A Needs Analysis for a University-Level English for Specific Purposes Program

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Many institutions provide foreign language education focusing on general skills, typically the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and often including communicative skills. In contrast, English for specific purposes (ESP) is focused on the teaching of English for a specific context in a target environment such as business, engineering, hospitals, or hospitality, and can be further differentiated according to more specific settings, such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), Professional Purposes (EPP), and Vocational Purposes (EVP) (Basturkmen, 2006). Needs analysis should be performed to determine the content of such programs. Moreover, it should incorporate language, learning, context, and teaching: Language includes identifying the linguistic elements such as sentence patterns, and the use, for example, genre. Learning comprises the procedures for the language acquisition including the situational context. Teaching encompasses the teaching methodologies to achieve the objectives (Basturkmen, 2006).

This article explores needs analysis and ESP, using as an example the case of the English curriculum in the Department of International Tourism Management (DITM) at Toyo University to investigate whether the English needs of the students are being met.

Literature Review

English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

ESP originated in the 1960's with descriptions of written scientific and technical works (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This led to a focus on learners and their perceived needs to integrate relevant language teaching in the curriculum to engender motivation.

From a linguistic perspective, ESP evolved in distinct stages: (1) register analysis, determining language requirements for specific fields such as engineering; (2) discourse analysis, identifying how sentences differ according to communicative activities; (3) target situation analysis (first defined by Munby, 1978), defining lan-

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guage for specific situations; (4) skills and strategies, focusing on functions required; and (5) a learner-centered approach, encouraging self-directed learning versus explicit teaching. Referring to learner-centeredness, Belcher & Lukkarila (2011) highlight the common notion of multiple identities, the learner displaying various roles according to context including future contexts, and, therefore, the importance of their contribution to needs analysis for curriculum development.

ESP course design should encompass a number of issues, namely, the varieties of language (including both general and situation-specific), needs analysis, syllabus types, narrow- or wide-angled course designs, and specific and specifiable ESP elements (Basturkmen, 2006). Moreover, ESP course design should incorporate detailed aspects of what is to be learned, including where, when, why, who are the learners, and who should participate in the process (Hutchinson & Waters, 1998). This involves detailed language descriptions, such as the kind of grammar needed (for example, present perfect or present continuous) and how it is to be used in a specific situation (for example, explaining the present situation about something). Courses should also be evaluated on a regular basis to monitor whether they are meeting course goals.

Course design should also consider the timing of ESP activities. According to Wharton (1999), there are three models whereby learners acquire ESP: "induction," where the learners acquire the linguistic skills prior to experience in the target situation; "adjunct," whereby learners acquire the linguistic skills at the same time as participating in the target situation; and "apprenticeship or mentoring," whereby the learners acquire the linguistic skills directly by being immersed in the target situation.

There is widespread recognition that English learners need to acquire a basic core language—frequently-used words and sentence structures—before acquiring more advanced specific language skills (Pitt Corder, 1993). In other words, they should learn to walk before learning to run in terms of linguistic competence (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartik, 1972). Such competence underpins language used in various contexts. Coxhead and Nation (2001) suggest learners master 2000 general-use words before acquiring specific-use words. Although Basturkmen (2006) concurs, she supports acquiring specific-use words prior to general-use words, proposing that the ESP curriculum should evolve via various contributors.

One method of addressing ESP requirements is content-based instruction, focusing on topics with linguistic skills integrated into the content (Basturkmen, 2006), and so-called content and language integrated learning (CLIL). This is now used extensively in ESP. Research findings on learners studying a text on tourism have demonstrated that explicit teaching of knowledge is more successful than focusing on meaning in terms of learner motivation and being able to produce similar text (Henry and Roseberry, 1998). On the other hand, a needs analysis study on nursing students at a Japanese university found that "social" English was rated as more important than "technical" English in terms of communicative skills required with patients in the workplace (Misuzu & Tremarco, 2005). Therefore, the balance between instruction of general communicative skills and technical skills may depend on the requirements of a particular profession.

In summary, ESP has existed for more than half a century, evolving from the needs of scientists and re-searchers to a broad range of fields. There is general agreement that there needs to be detailed descriptions of linguistic structures needed for specific contexts. Some researchers such as Pitt Corder (1993) favor developing the basic English competence of learners before embarking on language requirements of specific contexts. Others such as Basturkmen (2006) favor a more genre-focused approach, which may be more motivating for learn-ers. Needs analysis is a useful tool to address some of these issues.

Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is whereby the parties—instructors, learners, and other stakeholders—participate in an investiga-tion of what language is required for a specific group of people in a specific context. This is a common resource used for designing ESP curricula. Identification of unidirectional (one-sided) or bidirectional (interactional) lin-guistic elements such as vocabulary, grammar, and discourse and genre analysis are also useful for this, as are specific skills such as reading, writing, and listening and skills (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). For example, Bosher and Smalkoski (2002) investigated the needs of immigrant nurses in a nursing degree program in the United States and identified the following: (1) ability to vary tone when talking to patients in clinical settings; ability to make "small talk" with patients; (2) ability to understand non-standard English; and (3) ability to un-derstand training instructions. Other researchers have also identified skill sets through needs analysis. For exam-ple, Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) identified certain reading skills for EAP learners including: (1) understand-ing new information through existing knowledge; (2) recognition of various text structures; (3) skimming for gist; scanning for specific information; (4) identifying the importance of information; (5) selective reading for specific purposes; distinguishing facts from opinions; and (6) identifying main ideas.

Needs can be categorized into not only necessities (English skills needed to successfully perform in English in specific situations), but also areas of lack (aspects of English learners have yet to acquire) and wants (such as a goal to perform in English in a given situation) (Hutchinson & Waters, 1998). Jordon (1997) warns that stu-dents may lack certain skills in their native language that they may need in the target language, for example, in-experience with academic writing or note-taking, presenting additional curricular development challenges.

Information about needs is commonly gathered using methods such as questionnaires, observations, inter-views, collecting specific texts, and consulting with sponsors and learners (Hutchinson & Waters, 1998). Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998) further suggest assessments as a means of identifying needs, and additionally consult-ing with ex-students, and people working in the field including both employers and employees.

Needs analysis, however, may not always identify needs sufficiently. In ESP, there often is incongruity be-tween the perception of the language instruction providers about what learners need and the perception by the learners themselves of what they need (Basturkmen, 2006). Jordan & Mackay (1973) found that 70% of over-seas postgraduates studying at the University of Manchester and University of Newcastle Upon Tyne cited un-

derstanding English as their main difficulty after arriving in the UK. Moreover, 48% indicated that expressing themselves in English was the second greatest difficulty. After six months, these percentages dropped to 39% and 42%, respectively. Difficulty in expressing themselves in English was largely the result of lack of communication with native speakers. On the other hand, Johns (1991) found university staff rated listening as the most important requirement for learners' success at university. Blue (1991) found similar problems for spoken English.

Further criticisms of needs analysis include that: (1) institutions may bias the results themselves; (2) there may be a mismatch between objective needs (what is required) and subjective needs (what the learners are interested in), for example, engineering students may need technical English related to their major, but the students themselves may be more interested in general subject matter; (3) it may be difficult to adequately predict the exact language required in specific settings; (4) specific language training may be too rigid at the expense of the development of general linguistic competence; (5) learners may not know what they need for future work they have not yet had experience in; (6) learners may not have the linguistic knowledge to express what their needs are; and (7) needs analysis may be focused on only one area, for example, functions or vocabulary (Basturkmen, 2006).

Needs analysis thus needs to be broad in focus—looking at the big picture—but narrow in detail to offer sufficient specific data to be of practical use in ESP curriculum planning development. However, it is not an exact method. Perceptions by instructors, learners, and other stakeholders may be different. Therefore, care should be taken for the process to be as comprehensive as possible, and include as many stakeholders as is feasible.

English Program in the Toyo University Department of International Tourism Management

Many undergraduate students in the DITM establish careers in tourism-related fields at airlines, airports, travel companies, hotels, and hospitality services. To prepare the students for such careers, the DITM has a strong English language focus, offering a range of compulsory and elective English classes to first- and second-year students. English test preparation classes such as for the TOEIC, TOEFL, and IELTS, as well as study abroad preparation classes are also available on campus open to all faculties.

The curriculum is revised every four years. For the 2016 to 2019 academic years, compulsory English classes for first-year students include a general program of English Communication and Reading & Vocabulary. Those for second-year students are more focused on their respective fields, and include English for Tourism Industry, Applied Reading, and Tourism Projects. Electives (Autumn 2019) include Intercultural Studies, Hospitality English, Media English, Basic Writing, Academic Writing, Academic Reading, and Test Leader. Classes are ninety minutes, held weekly.

Student Survey

All compulsory English classes are streamed this way: for English Communication, a brief in-house speaking test is given during orientation week; for Reading & Vocabulary, the test score of the reading component of the TOEIC test is used. Second-year students are streamed according to their combined TOEIC reading and listening scores for English for Tourism Industry, while for those in Applied Reading and Tourism Projects only the TOEIC reading score is applied. Some elective classes may have TOEIC score cut-offs, for example, students enrolling in Basic Writing classes should have TOEIC scores of 470 or less.

The sample for the needs analysis survey described in this paper consisted of 195 first- and second-year students in my Reading & Vocabulary and English for Tourism classes. TOEIC reading scores for the first-year students ranged from 120 to 165 with an average score of 141. There were 159 females and 36 males in this sample. In terms of nationality, 91% of the sample was Japanese, with 5% Chinese and 4% other Asians. Seven of the first-year responses were inadequately completed, leaving a final number of 90. Of the 98 second-year students, one opted out, leaving a final number of 97. Owing to the relatively low numbers of males and non-Japanese, gender and nationality were not collected in the survey to protect privacy. The survey was conducted in English in conjunction with a class feedback survey in English on the final test day of the 2018 Spring semester for each class. This was an impromptu addition to gather data for discussion regarding revision of the English curriculum.

The survey (see Appendix 1) was constructed from ideas drawn from ESP needs analysis studies of undergraduates in fine arts (Kazar & Mede, 2015) and medicine (Celic, 2017). The survey included both open-ended questions and questions employing a 5-point Likert scale. Questions included the learners' career goals, their opinion of their English strengths and weaknesses, and what English language skills they thought were needed to reach their career goals. Additional questions covered whether the students thought the existing course offerings were important, and the usefulness of other potential courses such as *Kankō Eigo Shiken* (Japanese English Tour Guide Examination) preparation, Business English, Tour Guide English, and the content-based World Heritage course. Spaces existed in the survey for students to add their own suggestions. The survey was conducted in simple English to facilitate data collection.

Results

Data from the surveys was collated and summarized on Excel sheets. The findings of second-year students are presented before first-year students on the assumption that their answers may have greater validity based on the extra year of English learning experience in the DITM. Major findings are detailed below.

Career Goals

Main career aspirations included work in the airline/airport industry (11%; such as cabin crew and ground staff),

tourism industry (10%; such as travel agent), and hotel industry (9%; such as hotel manager). Other aspirations included a job using English (3%), wedding planner (2%), soccer player (2%), and civil servant (1%). Interestingly, 28% of second-year and 25% of first-year students did not specify a career goal (16%, 21%) or were undecided (12%, 4%).

Strongest and weakest English skills

Listening was rated as the strongest skill by the majority (33% overall; 40% for second-year students, 24% for first-year students). This was followed by reading (24%; 25%, 23%) and speaking (21%; 23%, 19%) with writing the lowest. Other skills mentioned included grammar, (1%), body language (3%), with 18% providing no answer (10%, 26%).

Regarding weakest skill, speaking (30% overall; 27% for second-year students, 34% for first-year students) was rated the highest, followed by listening (20%; 22%, 18%), writing (19%; 22%, 17%), and reading (18%; 21%, 14%), which were very close. Vocabulary (12%; 12%, 11%) and grammar (4%; 3%, 6%) were also mentioned, with 6% providing no answer (1%, 12%).

Speaking, listening, and reading scores were in inverted order of strongest skills. Of note, the score for writing, while low as a "strongest skill", was almost equally rated with listening and reading as the weakest skill.

English Skills Needed for Career Goal

Students strongly agreed or agreed they need English speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in that order: speaking (96% overall; 92% for second-year students, 95% for first-year students), listening (94%; 94%, 94%), reading (90%; 92%, 89%), and writing (87%; 89%, 85%).

Current Courses

As may be expected due to experience of having taken some classes, first-year students strongly agreed or agreed that first-year courses were relevant, while second-year students more strongly agreed or agreed that second-year compulsory courses were relevant. The results are as follows: first-year classes, English Communication (91% overall; 87% for second-year students, 95% for first-year students) and Reading & Vocabulary (85%; 79%, 90%); second-year classes, English for Tourism Industry (70%; 87%, 51%), Tourism Projects (68%; 86%, 49%), and Applied Reading (46%; 46%, 45%). There was general agreement (both strong agreement and agreement) close to 50% for the relevancy of the elective classes (Hospitality English, Intercultural Studies, Basic Writing, and Academic Writing) despite around a third (33%) not answering.

Potential Courses

There was around 60-70% strong agreement and agreement for the usefulness of a *Kankō Eigo Shiken* (Japanese English Tour Guide Examination) preparation, Business English, Tour Guide English, and World Heritage courses. Suggestions by students included Report Writing, TOEIC (both Speaking/Writing and Listening/Reading), and Study Abroad Preparation courses.

Overall, there was broad agreement of the applicability of the existing compulsory English classes for first- (English Communication and Reading & Vocabulary) and second-year students (English for Tourism Industry, Tourism Projects, and Applied Reading), as well as recognition for more specific classes for English test preparation and employment-related skills (for example, Tour Guide English and Business English). In general, speaking and listening skills were rated as being more important than reading and writing skills. Listening is the only one of the four skills not separately represented as a course focus in the current DITM curriculum.

Conclusion

The literature makes clear that needs analysis is an essential part of designing an ESP curriculum. To that purpose, it is important to draw from as many stakeholders as possible, including the educational institution, instructors, learners, and employers. Some researchers suggest that basic competence is needed before acquisition of more focused ESP linguistic skills. The DITM mirrors this pattern by offering compulsory courses in basic skills for first-year students, with compulsory courses for second-year students being more focused on the tourism industry. Electives include both basic skills, such as writing classes, and ESP courses such as hospitality English.

Speaking and listening skills were perceived by students as being the more important English skills needed. The DITM perhaps should consider greater inclusion of these skills in future courses for both first- and second-year students, especially listening skills, which currently are not focused on specifically. Moreover, since there is a clear proportion of students who have career goals in specific fields, such as the airline, hotel, and tourism industries, rather than providing a restricted number of compulsory classes for all second-year students, it may be better to provide a more focused compulsory courses from which students are required to select a certain number.

This survey has a number of limitations. Firstly, the development of the research instrument lacked alpha- and beta-testing. The questionnaire was also simplistic, compiled and conducted in the English language only, and focused on learners only. Moreover, there is a lack of statistical analysis of the results. A more comprehensive and rigorous follow-up study on learners in additional to a survey of instructors and employers in the Tourism Industry is warranted to provide further insights into the optimum balance of linguistic skills focus and selection of courses for students majoring in tourism, and to contribute more concrete research findings to the literature on needs analysis and ESP.

　　While the survey in this article is wanting in several aspects, the findings largely support the current curriculum direction of the DITM and provide useful observations to be drawn on and developed for future studies in the area of needs analysis and ESP for curriculum design in the department.

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Appendix 1　　Needs Analysis Survey

English Classes and Skills in the Faculty of International Tourism Management

A. About you.

1.　Are you a 1ˢᵗ / 2ⁿᵈ / 3ʳᵈ / 4ᵗʰ year student? (Circle)

2.　What is your career goal? _____

3.　My strongest English skill is _____

4.　My weakest English skill is _____

B. Do you need English for your career goal? *(Put a circle (O) for each item.)*

Skill	Strongly agree （非常に同意できる）	Agree （同意できる）	Neither agree nor disagree （どちらともいえない）	Disagree （同意できない）	Strongly disagree （全く同意できない）
1.　I need English speaking skill for my career goal.					
2.　I need English listening skill for my career goal.					
3.　I need English reading skill for my career goal.					
4.　I need English writing skill for my career goal.					

C. What specific English skills do you need for your career goal? Why?

1.　I need _____

2.　I need _____

3.　I need _____

4.　I need _____

D. What do you think of the current English classes? *(Put a circle (O) for each item.)*

Class	Strongly agree （非常に同意できる）	Agree （同意できる）	Neither agree nor disagree （どちらともいえない）	Disagree （同意できない）	Strongly disagree （全く同意できない）
1.　English Communication (1ˢᵗ year) is important.					
2.　Reading & Vocabulary (1ˢᵗ year) is important.					
3.　English for Tourism Industry (2ⁿᵈ year) is important.					
4.　English Tourism Projects (2ⁿᵈ year) is important.					
5.　Applied Reading (2ⁿᵈ year) is important.					
6.　Hospitality English (elective) is important.					
7.　Intercultural Studies (elective) is important.					
8.　Basic Writing (elective) is important.					
9.　Academic Writing (elective) is important.					

E. What other English classes would be useful for the Faculty of International Tourism Management? *(Put a circle (O) for each item.)*

Class	Strongly agree （非常に同意できる）	Agree （同意できる）	Neither agree nor disagree （どちらともいえない）	Disagree （同意できない）	Strongly disagree （全く同意できない）
1.　Kankō Eigo Shiken (観光英語試験) preparation					
2.　Business English (presentation skills, meetings emails, letters, reports, telephone skills)					
3.　Tour Guide English					
4.　World Heritage					
5.　(Your idea) _____					
6.　(Your idea) _____					
7.　(Your idea) _____					
8.　(Your idea) _____					

【Abstract】

ESP のニーズ分析（特定の目的のための英語)

キャロライン・バートーレリ＊

　ニーズ分析は、カリキュラムやシラバス設計だけでなく、教材開発や教育に関する特定の目的（ESP）のための英語を目的としたコースの必須コンポーネントです。包括的であるためには、ニーズ分析は、教育者によって決定されるだけでなく、それらの教育や他の利害関係者からの入力を組み込む必要があります。本稿では、ESPにおけるニーズ分析の一例として、国際観光マネジメント学科における 1 年次および 2 年生のサンプル人口の英語ニーズに関する調査を含む。
キーワード：ニーズ分析、特定の目的のための英語（ESP）、カリキュラム設計、クラスルーム研究

　Needs analysis is an essential component of courses aimed at English for specific purposes (ESP) regarding not only curriculum and syllabus design, but also materials development and instruction. To be comprehensive, needs analysis should not only be determined by educators, but should also incorporate input from learners and other stakeholders. This report investigates the English language needs of a sample population of first-and second-year students in the Department of International Tourism Management at Toyo University as an example of needs analysis in ESP.
Key words : Needs analysis, English for specific purposes, curriculum design, tourism students, classroom research

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