

# Need Analysis: English Language Use by Students in the Tourism and Hospitality and Industry

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## Abstract

This research had 3 objectives. First, to discover the main skills students studying in Tourism (TR) and Hospitality Industry (HI) need to successfully use English. Second, to ascertain the essential skills that students need in English language acquisition. Last, to investigate which skills students found to be the most problematic in English language learning. The informants of 160 students were split by the quota sampling method into two equally sized groups of 80 learners each; i.e., 80 were placed into the Tourism group and 80 into the Hospitality group. Twenty participants were selected equally from each academic year - from first year students to fourth year students - for placement into each category of TR and HI. To acquire relevant data a learner's perception questionnaire was employed as well as interview questions. Average and standard deviation were used to examine the questionnaire data and content analysis for the interview data. There was a .05 difference statistically between the hospitality industry and tourism students' English scores. The hospitality industry students scored slightly higher. Conversely, when comparing the different levels of students' attitudes in the 5 language skills, the tourism students scored higher than the hospitality industry students, yet the difference of .05 was also not statistically significant. Additionally, the outcome from a comparison of student satisfaction levels toward English teaching and learning, found that tourism students reported higher satisfaction levels than those of the hospitality industry students. However, the .05 degree of difference was not statistically significant. Also, neither of the student groups were significantly different in terms of enhancing their English skills. Additionally, the interview results showed that improving English language skills and grammatical structures were the skills the students' reported needing the most assistance with in their studies. Neither of the student groups were significantly different in terms of enhancing their English skills. The study found that the main reason that students of both majors desired to improve their English language skills was to improve their grades. The obstacles faced by the students in these two sample groups in using the English language are not very different, since most of the interviewed people reported that the skills of listening and speaking as being the greatest problems in their communication. Another similarity between the two sample groups was that students of both majors expressed a positive attitude toward their English language learning.

**Keywords:** needs analysis, English language use

## 1. Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industry has become a social and economic force on a global scale. Negotiating, engaging in transactions with foreigners, and general communication are extremely important skills for students who wish to work in either the tourism or hospitality industries. Therefore, English language proficiency is essential for those who are pursuing careers in this industry. In Thailand, the tourism industry is very profitable and grows every year. The Thai government consistently creates policies and laws which favor the tourism industry in order to encourage more tourists, produce more domestic jobs, and help the economy (Bonham & Mak, 2014). English is the main language used by the majority of tourists in Thailand. Furthermore, understanding English grammar structures and vocabulary are vital skills for students pursuing hospitality or tourism fields of work.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP or English for specific purposes has become much more popular with the popularity of educational psychology. ESP students have different requirements and interests from other types of students, which has influenced their motivations for learning and the effectiveness of their

schooling. This has led to the evolution of ESP courses which address learners' needs and interests. Therefore, ESP is becoming more important for students engaged in the Tourism and Hospitality industries. It is important for educators to understand their students' strengths, weaknesses, needs, and learning styles. Both teachers and students have issues in EFL or English as a foreign language. Some of these problems arise from teaching methodologies (Kannan, 2009). Many EFL teachers teach through lectures and placing a focus on grammatical rules rather than practicing communicative language. Nunan (2004) explains how a teacher-centered approach can be ineffective for some learners.

ESP has become a very important field in the EFL field. English for specific purposes creates opportunities for students to communicate and interact in situational. Hashim (2006) explains that when learners are put in situations to communicate naturally without stress, they experience a greater level of successful language acquisition than those students educated in the aforementioned traditional teaching methodologies. Although tourism is a major contributor to Thailand's economy, studies on ESP needs analysis on tourism related courses are insufficient. The lack of empirical studies on ESP needs analysis has compromised the quality of university ESP courses. The goals of the ESP courses are clearly outlined to the students, but they are nevertheless not achieved due to the virtual non-existence of needs analysis (Fiarito, 2005). It is worth noting that hospitality industry students should be offered an ESP course that equips them with a proficient level of English in order to communicate successfully in the real-world.

Teachers should not rely on their past experiences when deciding how and what students need to study. This can lead to a misalliance between the goals set out by the teachers and the English skills levels of the students when they complete their studies. This problem originates from the lack of specification and analysis of the students' needs (Douglas, 2013). The Tourism and Hospitality Industry are one of the sources of hard currency in Thailand, and in order to make this industry effective, it needs skilled and well-trained manpower. Consequently, the requirement for well-trained staff in the industry that possesses the necessary English skills must influence the types of training that are provided. In an effort to remedy the lack of specification and analysis of students' needs, the researchers are inspired to research the skills students need when studying English.

### 1.1 Purposes of the Study

This study aimed to analyze three things.

1. To learn about the different English skills needed for students studying in the fields of Tourism (TR) and Hospitality Industry (HI).
2. To find out the skills that students most need in English language learning.
3. To investigate the student's most problematic English language learning skills.

### 1.2 Research Questions

The questions proposed in this study are:

1. What do students studying Tourism and the Hospitality Industry need to improve their English communication?
2. Which skills do the students need when using the English language in their field of study?
3. Which skills do the students have problems with when communicating in the English language?

### 1.3 Conceptual Framework

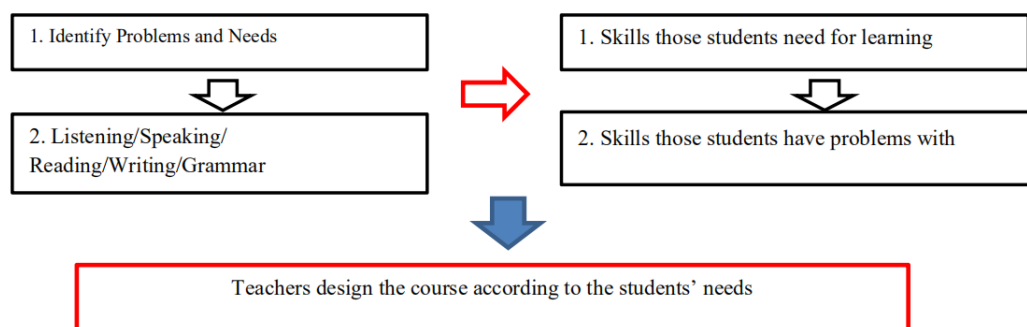


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of this study

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Needs Analysis in ESP Courses

English for specific purposes courses are courses geared toward a distinct career or discipline with the English taught containing the vocabulary and skills that address the specific purposes and needs for learners of that career or discipline. It aims to cultivate students' English communication skills for work. English for Special Purposes will become the prevailing type of English teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Hui, 2017). Compared with General English (EGP), ESP teaching has unique characteristics. From a teaching point of view, ESP teaching has a clear, targeted purpose. This means that ESP learners not only study English solely for language learning but also to gain knowledge of a particular profession. Hence, ESP courses and teaching methodologies are based upon a learners' needs analysis.

The students' learning needs influence the selection of lesson content and teaching methodology; namely, the communication activities which the students would use in their work and the knowledge and abilities which they need when carrying out the communicative activities (Reid, 1995). Moreover, ESP teaching pays attention to the practical competence of the learners. To communicate proficiently in English students, need to be able to communicate in a specific and professional manner. This means that the student's knowledge of learning and language use cannot be separated (Hutchinson & Waters, 2002).

ESP courses are centered on the idea that students will need to learn specific content while also being flexible to any external language that might be used depending on the student's field of work or study (Celce – Murcia, 2001). The main difference between general English courses and ESP courses is that the instructors are sensitive to the specific needs of the students and how they are going to use the content in their daily lives. For ESP to be successful the learners and teachers need to understand how the target language will be used outside the classroom. Piyanapa (2004) pointed out that a student's understanding of their strengths and weaknesses as well as what areas they would like to explore in a language is considered needs analysis. Hence, if an instructor understands the areas the learners will need to practice, better and more engaging courses can be designed. However, if the instructor does not consider how the learners will use the target language the course design will not be as beneficial or motivating for the learners which might lead to a student feeling disconnected from the lesson (Mackay & Mountford, 1978).

Needs analysis provides the instructors with a baseline on how to deliver new knowledge. In this study, needs analysis is used as a determination of behavior before improving and implementing the teaching plan. It can also deliver a baseline for English teaching material compilation, which allows the instructor to create teaching material that is more suitable for the objective requirements of the students and thereby increasing the students' learning interest. Needs analysis is an essential step when setting up ESP courses and is a tool for reaching the ultimate goal of the ESP courses. In this section, researchers are going to review four parts: definition of needs, features of EPS courses, the necessity of needs analysis, and learning needs in ESP courses. English for specific purposes can be divided into multiple categories. One is English for Academic Purposes (EAP) which focuses on the student's needs for language use in an academic environment. Another is English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) which targets the students' use of English in an occupational setting (Munby, 1978; Robinson, 1991).

When considering ESP for students in a specific field of study there are multiple subcategories available such as English for Science and Technology (EST), English for Business and Economics (EBE), and English for Social Sciences (ESS). English for business also has a category in the ESP field. English for Specific Business Purposes (ESBP) and English for General Business Purposes (EGBP) are just a few. The needs of learners can be put into three types in ESP (Tahir, 2011).

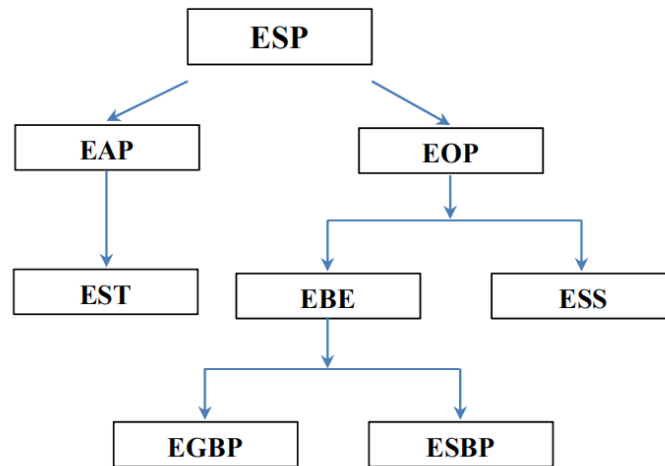


Figure 2. Branches of ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987)

Learning needs Cognitive Needs Sociological Needs Methodological Needs Ex. motivational, Ex. Teacher's role, subject Ex. classroom teaching, recreational and emotional valence, social responses procedures, abilities, and needs plan.

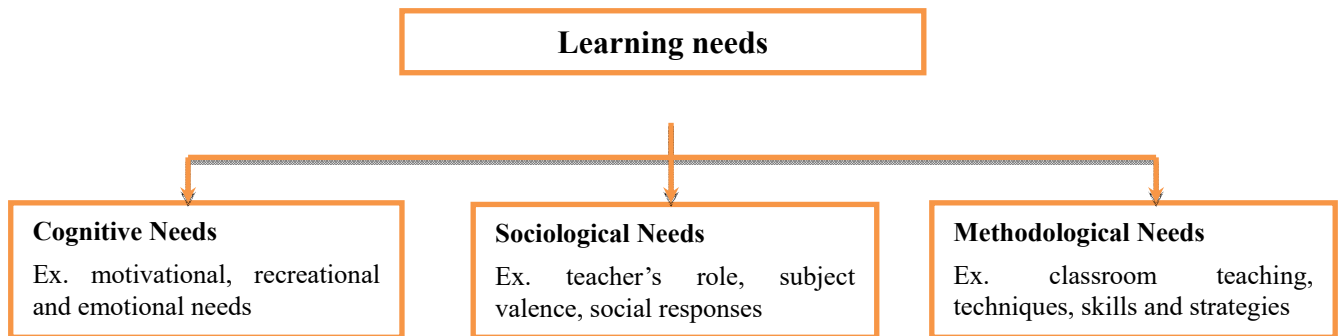


Figure 3. The types of skills needed by students studying ESP (Tahir, 2011)

A Learner Communication Needs Processor (CNP) and Profile needs are some of the tools Munby (1987) created.

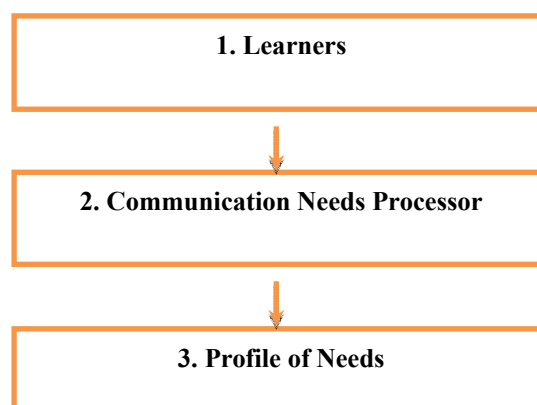


Figure 4. Munby's Model of Need Analysis (Munby, 1987)

1. Learners: this is the general information about the students. This information covers the student's ability level of English, nationality, gender, age, and other languages known.
2. Communication Needs Processor (CNP): is a tool used to determine the specific needs of a student. The students' background and profile are used to decide what kind of language lesson will benefit them most.
3. Profile of Needs: this is used to determine a curriculum's objectives for the ESP course.

A needs analysis model has been created by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) which has seven tiers. The first is about the way the curriculum will be planned with the educational circumstances in mind. Next, is about the student's info and background. Third, the students' educational history and use of English in the real-world are considered. Then the student's abilities or strengths and weaknesses in the target language. Next, the student's immediate goals or needed language for their occupation are considered. The fifth is the consideration of how the students best to learn is taken into account. The teacher needs to understand what kinds of lessons or methodologies will best stimulate the learners. The role the students need to take as an English communicator in their occupation is sixth. Finally, the educator needs to find vocabulary and phrases that are relevant to the learner's occupation and include them in the course. All of these tiers of consideration can be used to tailor fit the course to the student's weaknesses and desired course outcomes. In ESP courses the needs of the learners are heavily considered when designing the course. A competent process of finding the student's needs is imperative. If the process of finding the learners' needs is flawed, the course might be weak, uninteresting, or ineffective at reaching the students learning goals.

## 2.2 English Language Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is a critical form of research that needs to be conducted before lesson planning or learning, methodologies can be planned. A proper needs analysis system can guide the educator to a better understanding of the learner's objectives and subsequently the overall course, whereby the required English needs of the students are determined and prioritized. In the next section needs analysis definitions, variations of student language objectives, and ESP course design will be discussed. Historically there have been quite a few variations of needs analysis in EFL and ESL. Originally the term was coined by Michael West in the 1920s. West (1994) explained that at the beginning of ESP most of the focus was on English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) and that morphed into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) later. In order to properly understand the learner's needs a systematic and ongoing process needs to be used by the instructor. It also entails an interpretation of the information, followed by course creation decisions being made that are based on the interpretation to meet those needs. In order to produce and teach an effective course, the teachers and course planners must investigate the specific vocabulary and skills learners need to reach their educational goals.

### 2.2.1 Types of English Language Needs

A variety of different approaches have been used to achieve quality ESP courses. There are multiple types of needs analysis (NA). Learner analysis is a type of NA that focuses on the learner's needs. Task analysis is more focused on the types of activities that might be successful in the classroom (Nunan, 1988). Another two types of needs analysis were expressed by Richards (2001). Objectives, plans, and intentions of language use are all considered in subjective needs analysis. Based on facts such as first language, age, and country of birth, subjective needs analysis tries to find more concrete and authentic types of needs of the learner. In this study two types of NA will be used, target needs and learning needs, and will be discussed further.

1. The needs a learner requires for a specific or target situation is called target needs. Target needs focuses on the learner's necessities, strengths, and weaknesses, or wants and lacks, in a specific situation. Things the learner needs to know about a language for a specific scenario are the necessities. The ability to understand a text in a specific field of work could be a necessity for the learner. The level of assistance needed from the teacher is dependent upon how well the student can do the task on their own. The target proficiency can then be contrasted against the student's existing proficiency creating a profile of the learners' lack. Finally, wants can be seen as the student's perceptions of their learning needs. Wants are things the learner consciously thinks they need to be successful using the target language. By asking or interviewing the learners the instructor can get a better understanding of the learner's wants.

2. Learning needs are the actions the student must do to reach the course objectives. Learning needs also show a sequential road map of how a learner will be able to navigate the language course by starting with focusing on the wants and finishing with necessities. Moreover, learning needs to encompass all the factors in the learning process like feelings towards the target language, understanding of the language, what stimulates

learner growth, beneficial learning techniques, and the learner's personal profile. For ESP courses to be effective they should be exciting, interesting, innovative, grounded, and realistic in the time frame set by the instructor. ESP courses are quite different from traditional teacher-centered courses. In order to accurately meet the expectations and needs of the learners, target situation needs and learning needs are vital for the instructor to consider when designing lessons.

To sum it up, ESP lessons should be guided by the proper collection of both learning and target needs. The process of collecting the learner's needs can help lead the instructor to a successful course design that can meet and surpass the personal and educational expectations of the learners.

### 2.2.2 Course Design for ESP

Organizing and drafting an ESP courses is called course design. A practical course in ESP has three main ingredients. A legitimate analysis of the learner's needs, the instructor's comprehension and execution of a variety of approaches and methodologies, and the types of tools and resources the instructors and learners have at their disposal. With a clear objective stated, an ESP course is the journey to meet said objectives that both the learner and instructor travel together (Hutchinson & Walters, 1987). Munby (1978) describes an ESP course as a meeting point between the needs of the learner and the materials used by the instructors. The analysis of the learned needs will guide the materials the instructors choose. When an instructor is building an ESP course the vocabulary, phrases, and jargon of the target field need to be researched and understood. It is valuable for instructors to show the learners the course syllabus before starting the course. This allows the learners to have a chance to offer suggestions on how it can be improved. This also lets the learners gain an understanding of the objectives and pace of the course syllabus. Robinson (1991) explains that there are a lot of ways an ESP course can be designed. The instructor needs to look at each course as a new one. It can be easy for instructors to fall into the trap of using old methods or materials that may have worked with previous learners, but might not be relevant with the new ones. Each ESP course should be customized for the current learner's needs and wants.

To summarize, ESP course design needs to consider the learner's needs, wants, and goals and incorporate materials that are relevant, interesting, and accessible. Needs analysis of the learners is a key element of ESP course designs. To achieve these aims, several parameters have to be taken into consideration: the identification of needs, syllabus design, materials production, and evaluation and assessment.

### 2.3 English Language Skills

The most prevalent difference in an ESP course is the learner's objectives for studying the course. ESP students are typically adults who have already completed their formal education and are trying to gain more knowledge about the language needed for their specific occupation of the field of work. The foundation of a quality ESP course is built on a quality assessment of the learned needs. Rather than focusing on traditional grammar building, ESP courses only focus on grammar and language used in the learner's specific occupation. ESP covers a variety of subjects and areas. From business management to customer interaction for taxi drivers, ESP is only limited by the instructor's experience and imagination to build a relevant learning course. Unlike traditional learning where the course is developed without understanding the student's needs, ESP courses cannot begin to be assembled without the knowledge of the learner's needs. The four skills in English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), will all be explored in the following section.

Firstly, listening comprehension is a receptive skill in the aural mode. Exposing ESP learners to a variety of listening activities, using the target language, can be beneficial for the learner's vocabulary development and listening comprehension at real-life conversation speeds. When students use their listening skills, they have to use prior knowledge to try and comprehend what is currently being said (Harmer, 2001). If the learner does not have any prior knowledge or experience with the target language then trying to complete listening comprehension tasks will be extremely difficult.

When learners are exercising their speaking skills, it can be more difficult than they might have assumed. As the most straightforward way to communicate, speaking is an oral skill that is quite useful for ESP students (Hair, Friedrich, & Dixon, 1995). Harmer (2001) laid out four main aspects of communication through speech. The first is connected speech. The user needs to have an understanding of the sounds of specific words and also what kinds of words typically follow each other. The learners need to have an understanding of how words are used in a certain order together and how these words blend, or connect, with each other. When we adjust the tone of our voice or change the volume of our speech, we are using expressive devices. These devices can be clues to the listener about how we feel about the content being discussed. Understanding words that can make others feel positive or negative are important. Mastering a language's lexis and grammar can give the speaker more tools to

ensure the listener understands the exact emotions being conveyed. Being able to communicate with those who do not natively speak the language being used is difficult. Negotiation language is important for bridging the gap between users of a second language.

Reading is a passive skill that is usually developed alongside learners listening and speaking skills. Reading can improve many aspects of a learner's language abilities. More reading can develop a learner's vocabulary and can improve their listening comprehension. Pardo (2004) discusses how reading motivation can be increased by allowing the learners to choose their reading materials and instructors should try to find relevant and interesting material for them to read. This method of material selection encourages the use of authentic literacy. The results Pardo (2004) found are supported by the work of Ivey and Broadbush (2001) in that learners prefer to choose their reading material. After understanding the learner's needs and interests the researcher can make a more informed decision about what materials will best suit the course objectives.

Writing is one of the hardest skills in language because it combines multiple areas of a language into one task. The majority of people write much less than they speak, listen, or read so it can be challenging for even native speakers. Reading and writing are similar in that both can be used socially and both are used to express the speaker's ideas (Kavaliauskiene, 2004). Dudley-Evans & John (1998) explained that when creating scholastic or occupational texts, it is important that the writer has a firm understanding of the used language. Writing involves not only the production of text but also the skills to be able to edit and rewrite the text when mistakes are discovered. Writing can be quite challenging and should be taught carefully by the ESP instructor.

#### *2.4 Problems in Using the English Language*

Learners and instructors can find English difficult. Some of these problems are concerned with teaching methodologies (Kannan, 2009). Students can face a myriad of difficulties when trying to learn. Pronunciation, grammar, and spelling can plague language learners and lower their motivation to keep learning. Sometimes a learner's native language can cause some of these problems (Shelby, 2015). With so many unfamiliar words, language beginners can find listening to the target very difficult (Brown, 1994). It can be easy for beginners to get lost in a conversation while trying to listen to native speakers. If the beginner gets caught thinking about a new word the native speaker will continue to speak and quickly leave the beginners behind without knowing it. A good way to practice listening comprehension is to try listening to media in the target language regularly (Mendelssohn & Rubin, 1995). Scarcella & Oxford (1992) point out that, practicing listening comprehension might take more time because of stress, semantics, and difference from the learner's native language.

A key to successful listening comprehension is controlling the thoughts that go through the learner's mind while trying to decipher the target language. Reading comprehension can be as difficult as listening comprehension. According to Gunning (2002), lacking a solid foundation in vocabulary and grammar can be the cause of these problems. Nuttall (2000) says that these problems can also stem from confusing vocabulary which has multiple meanings or similar sounds. Sometimes students need to guess the meaning of words and phrases to overcome these problems. It is valuable for instructors to understand that the difficulty of vocabulary and phrases can inhibit the learner's reading comprehension. Prepositional phrases, abnormal nouns, participle phrases, and coordinating conjunctions are just a few of the problem words language learners have when developing reading comprehension (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003).

Therefore, a better way to provide effective and high-quality language teaching is to ascertain the students' needs when designing and delivering the course to make learners become independent language users (Seyyed Mohammad Reza, 2013). Some of the best ways to promote reading are to give the students more choices when selecting reading material and interesting ways to practice. In traditional teaching there is not adequate time for the learners to practice meaningfully or choose the material. Using English in Thailand is very important for communicating and working with foreigners. Mastering the English language can drastically change a Thai person's social and professional life in positive ways (Pinyosunun, 2006). However, for most Thai people it is difficult to find opportunities to use English in their daily life. Most colleagues and friends will use Thai to communicate in daily situations. Having never been colonized by a foreign country is a blessing and a curse in that most Thais will never need to use English in their society. Even though all students have to study English in grade school, the level of English in Thailand is still relatively low. In contrast, when you look at Thailand's neighboring countries, which were colonized, English is much more common and used by ordinary citizens.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

The research design is the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived to answer the research questions and control variance. This study is a developmental research using learners' perception questionnaires. Hence, learners' perception questionnaires were carried out. Further interviews were carried out with the learners. The researchers used interview questions to support the findings of the questionnaires, transcript analysis, and documents as data sources. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative tools for data collection. This research focused on students from two fields of study, Tourism (TR) and the Hospitality Industry (HI). The goal was to discover their needs when studying English, to find out the skills that students most need in English language learning, and to investigate the skills that students found to be the most problematic in English language acquisition. Consequently, the participants in this study were 160 TR and HI students of Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, Samut Prakan. The learners were chosen by the quota sampling method approach. In this section, the research instruments consisted of lesson plans, learners' perception questionnaire, and interview questions.

#### 3.2 Data Collection

This research took place in 15 sessions, during 15 weeks in the second semester of the 2018 academic year. The research was carried out from the August 2018 to December 2018. The whole inquiry was an on-going process; with data collection and analysis paralleling and overlapping each other. Therefore, the researchers collected the data using the following procedures. The researchers ask HCU's permission to conduct the study. With the participant's consent a questionnaire was used. All data were analyzed with the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD). After the questionnaire, the participants took part in interviews consisting of ten questions. The interview answers support the data gathered from the questionnaire.

#### 3.3 Data Analysis

In this section, the researchers present the data analysis, statistical devices, and evaluation. The first section is a discussion of the data analysis. Then the statistical devices are presented, and lastly, evaluation. Qualitative and quantitative means were used for gathering the data in this research. All the data gathered was analyzed using the following steps.

1. The scores of perception questionnaires were evaluated based on the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD).
2. Data from the interviews were analyzed, reanalyzed, and then coded for reliability.

In order to put the data into clear categories coding was used. While coding the researcher reorganized the information to better more concise categorize. All of the data was organized using the final categorize.

### 4. Results

Two sections were used to present the results. The quantitative data is represented in the first section and the qualitative data in the second.

#### 4.1 The Quantitative Data Report

The learning needs in English, of the participants from the faculties of Tourism and the Hospitality Industry. The results of the participants majoring in tourism had an average score of 2.90 in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. Whereas students majoring in the hospitality industry had an average score of

2.97. When comparing different levels of students' listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar abilities, the hospitality industry students scored higher than the tourism students, yet not at a statistically significant level of .05. When comparing the opinions towards how difficult listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar was, the students majoring in tourism had an average score of 2.40 and students majoring in the hospitality industry had an average score of 2.41.

Table 1. A comparison of the student's ability levels in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	2.40	.455	-.154	.878
Hospitality industry	80	2.41	.568		

\* Level of statistical significance .001 \*\* Level of statistical significance .05



When comparing the students listening, reading, speaking, writing, and grammar abilities, this study found that the hospitality students were more advanced than the tourism students, yet were not statistically significantly different at .05

#### 4.1.1 The Students' English Language Skills Needs for Use in Their Field of Study

Listening skills: most students needed to improve this skill at 47.5%, followed by need a bit improve at 27.9%, need very much to improve at 21.9%, and no need to improve at 3.1%. Reading skills: most students needed to improve this skill at 39.4%, followed by need a bit improve 35.6%, need very much to improve at 20.0% and no need to improve at 5%. With writing skills, most students needed to improve this skill at 47.5%, followed by need to very much improve at 25.6%, need a bit to improve at 25.0%, and no need to improve at 1.9%. In the area of grammar, most students needed very much improvement of this skill at 43.8%, followed by need much improve at 37.5%, need a bit to improve at 14.4% and no need to improve at 4.4%.

Students majoring in Tourism had an average score of 2.99 in their comparison of different opinions toward the needs of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. Students majoring in the hospitality industry had an average score of 2.91. The total average scores were 2.95. The attitudes toward listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar showed that the students majoring in tourism had an average score of 3.22, whereas the hospitality industry students had an average score of 3.18, and the total average scores were 3.20.

When each skill was considered, it was found that in listening skills, students majoring in tourism had average scores of 3.41, but the hospitality industry students had average scores of 3.24. The total average scores were 3.32.

#### 4.1.2 Student Problems When Communicating in the English Language

Table 2. Comparison of students' reading skill problems

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	3.18	.838	.088	.930
Hospitality industry	80	3.16	.947		

\* Level of statistical significance .001 \*\* Level of statistical significance .05

When comparing different levels of students' problems in reading skills, it was found that the tourism students scored higher than the hospitality industry students, yet the difference was not statistically significant at .05.

Table 3. Comparison of students' writing skills problems

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	3.33	1.003	.523	.602
Hospitality industry	80	3.24	.992		

\* Level of statistical significance .001 \*\* Level of statistical significance .05

When comparing different levels of students' problems in listening skills, it was found that the tourism students scored higher than the hospitality industry students, yet the difference was not statistically significant at .05.

Table 4. Comparison of students' listening skills problems

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	3.30	.886	.394	.694
Hospitality industry	80	3.67	.959		

\* Level of statistical significance .001 \*\* Level of statistical significance .05

When comparing different levels of students' problems in listening skills, it was found that the tourism students scored higher than the hospitality industry students, yet the difference was not statistically significant at .05.

Table 5. Comparison of students' speaking skills problems

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	3.32	.935	.832	.168
Hospitality industry	80	3.10	1.026		

\* Level of statistical significance .001 \*\* Level of statistical significance .05

When comparing different levels of students' problems in speaking skills, it was found that the tourism students scored higher than the hospitality industry students, yet the difference was not statistically significant at .05.

Table 6. Comparison of students' grammar problems

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	3.42	1.080	.303	.762
Hospitality industry	80	3.37	1.110		

\* Level of statistical significance .001    \*\*Level of statistical significance .05

When comparing different levels of students' problems in grammar, it was found that the tourism students scored higher than the hospitality industry students yet the difference was not statistically significant at .05.

Table 7. Students' satisfaction toward English teaching and learning

Students' Major	N		S.D.	z	Sig
Tourism	80	3.65	.730	-.282	.778
Hospitality industry	80	3.68	.780		

\* Level of statistical significance .001    \*\* Level of statistical significance .05

When comparing different levels of students' satisfaction toward English teaching and learning, it was found that the tourism students reported higher satisfaction rates than the hospitality industry students yet the difference was not statistically significant at .05.

#### 4.2 Qualitative Data Report

The qualitative data was divided into three categories: students' needs and level of difficulty, students' attitudes, and recommendations. The most critical skills for the participants to study were found to be English language skills and grammatical structures. The obstacles faced in using the English language are not very different among the two sample groups since most of the interviewed people considered listening and speaking as being the biggest problems in their communication. The most challenging skills to the participants were understanding accents of different foreigners, being able to pick up the correct words when English was spoken too quickly, and understanding basic expressions. For the category of students' attitude, both majors of students expressed positively and negatively toward English language learning because of various reasons of each participant. The needs that were discovered of these participants could be used to create a valuable ESP course to improve their language use in their occupations.

However, for some participants who had negative thoughts toward English language learning, they were motivated to practice continuously. Finally, in the category of recommendations, the participants emphasized technology in education because it played an important role in their current studies. Technology has changed most learners' perspectives on what they would like to gain from educational institutions. It is recommended that educators and institutions take notice of this change of perception and work to adapt the learning environment to be more conducive to the demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century students.

### 5. Discussions

#### 5.1 The Impact of Perceived Needs: An Analysis of English Language Skills in Tourism (TR) and the Hospitality Industry (HI)

The students of both the fields of Tourism (TR) and the Hospitality Industry (HI) have indicated that enhancing their English language abilities in a variety of metrics would contribute positively to their work performance. Research was conducted on the students' English abilities in these metrics (speaking, listening, reading, writing, and proper grammar skills therein) showed that TR students scored an average of 2.9 out of 5, and HI students scored a slightly higher at an average of 2.97 out of 5. When surveyed, the majority of those studying both tourism and hospitality responded that all the language skills would be especially important for their chosen profession. Where these results begin to differ is in the perceived most valuable language skill. TR students indicated that being able to read better would be the most useful; whereas, HI students believe they would be best served by increasing their listening abilities. The initial findings (that both TR and HI students perceived all English language metrics as valuable) are consistent with Aunruen's study (2005) which concluded that both TR and HI predominately need English language abilities to communicate in their profession. This study indicated that the four basic pillars of language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), were important; however,

attention must specifically be paid to improving grammar within these skill metrics.

Further clarification is provided by the study of Opasruttanakorn (2006), where listening and speaking abilities are generally more valuable skills than reading and writing. Jaroensuk (2009) further prioritizes listening as the single most important language skill to master, followed by listening (which falls in line with the results of Opasruttanakorn (2006)). Jaroensuk's study further analyzed the perception of difficulty in language skill acquisition by skill type/ Speaking was perceived as the most difficult skill to master, followed by, in descending order, listening, reading, writing, and finally grammar (which was viewed as the easiest to learn). The juxtaposition between perceived effort to gain a language skill and the importance of those skills appears to have shaped both TR and HI students' attitudes towards all of the English skill abilities. This study finds that the fact that both the TR and HI industry need English language skills to prosper enhances the acquisition of those very skills for students and professionals in those industries. Of note is that, while both the TR and HI industries function differently, the skill capabilities of TR and HI students do not tend to differ significantly from one another. Therefore, this study believes that a needs analysis of English language skills should be conducted as a part of curriculum development before the syllabus development for English language teaching is conducted. By incorporating needs analysis, the instructors can design the course and material in such a way that both students' majors could learn together. Needs in ESP courses can link up with the learning objectives set by the curriculum, as the study of Tahir (2011) found. As such, the findings from this study could be used to further refine guidelines for developing English courses and the use of materials that could lead to the improvement of the learners' outcomes.

### *5.2 English Language Skills Most in Need of Improvement*

A skills assessment of the students determined that, at present, students most need improvement in their listening and writing skills. Students also displayed a significant need for improvement in their grammar abilities followed by a need for improved reading skills. This study has determined that focus should be put on the improvement of listening and writing skills in particular. This finding mirrors the finding of both Janekit and Mantana (2007) and Yhouyhen (2008). When these results are analyzed through the lens of the students' perception of their own needs both TR and HI students' needs were identical. In descending order of importance to their studies, through the previously mentioned lens of student perception, students need to improve their grammar skills the most, followed by writing, then speaking, then listening, and then reading.

### *5.3 English Communication Challenges*

It has been thoroughly demonstrated that students of both majors would benefit from use of English language skills to communicate, study, and use in their daily lives. While this is a known benefit, it is also known that students, unfortunately, rarely use English in their daily lives. A direct consequence of this lack of practice is made evident in the complication that arise when students attempt to communicate with foreigners who speak English. This leads directly to problems arising when tourism employees are expected to provide services with foreign tourists. Those in the hospitality industry face similar complication when an English-speaking foreigner arrives for accommodation at their place of work. Some of the causes of these difficulties are the use of inappropriate words/expressions in speech, an inability to understand the English speakers' accent, an inability to understand written vocabulary, and improper use of grammar in their writing. Furthermore, it has been shown that students of both majors have difficulty when exposed to new English accents. The rural parts of all countries do not speak with the same accent as the major metropolises of their respective country and each country has a significantly different predominant accent. Lack of broad and frequent exposure makes these new encounters significantly more difficult.

## **6. Study Recommendations**

While information on the needs and challenges facing those who study tourism and the hospitality industry has been enlightening and valuable, further research into these same metrics for other industries is highly recommended. Furthermore, future research attempts should cooperate and coordinate with other universities as well as institutions of different educational levels, such as graduate students. This study believes that conducting further research in such a manner will provide the research with more widely applicable findings.

## **7. Conclusions**

Needs analysis showed that it can and should play an important role in the development of English language curriculum tailored for specific industry needs. Some industry students (such as those focused on tourism) understood their learning needs and objectives quite well. This study did use the proposed needs analysis in the development of curriculum and required this be done prior to the development of the syllabus for the English

language teaching used herein. A study of these methods and the results proffered by them leads this study to conclude that such methodology can prove to be a useful guideline for future research endeavors.

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