

# THE STUDENTS' NEEDS IN LEARNING ENGLISH FOR TOURISM AT ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM IN SINTUWU MAROSO UNIVERSITY

Sherliane Trisye Poi

**Abstract:** The objective of this study was to identify the students' needs of English Study Program in learning English for Tourism. The type of this study was qualitative descriptive method. The subjects of the study were fourth semester students in academic year 2015/2016 consisted of 44 students. Data were gathered through questionnaire and analyzed descriptively, then interpreted by the researcher. The findings of the study revealed that the students felt necessary to learn EFT for their education and career in the future. The students learned EFT to know the description of tourism language and to know everything related to English. Since the students lacked in speaking and writing, their priority in this course had to be on speaking and writing skills that could be done in various activities, for instance, through discussion method. At the end of learning process, the students responded that homework was very important for them. It is expected that the result of the study can be used as a reference to prepare and develop relevant materials for students' academic and professional needs, especially English for Tourism learning need.

**Keywords:** *English for Tourism, students' needs.*

Needs analysis has an important role in the process of designing and carrying out language courses, whether it is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or general English courses. The term need analysis generally refers to the activities that are involved in collecting information that will function as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the needs of a particular group of students.

English for Tourism learned by the Students of English Education Study Program in Sintuwu Maroso University Poso. The subject is divided in two parts; the subjects are English for Tourism 1 and English for Tourism 2. English for Tourism 1 present on odd semester and English for tourism 2 present on even semester. English for tourism 1 are contracted by students that are in semester 4 up to semester 5. English for Tourism 1 and 2 have 2 credits. In order to design the English for Tourism curriculum that meets the needs of students, a research study therefore needs to be conducted.

## Needs Analysis

The concept of needs analysis has been difficult to understand because of the various interpretations of the term 'needs'. Chambers (1980) explains that one of the main sources of confusion in the area of 'needs analysis' is the term need itself. According to him "the term 'need' is both ambiguous and imprecise". Thus, it would be necessary first to see the various interpretations of the term need. Hutchinson and Water (1987) classified needs into two broad categories: target needs and learning needs.

Target needs refer to "what the learner needs to do in the target situation" (Hutchinson & Water, 1987:54). They further subdivided

target needs into necessities, lacks and wants. *Necessities* refers to what the target situation requires from the students. Hutchinson and Water (1987) defined necessities as "what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation". Widdows on the other hand referred this definition of need as a goal-oriented definition (as quoted in Hutchinson and Water, 1987). Necessities are considered objective. *Lacks* refer to the difference between what the learner already knows and what he/she is required to know in order to function in the target situation. According to Jordan (1997) lack is "the gap between the target proficiency and what the learner knows already". Lacks, like necessities, are objective. On the other hand, unlike the above two types of needs, *wants* are subjective. They refer to what the students feel they need. An important point to consider here is that what the students think they need and what other concerned bodies say the students need may not be the same. Thus, such differences should be recognized and addressed appropriately (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

## Learning Needs

Hutchinson and Waters defined learning needs as "what the learner needs to do in order to learn." (1987). They suggested that "the needs, potential and constraints of the... learning situation must also be taken into account" for the successful analysis of learner. This definition of need as learning needs is a "process-oriented definition of needs and relates to transitional behavior, the means of learning" (Robinson, 1991).

In addition to the classification of needs into target versus learning needs and goal-oriented versus process oriented needs,

some scholars also classified needs into objective versus subjective needs.

Objective needs refer to the needs drawn from factual information about learners, whereas subjective needs refer to the needs felt by the students themselves. Brindley (1989) defined objective needs refer to needs that are derivable from different kinds of factual information about learners, their use of language in real life communication situations as well as their current language proficiency and language difficulties. Subjective needs (Brindley, 1989) refer to the cognitive and affective needs of the learner in the learning situation, derivable from information about affective and cognitive factors such as personality, confidence, attitudes, learners' wants and expectations with regard to the learning of English and their individual cognitive style and learning strategies.

Brindley's definition of objective needs and subjective needs also works to what Berwick (1989) referred as felt needs and perceived needs. Felt needs are those which learners feel they have. They are often called "expressed needs, wants or desires". Perceived needs on the other hand are "... judgments of certified experts about the educational gaps in other people's experience." (Berwick, 1989).

#### Approaches to Needs Analysis

Jordan (1997) identified seven approaches to needs analysis. These approaches are: target situation analysis, present situation analysis, deficiency analysis, strategy analysis, means analysis, language audit and constraints. However, the most widely mentioned are target situation analysis, present situation analysis and learning situation analysis.

#### Learning Needs Analysis

The previous two approaches to needs analysis focus on identifying the target performance and the students' current performance in relation to the target situation. However, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), needs analysis should also include how this target situation performance is achieved. In other words, as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) put it "we also need to know ... how people learn to do what they do with language". Thus, learning needs analysis is meant to gather data on what learners need to do in order to learn.

A framework for learning needs analysis is presented by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) with these major questions:

- 1) Why are the learners taking the course?
- 2) How do the learners learn?
- 3) What resources are available?

- 4) Who are the learners?
- 5) Where will the ESP course take place?
- 6) When will the ESP course take place?
- 7) These questions are further subdivided into more detailed questions.

#### The Purposes of Needs Analysis

Needs analysis serves various purposes, among which, the most widely mentioned is supplying content to a given course. Richards (2001) has identified the following additional purposes of needs analysis.

- 1) It provides data as to what language is required in the target situation, and thus, helps in specifying and sequencing contents.
- 2) It provides parameter for collecting data from various groups of people, hence, enlarging the input in to content, design and implementation of a language program.
- 3) It identifies language needs and directs the development of goals, objectives, and contents.
- 4) It helps in grouping students by supplying information about who is at what level, who needs extra training, who shares the same need with the others etc.
- 5) It identifies the gap between the learners' current performance and the required target performance.
- 6) It helps to identify the difficulties students are facing.
- 7) Provides data for evaluating an existing program (as to how far it addresses the needs of the target learners).

Since needs analysis serves the purposes listed above and many more, it is considered to be an important component in syllabus design.

#### Tourism

Tourism is commonly referred to as "the activity of visiting places for pleasure". The basic concept of tourism is based on the movement of people outside their own place of residence i.e. home area. Therefore, tourism can be considered as the movement of people within a city, state, country or across international boundary. Conceptually, tourism is defined as "the sum of the phenomenon and relationships arising from the travel and stay of nonresidents in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity". Tourism can be defined as: "The activities of a person travelling to a place outside his or her usual environment for less than a specified period of time and whose

main purpose of travel is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the places visited.”

Elements of tourism refer to the basic fundamental without which tourism activity of any kind is not possible. They form the base of tourism and all tourism activities are possible due to them. The concept of tourism as a phenomenon involves the movement of people within their own country or across the national borders for a certain period of time. The anatomy of tourism phenomenon is basically composed of three elements, namely; (1) man (the human element as the creator of the act of tourism), space (the physical element to be necessarily covered by the act itself) and time (the temporal element which is composed by the trip itself and the stay at the destination).

The components refers to those parts of machinery without which the mechanism of the machinery will fail. The parts of tourism that makes the mechanism of tourism industry work are the components of tourism. There cannot be any touristic activity without attraction also known as Tourism Patrimony, Transportation, Accommodation and Amenities. Together these components are commonly referred to as the A's of Tourism. The components are:

- 1) Attraction or Tourism Patrimony
- 2) Accessibility
- 3) Accommodation
- 4) Amenities are the facilities provided to the tourists.

### Method

The type of this research is qualitative descriptive method. Descriptive method to describe about the result of the students' need in learning of English for Tourism subject at English Study Program of Sintuwu Maroso University. The location of this research was English Education Study Program in Sintuwu Maroso University. It is located in Jl. P Timor No. 1 Poso. The source of the data for the research was the fourth semester students of English Study Program in Sintuwu Maroso University Poso, in the academic year of 2015/2016 academic. The data were gathered using questionnaire distributed to 44 students as the respondents.

### Findings and Discussions

#### Findings

To make it clear, the findings were organized part by part by the answer of the students from the questionnaire. Students' attitude was one of contributing factors which determined the students' success on learning

foreign language. There were two questions dealing with the students' attitude.

#1: *Is it necessary for the students of English Department to learn EFT?*

For this question, 68,2% students responded as very necessary, 27,2% students responded as necessary, and 4,5% students responded it as not very necessary. It shows that more than half students responded that it was very necessary for the students of English Education Department to learn EFT.

#2 *Is EFT useful for your education and your career?*

75% students positively responded that EFT was useful for their education and career, while 25% students responded it as useful. Therefore, almost all students agreed that EFT was useful for their education and career.

#3 *Why do you enroll in EFT program?*

52% students responded that they would like to know what English for Tourism was about, while 34% students answered the course was to complete their knowledge of English, 9% students answered to complete their semester credit, and 5% students said the course was the one left. It means that half of the students enrolled in the program since they were curious of the course.

#4 *Which skill do you feel was your weakest?*

When asked about which of the four skills was the weakest for them, 45,4% students answered that speaking skill was their weakest, 43% students said that writing was their weakest, and 11,3% students answered that their reading skill was their weakest. Thus, almost half of the students agreed that speaking skill was the weakest skill for them.

The students' personal objective to enroll in English for Tourism course was considered as necessary to be known. The reason to ask the questions was to know whether the students had any complaints or not regarding the course. The answers were considered as valuable inputs toward the improvement of the next English for Tourism course.

#5 *According to you, is it necessary to make improvement in EFT teaching?*

For this question, 52,3% students responded that it was very necessary to improve the teaching of English for Tourism, while the rest 47,7% students gave a rather weak statement that it was necessary, but not very necessary to improve the teaching. In another word, half of the students showed their satisfaction, but the students still wished for any other suitable measure to be done in the course to meet the students' needs. This

strongly indicates that students needed new methods in EFT I teaching and learning.

*#6 If your answer is yes (for question #5), what did you feel when learning course?*

47.7% respondents claimed that the material was far from their understanding. Another 31,8% claimed that the way of teaching and learning in the course were monotonous. It means that the method had not suited the students' learning needs yet, while the remained 20.5% respondents claimed that the materials did not vary. It means that almost half of the students felt that the materials were difficult to comprehend.

The question of methodological preference was aimed to find out specifically the way the students preferred to do in learning process. Questions related to this are as follows:

*#7 According to you, are these activities useful for you?*

The students were asked to choose which of the following activities was most useful for them: role play; discussion; songs; memorizing conversation; creating post card, announcement and leaflet, and; language game. 77.3% students answered that discussion was most useful, and 75% students answered that creating postcard. Role-play was the second choice, chosen by 31 or 70.5% respondents and memorizing conversations came after it which was chosen by 13 or 25% respondents. The other techniques such as songs and language game were viewed useful by only a small number of students, which seem unlikely to be considered. The high comparison among the choice should be considered as the students' preferable way of learning in the classroom. It is better for lecturer to accommodate the students' way of learning so the students can participate in the learning process.

The following tables explain the students' view of learning time, the additional time of learning and their aim to add time of learning.

*#8 Is homework important for you?*

At the end of the learning process the teacher some time give the home work. The students response to the home work is varied, 24 or 54,5% think it is very important and 11 students or 25% that important but there are 9 students think that it is not important.

The given question was aimed to have some valuable suggestions as their wants and inputs in designing syllabuses.

*#9 What is your suggestion to improve EFT?*

For this question, 36.4% students responded that it could be done in various activities. It seems that variation on the class activities was viewed as something to bring

them in easy and enjoyable situation. 29.5% students responded that grammar was also important to teach in the course, while 22.7% responded that vocabulary was also important. Their responses were very reasonable since EFT has its own characteristics of language. Finally, 11.4% responded that the course had to consists of culture as additional knowledge. This means that almost half of the students agreed that EFT could be done in various activities.

*#10 How are you going to use your knowledge of English for Tourism*

The students were asked about how would they use their knowledge of English for tourism. 77.3% students wanted to use it to give information of tourism product and service such as hotel and travel. 18.2% said they wanted it to understand job information and write letter of application, while the rest of them or 4.5% said that they had not decided yet what to do with their knowledge from the course. This means that almost all students wanted to use the knowledge to give information around hospitality subject such as giving information about hotels and travels. This is very reasonable because in general people do not go to University without any target. Most of them expect to earn money by using their knowledge, and it can only be done if the students do a job.

### Discussion

From the findings, it is revealed that students' demand of English for Tourism, as shown by their responses on the ten questions. Their positive attitude was a good reason to keep their motivation to know the language more and more. Positive attitude of English in general and ESP as Gardner's theory (cited in Freeman & Long, 1992:175) states that attitude does not directly correlate to the success of learning in English, but it directly correlates to motivation, and to the success and failure of learning an L2.

Attitude affects motivation, which in turn affects second language acquisition. The students' positive attitude to English for Tourism is an internal factor to become successful English learners, and for that reason it is hoped that various given activities of learning will be enjoyable for them.

It seems that the students' weakness in speaking was caused by their low of self-confidence to express their idea orally. The fact that the student wrote a question, but offered it to a friend to ask it, is a fact that the students were motivated to know the lesson, but not confident to show what they want. In order to cope with this, there should be a way

to help them improve their speaking skill by giving them much more chance to speak without any pressure.

The lack of writing can be understood since writing is not a natural activity in which all people have to be taught how to do it. Based on the data, writing was not placed at the top of needs, however, writing is very essential in tourism, such as to give a clear information to our guest in written form. It means, the ability of listened in English more or less will be useful for the students' future career. For these reasons, it is decided to facilitate the students not only to improve their speaking skill but also listening skill.

Target situation can be defined as specific purpose for which the course will be required, such as why the language is needed, how the language will be used and what learners think they will achieve (Wello & Nur, 1999:43). The reason that English was their first choice shows that they have high motivation in learning English. So do in learning English for tourism, which was shown by the most students who think English for tourism is very necessary.

The students were enthusiastic to know more and more English shows their demand on English. Their demand of English could be concluded high since they think it is very necessary to add their English knowledge for out of university such as English meeting club. Their specific reason to do that is to improve their ability in speaking. The students' need in learning English for Tourism is positive. This finding was based on their opinion that English for Tourism is useful for their career. That is why they want to know what English for Tourism is

The students said that it is very difficult for them to speak while the lecturers identified that the most difficult thing the students do is writing. It can be concluded

that both of these skills are the students' lack. All of the students who had experiences of learning English for Tourism, claimed that there should be a proof of English for Tourism teaching both in material and the class activities. To improve the teaching and learning process of English for Tourism, the respondents suggest doing the process in various way, such as discussion, role-play and making creation. The students' reason to learn English for Tourism was to develop their knowledge of English in tourism context and to develop their future career. The students' lacks were in speaking. Listening and writing. Therefore, the students' priority must be on speaking and writing skills.

### Conclusions and Suggestions

The students' needs in learning English for Tourism can be conclude that the students felt necessity in learning EFT for their education and career in the future. This is very reasonable because in general people do not go to University without any target. Most of them expect to earn money by using their knowledge, and it can only be done if the students do a job. When they learn EFT they know the description of tourism language and to know everything relates to English language as the consequence of the students of faculty of teacher and education. The students' lacks were in speaking and writing. So, the students' priority must be on speaking and writing skills. It should be done in various activities. The Discussion method is the ways of the students' prefer to do in learning process. At the end of learning, process the learner response very important in giving homework. Hopefully that the result of the research used as a source, to prepare and develop materials which are relevant to students' academic, and professional English language need especially English for Tourism learning need.

### REFERENCES

- Berwick, R. (1989). Needs assessment in language programming: From theory to practice. In R. K. Johnson (Eds.), *The second language curriculum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brindley, G. P. (1989). The role of needs analysis in adult ESL program design: In R. K. Johnson (Eds.), *The second language curriculum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chambers F. (1980). A re-evaluation of needs analysis. *ESP Journal*, 1/1,
- Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jordan, RR. (1997). *English for academic purposes: A guide and source book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robinson, P.C. (1991). *ESP today: A practitioner's guide*. New York: Prentice Hall

#### **About the Author**

Sherliane Trisye Poi is the Lecture of English Education Study Program at Sintuwu Maroso Poso.