

# Actualization of The Freedom of Learning Program (FoLP) in Higher Education Using CLLA (Cultural Language Learning Approach)

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## ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic requires all education stakeholders to adapt to the demands of that era. The existence of COVID-19 has a comprehensive impact, especially in disadvantaged areas for various limitations on online learning. This study intended to actualize the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology program of Freedom of Learning (FoLP). FoLP is one of the main focuses of 2020-2024 RIRN (*Rencana Induk Riset Nasional*). It focused on the Cultural Language Learning Approach (CLLA), as an approach to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) by embedding moral values in the given discourse contents with varied focus and study settings adapted to the demands of the times and global needs. It is currently implemented as a medium for the FoLP students' research at another research institution outside of their campus. This research guided such FoLP students' research for carrying out their jobs outside of their campus, namely at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FSPS) by involving 50 students concerning the use of CLLA in their ESP course. This project intended to analyze the students' needs by highlighting their "necessity, wants and lacks". The test results analysis using the Sheppard model reveals that the ESP students need wider ESP learning interventions to achieve the optimum scores achievements as the average score of 50 students learning assessment is  $350/70=50$ . On a 100 scale, the average score is  $50/70 \times 100 = 60$  which means they belong to low capacity ("lack") by remembering that they should fulfill both the "necessity and wants" in their ESP learning using CLLA. Whereas they should be at least categorized into pre-advanced English learners.

*Keywords: FoLP, CLLA, ESP, needs analysis, pre-advanced English.*

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## 1. Introduction

To prepare students to face social, cultural changes, the world of work, rapid technological advances, and efforts to improve the nation's competitiveness, universities in Indonesia are required to design and implement the Freedom of Learning Program (FoLP) - under the liberating Campus what so-called Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM in short) policy. The actualization of MBKM is expected to answer such demands. MB-KM is a form of learning in higher education that is autonomous and flexible to create a learning culture that is innovative, unfettered, and accessing the needs of students (Ditjendikti, 2020a; 2020b; 2021).

This study referred to the latest relevant issues to answer the challenges of problems and the development of education and culture following the National Research Master Plan (Rencana Induk Riset Nasional/RIRN) which must be referred to in the University Research Master Plan (*Rencana Induk Penelitian/RIP*) of the researcher's University in 2029. The strategic issue in this research is a learning approach in the field of education, which is called the Cultural Language Learning Approach (CLLA) as one of the writer's previous findings. It is an approach of learning which utilizes local cultural heritages such as performances, buildings, foods and beverages, ceremonies, heirlooms, folklores, legends et cetera, as the learning focuses (Setiadi, 2017; Hermayawati, 2020). In the previous studies, CLLA was implemented at secondary schools. In this case, CLLA is currently focused on an approach to implement the FoLP in partnership with a private university located in Yogyakarta. CLLA has been so far, disseminated both at secondary and higher education levels. Such an approach is addressed to accommodate human capabilities completely.

Every human is naturally endowed with 6 (six) capacities, namely as follow: (1) five senses and proprioception (id est: perception or awareness of the position and movement of the body), (2) cognition, (3) learning, (4) memory, (5) decision-making, and (6) action-taking (Hai-Jew, 2016). Unfortunately, in most education programs, such capabilities have been rarely embedded with the HOTS and FCPM knowledge dimensions whereas those abilities can be acquired through habituation. Cherry (2016) defines that habituation as a decrease in response to a stimulus after repeated presentations. He illustrates a habit is somewhat a new ringtone that may initially draw one's attention or even become distracting. Aside from habituating the use of such human

capabilities, most teachers at any level of studies are rarely making use of their learners' meta-cognition ability. Meta-cognition consists of the words 'Meta' and 'Cognition' which means 'thinking beyond thinking'. It is the ability to think about one's thinking (Drew, 2020). Referring to the revised Bloom's taxonomy, meta-cognition is the highest level of human knowledge dimensions aside from factual, conceptual, and procedural aspects (FCPM) (Krathwohl, 2002).

In recent years, English language teaching materials, textbooks, videos, and websites that facilitate the learning of language, which have grown in number, have tended to cover safe, non-controversial topics using the banking model (in Paulo Freire's terms). Often these topics did not engage learners either affectively or cognitively (Kohnke, 2019). In relation to the education process (including language teaching) both Paulo Freire, the education 'godfather' of Brasilia, and Ki Hajar Dewantara, the education "godfather" of Indonesia stressed that education must avoid oppression and give the learners learning liberation. The teaching and learning process even does not access the learning needs analysis. FoLP using CLLA is a matter of approach for preparing the learners of any education levels to actualize their human's six enablements completely. It also can be addressed to develop either learners' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) or factual, conceptual, procedural, and meta-cognitive (FCPM) knowledge dimensions (King et al., 2016).

This paper is intended to reveal one of the efforts to actualize the Freedom of Learning Program (FoLP) by involving 5 (five) students who are conducting research related to CLLA actualization. In this case, CLLA is intervened in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course conducted at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FSPS) adjusted to the course needs analysis by developing the current FoLP curriculum as demanded by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. One of the basic assumptions of curriculum development is that a sound educational program should be based on an analysis of learners' needs. Procedures used to collect information about learners' needs are known as needs analysis (Richards, 2010).

## 2. Research Method

This is the writer's preliminary implementation study by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data to assess programs and policies that are the subject of evaluation (Knox, 2021;

Peters et al., 2013). It is a project conducted in collaboration with the Research and Community Service Board (RCFB) and Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FSPS) of a private university in Yogyakarta. Aside from involving 5 (five) students of the seventh semester who are researching outside of their campus. This study involves 50 students of the FSPS under-guided by the writer (as the research team leader and content consultant) and the head of RCFB as the research administrative cases. Figure 1 illustrates the research procedure.

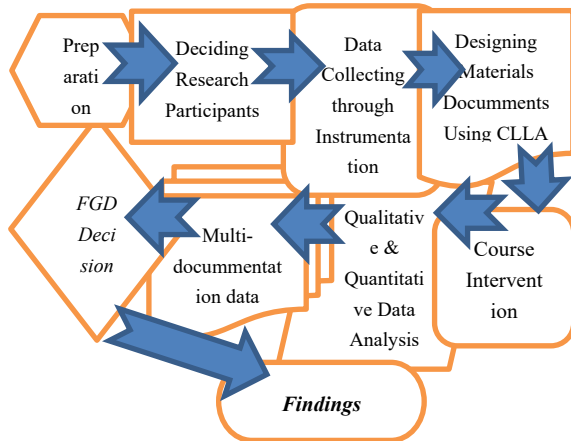


Fig. 1. Research Procedure

The research procedure started from preparing research instrumentation. The research instruments consisted of a closed questionnaire distribution addressed to the 50 participants and an unstructured interview for the head of RCFB and her staff. Results of instrumentation were gathered to analyze descriptively to find qualitative data. The results of data analysis were used as the basis of designing materials documents using CLLA to intervene in the online learning process. The multi-document data such as course syllabus, students’ worksheets, assessment, and its analysis results were gathered as quantitative data. The Focus group Discussion (FGD) involving all of the research stakeholders was established to define the findings.

**3. Findings**

As is previously stated this study investigated FSPS students ESP needs analysis that includes the three aspects of “necessity” (sequential materials content available in the current used ESP syllabus), “wants” (materials content which is matched with the department and level of study) and “lacks” (the gap between what should be learned in the syllabus and the real facts of students’ ESP competence). The following are the findings regarding the three aspects of ESP needs analysis. Needs are the core characteristics

of ESP by utilizing the methodology and activities of the subject matter that serve and focus on the language skills covered in the discourse appropriate to the defined activities (Dudley-Evans, 1998). A needs analysis includes the needs of the learners themselves, the teaching establishment, the user institution, or for each of the three (Kareva, 2013). The followings are findings concerning the three main aspects of ESP implementation with CLLA conducted by the students joining FoLP in the research setting.

**3.1. Necessity**

Table 1. Syllabus content currently used in the research setting

**The ESP Syllabus Currently Used in the Social and Political Science Faculty**

1. Students are able to understand grammar and vocabulary embedded in the general study concerning the Social and Politics Science.  
2. Students are able to communicate, expressing their ideas related to their discipline in English.

Meeting	The Expected Competence to acquire	Learning Topics	Learning Activities	Time Allocation	Students' Experiences	Evaluation Criteria	Notes
1	Express Achievement and formalization in English	Self Introduction, Asking one's personal data			Watching, taking notes, asking	Group conversation practice	
2	Understand the pattern of noun phrase and sentence	Noun phrase			Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
3	Describe words search in English correctly	Letter and Words	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
4	Understand and make sentences using simple sentence, compound and complex sentences	Simple sentence, compound and complex sentences	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
5	Identify any vocabulary related to their discipline	Types of Words	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
6	Understand and make sentences using Present Tense form	Present Tense	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
7	Understand and make sentences using past tense form	Past Tense	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
8	Answer the question of multiple choice in the form of discourse having learned from 1-7	Mid-term Test			Watching, taking notes, asking		
9	Understand and	Degree of	Discussion		Watching,	Randomly giving,	

Table 1. Syllabus content currently used in the research setting (Continued)

	make sentences using degree of comparison	Comparison			taking notes, asking	and asking questions to student	
10	Understand and differentiate countable, uncountable and relative	Countable and Uncountable Nouns, Relative Clause	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
11	Understand and make sentences using active form and passive form	Active-Passive Voice	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
12	Understand and make sentences using direct and indirect speech	Direct and Indirect Speech	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
13	Understand and make sentences using conditional sentence forms	Conditional Sentence	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
14	Understand and make sentences using General and To Infinitive	General and To Infinitive	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
15	Understand and make sentences using Affixes and Derivatives	Affixes and Derivatives	Discussion		Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	
16	Answer the question of the 9-15 meetings	Semester Final Exam			Watching, taking notes, asking	Randomly giving and asking questions to student	

Reference list:  
1. English Course Handbook  
2. Annual Scientific Activities in English

A necessity in the current study was regarding the English learning content provided in the English syllabus. Table 1 illustrates the current

English syllabus implemented in the Social and Politics Science Faculty (SPSF), English was taught for a 3-semester credit unit (SCU) time allotment or 150 minutes every week with a total of 16 meetings. It provides 14 materials as the learning topics, such as follows: (1) Self-introduction, Asking one's personal data; (2) Noun phrase; (3) Letter and Words; (4) Simple sentence, compound, and complex sentences; (5) Types of Words; (6) Present Tense; (7) Past Tense; (8) Mid-term Test; (9) Degree of Comparison; (10) Countable and Uncountable Noun, Relative Clause; (11) Active-Passive Voice; (12) Direct and Indirect Speech; (13) Conditional Sentence; (14) Gerund and To infinitive; (15) Affixes and Derivation; (16) Semester/Final Exam. Referring to its contents, the syllabus model used by the instructor in the English class is the Grammatical/Structural Syllabus Model. Such a model has no more matched with the most updated English Language Teaching concept that must expose integrated skills in use embedded in communicative approaches besides developing learners' HOTS and meta-cognitive dimensions.

### 3.2. Wants

The "wants" is in this case, the learning content must be matched with the learners' level of age and level of language competence. Higher education learners must belong to at least "pre-advanced learners" that can only be seen from the learned discourse contents. Based on the syllabus content being used, it can be seen that it does not show such demanded criteria since it only exposes hand-outs grammatically taken from the isolated sentence samples even though the instructor tried performing the sentences related to the discipline. Ideally, every meeting must expose a discourse topically appropriately with the discipline subject matters.

### 3.3. Lacks

The "lack" aspect is analyzed through the students' pretest result using Sheppard (2015) Model. Table 2 illustrates 7 (seven) aspects of assessment analysis according to Sheppard's (2015) model. It includes Overall impact, Clarity, Organization, Mechanics, Grammar, Style, and Presentation by using 5 (five) scales, namely 'Not Yet' (Score=2), 'Emerging' (Score=4), 'Developing' (Score=6), 'Effective' (Score=8), and 'Strong' (Score=10). The score scales spread from 2 (the lowest score) until 10 (the highest score). Those seven aspects are scored 70 (seventy).

Table 2. First Round of 50 Students' Learning

Achievement Using Sheppard (2015) Model (Interim Result)

Scoring Aspects	Not Yet	Emerging	Developing	Effective	Strong	Σ
	2	4	6	8	10	
Overall Impact	4	6	20	15	5	50
Clarity	4	6	20	15	5	50
Organization	4	6	20	15	5	50
Mechanics	6	11	16	12	5	50
Grammar	6	11	16	12	5	50
Style	6	11	15	15	3	50
Presentation	6	11	15	15	3	50
Comments	36	62	122	99	31	350

Referring to Table 1 computation results, it can be seen that the total score is equally 350. The maximal score is personally 70. This means that the average score of 50 students for the first round learning assessment is  $350/70=50$ . On a 100 scale, the average score is  $50/70 \times 100 = 60$ . This learning achievement needs improvement to achieve the optimum scores by implementing much more cyclical intervention to the learners.

## 4. Discussion

The relative low achievement is among others because of the following reasons: (1) both the given materials content and the learning approach are relatively new; (2) the language use level of difficulty is considered high; (3) the low of language mastery intakes of most learners and (4) learners are not well-habituated to use HOTS and FCPM knowledge dimensions. It implies that the learners have not been accustomed to optimizing the way of thinking using the aforementioned four reasons.

The first reason is, that most of them were not familiar with the content of the materials being learned using CLLA. This matter occurred for most students did not care about their own traditional culture (Ant, 2008), particularly wayang orang (human puppets) stories, whereas it can be benefited as the content materials delivered in the form of video completed with

subtitling or running texts. Say, for example, the content of Mahabharata wayang stories can be practically used as the materials discourses to improve the learners' language competence either in cognitive, affective, or psychomotor aspects. The three learning aspects are suggested to be developed in the education processes. Unfortunately, the previous research did not generally utilize them.

Wayang is a kind of priceless cultural product. Even-though culture can be a force for oppression and domination, it can also be a force for creativity, resistance, and liberation. It is also a deeply important aspect of human social life and social organization. Without it, we would not have relationships or society (Cole, 2020). This is such an ironic matter by remembering that wayang has been admitted by UNESCO as one of the world cultural heritage that comes from Indonesia (Runnisa, 2018).

Secondly, learners were not accustomed to directly using English skills in an integrated manner, namely listening-speaking-reading-writing all at once so they felt that the materials being learned were relatively difficult both for most ESP teachers and students (Hoa & Mai, 2016). It was due to the learners' previous habits that had never accessed the current trend of pedagogical changes (Owen & Vista, 2017). Hence, the shift of today's pedagogical trend needs the students' encouragement to become autonomous learning without always leaning on the teachers' support except for their feed-backs.

Third, most of the learners' language intakes were relatively low. Based on the assessment results using Sheppard's (2015) model, they mostly belong to the 'developing' or "lack" capacity level, which is commonly called survival English level. According to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), which is an international guideline to measure language ability, using a scale from A1 (beginners) to C2 (language masters), they are mostly categorized into A2 level. Fourth, the previous language learning classroom activities have been less-actualizing HOTS (the level of analyzing, evaluating, creating) and FCPM, especially at the meta-cognitive level of thinking capacity. Such issues were also previously argued by Bastawrous (2016), Kohnke (2019), Drew (2020), and Hermayawati (2020).

Since it was a preliminary research project, the participants were continually intervened to improve their language use capacities. Besides, they have to acquire their cultural heritages that contained valuable moral messages needed to

increase their HOTS and FCPM learning activities. Whereas, the two levels of thinking need to be optimized for the sake of learning achievement quality (Thomas & Thorne, 2009); King, Goodson & Rohani, 2016; Owen & Vista, 2017; Putra & Abdullah, 2019).

Both of the aforementioned thinking levels have not been actualized including in the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) teaching. It is due to the lack of ESP teachers' professionalism (Oxford, 2001; Hoa & Mai, 2016) for the current study shows that most ESP teachers were not graduate of English education study programs but teachers of the relevant subject matters. Even though they should have mastered the concept of the latest ESP implementation that prioritizes the use of Content-Based and Task-based learning to teach integrated language skills (Oxford, 2001), and no more in segregated skills through various authentic and actual themes.

ESP should be a combined subject matter and English language teaching. ESP teachers must play many roles, such as organizing courses, setting learning objectives, establishing a positive learning environment in the classroom, and evaluating students' progress (Fiorito, 2021). ESP teaching involves the following aspects: (1) presenting basic concepts; (2) presenting teaching issues like effectiveness of ESP, teaching strategies, ESP teaching objectives, teachers' role briefly; (3) explaining curriculum development, course design, needs analysis, and assessment; and (4) bringing about problems and challenges (Ahmed, 2014; Fiorito, 2021). To actualize the aforementioned characteristics a team-teaching is crucially needed. In this case, English teachers and content teachers may negotiate with each other to accomplish self-training programs through their meta-analysis competence (Ghafournia & Sabet, 2014). Education, including the ESP teaching process, is also affected by the expectations of people about their future. Hence, the under-coped relevant institutions do not only respond to social changes but also can act as a leading force for change (Diana, 2001).

The aforementioned requirements of ESP teaching should be fulfilled by any ESP practitioners, including the teacher of the faculty of social and politics (FSP), as the current research setting. But it did not completely happen. Previous studies revealed that many ESP learners in higher education levels had neither good at practicing English in spoken and written ways nor in productive and receptive use (Oxford, 2001; Poedjiastutie, 2017; Rasyimah, Ahyar & Sari, 2018). Such ESP teaching requirements can be

met through the actualization of CLLA which also accesses the development of cognitive, affective skills with moral values, psycho-motor, and the dimensions of factual, conceptual, procedural, and meta-cognitive knowledge of students. Since CLLA performs the four language skills thematically and accesses all of ESP teaching concepts as a whole.

Not only accessing the concept of ESP but CLLA as an offer of language learning model can also be used for the development of the realm of higher-order thinking skills such as HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) and FCPM (Factual, Conceptual, Procedural and Meta-cognitive), optimizing psycho-motor and affective skills optimally (Hermayawati, 2020). The aforementioned conceptual basis had been instilled to the FoLP students as the ELT (English Language Teaching) student researchers. The current study implies that the instructor did not understand how to develop a standardized ESP learning program so this issue affects the learners' learning achievement as shown in the aforementioned data. Such current research findings are supported by previous studies such as Oxford (2001), Hoa & Mai (2016), Fareed, Asraf & Bilal (2016), Poedjiastutie (2016), Lee (2017), and Rasyimah, Ahyar & Sari (2018) with different issues focused on CLLA embedded with HOTS and knowledge dimension aspects of FCPM thinking levels.

## 5. Conclusion & Recommendation

Freedom of Learning Program (FoLP) in this study concludes that by considering the first round achievement of this project which was still relatively low (both on the level of language and the mastery of the learned discourse content issues) the next rounds of the learning process need much more cyclical interventions to the learners. The cyclical learning interventions will be completed based on the last situation and condition of the observable English online classrooms. Thus, it is recommended for future study, especially being involved in the FoLP to prepare all of the needed teaching programs completely with its cyclical assessments for the accomplishment of their assignment in ESP Teaching in the under-studied Social and Political Study Department.

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