

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the rationale for this study. This includes the background of the study, research questions, research purposes, research limitations, significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and structure of the dissertation. Each section will discuss the trend and issues of speaking, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and Online Course.

1.1 Background of the Study

In the disruptive world of the 21st century, students must possess strong English communication skills, particularly in the realms of ESP or English for Specific Purposes (Hyland, 2022). These skills have become essential in navigating global challenges and fostering cross-cultural understanding. Proficiency in English spoken communication in ESP context empowers students to effectively address industry-specific obstacles, engage in successful presentations, and contribute to their professional fields. With English serving as the global language of business and collaboration, students equipped with these communication skills are better prepared to seize opportunities in an interconnected world and succeed in the rapidly changing global marketplace.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a specialized approach to teach English that focuses on learners' specific needs and context in a particular field, providing customized language instruction, for an effective course. (Anthony, 2014; Basturkmen, 2010; Baumgartner et al., 2003; Crosthwaite & Cheung, 1977; Hyon, 2005; Işik-Taş et al., 2019; Li, 2018; Paltridge & Starfield, 2016; Stoller & Robinson, 2018; Woodrow, 2018). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is tailored to meet the specialized language needs of particular professions or academic fields (Beer, 2019). Unlike general English,

ESP focuses on specific vocabulary, skills, and communication norms relevant to learners' professional contexts and job-related functions (Fălăuș, 2017). This approach involves designing courses that address the unique linguistic demands of various fields, such as business, medicine, or engineering, ensuring that learners acquire the precise language competencies needed to perform effectively in their respective areas. ESP often emphasizes practical language use, integrating real-world tasks and scenarios into the learning process to enhance students' ability to apply their language skills in authentic professional situations.

However, implementing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) comes with set of challenges, while the challenge in general English lies in providing learners with broad and adaptable language skills applicable to a wide range of everyday and social contexts, the challenge in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is in delivering highly specialized language training that meets the precise needs of occupation or academic fields (Fălăuș, 2017). In addition, one major challenge in ESP is the need for tailoring the curriculum to meet the precise needs of learners, in which oral communication becomes one of the highlighted problems in ESP context (Hyland, 2022). The speaking challenges involve not only developing students' fluency and accuracy in speaking but also equipping them with the confidence to engage in meaningful conversations within their specialized fields(Sharma, 2024).

In Indonesia, the ESP general problems include tailoring curricula to meet learners' specific needs, addressing students' language abilities, and designing appropriate courses (Andriani, 2014). ESP teachers often struggle with pedagogical issues and may lack the necessary expertise in both language instruction and the specialized field. Course materials and evaluation methods also present difficulties, as they need to be relevant and effective for the specific context (Septiana, 2018). Additional challenges include limited time, insufficient credit hours, and heterogeneous classes (Khalili & Tahririan, 2020). Moreover, research on ESP speaking problems reveals several common challenges faced by students. These

include linguistic issues like limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, and pronunciation difficulties (Handayani, 2009). Non-linguistic factors such as anxiety, shyness, low self-confidence, and lack of motivation also hinder speaking performance (Prasongko, 2023). Additionally, insufficient practice opportunities and limited exposure to native speakers contribute to speaking difficulties (Handayani, 2009). It means that there is also a need to reform the ESP teaching practices, particularly to improve overall effectiveness and meet learners' professional needs (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021).

To address those challenges and problems, online courses have become increasingly prevalent in education, offering diverse models ranging from minimal internet use to fully electronic delivery (Kebritchi et al., 2017). Online courses create potential learning spaces that blend conventional methods with technological innovations, improving accessibility and efficiency in education (Shukla et al., 2020). Recent research in ESP context also highlights the importance of online courses for developing oral presentation and public speaking skills. Studies highlight the effectiveness of digital platforms like blogs, Moodle, and Zoom in teaching these skills to a large audience (Karapetyan, 2021).

However, while online courses offer numerous benefits, the existing research highlight problems in the development of ESP speaking online course models. While generally ESP teacher education remains neglected, efforts have been made to design online ESP teacher education curricula (Constantinou & Sophocleous, 2021). In Indonesia, there were a lot of online learning practices in general but there was limited study about ESP speaking online course model. The recent related research found in English-speaking skills, in ESP learning, was the development of "Absyak" application to enhance pharmacy students (Syakur et al., 2022) Beside the limitation of the available fields, the challenges remain in the unclear model principles used in the study and the technology. The present study still focuses on the applications' multimedia satisfactions and desktop version implementation. There is no clear suggestion about the model basic principles, teaching principles, and interactive technology.

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Therefore, by addressing curriculum tailoring and course design needs (Andriani, 2014); pedagogical, material, evaluation, and expertise issues (Septiana, 2018); time and class diversity obstacles (Khalili & Tahririan, 2020); linguistic and non-linguistic challenges, including practice and exposure limitations (Handayani, 2009; Prasongko, 2023), it can be concluded that there is an urge for the development of an ESP speaking online course model related to the specific field and needs in Indonesia. Specifically, this study aims to develop an ESP speaking online course model underlying not only the cognitive and technology presence as widely implemented but also the affective (social presence and interactivity) and teaching presence as a innovative model in enhancing students speaking ability for business English presentation course.

1.2 Research Questions

The research question in this study is formulated as follows:

- 1.2.1 How effective is the proposed ESP speaking online course model in facilitating the students' learning activities?
- 1.2.2 Can the developed ESP speaking online course model help the students to improve their speaking ability?

1.3 Research Purposes

This research aims to:

- 1.3.1 Find out the effectiveness of the proposed ESP speaking online course model in facilitating the students' learning activities.
- 1.3.2 Investigate whether the designed ESP speaking online course model helps the students enhance their speaking ability.

1.4 Research Limitations

The research findings are derived from a specific educational context and a particular group of learners. Consequently, the results may not be generalizable to other educational settings or diverse learner populations. The effectiveness of the model and the appropriateness of the interventions could differ when implemented in various contexts or with different demographics. This limitation indicates that, while the study offers valuable insights, additional research is necessary to assess the model's performance and relevance across a broader range of environments and learner groups.

In addition, the study was conducted within a limited timeframe, leading to a course duration and content weight that were adjusted to meet the wants of students and institutional beliefs, using the most compact design format that can still be modified as needed in the future. However, due to this case, it may affect the macro-level test of ESP speaking skills, which is typically monitored in long-term courses. The findings from this study can serve as a reference for the most compact online course designs in very specific situations, business English presentation, where the assessed speaking skills relate to both macro and micro skills in the presentation field. In summary, while the model can still be used, it requires adjustments in its design, taking into account the objectives, number of participants, and whether the course duration is shorter or longer in the future.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study extends across three crucial perspectives, offering valuable contributions to the realms of theory, practice, and strategy in the context of ESP speaking online course model development. This study offering tangible benefits to educators, learners, and policymakers in providing strategic guidance for institutions and navigating the evolving landscape of English language learning through online courses.

Firstly, from a theoretical standpoint, this study enriches the academic landscape by providing essential insights into the design of ESP speaking online courses. As instructional design in this specific area is relatively unexplored, the findings of this research serve as a foundational reference for scholars and researchers interested in furthering investigations within the domain of ESP online courses. By shedding light on appropriate model instructional strategies, content delivery methods, and test frameworks, this study lays the groundwork for future theoretical developments in the field, fostering a deeper understanding of how to optimize language learning experiences in online environments.

Secondly, on a practical level, the outcomes of this research have direct applicability for ESP designers, lecturers, and students seeking innovative solutions for the enhancement of speaking abilities. The practical implications of the study lie in its potential to inform the development of targeted framework and model including the interventions, materials, and teaching methodologies tailored specifically to the nuances of ESP Speaking. By addressing the practical needs of educators and learners, this research contributes tangibly to the improvement of language instruction, fostering a more collaborative and engaging learning experience.

Lastly, the strategic significance of this study is underscored by its relevance to language learning policies. Universities and government entities searching for viable models of English language learning online courses, particularly in the ESP speaking domain, can benefit strategically from the insights garnered. The study provides a roadmap for the strategic implementation of online courses in English language learning contexts, aligning with broader educational objectives. Policymakers can draw upon the research findings to shape informed decisions and formulate effective strategies for integrating ESP speaking online courses into language learning initiatives at institutional and national levels.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

In order to mitigate potential ambiguity in interpreting the definition within this study, a detailed clarification of certain terminologies employed in this research is provided as follows.

1.6.1 ESP (English for Specific Purposes)

The ESP term in this study relies in English for Occupational Purposes under English for Business Purposes specifically for business English presentation (Crosthwaite & Cheung, 1977; Li, 2018).

1.6.2 Speaking

In this study, speaking includes verbal and non-verbal communication skills such as fluency, accuracy (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation), coherence, confidence and presence. The speaking test assesses how well these skills are used in real-time communication (Baron, 2020; Boonkit, 2010; Rao, 2019).

1.6.3 Online Course

The online course defines as a structured and specific learning program for numbers of participants with flexible learning experiences, allowing suitable targeted participants to access, use, adapt, and share materials, anywhere over internet through various kind of interactive technology such as desktop & mobile learning platform and social media (Carroll & Kop, 2011; Sánchez & Zuntini, 2018; Zhang, 2016).

1.6.2 A Model

A model refers to the design of principles & technology innovations and media of the ESP Speaking online course as a simplified representation or abstraction of a real-world system (Işman, 2011).

1.7 Structure of the Dissertation

This research study unfolds across five comprehensive chapters, each serving a distinct purpose in contributing to the overall understanding and enhancement of ESP speaking skills through the designed online course model. Each chapter displays as a crucial piece of the research puzzle, collectively contributing to the advancement of knowledge in ESP speaking instruction through the innovative design of online course.

In Chapter I, the introduction, a thorough background of the study is presented which mainly describes the issues on ESP speaking skills importance, problems, and urgency in general concepts and shows some empirical evidence related to the existence of the latest research of successful online courses in supporting the ESP general and speaking problems. The background of the study is accompanied by the research questions, research purposes, research limitations, significance of the study, and clarification of key terms. Furthermore, this chapter outlines the overall structure of the dissertation, providing a roadmap for the reader to navigate through the subsequent chapters.

Moving to Chapter II, the theoretical review, a foundation is laid by citing relevant theories that underpin the research investigation. This chapter also delves into previous studies, establishing a contextual framework that supports and informs the current research on ESP speaking skills within the online environment. The ESP definitions, branches, and characteristics are highlighted. Furthermore, the definition, nature, skills, activities, and assessment to determine students' speaking performance are defined. The online course, needs analysis, model development, CATTy model, and the conceptual framework are identified in this chapter.

Chapter III, research methodology, meticulously details the research design, settings, participants, instruments, data collection, data analysis, and summary of Chapter III. This comprehensive exploration ensures transparency and reliability in the research process including the process of the online course model development

covering the preliminary, piloting, and tests employed in the research. This encompasses the information of the course design, lesson plan, and online course media, offering a comprehensive overview of the instructional strategies implemented during the research.

Chapter IV, research findings and discussions, providing crucial findings from the collected data and insight from the ESP speaking online course implementation. This chapter engages in an in-depth discussion related to the effectiveness of the proposed model in facilitating the students' speaking activities and improving the students' ESP speaking skills especially within the business English presentation course, interpreting the results and shedding light on the implications of the study.

Concluding the dissertation, Chapter V, titled conclusion and recommendations, encapsulates the study's key findings. It not only offers a succinct conclusion but also provides theoretical, practical, and strategical recommendations, thereby contributing to the broader discussion on ESP speaking skills and online learning development.