An Analysis of Thai Undergraduate Student's Needs in English for Secretaries and Office Class

Jiraporn Pletikosa
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Phetchaburi Rajabhat University, Thailand
E-mail: jiraporn.ple@mail.pbru.ac.th, ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2643-3647

Abstract

Background and Aim: A needs analysis must be carried out to develop instructional materials and classroom activities that effectively meet the needs of the students. This analysis demonstrates how crucial it is to build syllabuses based on impartial evaluations of students' needs because, in the absence of such assessments, course materials might not be able to ensure that students successfully master the material. Thus, this study aims to analyze the needs of students in learning English for Secretaries. This study aimed to identify the target needs and determine the learning needs of Thai undergraduate students in English for Secretaries class from a government university in Thailand.

Materials and Methods: The sample consisted of 24 third-year students from the Business English major who enrolled in English for Secretaries and Office class. In this research study, the mixed-method approach was used to analyze data on the learners' target needs and learning needs. The questionnaire data were collected and analyzed using percentages and frequencies, as well as arithmetic means and standard deviations. The data from open-ended questions were qualitatively analyzed with interpretations.

Results: The results regarding students' target needs revealed that most participants were at a basic level of English language proficiency. They targeted improving grammar rules and needed to expand their vocabulary knowledge more than other skills. Additionally, the findings on students' learning needs indicated a preference for classroom activities like brainstorming, practicing, and developing skills required to learn vocabulary. The preferences for the teacher's role were both a facilitator and a controller.

Conclusion: Students with a basic level of English language proficiency mainly focus on improving grammar and vocabulary. They prefer certain classroom activities that are applicable in the secretary field and the teacher's role as a guide in their learning.

Keywords: Needs analysis; Target needs; Learning needs; Learner's needs

Introduction

When working in worldwide companies, English is a widely used language for international communication among people (Nickerson, 2005). Business activities in tasks, negotiations, and collaborations heavily rely on effective communication, and English ensures clarity and precision in these interactions (Naito & Terauchi, 2020)

It is important that universities offer courses that teach English for specific purposes (ESP) to equip skills students need to prepare them for future work careers. Robinson (1991) and Chan (2001) have pointed out that the teaching materials and syllabus of ESP courses must be appropriately relevant to the fields and professions of English users. ESP can be seen as an English language course designed to meet the specific needs of learners in their fields of work (Ratmanida, Fatimah, Al-Hafizh, & Chair, 2020). According to the description above it can be concluded that ESP material is designed and developed based on needs analysis.

Analyzing learners' needs is crucial for developing effective teaching materials and methods in the classroom. However, institutions should not develop teaching materials without collecting the needs of the learners. Andi & Arafah (2017) have mentioned that oftentimes the courses are developed based on the teacher's perception, intuition, and subjective beliefs without paying attention to objective assessments of the learners' needs and situations. As a result, the course materials may not guarantee that students will successfully master English. Yana (2016) pointed out that needs analysis should be conducted as the first step of syllabus design to obtain information about the learners, situations, and purposes for language learning. It is necessary to consider learners' needs based on their knowledge, skills, and preferred methods and materials for language courses to make sure that students learn useful things (Richards, 2001; Ratmanida, Fatimah, Al-Hafizh & Chair, 2019). When deciding on an appropriate course to meet learners' needs, teachers should not ignore the importance of needs analysis. Many researchers have conducted needs analysis on learners before designing teaching materials as well as classroom activities. In the study of Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019) on a need analysis of English teaching materials for secretarial students, they found that the students needed to be equipped

with English speaking skills, writing skills, and linguistic skills (e.g., vocabulary and grammar) to complete secretarial tasks. The most wanted classroom activities among students were dialogue, text with pictures, letters, graphs, diary, role play, and arranging composition. Furthermore, the study conducted by Fatimah (2021) carried out a needs analysis to find the English materials needed for secretary students. The result on materials usage in the classroom shows that the students wished to learn skills that are applicable and beneficial in their future workplace. They are public speaking, telephone handling, customer service, reporting of agenda, scheduling of official trips, public relations, writing letters, emails, and memos. Likewise, Mussa and Wondie (2021) as well as Raharjo, Setiyanti, and Sofiani (2021) have used needs analysis to gather information about the English language needs, difficulties, and attitudes toward learning the English language of secretary students to develop the instructional materials for their courses. The finding showed that all English language skills are important for participants. Even though the trainees have encountered the difficulties using English language, they still have a positive attitude towards learning the English language. As can be seen from many previous studies, a great emphasis has been put on the analysis of learners' needs to elicit valuable information to develop the teaching materials as well as classroom activities.

As needs analysis plays an important role in designing methods and teaching materials in ESP courses, teachers should not neglect it. Therefore, it is necessary to observe the needs of learners to choose appropriate teaching materials for English for Secretaries and Office Class. This study aims to identify the target needs and determine the learning needs of Thai undergraduate students in English for Secretaries and Office Class. The outcome of the needs analysis will be used in developing teaching materials as well as classroom activities for students in the English for Secretaries and Office Class. It is expected to make the teaching-learning process not overlap with the curriculum.

Research Objectives
1. To identify the target needs of Thai undergraduate students in English for Secretaries class.
2. To determine the learning needs of Thai undergraduate students in English for Secretaries class.

Literature review
1. English for Specific Purpose (ESP)
The term "English for Specific Purposes" (ESP) refers to a method of teaching and learning a language that focuses on the English language, genres, and skills that are required in a particular field to meet a learner's current or future academic or occupational needs (Day & Krzanowski, 2011; Ramírez, 2015; Anthony, 2018). In theory, every learner requires a language course customized to their specific needs. However, in practice, it is necessary to group learners based on similar needs. Day & Krzanowski, 2011). ESP is considered a language learning approach that focuses on achieving goals (Robinson, 1980). It can be viewed that students do not learn English to adopt the language but to use it as a tool to achieve their goals. Identifying learners' needs should be the first step in an ESP course or program, as it allows teachers to assist students in achieving their goals and meeting their expectations (Bhatia et al. (2011). According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the ESP is viewed as an approach to asking simple questions to learners to obtain the purpose behind students' motivation. It could be either nurses wanting to keep up with new developments or business employees wanting to sell their products at international trades. These reasons will then determine the kind of language that is going to be taught.

The ESP teaching method and the classroom setting can be seen differently from general English (GE). The ESP courses are designed to achieve specific goals and emphasize greatly on practical training, whereas in GE course's purpose is to teach English for everyday situations (Widdowson, 1983). Another explanation is that all language skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing of the general English approach are highlighted equally, while in ESP the course is designed to meet the learners' most needed skills (Rahman, 2015).

2. ESP in English for Secretaries
Secretaries play an important role in the company as they serve as assistants to the leadership and they are someone who can be trusted to perform duties and carry out administrative tasks that support

company activities internally, and internationally as well (Yatimah, 2009; Raharjo, Setiyanti & Sofiani, 2021). Therefore, the requirement of many companies is a secretary who possesses skills in dealing with company activities and a good command of English language skills, i.e., listening, speaking, writing, and reading (Raharjo, Setiyanti & Sofiani, 2021). Universities must design an effective language course for students with the necessary work skills as well as English proficiency that are required for future employment.

English for secretaries is a branch of ESP. It is designed for the needs of secretaries or learners who wish to handle administrative tasks in English in terms of speaking and writing (Toselli and Milan 2010, as cited in Raharjo & Emzir, 2019). The EFS course focuses on helping students improve their English language proficiency while also emphasizing the need for secretaries to achieve the goal of learning. The learning materials in EFS cover topics in general office activities such as telephoning, making appointments, writing minutes, dealing with emails, and welcoming visitors (Raharjo, Setiyanti & Sofiani, 2021).

Needs analysis

Needs analysis has been defined by scholars as a primary process to gather information for designing courses that are relevant to successful activities and meet the specific needs of learners (Johns, 1991, as cited in Songhori 2008). Robinson (1991) stresses that needs analysis has to take place before designing a specific course as its goal is to pinpoint exactly what students are required to do through English. Bhatia et al. (2011) point out that needs analysis is an initial stage for designing an ESP course. Learners' information such as abilities, attitudes, preferences, and desired abilities plays an important role in helping teachers make decisions about what will be taught in the classroom (Graves, 2010). Salas, Mercado, Ouedraogo & Musetti (2013) emphasize the crucial role of needs analysis as a step that takes place before the training program begins, but if neglected, it can have negative consequences, particularly for students. When the learners' knowledge and skills they need to acquire are not addressed properly upfront, the training program is likely to be less effective, and the learners may not achieve the desired outcomes.

When needs analysis is seen as a vital tool to use as an initial stage of designing an ESP course, the term 'needs' is distinguished by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as target needs and learning needs.

3. Needs analysis in English for secretaries

English for Secretaries (EFS) is a course designed in particular to teach students about secretarial professions (Raharjo, Mayuni & Emzir, 2019). The EFS course is designed to be oriented toward the specific needs of learners along with the field of work (Surbakti, 2015 & Ratmanida, et al., 2020). To decide on content, methods, teaching materials as well as activities for the EFS course, the learners' needs should be analyzed before designing a specific course to perceive the learner's field of interest (Robinson, 1991). Needs analysis helps guide teachers in choosing teaching methods, materials, and activities that are relevant to the learners' needs (Chan, 2001).

As needs analysis is an essential tool for collecting learners' needs, it was employed by many teachers before the syllabus design. Mussa and Wondie (2021) have employed needs analysis in their study to obtain the need for English language skills among customer contact and secretarial operation coordination trainees. The result of trainees' English skills needs like writing, speaking, reading, and listening were used as a part of the syllabus design to prepare appropriate English language courses to meet the needs of the trainees. Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019) used needs analysis to determine the needs of students in the English for Secretary (EFS) teaching material. They discovered that students' main goal in EFS learning was to complete the secretarial tasks in English even though they often encountered difficulties in learning speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in EFS. Likewise, Raharjo, Setiyanti, and Sofiani (2021) used needs analysis to determine the needs of secretarial students in terms of speaking skills to meet the need for professional secretaries. The researchers found that the students encountered many speaking obstacles, including limited vocabulary range and incorrect grammar. In addition, they wished to improve their speaking skills to complete secretarial tasks including dealing with phone calls, performing a job interview, explaining a product, making an appointment, booking a hotel, organizing a business meeting, giving a presentation, handling a negotiation, and many more. Needs analysis is an essential tool for teachers to use to elicit learners'

needs to decide on teaching and learning materials for the EFS course. Students in the EFS course should achieve skills that are applicable and beneficial in their future workplace (Fatimah, 2021).
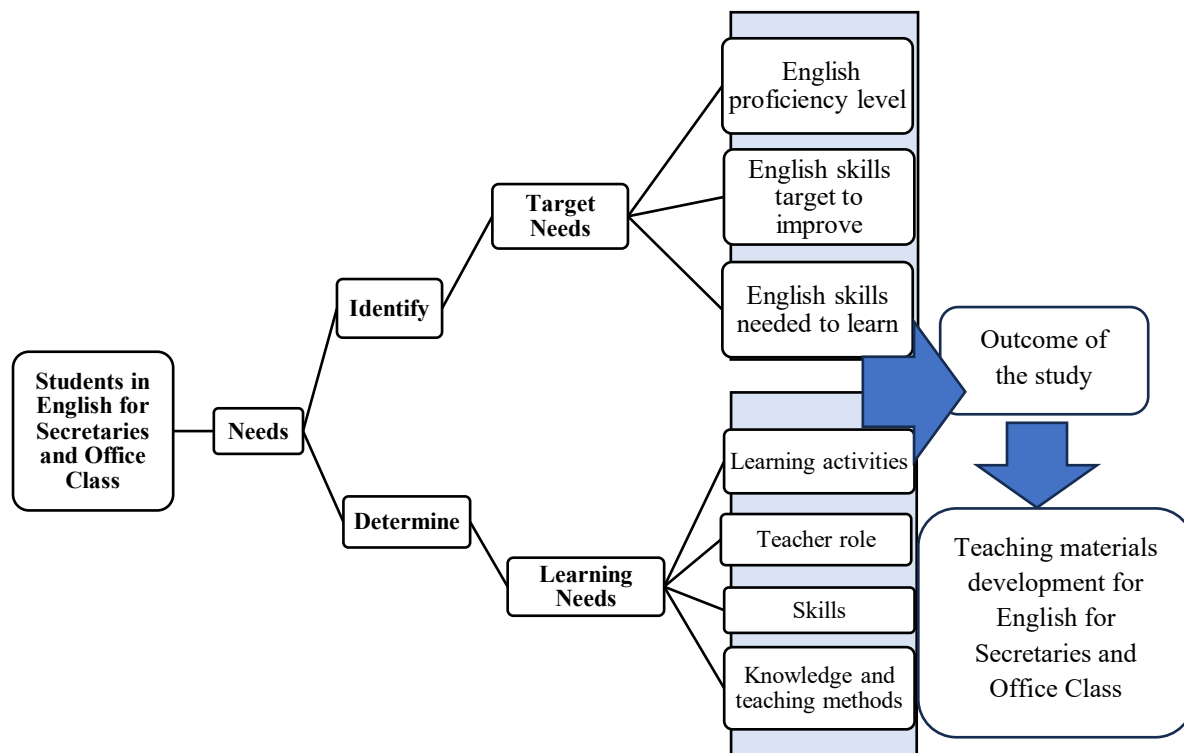
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 Adapted from Hutchinson & Waters (1987) and Surbakti (2015)

Methodology

Research Design

The mixed-method approach is used to analyze data on the learners' target needs as well as learning needs in this research study. The quantitative data was derived from questionnaires obtained by converting respondents' answers into scores, while the qualitative technique was also carried out to describe the results of the questionnaire and open-ended questions.

Population and Sample Size

The research participants in this study are comprised of 24 third-year students from the Business English major at a government university in Thailand. They enrolled in the English for Secretaries and Office Class and were selected to participate in this research study by using both convenient and random sampling methods.

Data Collection

A questionnaire consisting of twenty-eight multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions was created via an online platform (Google Form) as it is convenient for students to participate. The multiple-choice and open-ended questions were designed to be completed within ten minutes. The data were collected in May 2024.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a structured online questionnaire divided into four parts adapted from Yana (2016) as well as Andi and Arafah (2017). They were the general background information, the problems of using the English language, the English language skills needed for learning in English for Secretaries class, the preferred learning activity, and the teacher's role. The open-ended questions

were given in the last part to elicit answers concerning participants' expectations of the class and suggestions on activities, contents, or assignments for the class. The items in the questionnaire were sent to three experts for validation by using the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) before launching to the participants.

Data Analysis

To identify target needs and determine learning needs among students, the answers obtained from participants were analyzed using the Excel program. The percentage and frequency were used to analyze the general background information, while arithmetic means standard deviations were used to analyze the data regarding the problems of using the English language, the English language skills needed for learning in English for Secretaries class, the preferred learning activity, and the teacher's role. The data from open-ended questions were qualitatively analyzed with interpretations.

Results

The results of this study were presented in five parts. They reveal the students' general background information, problems using the English language, English language skills needed for learning in English for Secretaries class, the preferred learning activity, the teacher's role, and the open-ended questions on participants' expectations and suggestions on activities, contents, or assignments for the class.

Part 1 General background information

Table 1: English language proficiency levels

How advanced are you in using English in general?	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	2	8.3%
Basic	19	79.2%
Intermediate	3	12.5%
Advanced	-	-
Total	24	100%

As presented in Table 1, most of the student's English language proficiency levels were at a basic level (79.2%). Some responded that they were at an intermediate level at 12.5% and a beginner level at 8.3%, respectively.

Table 2: Years of learning English in the educational system

Years	Frequency	Percentage
More than 6 years	12	50.0%
3-6 years	9	37.5%
Less than 3 years	3	12.5%
Total	24	100%

As shown in Table 2, most students have learned English in the educational system for more than six years (50%). This was followed by students who had learned English for three to six years (37.5%) and less than 3 years (12.5%).

Table 3: Occasion for English usage

Occasion for English usage	Frequency	Percentage
In Classroom	22	91.7%
Outside classroom	2	8.3%
Total	24	100%

As presented in Table 3, the occasion for using English by students mostly in the classroom at 91.7%. Out of 24 respondents, only two students use English outside the classroom at 8.3%.

Table 4: Individuals students communicate with in English

Who do you communicate in English with?	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers	16	66.7%
Friends	5	20.8%
Family	-	-
Others (Native speakers)	3	12.5%
Total	24	100%

Table 4 shows the group of people who students use the English language to communicate with. Most of the students responded that they frequently use English to communicate with teachers at 66.7%. Some of them responded to using English to communicate with friends at 20.8% and with native speakers at 12.5%, respectively.

Table 5: Study abroad experience

Study abroad experience	Frequency	Percentage
No	22	91.7%
Yes	2	8.3%
Total	24	100%

As shown in Table 5, 22 students did not have experience studying abroad at 91.7%. Only two students revealed experience studying overseas at 8.3%.

Part 2 The problems of using English language
Table 6: Problems of using the English language

Questionnaires	Mean	S.D.	Frequency Level
13. Do you feel shy when speaking English?	2.88	0.439	Often
14. Do you feel afraid to make errors when speaking English?	3.08	0.571	Often
15. Do you feel afraid to be criticized if you make errors when using English?	2.96	0.735	Often
16. Do you have a limited English vocabulary range?	2.88	0.525	Often
17. Do you have bad English grammar?	3.29	0.455	Always
18. Do you have bad English pronunciation?	2.95	0.475	Often
19. Do you have limited knowledge of English use in a business context?	2.83	0.624	Often
Average	2.98		Often

Table 6 illustrates the problems the students encounter when using the English language. It can be seen that most of the respondents had bad English grammar with a frequency level of always, with a mean of 3.29 (S.D.=0.455). At the often level, the participants felt afraid to make errors when speaking English (M=3.08, S.D.=0.571); they were afraid to be criticized by other people (M=2.96, S.D.=0.735); they had bad English pronunciation (M=2.95, S.D.=0.475); they felt shy when speaking English (M=2.95, S.D.=0.475); they had a limited English vocabulary range (M=2.88, S.D.=0.439), and they had limited knowledge of English usage in a business context (M=2.83, S.D.=0.624).

Part 3 The English language skills needed for learning in English for Secretaries class

Table 7: The English skills need for learning in the English for Secretary class

Questionnaires	Mean	S.D.	Need Level
21. Is reading comprehension necessary for you?	3.46	0.498	High Need
22. Is speaking fluently and confidently necessary for you?	3.46	0.763	High Need
23. Is speaking accurately necessary for you?	3.25	0.520	Moderate Need
24. Is understanding other speakers necessary for you?	3.54	0.498	High Need
25. Is writing accurately necessary for you?	3.42	0.493	High Need
26. Is learning vocabulary necessary for you?	3.58	0.493	High Need
Average mean score	3.45		High Need

Table 7 shows the findings related to the English skills needed for students in learning English for Secretaries class. The results highlight that a majority of the participants agreed that skills such as learning vocabulary (M=3.58, S.D.=0.493), understanding other speakers (M=3.54, S.D.=0.498), reading comprehension (M=3.46, S.D.=0.498), speaking fluently (M=3.46, S.D.=0.763), and writing accurately (M=3.42, S.D.=0.493) are High Need respectively for them to learn in English for the Secretaries class. Moreover, there was consensus among respondents that speaking accurately is a moderate need for them to learn (M=3.25, S.D.=0.520).

Part 4 The Preferred Learning Activity and Teacher Role
Table 8: Preferred learning activities

Topics	Mean	S.D.	Frequency level
27. What is your preferred learning activity?			
1) Work alone	2.46	0.912	Seldom
2) Brainstorm	2.71	0.841	Often
3) Quizzes	2.46	0.706	Seldom
4) Videos	1.92	0.812	Seldom
5) Role play and simulation	1.83	0.799	Seldom
6) Presentations	1.88	0.665	Seldom
7) Practice	2.71	0.789	Often
8) Exams	2.25	0.878	Seldom

Table 8 displays the students' preferred learning activities. In general, the respondents often enjoy engaging in brainstorming and practicing activities, with a mean score of 2.71 (S.D.=0.841) and 2.71 (S.D.=0.789), respectively. Conversely, students express their preferences at the seldom level for working alone (M=2.46, S.D.=0.912) doing quizzes (M=2.46, S.D.=0.706), doing exams (M=2.25, S.D.=0.878), watching videos (M=1.92, S.D.=0.812), doing presentations (M=1.88, S.D.=0.665) as well as role-playing and simulation (M=1.83, S.D.=0.799).

Table 9: Preferred Teacher Role

Topics	Mean	S.D.	Frequency level
28. What kind of role do you like your teacher to have?			
1) As a facilitator and guide	2.46	0.706	Slightly
2) Traditional role (someone in control of everything in class)	2.46	0.815	Slightly

Table 9 indicates the preferred teacher role among students. Overall, the respondents prefer both the teacher role as a facilitator and guide and the traditional role at a seldom level with a mean score of 2.46 (S.D.=0.706) and 2.46 (S.D.=0.815).

Part 5 Open-ended questions
The last section of the questionnaire was an open-ended question asking students about expectations and suggestions on activities contents or assignments for the course. They are as follows:

29. What expectations do you have of your teacher or course?
The answers to this question can be categorized into knowledge and teaching approaches.
    1) Knowledge
    The respondents stated that they would like to learn the knowledge and skills in the secretarial field for their future careers. The content for the course should include English that is practical to use in the workplace.
    2) Teaching approach
    The respondents answered that the teacher should create a relaxed atmosphere and be patient for slower learners to keep up with the lessons. The teacher should give students more chances to practice activities in the classroom rather than giving tasks such as homework and presentations.
    30. Do you have any suggestions on activities contents or assignments for the course?
The respondents answered that games concerning the lessons should be integrated into the classroom activities to create a relaxing atmosphere.

Discussion

The findings of this research study can answer both research questions. They are (1) What are the target needs of Thai undergraduate students in learning English for Secretaries class? and (2) What are the learning needs of Thai undergraduate students in learning English for Secretaries class?

The first research question focuses on the target needs of Thai undergraduate students in learning English for the Secretary Class. This part includes (1) the student's English language proficiency levels, (2) the language skills targeted to improve, and (3) the English skills students need to learn.

1) The student's English language proficiency levels

The data regarding students' proficiency shows most participants considered themselves to be at a basic level (79.2%), followed by intermediate (12.5%) and beginner (8.3%). Proficiency may be affected by their background with many factors such as individual years of learning English, occasion for English usage, people they communicate with, as well as experience of studying abroad. The findings show that half of the students in the educational system have studied English for more than six years (50%), while some of them have studied English for around three to six years (37.5%) and others less than three years (12.5%). The majority of students have had an opportunity to use the English language in the classroom at 91.7%, while some of them use the English language outside of the classroom at 8.3%. However, 66.67% of students used English to interact with their instructors, 20.8% with their friends, and 12.5% with others. Also, no prior experience studying abroad (91.7%) gave students less chance to use their English. It suggests that the view of the English proficiency level of the individual varies depending on their educational background experiences. When comparing the findings with studies on needs analysis on language courses conducted by Andi and Arafan (2017), Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019), Fatimah (2021), and Surbakti (2015), variations in participants' English proficiency levels are evident. For instance, Andi and Arafan (2017) found that their participants had a fair level of English proficiency, whereas Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019) reported a mix of intermediate and beginner levels. Fatimah (2021) identified participants primarily at the basic and low intermediate levels, while Surbakti (2015) observed participants mainly at the elementary and intermediate levels.

These differences highlight the diverse linguistic backgrounds and skill levels among students, influenced by factors such as educational background experiences, exposure to English outside the classroom, and individual self-assessment. Understanding these variations is essential for teachers to adapt instruction effectively, addressing the specific needs and challenges of students at different proficiency levels.

2) The language skills targeted to improve

According to the present results, the language skills targeted to improve among students were English grammar rules (M=3.29, S.D.=0.455), which are identified as leading to frequent errors in language usage. Students seem concerned about making mistakes in their English grammar usage, as improving their grammar rules comprehension will enable them to use English correctly. As in English usage, incorrect grammar usage is seen as a challenge faced by students (Andi and Arafan, 2017). In contrast, the study of Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019), as well as Raharjo, Setiyanti, and Sofiani (2021), revealed that the English skills students targeted to improve the most was vocabulary. Students

sought to enhance their vocabulary knowledge as it would enable them to use English listening, speaking, reading, and writing effectively. Given these insights, it is evident that the students recognize the essential role of vocabulary knowledge in improving their skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

It can be concluded that the diverse perspectives among students regarding the language skills targeted to improve highlight the individual of English language learning. While some students prioritized mastering grammar rules to enhance their overall language proficiency, others emphasized the importance of vocabulary knowledge in effective language expression use. These differences show that each student has a unique approach to learning English. Teachers need to recognize these diverse learning goals in designing the courses to help students achieve the language skills targeted to improve.

3) The English skills students need to learn

According to the results of the English skills students need to learn, vocabulary knowledge was the most needed among the participants (M=3.58, S.D.=0.493). It was followed by other skills such as comprehension of spoken English, reading, fluent speaking, and accurate writing, respectively. Speaking accuracy, however, was seen as moderately needed. It highlights that vocabulary knowledge is seen as a necessary skill needed to learn the most compared to other skills in students' opinion. This finding was in line with the result of research conducted by Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019), which revealed that vocabulary knowledge is important for English usage. Limitations in vocabulary were a significant problem affecting students' English skills, particularly in English for Secretary (EFS) learning. Without a strong vocabulary knowledge, students may struggle to complete secretarial tasks effectively, hindering their proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing within business contexts. Likewise, Andi and Arafan (2017), as well as Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019), identified vocabulary and pronunciation as key areas of focus among students in learning English for secretary (EFS). In students' view, these skills are necessary for working as a secretary. Good vocabulary knowledge is required to enable clear communication for tasks like telephoning, job interviews, reservation handling, minutes writing, and so on (Raharjo, Setiyanti, and Sofiani, 2021; Fatimah, 2021).

Given these insights, it is evident that the need to enhance vocabulary knowledge is essential for successful English for Secretary (EFS) learning. Limited vocabulary comprehension shows a significant challenge to students' English language usage, particularly in professional settings.

The second research question focuses on the learning needs of Thai undergraduate students in learning English for Secretary Class. This part includes (1) the preferred learning activity, (2) the preferred teacher's role, (3) skills as well as (4) knowledge and teaching methods

1)The learning activity

According to the results of preferred learning activities, it can be seen that brainstorming and practice activities were preferred the most among students with a mean score of 2.71 (S.D.=0.841) and 2.71 (S.D.=0.789), respectively. This result suggests a strong desire among students to actively participate and engage themselves in sharing ideas with classmates and practicing tasks related to their subject. Likewise, the study of Andi and Arafan (2017) shows that students expressed their preferences for learning activities in groups and pairs which promotes active communication and engagement. Tasks such as speaking in pairs or small groups which allow students to talk in English with friends were the most favorite activities, followed by learning through games, using films, videos, and pictures. In contrast, the study of Mystakidis & Lympouridis (2023) shows that students have a strong interest in immersive learning experiences that allow them to apply their knowledge and skills in practical situations. They preferred to do role-play, followed by problem-solving and discussions. It suggests that students are more likely to participate in classroom activities relating to their interests. It was confirmed by Fatimah (2021) that students will be interested in learning topics and materials that are directly related to their field of study.

Based on these findings, it becomes evident that students preferred classroom activities conducted in various interactive, practical, and relevant learning experiences. To design effective teaching materials, these preferred learning activities should be applied to align with student preferences and needs.

4)The teacher's role

According to the survey, the preferred role of a teacher in the classroom among students was as both a facilitator and controller with a mean score of 2.46 (S.D.=0.706) and 2.46 (S.D.=0.815). It suggests that students prefer the teacher to balance the role of not only facilitating learning but also maintaining control within the classroom environment. Similarly, the study of Surbakti (2015) shows a divided student preference: 51% prefer teachers as feedback givers, while 49% see them more as tutors. This split suggests that students expect mentorship and evaluative help from the teacher. On the other hand, Yana (2016) found that the preference of students in the English-speaking class toward the teacher role was to act solely as a facilitator. This finding shows that students have a strong inclination towards a more student-centered approach to learning, where the teacher's primary role is to guide and support students. Similarly, in the study of Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019), the results reveal that students preferred teachers to take on the role of a moderator. The students required the teacher to act on guiding discussions, promoting critical thinking, and facilitating collaborative learning experiences. This preference highlights the value placed on interaction and participation in classroom environments.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students have diverse perspectives on the ideal role of a teacher in the classroom. While some value the teacher as a feedback giver or tutor, others prefer a facilitator or moderator. These varying preferences could be attributed to individual learning preferences among students.

5) Skills

Among the various skills required to learn a language, the most important one that needed to be acquired among participants was learning vocabulary (M=3.58, S.D.=0.493). It suggests that students need to improve their vocabulary knowledge as it is a crucial skill to be mastered when learning specific English especially English for secretary class. Unlimited vocabulary knowledge will help students to express English skills effectively in terms of listening speaking reading and writing. It was also confirmed by Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019) that the limited knowledge of vocabulary in specific fields will affect the students' English skills. Their study reveals that vocabulary and grammar were considered the linguistic skills that must be mastered by secretaries. Similarly, the study of Andi and Arafan (2017) on needs analysis among students to develop teaching materials, found that the skills students needed to acquire the most were vocabulary and pronunciation. These acquired skills are seen as a foundation for effective communication. A strong vocabulary knowledge enables students to articulate ideas clearly and accurately, while pronunciation enhances their ability to communicate fluently and confidently. However, the skills needed to be acquired the most in the study of Mussa and Wondie (2021) resulted in contrast from the previous studies. The study on the needs for English skills of secretary trainee students by Mussa and Wondie (2021) shows that the skills students needed to acquire the most were writing, more so than speaking and reading. The preference for writing over speaking and reading among students in this study suggests a recognition of the importance of writing skills in the secretarial profession. Secretaries often engage in tasks such as composing emails, drafting documents, filling forms, preparing documents, and writing minutes, having strong writing skills is a crucial asset in their profession.

Based on these findings, it becomes evident that while vocabulary remains a foundational aspect of language learning, the most important skills can differ depending on the professional context. For secretaries, proficiency in writing is essential, alongside a solid foundation in vocabulary and pronunciation. Teachers need to customize lessons to focus on these skills to prepare students for success in their future careers.

6) Knowledge and teaching methods

According to the open-ended questions, asking participants for suggestions on activities, contents, or assignments for the course, the research findings highlight several key insights for students aiming to excel in the secretarial field.

The respondents expressed their desire to acquire knowledge and skills in the secretarial field to enhance their future careers. The course content should include English that is applicable in the workplace. This finding was in line with the previous study conducted by Fatimah (2021). The analysis of secretary students' need for English material shows that students require specific materials that are relevant to their field of study and applicable to use in the workplace. For secretary positions, overall knowledge and the specific English language used to perform tasks are important, and well-prepared students will be more advantageous. This aligns with the study conducted by Andi and Arafan (2017), which revealed that vocabulary and pronunciation are crucial skills to be considered when designing materials for English for secretary (EFS) learning. The specific vocabulary and technical terms will allow students to gain a good understanding of English use in the secretarial context efficiently, further

supported by the study of Raharjo, Mayuni, and Emzir (2019), that the knowledge of vocabulary is a primary area for English skills improvement.

According to the findings on teaching methods obtained from students, the teacher should combine patience, a supportive approach, games, and a relaxed learning environment to enhance students' engagement during classroom activities. The classroom activities are very important and teachers should provide multiple opportunities for students to practice through stimulating activities. This aligns with the study conducted by Surbakti's (2015) findings that students enjoy participating in activities relevant to the secretary field. The importance of practical skills training is essential for English for Secretary (EFS) learning, with students expressing a need for instructions in various tasks integral to secretarial roles, as highlighted by Raharjo, Setiyanti, and Sofiani (2021). These skills include job interviews, reservations, handling business trips, telephoning, invitations, presentations, and so on. These findings underscore the significance of integrating real-world situations and tasks into the classroom to prepare students for the challenges they will face as future professionals.

Overall, the findings suggest that effective English for secretary classes should prioritize practical English language skills designed for workplace contexts, alongside hands-on training in essential secretarial tasks. Furthermore, adopting patient, supportive teaching methods that encourage active participation and practice can significantly enhance students' learning outcomes and prepare them for success in their future careers.

Conclusion

The following conclusions are based on the findings and discussion of the research questions.

The first research question focuses on the target needs of Thai undergraduate students in learning English for the Secretary Class. It can be concluded that most participants in this study considered their English language proficiency at a basic level. It was mainly affected by the educational background experience of English language usage. Most participants emphasized that the English language skills targeted to improve were grammar rules to ensure accurate language use. Improving this skill will allow students to minimize errors and use English correctly. Likewise, the majority of participants perceived that the English skill they needed to learn was vocabulary knowledge. It was followed by other skills such as comprehension of spoken English, reading, fluent speaking, and accurate writing, respectively. Speaking accuracy, however, was seen as moderately needed.

The second research question focuses on the learning needs of Thai undergraduate students in learning English for the Secretary Class. It can be concluded that the most preferred learning activities among the participants were brainstorming and practice activities. The preferred teacher role in the classroom among students was both a facilitator and a controller. It is suggested that students prefer teachers to balance their role in facilitating learning while also maintaining control within the classroom environment. The skills needed to be acquired most among participants were learning vocabulary. Students are required to improve their vocabulary skills when learning specific English, especially for secretary classes. The participants desired to learn knowledge and skills that are applicable in the secretarial field. The teaching methods are required to include multiple opportunities to practice through stimulating activities, rather than relying solely on homework and presentations. Additionally, integrating games relevant to the lesson can help enhance the learning experience and create a more relaxed atmosphere.

Recommendation

The findings of this study could be useful to lecturers or teachers who are teaching English for specific purposes. The results of students' target needs and learning needs will be helpful in terms of developing suitable teaching materials as well as classroom activities. Future research studies may explore the needs of different groups of participants, such as teachers, secretaries, and companies to elicit insightful information for designing effective teaching materials as well as classroom activities. In addition, factors that affect the English language learning needs, problems, and suggestions in English for secretary classes can be further studied.

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