

NON-ENGLISH MAJORED LEARNERS' PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION, AND DIFFICULTIES TOWARDS ELT CLASSROOM

Zuliana Lestari

Akamigas Polytechnic of Palembang

zuliana@pap.ac.id

Submit, 26-06-2023

Accepted, 29-06-2023

Publish, 30-06-2023

ABSTRACT

English proficiency has been difficult to achieve by non-English majored learners, yet it is important that they be good at it in order to compete in their work field. This study investigated learners' perception towards English, and their expectation, perception, and difficulties in ELT classroom. This research was descriptive qualitative research which involved one lecturer and 16 first semester students of a non-English majored tertiary education. The data were obtained through questionnaire and interview. The results pointed out that the learners had positive perception towards English and their ELT classroom. It was expected that English subject be learned in more than one semester and English be used as the dominant medium of instructions. Due to lack of vocabulary and pronunciation, speaking was chosen as the major difficulty by the learners.

Keywords: Difficulty, ELT Classroom Perception, Expectation.

INTRODUCTION

English learning at a non-English majored tertiary education program has its own challenges to cope with (Iftanti & Maunah, 2021). The term English Foreign Learners (EFL) labeled to the students has proven to be enough to describe that teaching English to them will be quite tough as they are not daily exposed to the target language (English), and the vocabulary usage is not naturally developed (Astika, 2016). More efforts are urged to do in order to create conducive English environment and atmosphere in the classroom for non-English majored learners who view English not as their main subject in their study at college as the portion of English is only 2 to 5 credits (Rokhyati, 2013, cited from Sari, 2021, p. 134). On top of that, no explicit regulation is issued by the Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) (2020) in the National Standards of Higher Education about the proportion of English subject in non-English major tertiary education institutions.

Students' low interest in English subject and their poor English basic knowledge, worsened by inadequate learning environment and facilities would be the equation for the unsuccessful ELT classroom (Emiliasari & Kosmajadi, 2019). Furthermore, students' perception towards English learning contribute to whether ELT classroom at non-English majored classes will be either successful or not.

In a broader scope, another crucial situation needs to be dealt with regarding English in our country. Indonesia was placed in the 81st rank (low proficiency band) based on English Proficiency Index or EPI (Education First, 2022), which dropped 20 levels compared to that in 2019 at 61st rank (Sari, 2021). This position is not even better when we compare it to Indonesia's neighbors such as Singapore, which ranked 2nd, Philippines ranked 22nd, and Malaysia ranked 24th making them being at very high and high proficiency bands respectively. This should be a brief description of how English is still an urgent soft skill that Indonesian learners have to improve if they plan to compete in international scholarship studies and in varied job sectors (Shobikah, 2017; Eriani, Pratolo, Nailufer & Astuti, 2019).

With such complicated aspects in the atmosphere of ELT classroom for EFL learners, especially for those non-English majored students, it is essential for one researcher to investigate learners' perception towards English and ELT classroom itself as well as their expectation and difficulties in ELT classroom. Regarding these aspects, we need to dive in the learners' ways of seeing, thinking, and understanding from their senses and perspectives, as how the meaning of perception is defined in Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary (2008: 325). In addition, it is the ability to understand the true nature of something. When we relate it to students' perception of English and ELT classroom, it then can be interpreted as students' insight and understanding towards English and ELT classroom in the aspects of how it influences their learning participation, outcomes and goals.

This research focuses on the students' perception, expectation and difficulties faced by non-English majored students at a tertiary education. This study can be considered as one way to analyze what the students think and need in the ELT classroom. The results of this study can be regarded as a need analysis of what the students should get in their ELT classroom as well as an evaluation of what the students had got in their current ELT classroom so far.

There have been numerous studies regarding perceptions, expectations and difficulties faced by non-English majored students towards English and ELT classroom. It is crucial to have the insight of the learners' perception regarding English itself. Besides, having more information related to the learners' perception towards ELT classroom they experienced would be beneficial for the lecturer to see how successful the teaching and learning he had conducted. In term of expectation of ELT Classroom, the lecturer will gain important information from the learners themselves of how they hope English classroom activities should be carried out, so they would get the most meaningful experience of English learning in classrooms.

Iftanti and Maunah (2021) carried out research regarding non-English department students' belief, perception, and challenges to learn English in globalization era. The qualitative study was implemented by interviewing 80 non-English department students who took TOEFL course at that time. The results of the investigation revealed that students perceived English in two opposite points of view; a difficult subject with complicated structure patterns and rules, yet a fun means to bring success in the aspects of education, social and economy. It was also concluded that students were challenged to equip themselves with sufficient English skills in order to compete in globalization era.

Halim, et. al., (2021) conducted a study regarding teacher talk in ELT classroom from the students' perspective and expectation. A teacher and his 10th grader of SMA N 9 Makasar were the subject of the research. Interview and class observation were conducted in gathering the data. The study showed mostly negative results regarding the teacher's teaching style, teaching method, giving feedback and motivation. The result related to the students' ideal expectations obtained from the study indicated that English teacher should be able to create interesting classroom atmosphere more effectively, efficiently and creatively.

Gadu and Mahsun (2018) also investigated students' perception towards English Hospitality learning at Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram. The study was descriptive qualitative involving 25 active students as respondents for the questionnaire prepared. The aim of the study was to figure out the achievement of English Hospitality subject learning in the terms of learning outcome, materials taught, teaching method applied, teaching aid used, and assessment concept implemented. The findings of the study revealed positive results from the students' perception of English Hospitality subject. The percentage range of 80%-100% showed positive responses towards teaching materials, teaching method, teaching aid usage, the learning outcome, and assessment conducted by their lecturer.

Emiliasari and Kosmajadi (2019) carried out a study regarding students' perception of English learning. A descriptive quantitative survey was chosen as the technique to conduct the research. 84 students of Islamic education faculty were the subject of the research. Based on the data results, it was found out that the students' perceptions of English learning were low and it was caused by some factors, namely students' low interest, students' low basic English knowledge, unsupportive environment, and easily-forgotten concepts of English materials which had been studied at school.

Parallel with that, Eriani, et. al., (2019) investigated the students' expectation in EFL classroom. The study was conducted at a management department of a private university in Yogyakarta. The sample taken was seven 1st semester students from management undergraduate program. In conducting the research, observation and interview were chosen as the technique of gathering the data. The results of the study, in accordance with the objectives, found out that the students were ensured that in the future English would be one of the mandatory requirements for seeking jobs as applicants with good English skill were more in demand than those not having good English mastery. The next finding showed that the students expected the learning of English in classroom

would involve all the four skills of English including grammar and pronunciation. And related to learning style, students preferred a certain learning method such as group work, used English in the context of everyday conversation with a more relaxed and communicative atmosphere, and learned English using videos.

Diep (2021) listed five major factors determining the quality of English language learning in his research conducted at higher education universities in Ho Chi Minh. The study was conducted by implementing qualitative and quantitative research methods. Questionnaires and in-depth structured interview were used as the technique of collecting data. The five major factors influencing students' excellent English learning covered students' motivation and behavior, high-qualified lecturer, learning atmosphere, students' learning targets, and curriculum.

Badiozaman, Leong & Jikus (2019) explored students' perception and English implementation in higher education in relation with students' academic self-efficacy. In the findings, positive correlation between students' academic self-awareness and their English performance was obtained. Students with high academic self-efficacy towards English managed to achieve good performance in English because they highly valued English in spite of their average English proficiency.

Yuntao (2019) conducted non-experimental quantitative research dealing with factors affecting English proficiency of non-English majored students from their own perspectives. The study was carried out to a total of 300 second year students of Henan University, China, through questionnaire survey. Based on the results of study, two findings were highlighted. First, among four potential factors, students' learning strategies held the highest notable effect on the students' English proficiency. Second, regarding distance between students' first languages and English, the earlier students learn English, the higher it affects students' English proficiency.

Ngoc and Mai (2020) carried out a study case in Vietnam regarding factors affecting low participation of non-majored English students in English speaking class. The research involved 153 of non-English major students from a university in Mekong Delta, Vietnam, as the respondents. Six of them were taken to do the semi-structured interview. Based on the results obtained, three main factors contributed to the students' low participation in English speaking class. They were students' insufficient vocabulary, afraid of being misjudged by their classmates and lecturer, and feeling overwhelmed during interactive speaking tasks.

Different from the studies above, this study explored four scopes, namely learners' perception of English, learners' perception towards ELT classroom, learners' expectation towards ELT classroom, and difficulties encountered in ELT classroom. These scopes were proven to be contributive to improve the quality and the success of an ELT classroom as shown in some research findings, i.e. perception (Iftanti & Maunah, 2021; Yuntao, 2019; Badiozaman, Leong & Jikus, 2019; Emiliasari & Kosmajadi, 2019; Budiando, 2019), expectation (Loveta, Loeneto, & Vianty, 2020; Eriani, Prato, Nailufer & Astuti, 2019; Gadu & Mahsun, 2018), perception and expectation (Halim, et. al, 2021), difficulties (Hajar & Rahman, 2022; Ngoc & Mai, 2020; Patau, 2018). At the end of the

research, it is aspired that this research would contribute to give both complete and essential information for lecturer to set more interactive and effective ELT classroom with supportive and fun learning atmosphere. The learners would also benefit from getting better ELT classroom experience which can highlight their strength and improve their weaknesses in English.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was a descriptive qualitative which was attempted to find out learners' perceptions towards English and ELT classroom as well as their expectation and difficulties towards ELT classroom at a non-English majored tertiary education institution in Palembang. It involved 16 students of the first semester class of Oil and Gas Laboratory Analysis Engineering study program and one lecturer. The data were gathered through questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire consisted of 18 items which were categorized into three aspects: learners' perception towards English, learners' perception towards ELT classroom, and learners' expectation towards ELT classroom. More specifically, Items 1 to 5 measured students' perception regarding English as an international language in relation to their needs to future career. The questionnaire tried to see how the learners viewed English. Items 6 to 10 in the questionnaire were meant to investigate students' expectation towards English learning and teaching in classroom. Meanwhile, items 11-18 in the questionnaire defined students' perception towards English learning and teaching activities they experienced in the classroom in one semester. The questionnaires were given at the end of the semester using google forms. Aside from questionnaires, the students were also interviewed, which was aimed to discover their difficulties towards English learning. The types of students' responses were open answers in which various thoughts from the students regarding their difficulties during the ELT classroom they had completed in one semester.

The questionnaire and interview were administered after the ELT classroom had ended and the test had been conducted at the end of the semester. The data gathered from the questionnaire were counted in form of percentage and analyzed in form of description as the findings of the study, whereas the students' answers in the interview were obtained by direct interview to the sixteen students. The students' responses were recorded and presented after being translated into English. Both questionnaire and interview data were qualitatively presented. The results of the study would be expected to be an evaluation for ELT classroom implementation in the next semester as well as need analysis to provide and design better ELT classroom in the institution.

RESEARCH RESULT

This study was aimed to investigate non-English majored learners' perception, expectation and difficulties towards ELT Classroom. There are total of 18 items given to the students in the questionnaire and one question in the interview. This study involved 16 students of the first semester Academic Year 2021/2022 where they studied English subject for fifteen meetings in approximately 4 months from October 2021 to February

2022, and one English lecturer as their educator. After the semester test was conducted, the questionnaire was given to the students as well as the interview. The students were ensured that their responses were made anonymous and would never affect their score in the English subject. This was purely carried out for the sake of both evaluation and improvement to the ELT classroom activities in this study program.

Learners' Perception towards English

The aspect of learners' perception regarding English consists of 5 items or questions.

Table 1
Learners' Perception towards English

Item	Questionnaire	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	English is an important course.	81.25% (13)	18.75% (3)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
2	It is important to master English as it is an international language.	68.75% (11)	31.25% (5)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
3	Good skills of English help me learn various materials and information related to oil and gas industry.	62.5% (10)	37.5% (6)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
4	Having good proficiency of English helps support my career in oil and gas industry.	75% (12)	25% (4)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
5	Mastering English is not difficult.	62.5% (10)	12.5% (2)	12.5% (2)	12.5% (2)	0.00% (0)

Item 1 asked if the learners think of English as an important subject in their study. As seen in the table above, 81.25% respondents or as many as 13 learners responded 'strongly agree' and the other 3 or 18.8% responded 'agree.' No students gave a neutral, disagreed and strongly disagreed. This proved that the students had high awareness of the importance of English subject in their study and it could be a good intrinsic motivation for them to study the subject in class.

In Item 2 of the questionnaire, the learners were asked whether it was important for them to master English as it is an international language. Similar to the response obtained by Item 1, this item also received a very positive response. 68.75% students strongly agreed to the statement. This was equal to 11 students out of 16 total respondents. And 31.25% students or equals to 5 students agreed with the statement. This also meant that the students' perception towards the importance of English as an international language was very positive.

Item 3 questioned the students whether their good skills of English would help them learn various materials and information in oil and gas industry, their future work field. The students also responded very positively to the statement. The results showed

62.5% of them or equals to 10 students strongly agreed, and 37.5% students responded agree, making it 100% students had positive perceptions on this statement.

Item 4 seek for the students' perception whether having a good skill of English would help support their career in the oil and gas industry. Just like the three previous items, this item got very positive response; 75% learners strongly agreed and 25% learners agreed, or with the number of respondents 12 and 4 respectively for each response.

The last item in this category was Item 5, which tried to measure the students' perception if they thought that mastering English is difficult or not. This item got quite various responses. 10 students or 62.5% of the total 16 students agreed that mastering English was not difficult. The other 6 students were divided into other three categories of responses, in which responses 'agree,' 'neutral,' and 'disagree' each got two votes.

Learners' Expectation towards ELT Classroom

Items 6 to 10 of the questionnaires tried to picture the learners' expectation in ELT classrooms activities.

Table 2
Learners' Expectation towards ELT Classroom

Item	Questionnaires	SA	A	N	D	SD
6	Classroom activities which focus on speaking skill improvement should be prioritized.	56.25% (9)	31.25% (5)	6.25% (1)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)
7	I want English learning activities at college can cover all four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)	75% (12)	25% (4)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
8	I hope English learning is conducted using 75% to 100% English as the medium of instructions (EMI).	50% (8)	37.5% (6)	0.00% (0)	12.5% (2)	0.00% (0)
9	I feel English course which only occurs on the first semester is enough for me to master English.	12.5% (2)	31.25% (5)	6.25% (1)	43.75% (7)	6.25% (1)
10	English course should continue in the next semester so that my English proficiency is better.	62.5% (10)	37.5% (6)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)

Item 6 tried to find out the learners' expectation whether classroom activities which focused on the improvement of speaking skill should be prioritized. In this item, they responded variedly though the dominant percentage (56.25%) was in the category of 'strongly agree.' It was the same as 9 students. Whereas, 5 students or 31.25% agreed, 1 student said 'neutral,' and the other one disagreed.

Item 7 questioned if the learners wanted the four skills of English to be applied at the same portion in classroom learning activities. The students gave positive responses towards this statement. 12 students (75%) strongly agreed and 4 students (25%) agreed. This indicated that the students required that the learning activities applied in the ELT classroom involved integrated skills. Therefore, the learning activities also had to be varied.

Item 8 measured students' expectation or preference of how the information and instructions during the learning should be conveyed. In this case, the preferred media of instructions during the classroom activities was analyzed from the students' response. As shown by the data, half of the students in the class, or 8 students (50% respondents) stated 'strongly agree' if the medium of instruction used was 75%-100% English. Meanwhile, 6 students or similar to 37.5% agreed. It meant that in total, 87.5% students or 14 students supported the implementation of EMI in classroom activities at the range of 75%-100%. The rest vote was only 2 students did not agree with the statement.

For Item 9, 7 students gave responses of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' to the statement if English course which only occurred on the first semester was enough for them to master English, with the percentage of 12.5% and 31.25% respectively. It was below half of the total 16 respondents. 1 student responded 'neutral' and half of the students responded 'disagree' and 'strongly disagreed.' This result resonated with the last item in this aspect. Item 10 which asked if the English subject should continue in the next semester in order to accommodate students' better English proficiency got the total of 100% positive responses. 10 students (62.25%) and 6 students (37.5%) strongly agreed and agreed with this statement.

Learners' Perceptions towards ELT Classroom

Items 11 to 18 on the questionnaires investigated the learners' perceptions towards English learning and teaching activities in the classroom during one semester that had passed.

Table 3

Learners' Perception towards ELT Classroom

Item	Questionnaires	SA	A	N	D	SD
11	The lecturer of English has good English proficiency.	87.5% (14)	12.5% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
12	The lecturer of English applied interesting and easily-understood methods in teaching.	87.5% (14)	12.5% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
13	The lecturer of English was willing to give review on previous materials or explanations if the students have not understood yet.	87.5% (14)	12.5% (2)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)

14	The materials of English studied were strongly related to the field or the study program I am taking.	62.5% (10)	37.5% (6)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
15	The learning activities were appropriate with the learning objectives aimed to achieve from the study program I am taking.	50% (8)	43.75% (7)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
16	The lecturer of English was constantly giving the students encouragement to learn and master English better.	68.75% (11)	31.25% (5)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
17	The classroom or learning activities applied were varied, starting from group work to individual assignment such as presentation in front of the class.	50% (8)	50% (8)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)
18	Online assignments given through GCR encouraged me to study and practice English actively at home.	18.75% (3)	56.26% (9)	18.75% (3)	6.25% (1)	0.00% (0)

Item 11 evaluated the lecturer's skills and proficiency of English. This point needed to be highlighted as the lecturer was the facilitator to achieve the target language mastery. This point was also considered as the evaluation to see whether or not the lecturer had good English skills based on the students' perspective. Based on the data obtained, 14 learners (87.5%) strongly agreed and the other 2 (12.5%) agreed, which meant that all learners had positive response towards the statement.

Item 12 evaluated if the lecturer of English applied interesting and easily-understood methods in teaching. For this statement, the students also gave very positive responses which was exactly the same as the previous statement. 87.5% students strongly agreed and the other 12.5% students agreed. Lecturer's ability to apply varied teaching methods is crucial in creating interesting learning atmosphere in ELT classroom. The learning activities are not monotonous and give better chance to actively involve learners in the learning process.

Item 13 measured the students' perception whether the teacher was willing to review the materials when the learners have not fully understood yet. For this statement, all students gave positive response with also exactly the same percentage as the two previous statements in the questionnaire. 87.5% or 14 learners were in strong agreement with the statement and 2 learners (12.5%) chose 'agree.'

In Item 14, the students were intended to evaluate whether the materials of English given by the lecturer were strongly related to their field of study or study program. This Item gained positive responses. 10 learners (62.5%) strongly agreed and

6 learners (37.5%) agreed. No responses were chosen for neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.

Item 15 measured whether the learning activities were in accordance with the learning outcomes designed by the study program. This item got positive responses from the respondents. Total of 8 students or the same as 50% responded 'strongly agree,' 7 students or similar to 43.75% responded 'agree,' and only 1 person (6.25%) responded 'neutral.' This result showed that the learning activities given by the lecturers were suitable for the learners in order to attain the learning outcomes.

Item 16 which questioned whether the lecturer of English had been constantly giving the students encouragement to learn and master English better during the study in one semester also got positive responses. 68.75% respondents or equals to 11 students strongly agreed and 5 students (31.25% respondents) agreed. No students chose 'neutral,' 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree.'

In Item 17, the students were required to evaluate if the learning activities conducted were varied, from group work discussions to individual presentations. This item of the questionnaire got very positive responses from the students. The responses of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' were voted by 50% respondents each. It showed a total of 100% positive response from the students towards the learning methods applied by the lecturer in ELT classroom.

Item 18 tried to investigate whether the online assignments given by the lecturer through GCR prompted the students to study actively at home. Positive response still dominated the ratio for this item. 9 students or similar to 56.25% agreed and 3 students (18.75%) strongly agreed. The responses 'neutral' and 'disagree' got 18.75% and 6.25% respectively. This result showed that 12 students (75%) had positive perception that the assignments assigned to them via GCR would boost their frequency to study at home.

Students' Difficulties in ELT Classroom

Besides digging learners' perception and expectation, this study also explored learners' difficulties in English learning. The data were gathered by conducting direct interview at the end of semester. The students were asked one open-ended question, "What difficulties you had during your English learning this semester?" From the answers gathered, the difficulties declared by the students were grouped into some categories, namely speaking, vocabulary, pronunciation, writing, listening, lack of reviews and practices, and no difficulties.

The first difficulty which was mostly stated by the respondents during their English learning was speaking. The aspect of speaking was declared by 11 learners in total as stated by Respondents 7, 8, 9, 12 and 14, as follow:

"Speaking. I just can't speak when I am in front of the class. I just go blank. Maybe because I don't have much vocabulary, too." Respondent 7 said straightforwardly.

Respondent 8 said, "Speaking is very difficult. I memorize what I want to say for my presentation, but when the lecturer or my friends ask me questions, I understand them, but I don't know what to say. And listening, too. I can't understand what the speaker says. The person speaks very fast."

“I have difficulty in speaking, lack of vocabulary, and listening.” Respondent 12 said. Respondent 14 also stated that her difficulties were both in speaking and writing. Her statement was quoted as follow:

“I don’t understand speaking and writing. I think I can do exercise about listening and reading well, but not speaking and writing.”

The next difficulty mentioned by eight respondents was vocabulary. Respondents 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12 and 16 stated that their difficulty in learning English was mainly about vocabulary whether during speaking, presentation or conversation, or in writing practices. Some statements testified by the learners were as follow:

“It was difficult for me to understand what people say in English because I have very little vocabulary. And I don’t know what to say if the lecturer suddenly asked me.” Respondent 3 asserted in the same tone:

“I don’t have much vocabulary. It’s difficult for me to memorize English words.” Stated by Respondent 4.

Respondent 5 said, “I get difficulties when I listen to people speaking in English to me because I don’t understand much what they say.”

Pronunciation was another difficulty remarked by the learners. Respondent 2 said that sometimes she was thinking about her pronunciation while performing in front of the class because pronunciation was very important, but her pronunciation was not fluent and sounded hesitant. Her statement was recorded as follow:

“Sometimes I think about the pronunciation when I perform in front of the class because I think pronunciation is very important. But I keep stammering when I speak, so I become hesitant to speak.”

“It’s difficult for me to speak because the pronunciation is very hard,” Respondent 13 added.

Respondent 12 also answered that pronunciation was included into her difficulties in stating what she had in mind, as stated below:

“I get difficulty to say what I want to say. Many words are very hard to pronounce.”

Then, another difficulty claimed by the students during their English learning was writing. Respondents 10 and 4’s statements were written respectively as follow:

“My biggest difficulty is writing. I can’t write or spell many words correctly. I can say it, but I cannot write it correctly. There is always missing or mixed letter. Miss made many red circles in words in my writing and wrote the correct word spelling. I just laugh. But I still got good scores.” (Respondent 10)

“Writing is also difficult because I don’t know what to write. If the topic is about My Introduction or My Daily Activities, I still can write it. But if it is about My Holiday, I can only write few sentences even though there is a sample text.” (Respondent 4)

Respondent 16 expressed a lot more aspects as her difficulties in learning English. She also gave some attitude or actions she did towards her difficulties. Her statement was quoted as follow:

“In my opinion, English lesson is difficult and easy. It is difficult to pronounce and remember the spelling correctly. But if we are consistent, it will be easy to remember.

Vocabulary, grammar, and sentence construction are also quite difficult to learn but if you are diligent in repeating, it will look easy. But for someone like me who is quite lazy to read, it will be quite difficult, but I usually overcome my laziness to read by listening to the pronunciation via google voice.”

Similar to one aspect mentioned by Respondent 16, two respondents, Respondents 1 and 11, said that their difficulties or obstacles were lack of reviews and practices. Their statements were quoted as follow:

“When I learn in the class, I feel at ease because Miss helps me. I also work in group with my friends many times. They help me, too. But maybe I’m lazy to review the materials or practice when I have spare time at home.” Respondent 11 said.

“To learn new materials sometimes we need two or three meetings. I can remember it when I do exercises in class. But when I am at home and try to do the homework, I forget and I am lazy to review or to study again.” (Respondent 1)

Among those difficulties listed by the students above, there were two respondents stated confidently that they did not have difficulties in learning English. Respondents 6 and 15’s statements were simply expressed as follow:

“There is no significant difficulty in learning English.” (Respondent 6)

“Nothing. I like English.” (Respondent 15)

DISCUSSION

Based on the information gathered and the data analysis presented for the term of learners’ perception towards English, it could be stated that students had very positive perception towards English as one subject in their study even though it is not linear to their major or study program. Having positive perceptions towards English will contribute to the learners’ achievement in ELT classroom, which is supported by Zheng, et.al. (2016), who revealed that learners with perspective towards language learning had strong relation with their success in the assessment. These learners’ positive perception towards English also strengthened the position of English as an important element for non-English majored learners which can attribute their soft skills as their strength to get better chance of finding good jobs (Roshid, 2013), especially in oil and gas industry, and gain more knowledge and information in this field (Khatoun, et.al., 2018). Furthermore, English frequently becomes the key to advancing of getting a job with better income in a company requiring high productivity (Dustmann & Fabbr, 2003; Leslie & Lindley, 2001; Tainer, 1988). Moreover, in the last item, 12 out of 16 learners also showed their confidence and belief in the term of English mastery. Their agreement to the statement that English mastery was not difficult indicated that they had high self-efficacy to English and thus would bring positive outcome to their learning achievement (Badiozaman, Leong & Jikus (2019).

From the data presented for students’ expectation towards ELT classroom, it showed the learners expected that first they want the classroom activities emphasize more in training their speaking skill without neglecting the other three skills of English. It meant that integrated skill implementation in the classroom activities with active

interactions between the lecturer and the learners, and among the learners themselves is highly anticipated. Active feedback during the classroom activities, especially during speaking tasks, was proven to give the biggest contribution to the successful speaking practices in classroom (Patau, 2018). This result was also in agreement with the research by Eriani, Pratolo, Nailufer & Astuti (2019), which emphasized that the students required not only the implementation of integrated skills but also the application of grammar and pronunciation.

Learners also expected English to be applied as the medium of instructions (EMI) in their ELT classroom in the percentage above 75%. This reflected the learners' enthusiasm of having more interactions using English in the teaching and learning activities. This practice would certainly benefit the learners' English proficiency as it would create greater chances for the learners to be exposed to the target language (Rahmadani, 2016; Dickson, 1996). Furthermore, Rahmadani (2016) specified that the use of EMI in English classrooms were able to boost students' standards and motivation in learning English, build on students' confidence in speaking sessions, and assist them to comprehend more articles and English textbooks. On the other hand, low exposure of English and its vocabulary usage hindered learners' English proficiency (Astika, 2016). The learners also look forward to having English subject in the next semesters, not only in the first semester by showing affirmative responses to this statement in the questionnaire. This also indicated that the learners are eager to have English practice conducted more regularly in several semesters during their study at college.

For the aspect of learners' perception towards ELT classroom based on the learners' questionnaire results, more than 80% learners had positive perception towards their ELT classroom in one semester of their learning. It was obtained that the lecturer was able to apply varied methods in the learning activities. In other words, students were preferable to have various practices of classroom activities conducted by the lecturer as it would determine the learners' willingness to be actively involved in the tasks (Loveta, Leoneto, and Vianty, 2020).

The lecturer's willingness to review materials and actively gave encouragement to the learners during the study indicated an active classroom activity. This also signaled that the learners put their full attention and efforts in the process of the target language acquisition. It also implied that the students had shown good interest in the materials being taught.

In the term of the materials given in the English subject, the learners acclaimed that the materials were strongly related to the study program they are taking, and the learning activities were also mentioned in accordance with the learning outcomes designed by the study program. When the materials being learned are considered as those needed by the learners, this would be enough to motivate the learners to pay attention in ELT classroom and feel more obliged to master and to apply the materials for their own good. Nikoopour and Farsani (2011) highly suggested that the learners learned the materials they needed. Learning materials which were relevant to the expected work field would motivate the students to speak more bravely in the classroom, increase their

English proficiency and support their career development (Gadu & Mahsun, 2018). A strong relation between the English materials being studied and the field of study the learners are majoring would enable the learning outcomes of the course were on the correct track.

Another finding suggested that the lecturer actively encourage the learners to learn and master English better. This would also escalate their interests in learning English. Lecturer's attention towards the learners' motivation in learning is a quality that sometimes neglected. Giving encouragement by praising and giving positive feedback will make the students feel being supported during the process of learning. Yuntao (2019) pointed out that motivation in the language learning took the biggest factor on learners' English proficiency. On the other hand, giving bad remarks or responses towards the students' performance in the learning activities either from the lecturer or peers will result in the students' anxiety to take part in the study (Ngoc & Mai, 2020; Patau, 2018). When the lecturer is already an active motivator with some positive comments for the students, another positive impact will be able to occur, thus, a strong bond between the students and the lecturer as they feel that the lecturer cared for their psychological state during the study. In addition, giving praises effectively could alter the students' attitude and mindset towards the learning. Therefore, it was an easy, simple and effective approach to encourage and influence our students (Halim, et al., 2021).

The last question was related to the use of GCR as the media to submit learners' assignment. Most of learners were in agreement that this motivated them to actively study and practice English at home. This is in line with the study by Kemp (2020) which stated that blended learning allowed the learners to ask questions and made content revisions during offline sessions as well as gave them opportunity to have their own independent thinking regarding the materials learned. Saputri, Larasati, & Febriyanti (2020) stated that giving additional assignment to students outside their classroom meeting reinforced them to obtain higher comprehension regarding the materials learned. However, the amount of homework to be assigned should be put into consideration since too much assignment would bring students' loss of interest in the lesson and the subject itself (Saputri, et al., 2020).

With all these positive results on ELT classroom evaluation directly assessed by the learners, this can result in their active participation in the ELT classroom to support their English skill progress and improvement. With this positive attitude or perceptions, learners would engage actively in their learning in order to obtain better English proficiency. (Zulfikar, Dahliana, & Sari, 2019).

The last feature to discuss is difficulties stated and encountered by learners. Speaking became the major difficulty experienced by the learners during their study. And this was caused by lack of vocabulary and hesitance of having the correct pronunciation. This result is in line with Iftanti and Maunah (2021) who proved that pronunciation was one among several reasons contributing learners' perception of English as a difficult subject. Ngoc and Mai (2020) and Patau (2018) had also confirmed through their research that the two components of vocabulary and pronunciation contributed to the factors

affecting learners' low participation in speaking. Furthermore, it resulted in learners' situations in that they frequently lost for words when they had to translate what they wanted to say in their mind in speaking activities (Ngoc & Mai, 2020). Astika (2016) stated that one fundamental component in language learning was vocabulary as it helped learners to convey meanings, so it is important for them to find some strategies to learn unfamiliar words become more memorable and everlasting (Gumartifa, Saputri & Yuliani, 2020). Furthermore, both lecturer and learners might need to apply one or more out of four strategies to support improving vocabulary mastery, namely Cognitive, Metacognitive, Memory and Determination strategies (Astika 2016).

Writing was also included into difficulty encountered by the learners in the ELT classroom. When students said that writing was their difficulty, it was strongly related to the vocabulary, word spelling or developing ideas of what they should write when they were assigned a writing assignment (Inderawati, et al., 2022). To overcome the aspect of lack of vocabulary or misspelled words, the use of Google Translate can be a good option to improve learners' writing ability as it helped them paraphrase words using suggested synonyms and showed the correct word spelling (Inderawati, et al., 2022; Inderawati, et al., 2019). Implementing peer review and free writing practices could also be favorable options as they are stimulant techniques to enhance students' writing skill (Sartika & Arriyanti, 2020).

Listening was included into the difficulty met by the learners, which was resulted from the speakers' accent and pronunciation as well as his speed of speaking. A speaker's accent determines the ways he talks, utters the words and generate the sounds while speaking (Saipullah, Syahri, & Susanti, 2021). However, being exposed to various accents of both native or non-native English speakers could also benefit learners' English skills of listening and speaking when they perceived it as a challenge (Saipullah, et al., 2021). Additionally, whether it is speaking, writing, and listening skills, or whatever elements that become the learners' difficulties in their ELT classroom, the learners' first language also plays part in the obstacle to learn English (Sulaiman, 2022).

The last difficulty in learning English mentioned by the learners was the factor of laziness. They said they were lazy to review the materials at home or independently even when they had to do the assignment from the lecturer. This is relevant to the result of questionnaire Item 18 which inquired the students if the tasks assigned by their lecturer through GCR encouraged them to study at home. Three students responded 'disagree' to this item. To anticipate this difficulty in the future, Saputri, Larasati, & Febriyanti (2020) suggested that it is essential for the parents to be involved in helping their children with homework and taking the role of an educator at home. Additionally, assisting their children with assignment help improve parents-children relationships (Saputri, et al., 2020). However, for learners at college year, parents can be at least the learners' motivator, facilitator and supervisor during the assignment completion.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that non-English majored learners' perceptions towards English and their ELT classroom for one semester they had completed were positive. Some of the learners' expectation towards ELT classroom was that they were looking forward to having English as the major medium of instructions in the teaching and learning activities and having another English subject in the next semesters. This reflected their motivation and eagerness to be more involved and exposed in English conversations in their ELT classroom and have more chances to study English in more than one semester. Despite the positive perceptions towards English and ELT Classroom, learners do have their own difficulties they encountered during their English learning. Most of them were in terms of speaking skill, lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, writing, listening, and lack of reviews. From the difficulties affirmed by the learners during their ELT classroom, the lecturer is expected to design classroom activities that will be able to encourage the learners to be more motivated and comfortable to participate actively in their English learning process, especially in speaking activities, as well as help them overcome their difficulties. This way the learners with such obstacles and difficulties will never feel left behind in every task being conducted. Just as importantly, as the study was conducted in one out of four study programs at a non-English majored higher education institution, the results obtained were not meant to be generalized. Further research on students' perception, expectation and difficulties towards ELT classroom in all four study programs were suggested to be conducted.

REFERENCES

- Astika, I, G. (2016). Vocabulary Learning Strategies of Secondary School Students. *IJOLTL* (2016),1(1): 1-18.
- Badiozaman, I.F.A., Leong, H.J., & Jikus, O. (2019). Students' Perception and Use of English in Higher Education Institutions: Links with Academic Self-Efficacy. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*. 11(1), 36-49.
- Budianto, L. (2019). The Non-English Major Students' Perception on ESP Course. Presented at Asia TEFL 2019, The 17th Asia TEFL International Conference, 27-29 June, 2019. The Language Institute Thammasat University, Thailand. (Unpublished) <http://repository.uinmalang.ac.id/8055/>
- Bull, V. (2008). Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary: 4th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dickson, P. (1996). Using the Target Language: A view from the classroom. *National Foundation for Educational Research*.
- Diep, L. T. N. (2021). English Language Learning Quality at Tertiary Institutions from Learners' Perspective. *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues*. 24(1), 1-17.
- Dustmann, C., & Fabbr, F. (2003). Language Proficiency and Labour Market Performance of Immigrants in the UK. *The Economic Journal*, 113(489), 695-717.

- Education First. (2022). EF English Proficiency Index: A Ranking of 100 Countries and Regions by English Skills. Retrieved on January 2, 2023 from <https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/>
- Eriani, E., Pratolo, B.W., Nailufer, Y., & Astuti, D.M. (2019). Students' Expectations in EFL Classroom : A Case Study at Management Department of a Private University in Yogyakarta. *The 5th UAD TEFL International Conference (5th UTIC)*. 129-136. doi: 10.12928/utic.v2.5747.2019
- Gadu, P., & Mahsun. (2018). Persepsi Mahasiswa Terhadap Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Hospitality Pada Program Studi Diploma Tiga Perhotelan Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram. *Media Bina Ilmiah*, 12(10), 511-521
- Gumartifa, A., Saputri, K., & Yuliani, S. (2020). The Knowledge of Vocabulary Learning Strategies Practice for English as a Second Language Learners. *English Community Journal*, 4(2), 79-89.
- Hajar, I. & Rahman, Abd. (2022). High School Students' Difficulties in English Speaking Skills of Namlea, Buru Island. *Exposure: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 11(1), 31-40.
- Halim, N. M., Wulandari, Y., & Halim, A. (2021). Teacher Talk: Student's Perception and Expectation in ELT Classroom. *ELT Worldwide*, 8(1), 51-59
- Iftanti, E., & Maunah, B. (2021). Belief, Perception, and Challenges of Non-English Department Students to Learn English in Globalization Era. *Indonesian EFL Journal*. 7(1), 1-12,
- Inderawati, R., Petrus, I., & Jaya, H.P. (2019). Exploring and Identifying Technology-Based Dynamic Learning Through Social Media in Academic Writing. *English Community Journal*, 3(1), 317-324.
- Inderawati, R., Hayati, R., Marlina, R., Novarita, Awaludin, Anam, S. (2022). Argumentative Essay and Vocabulary Enrichment of English Students by Utilizing Google Translate. *English Community Journal*, 6(2), 131-141.
- Kemp, N. (2020). University Students' Perceived Effort and Learning in Face-to-Face and Online Classes. *Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching*, 3(1), 69-77.
- Khatoon, S., Umar, M., & Roofi, Y. (2018). English as an Obstacle to Gaining Knowledge. A Case of Sindh Pakistan. *Grassroots*, 52(1), 200-208.
- Ngoc, L.K., Mai, L.X. (2020). Factors Affecting Non-Majored English Students' Low Participation in EFL Speaking Classroom : A case in Vietnam. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 7(11), 264-287.
- Leslie, D., & Lindley, J. (2001). The Impact of Language Ability on Employment and Earnings Of Britain's Ethnic Communities. *Economica*, 68(272), 587-606.
- Loveta, G., Loeneto, B. A., & Vianty, M. (2020). Students' Expectation Toward Teacher's Teaching Style and Contribution to Students' English Performance. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 9(1), 135-144.
- Nikoopour, J. & Farsani, M.A. (2011). English Language Teaching Material Development. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(2), 1-12.

- Patau, S. A. (2018). Factors that Influence Students' Participation in English Speaking Classroom Activities. *Sintuwu Maroso Journal of English Teaching*, 4(1), 31-38
- Rahmadani, D. (2016). Students' Perception of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in English Classroom. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 6(2), 131-144.
- Roshid, M.M. & Chowdhury, R. (2013). English Language Proficiency and Employment: A Case Study of Bangladeshi Graduates in Australian Employment Market. *Mevlana International Journal of Education (MIJE)*, 3(1), pp. 68-81.
- Saipullah, H.M., Syahri, I., & Susanti, R. (2021) Students' Perceptions on the Accents of Non-Native English Speakers in Interactive Listening and Extensive Speaking. *English Community Journal*, 5(1), 1-9.
- Saputri, K., Larasati, F., Febriyani, M. (2020) An Analysis of Parents' Perceptions on the Importance of Homework in Improving English Achievement. *English Community Journal*, 4(2), 109-121.
- Sari, M.P. (2021) An Evaluation of English Program: A Deep Analysis of EFL Learners' Attitude Towards English Program. *International Journal of Indonesian Education and Teaching*. 5(2), 133-147.
- Sartika, D. & Arriyanti, N. (2020). Enhancing Students Writing Skill to Write Descriptive Text Using Peer Review and Free Writing Techniques. *English Community Journal*. 4(2), 90-97.
- Shobikah, N. (2017). The Importance of English Language in Facing Asean Economic Community (AEC). *At-Turats*, 11(1), 85-93.
- Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi. (2020). Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Permendikbud) Republik Indonesia no. 3 tahun 2020. Retrieved from: <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Home/Details/163703/permendikbud-no-3-tahun-2020>
- Suharsih, S. & Wijayanti, M.A. (2021). Online Learning for EFL Learners: Perceptions, Challenges, and Expectations. *Journal of English Language Studies*, 6(2), 244-257.
- Sulaiman, M., Syahri, I., & Saputri, K. (2022). A Contrastive Analysis between English and Indonesian Copulative Verb. *English Community Journal*, 6(1), 36-45.
- Tainer, E. (1988). English Language Proficiency and the Determination of Earnings Among Foreignborn Men. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 23 (1), 108-122
- Yuntao, W. (2019). Non-English Major Students' Perceptions of Factors Influencing English Proficiency in China. *English Language Teaching*, 12(4), 157-165.
- Zheng, C., Liang, J.C., Yang, V.F., Tsai, C.C. (2016). The Relationship between Chinese University Students' Conceptions of Language Learning and their Online Self-Regulations. *System*, 57.
- Zulfikar, T., Dahliana S., & Sari, R. A. (2019). An Exploration of English Students' Attitude Towards English Learning. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, 2(1), 1-12.