in the English class. Data were collected through a questionnaire containing 15 questions which were close-ended. The result indicates that students prefer the lecturer to use Indonesian as the instruction language to explain grammar or vocabulary because it makes them feel more comfortable, understand better, more confident in the learning process. However, the lecture's use of English did not significantly impact students' motivation and participation to learn English.

Keywords: *students' perception, non-english major students, the use of English*

Introduction

The use of English in various fields is no longer new. Usually, English is used in fields such as education, science, information and communication technology, diplomacy, economics, law politics, and tourism so English is considered very important to learn, especially at the higher education level. Education in Indonesia has been mandated to make English a compulsory course at the higher education level so almost all universities have implemented it. This means that all students in higher education from various majors or study programs are required to take English courses. The aim is to prepare students to face the challenges and demands of the future. Therefore, teaching and learning English in higher education becomes very important. English language learning at the tertiary level expects students to have English language skills such as being able to present lecture material in English, read articles or texts written in English, express opinions or opinions in English both orally and in writing, and so on (Bahar & Husain, 2021).

The use of English in the learning process particularly in the non-language major provides its challenges. As a lecturer of this English course, who presents the learning materials in English, also strives to use English in the classroom. It is intended that the students are accustomed to listening, reading, writing, and speaking in English. Since the students are not from English major, it is important to consider their perceptions on the use of English in the English subject.

Based on previous observations, most 1st semester students at AMIK Luwuk Banggai, in the D3 Informatics Management Study Program, in particular, can hardly do this. The researcher observed that students found it very difficult to understand instructions in English classes when the instructions were expressed in English even on simple instructions. In addition, students of the D3 Informatics Management study program also did not enjoy the English language course material which was presented using English. This is possible because English is not a native language for most of them. This fact is in line with the opinion which states that for language learners, especially in Indonesia, where English is not usually spoken in social life, accuracy is the focus of learning English (Setiyadi, 2020).

According to Kumar (in Sibarani, 2019) who looks at the definition of perception based on philosophical, psychological, and cognitive perception states that perception is essentially a process to achieve awareness or understanding of sensory information. In addition, other experts mention that perception is the way individuals give meaning to their experiences (Chan & Wong, 2023). Furthermore, perception can be linked to the learning process where students acquire knowledge practically and enter it into their factual memory (Sutisna et al., 2019).

Of course, research related to student perceptions has been done before but the focus of the study is on the use of Indonesian in English language learning. (Hawa et al., 2021); (Nazilah et al., 2021); (Saputra & Asirah, 2022); (Elian et al., 2023). Some of these studies also used a variety of respondents such as junior high school students, high school students, and college students majoring in English.

However, those previous researches have not been discussed the use of English in English language learning particularly for students majoring in non-English majors. Therefore, this study aims to obtain an overview of the perceptions of students of Informatics Management study program toward the use of English by lecturer in English course. In addition, the result of this research hopefully can be considered as additional information related to students' perspective about using English for the non-English major students.

Method

This research applies quantitative method. Quantitative research uses numerical data as its object (Risadiana Chandra Dhewy, 2022). Then, data were collected through a questionnaire.

This research was conducted at AMIK Luwuk Banggai for the 2023/2024 academic year and involved 59 first-semester students of the D3 Informatics Management Study Program as participants. This research also adopted a simple random sampling where all the samples were selected randomly from the population. Meanwhile, the primary data was a questionnaire containing 15 *close-ended questions* written in Indonesian. The aim is that the instructions and statements in the questionnaire can be easily understood by students. The questionnaire was distributed online via a *Google form* link.

Furthermore, this study also uses a *Likert scale* (4 scales) with alternative responses, namely: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), and strongly agree (4). The formula used to calculate the data is $P = F / N \times 100\%$. In addition, to facilitate data analysis, the questionnaire statements were divided into categories: preferences, feelings, advantages,

and disadvantages of the use of English by lecturers, and students' motivation towards the use of English by lecturers.

Result and Discussion

The following presents the results of a questionnaire related to student perceptions of the use of English in English Language Courses in the D3 Informatics Management Study Program Semester, 1st semester students.

Table 1. Results of Students' Perception Questionnaire

No	Questionnaire Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I prefer lecturers to use English when teaching English language courses.	7.1%	23.7%	56%	13.1%
2	I understand more when the lecturer uses English when teaching in class.	4.8%	48.8%	35.7%	10.7%
3	I understand better when the lecturer translates new vocabulary and reads the text into Bahasa Indonesia.	3.6%	1.2%	36.9%	58.3%
4	I feel more comfortable when the lecturer explains the material in Bahasa Indonesia	6%	16.7%	41.7%	35.7%
5	When lecturers use English, I feel motivated to learn English	2.4%	8.3%	53.6%	35.7%
6	I feel more confident when using English to express ideas/opinions, experiences, or answers in English courses.	3.6%	44%	39.3%	13.1%
7	When learning the structure or pattern of English sentences (<i>Grammar</i>), I understand better if the lecturer explains it using English.	6%	47.6%	39.3%	7.1%
8	With the lecturer using English when teaching the English course, I can better understand the difference between Indonesian grammar and English grammar.	2.4%	11.9%	53.6%	32.1%
9	I can maximize my time to study in class When the lecturer explains the material using English	2.4%	27.4%	56%	14.3%
10	I will reduce participation in class activities or exercises when the lecturer does not use English.	18.8%	52.5%	22.5%	6.3%
11	The lecturer's habit of using English makes me always depend on the lecturer to translate all materials or instructions first.	7.1%	31%	47.6%	14.3%
12	The lecturer's habit of using Bahasa Indonesia made me overlook the importance of English.	25%	38.1%	29.8%	7.1%
13	I had several opportunities to hear and use Bahasa Indonesia when the lecturer explained the material in English.	2.4%	9.5%	66.7%	21.4%

14	When the lecturer explains in English, I don't want to learn more English.	46.4%	39.3%	11.9%	2.4%
15	The lecturer's habit of using English makes me afraid to make mistakes in using English in class.	20.2%	42.9%	23.8%	13.1%

In this part of the discussion, the author tries to describe the results of the research into several categories, namely the preference for the use of English by lecturers, students' feelings towards the use of English in English courses, students' perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the use of English by lecturers in English courses, and students' motivation towards the use of English in English courses.

First, referring to the questionnaire results presented in Table 1 above. The use of the Indonesian language by lecturers in English courses is necessary when translating new vocabulary and explaining a text. This can be seen in the results of the questionnaire specifically on statement number 3, where there are 58.3% of students strongly agree and 36.9% of students agree regarding statement number 3. This finding is also in line with the results of research from (Isnaini & Aminatun, 2021). The research states that the use of Indonesian can help students or college students ascertain vocabulary that is less common or unknown to them.

Furthermore, the use of English by lecturers when explaining English grammar or sentence patterns (can be seen in statement number 7) shows the opposite result. There are 47.6% of students who disagree if the lecturer uses English when explaining English grammar, but there are also 39.3% of students who strongly agree with the statement. Based on these results, it can be concluded that lecturers need to explain English grammar using Indonesian. The goal is that material related to *grammar* can be better understood by students. This is in line with previous research which found that the use of Indonesian can facilitate students to understand the teacher's explanation of *grammar* (Safitri et al., 2022).

The second part is related to students' feelings towards the use of English by lecturers of English courses. Statements related to students' feelings can be seen in questionnaire statements number 1, 2, and 4. The questionnaire results of these three statements show diversity. Based on statement number 1, 56% felt happier if the lecturer used English when teaching English courses in class. However, there were also 23.7% of students who disagreed with statement number 1. On the other hand, based on statement number 2, a total of 48.8% of students feel that they understand better if the lecturer uses Indonesian rather than English when teaching in class. In addition, referring to statement number 4, there are 41.7% of students feel more comfortable when lecturers explain material using Indonesian.

This leads to the conclusion that although most students agree that lecturers use English when teaching English courses, students feel more comfortable and understand better if the material is explained by lecturers using Indonesian. This fact also shows that the use of Indonesian in English courses provides a positive value to support their level of understanding of the material provided. In addition, because Indonesian is indeed the mother tongue used by the students. Therefore, in line with the results of other studies, most students gave a positive perception of the use of Indonesian as the language of instruction in English classes (Wulandari, 2019).

Third, it relates to students' perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the use of English by lecturers in English courses. Advantages relate to the benefits of using English by lecturers when teaching English courses. The results of questionnaire statement number 9 showed that 56% of students agreed that they could use the maximum learning time in class when the lecturer explained the material using English. This is contrary to previous research which states that teaching English using English is ineffective (Sibarani, 2019). However, when referring to the results of the questionnaire against statement number 6, it shows the opposite that 44% of students disagree that the use of English by lecturers of English courses can increase their confidence to express ideas, opinions, experiences, or even answers when learning English courses. It is possible that although the use of English by lecturers in English courses can increase the efficiency of learning time, students still prefer lecturers to use Indonesian as the language of instruction to increase their confidence in learning English. This is also supported by the results of research (Elia et al., 2023) which states that the use of Indonesian as the language of instruction by lecturers makes students feel calmer and increases the efficiency of learning time.

Furthermore, related to the lack of use of English by lecturers in English courses. The statement that each student relies on the lecturer to translate the material presented in class was approved by 47% of students but not approved by 31% of students. This result shows that there are still more students who depend on lecturers to translate all materials or explanations in advance into Indonesian. This is in line with research (Resmini, 2019) which found that excessive use of Indonesian can lead to linguistic transfer dependence for students. This is also possible because D3 Informatics Management study program students are non-language majors so they still need help from lecturers to translate English-language materials or explanations.

Fourth, related to student motivation towards the use of English by lecturers in English courses. The questionnaire results on these three statements show different results. If we look at the results of statement number 5, 53.6% of students agreed and 35.7% strongly agreed that if lecturers use English, they feel motivated to learn English. On the other hand, 52% of students disagree and 22.5% agree to participate in class activities or exercises when the lecturer does not use English. This means that more students choose to participate in classroom activities even when the lecturer uses English. However, some students do not participate in class if the lecturer uses English. In addition, the results of the questionnaire on statement number 14 showed that 46.4% of students strongly disagreed with statement number 14, and 39.3% disagreed. Through these results, it can be concluded that the use of English by lecturers in English courses can increase students' motivation and participation to learn English.

Overall, this study is different from previous studies, the difference lies in the focus of the research. In other words, some previous studies focus on the use of Indonesian in English classes while this study focuses on the use of English in English courses. In addition, the subjects of this study are also students majoring in non-language majors so it takes longer for them to understand and use English.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion above, it is clear that students of the D3 Informatics Management study program have various perceptions related to the use of English by lecturers in English courses. Some things that can be concluded based on the results of this study are that students prefer lecturers to continue to explain English material including grammar and vocabulary using Indonesian so that it is better understood by students and students feel more comfortable. In this case, the use of Indonesian in English courses is still needed and still provides positive value. In addition, the use of English by lecturers in English courses also has advantages and disadvantages. Although the use of English does not affect the efficiency of learning time, they feel more confident if the lecturer uses Indonesian as the language of instruction in English courses. They prefer lecturers to help translate the English material explained in class. However, this does not affect the motivation of the students themselves because the use of English by doses in English courses can keep them motivated and keep participating to learn English. ,

This research hopefully can be used as an information for the English lecturers about the benefits of using Indonesian in the English class. This research also can give a contribution to the development of English as Foreign Language (EFL) field by providing recommendations for practice or policy in Indonesia. Finally, it is suggested for further research to use the interview technique in order to obtain more data so that the extreme findings can be obtained.

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