

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter gives the conclusions of the study and provides some suggestions to some parties responsible for planning and implementing the English course. The conclusions focus on the answers to the research questions or the purposes of the research. Suggestions are then given on the basis of the conclusions.

5.1 Conclusions

The purposes of this research are (1) to depict the existing conditions of the present English course, (2) to find out the students' needs and the faculty's expectations of the English course through needs analysis, and (3) to propose a better English course design based on the needs analysis. The findings of the research conducted through questionnaire, observation, interview, and documents review, give a portrait of the present English course and provide the information on the student profile, the target needs and learning needs, which becomes the basis for designing a new English course.

The following presents a summary of the main findings and then gives the conclusions of the study on the basis of the findings.

The present course aims at strengthening what the students have learned before in high schools. The course objectives stress on reviewing some grammatical items and comprehending reading passages. The materials are based on the course objectives, and the teaching and learning activities depend on the selected materials. The instructional materials of the course consist of grammatical items and reading texts. The reading texts are not subject-matter specific in accordance with the students' field of study, but they are

based on the students' common cores, natural or social sciences. Assuming that the course would improve the students' skill to comprehend reading texts, the course should focus on the reading micro-skills, which were not found in the present teaching and learning process. In general, there are three groups of activities in the class: (a) pre-activities (warning-up, motivating students, reviewing previous lessons), (b) whilst-activities (lecturing, explaining, students' doing exercises), and (c) post-activities (reviewing main points, giving assignments). The instructors tend to cover all the materials in the course book, which could, to some extent, sacrifice the students' understanding of the lessons. The course has only achievement assessment which includes the mid-semester test and the semester test. The tests consist of reading comprehension, vocabulary, and structure items, which reflect the course objectives. No course evaluation is conducted to look into the worth and value of different aspects of the course.

With regard to the class arrangement, the classes are relatively big with 30 to 40 students of the same study program; therefore, the classroom setting is usually in theatre seating, where the students would sit in rows. This seating might affect the teaching and learning activities, in which the interaction would be mostly from the instructor to the students. In terms of the instructors, all have English-Education academic qualification although half of them who had only *sarjana*'s degrees could be considered under-qualified in accordance with the Law No.14/2005 on teachers and lecturers. The course still employs part-timers. The reluctance of full-time lecturers to teach the English course for non-English majoring students could be related to the "prestige" of the course, which might derive from the status and type of the course and students' motivation.

The results of needs analysis give the information on the student profile, the target needs and learning needs. The student profile can be described as follows: The students are mostly at the age of 18 and 19, and three fifth of them are females. The students are from various education study-programs, and have a wide range of English proficiency, from 300 to 450 on the TOEFL, but most of them are in the pre-elementary level (351-400). The students' motivation to learn English is average although some of them are highly motivated. Most students devote enough time to learning English. In the process of teaching and learning, the students prefer to learn English under the instructor's guidance and to work in small groups. During their study at the faculty, the students have an easy access to the library and computer laboratory.

The target needs and learning needs can be described as follows: The students need to develop their reading skill in order to be able to comprehend reading texts, to develop their speaking skill in order to be able to give an oral presentation, and to understand grammatical and vocabulary items in order to support the reading skill. The students want to study English for their future needs to work with computer, communicate in English, and read English textbooks. The students need practice in speaking and reading, grammar and vocabulary, and they prefer to have multiple-choice exercises and discussion. The students also prefer to use printed material and visual aid. In terms of feedback, they prefer to be corrected by the instructor privately after class.

The results of needs analysis become the basis for designing a new English course. Following the process of Nation & Macalister's (2010) model of curriculum design, in which needs analysis is one of the process components, a new English course design is produced as a proposal. The course design includes such aspects as the course rationale,

goals and objectives, the skills syllabus, the materials, the learning activities, the monitoring and assessment, and the course evaluation.

On the basis of the findings, some conclusions can be drawn:

- (1) The present English course is of General English in nature, not ESP. There was no attempt to discover the needs of learners as Hutchinson & Waters (1987) argue that the distinction between ESP and General English lies in the awareness of a need. Besides, one ESP distinct characteristic is that the course should be designed to meet specific needs of learners (Strevens, 1988; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).
- (2) No needs analysis was conducted prior to designing the present English course. The students' needs and the faculty's expectations were ignored by the language institute which is in charge of providing the students with the language course.
- (3) The prospective English course is an EAP course, more specifically EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes) (Widdowson, 1983; Blue, 1988; Jordan, 1997), because the course has a skills syllabus, which stresses on developing the reading micro-skills of the students in the context of education. This course is quite different from other ESP courses which tend to select topical syllabi and aim at developing all the four language skills.

5.2 Suggestions

On the basis of the conclusions, some suggestions can be put forward:

- (1) Needs analysis is an important part in the process of designing a language course. The university's language institute which is in charge of designing and running the language courses for all the faculties is suggested to conduct a needs analysis before

designing a language course. The aim is to design a quality course which will meet the needs of learners and the faculty. Considering the cost and time constraints, it may not be possible to conduct the needs analysis every semester or every year, but at a certain period of time, say, in two or three years' time.

- (2) Regarding the main limitation of the study concerning the practical application of the proposed course design, it is suggested that the language institute could adopt the course design, developing the instructional materials, and put it into practice. Only after it has been implemented that the effectiveness and acceptability of the course could be evident.
- (3) The findings of this research are specific to the site where the research was conducted. As every faculty has its own characteristics, a similar research conducted at different faculties will result in different findings. The language institute is, therefore, suggested not to use the proposed course design for the students of other faculties. It would be better to design different language courses for the different faculties on the basis of a different needs analysis. Similarly, this proposed course design may not be appropriate for the students of other institutions or universities.
- (4) Closely related to needs analysis is the collaboration of all the stakeholders of the language course. Needs analysis will be effective only if all the stakeholders eagerly participate in the process. In the context of this research, the faculty including the departments and the study programs tended to take what the language institute has provided for granted. The faculty, the departments and the study programs should, to some degree, actively contribute to the course by, for example, voicing their needs and the students' needs to the language institute.

(5) Some instructors complain that the students do not seem to be highly motivated to learn English. To some extent, it may be because the first-year undergraduate students have not understood the importance of English in relation to their study. It is, therefore, suggested that the English course be offered to the students in the second year when the students have had a better idea of why they need English in their study (i.e. they have to read some textbooks and other additional sources which are often written in English). This awareness will become instrumental motivation for the students to learn English more enthusiastically.