

ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE FOR EFL COLLEGE INTERNS IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM INDUSTRY IN TAIWAN:NEEDS ANALYSIS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract: In recent decades, international tourism industry has developed rapidly. Numerous researchers in the field of English for Specific Purpose (ESP) have identified the significance of designing ESP-based curriculum. Analyzing students' learning needs and difficulties/challenges faced has been the integral part of ESP specialists. The research aimed to explore: (1) the perceived current English level of the college interns in International Tourism Industry; (2) English language basic skills needs in International Tourism Industry; (3) English language using difficulties and challenges in International Tourism Industry. A questionnaire was applied for the research purposes. 80 college interns in international tourism industry were recruited to participate in this study. Data were collected and analyzed. The research findings reveal that: (1) the EFL college interns' English level is intermediate; (2) English language basic skills needs are: understanding the service requirements from the customers, fluent communication skills and professional reception skills at the workplace; (3) the most difficult challenges which faced by EFL college interns are foreigners' accent and dialects use. Recommendations and pedagogical implications are raised for researchers and educators concerned with language learning and ESP curriculum design.

Keywords: ESP, International Tourism Industry, Needs Analysis, Language Learning

I. INTRODUCTION

The globalization in the world has been developed rapidly in the recent years. In the economic sector, according to World Trade Organization (WTO), the requirement of the English for cross-border trade and tourism has been the mainstream. In the education sector, the globalization in the university has been promoted by the R.O.C. Education Ministry, including the exchange students, overseas internship and tourism courses. As for tourism industry development sector, tourism resources are so abundant in Taiwan that the tourism industry has developed in recent years. Thus, the needs of the tourism English ability and skill have been enlarged for the job market. (Chien, 2012) Since January to October, 2016, 8.76 million visitors have arrived in Taiwan. Foreign visitors were roughly 4.47 million (R.O.C. Tourism Bureau, 2016). The English ability job market is also enlarged.

The research explores the needs and problem of the English use in the tourism industry. The needs and analysis research explores the requirement from the tourism industry and provide the practical suggestions for the curriculum designers. Since the tourism industry has been flourished in the recent, English use in the tourism industry is a significant part. However, the gap between the learning in the college and needs of the job market is not mentioned specifically in the previous researches. English use in the tourism industry is the part of the English for Specific

Purposes (ESP). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been developed for fifty years. The courses designed are for numerous of ESP learners with specific goals or areas of study (Chang, 2009). In order to explore the needs and problems of the college learners, needs analysis plays a vital role in developing English for specific purposes curriculum (Prachanant, 2012).

Needs analysis has been one of the key elements and an integral part of English for specific purpose (ESP) practitioners; i.e., researchers, course designers, material developers, testers, evaluators as well as classroom teachers for many years (Wannapok, 2004). The research investigates for the needs and the problems encountered in the international tourism industry.

1.1 Rationale

According to McKimm (2003), the process of the curriculum design was divided into objectives model and process model. "The process model assumes that content and learning activities have an intrinsic value and they are not just a means of achieving learning objectives and that translating a behavioral objective is trivializing." (Stenhouse, 1975, p.52) The objectives model is a systematic methodology to course planning. It is a part of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) which indicated that the desirable outcomes of their programs should be considered by educators and states them in clear and specific description (Prideaux, 2000).

The purpose of the study is to explore the English level, needs and difficulties of EFL College interns English language use in the international tourism industry. English language using expresses the significance of the international tourism industry. The results and pedagogical implications are raised for researchers and educators concerned with language learning and ESP curriculum design and improve the course design more directly for learners and educators.

II. DETAILS EXPERIMENTAL

The purpose of the study is to explore the needs and problems of the English language use in the international tourism industry. Furthermore, the perspectives from the EFL College interns in the international tourism industry were investigated with open-ended questions and questionnaires. In this section, research design, population and selection of sample are firstly introduced and follow by the descriptions of instrumentation used. Research procedures and statistical data analysis were expressed by the figure and descriptions.

2.1 Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were implemented in this study. Quantitative approach is utilized in a previous similar research in the Thailand by Prachanant (2012) and Hussam (2013). The researchers developed and formed the questionnaire with 22 determinants. The research survey the needs, problems and functions of English language use by 80 tourism EFL College interns. Furthermore, three open-end questions are included in the questionnaire. The questions are also utilized in a previous similar research in Thailand by Charunsri (2011). Qualitative approach is also used in a previous similar research. The researcher designed four interview questions. The period of the interview is limited into thirty minutes. Therefore, the method carried out in this study adopted the same set of questionnaire for needs analysis on English use in the international industry.

2.2 Research Questions

The present study aims to address the following three research questions.

1. What is the perceived current English level of the EFL college interns work at international tourism industry?
2. To what extent are English language basic skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) needed in EFL college interns' workplace?
3. What are the English language using difficulties faced by the EFL college interns in the workplace?

2.3 Participants

This study recruited participants, EFL college interns in the international tourism industry. According to the

previous studies, the sample is 80 EFL college interns in the international tourism industry from several hotels in central of Taiwan were recruited for the questionnaires. There were 16 males and 64 females, 20-30 years of age. They have been working in the international tourism industry for 1-5 years.

2.4 Instrumentation

Questionnaires- paper and online questionnaires. The questionnaires with 22 questions were used to survey the importance of English using in the international tourism industry with Likert five-point scale. The questionnaire is adapted some items of Hussam's questionnaire (2013) and modified them to suit the study. A research informed consent form and a cover letter containing the explanation of the questionnaires and contact information is also included on the online questionnaires system.

2.5 The Reliability of the Questionnaire

Hussam (2013) distributed the questionnaire to a jury who are specialized in TEFL. Reliability of the questionnaire is that Crombach Alpha Formula was implemented to establish the reliability of the questionnaire where it gained a score of 0.96.

Table 2: Reliability of the Questionnaire According to the Domains

No	Domains	Item	Reliability
1	Perceived level in EFL	0.85	4
2	EFL skills importance in workplace	0.79	4
3	English language listening skill	0.80	5
4	English language speaking skill	0.67	4
5	English language reading skill	0.70	3
6	English language writing skill	0.81	4
7	English structures	0.82	4
8	Using English in workplace	0.83	4
9	The importance of English in promotion and performance	0.87	9
10	Using English in security tasks	0.92	16
Total		0.96	57

Note. Adapted from Hussam, 2013, p.1122

2.6 Research Procedures

The following steps were taken to construct the questionnaires. First, the questionnaire is divided two parts. First part is twenty-two questions with Likert five-point scale about the English using in the international tourism industry. Second part included three open-ended questions to realize the difficulties and challenges about the English using in the international tourism industry. The questionnaires were delivered to the EFL College interns of the international tourism industry both paper and on-line format. The questionnaires were delivered at mid-January, 2016 and were collected at the beginning of February, 2016. The period was approximately three weeks. The data was analyzed at the mid-February, 2016.

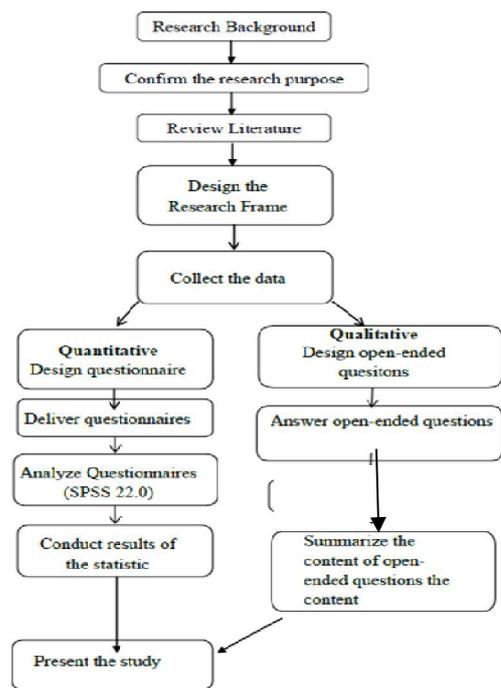


Figure 2. Research procedures

2.7 Statistical Data Analysis

This study adapted descriptive analysis with means and standard deviation of each item on the list. The data was analyzed by SPSS 22.0. Descriptive statistics was used for the needs of English Language basic skill and the needs of English language in the workplace: aspects of difficulties.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of data analysis and findings concerned with research questions. The first section focuses on descriptive statistic, including average means and standard deviation of the data. The second section describes the perspectives from the open-ended questions in questionnaires.

3.1 Descriptive Statistic of the Results

Based on the research purpose, the results of data analysis were as follows:

1. What is the perceived current English level of the EFL College interns work at international tourism industry?

Table 3: Means, Percentage and Standard Deviations of the First Domain (Perceived Current English Level of the EFL College interns)

NO.	Domains	Means	Percentage	Level
1	Listening	3.29	62.3	Good
2	Speaking	3.38	65.6	Good
3	Reading	3.31	65.4	Good
4	Writing	2.83	57.6	Beginner
	Total	3.20	62.7	Moderate

It is obviously that EFL college interns' current English level is intermediate as the total score mean was 3.2 (62.7%). It can be inferred that EFL college interns are not good in English writing skill. The results are due to the fact that English writing skill still not used in daily life and lacked of the opportunities of the practice.

2. To what extent is English language basic skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) needed in EFL College interns' workplace?

Table 4: Means Standard Deviation and Percentage of Listening Domains in English for International Tourism Industry (Q1-Q4)

NO.	Items	Means	Percentage (%)	Level
1	I need listening to understand terms and scripts associated with hotel work.	4.11	82.2	Agree
2	I need listening to understand scripts and expressions in general.	4.11	82.2	Agree
3	I need listening to understand different accents like British English and American English.	4.08	81.6	Agree
4	I need listening to understand inquires and questions foreigners ask about my work.	4.43	88.6	Strongly Agree
	Total score	4.19	83.8	Agree

As shown in table 4, the degree of EFL college interns' English listening skill is very important as its means was 4.19 (83.8%). It is apparent that English skills the most relevant need is to understand inquires and questions foreigners ask about my work as its means was 4.43(88.6%). In contrast, understanding different accents was reported as the lowest need being used and the means was 4.08 (81.3%).

Table 5: Means Standard Deviation and Percentage of Speaking Domains in English for International Tourism Industry (Q5-Q8)

NO.	Items	Means	Percentage (%)	Level
5	I need speaking skill and conversation to use terms and expressions associated with hotel work.	4.43	88.6	Strongly Agree
6	I need to speak general English.	4.20	84	Agree
7	I need to speak English because I want to understand what foreigners say about my department.	4.36	87.2	Strongly Agree
8	I need to speak English so as to discuss topics related to service information.	4.26	85.2	Strongly Agree
	Total score	4.32	86.4	Strongly Agree

As shown in table 5, the degree of EFL college interns' English speaking skill is very important as its means was 4.32 (86.4%). The tourism EFL College interns' most important needs of the speaking skill is to use terms and expressions associated with hotel work as its means was 4.43(88.6%). Speaking general English was reported as the lowest need being used and the means was 4.20(84%).

Table 6: Means Standard Deviation and Percentage of Reading Domains in English for International Tourism Industry (Q9-Q11)

NO.	Items	Means	Percentage (%)	Level
9	I need reading to correctly read and understand service-related words and terminology related to my job.	4.05	81	Agree
10	I need reading to correctly read, translate and understand materials related to my job.	4.16	83.2	Agree
11	I need reading to correctly read and understand general words, phrases, and non-related service information texts.	4.05	81	Agree
Total score		4.08	81.6	Agree

Table 6 demonstrates that the most essential needs of the reading skill is to read correctly, translate and understand materials related to the job as its means was 4.16 (%). On the other hand, correctly reading and understanding words and information text was lowest need being used as it means was 4.05 (81%).

Table 7: Means Standard Deviation and Percentage of Writing Domains in English for International Tourism Industry (Q12-Q14)

NO.	Items	Means	Percentage (%)	Level
12	I need writing to correctly write reports related to my job.	3.65	73	Agree
13	I need writing to correctly write a briefing relevant to my job.	3.83	76.6	Agree
14	I need writing to correctly write short messages for offering or providing information.	3.96	79.2	Agree
Total score		3.97	79.4	Agree

Table 7 indicates that the most essential the needs of the writing skill is to correctly write short messages for offering or providing information as its means was 3.96 (79.2%). On the other hand, writing reports related the job was lowest need being used as it means was 3.65 (73%).

3. What is the English language using difficulty faced by the EFL College interns in the workplace?

Table 8: Means Standard Deviation and Percentage of English Difficulties for International Tourism Industry (Q15-22)

NO.	Items	Means	Percentage (%)	Level
15	I find difficulty in following English conversations of natural speed.	3.12	62.5	Agree
16	I find difficulty in communicating in English with foreigners of different dialects.	3.71	74.2	Agree
17	I find difficulty in understanding all that is said in English.	2.97	59.5	Neither Agree or Disagree
18	I find difficulty in using English because of cultural differences.	3.2	64	Agree
19	I find difficulty in lacking grammar knowledge.	2.96	59.2	Neither Agree or Disagree
20	I find difficulty in having inadequate vocabulary.	2.48	49.7	Neither Agree or Disagree
21	I find difficulty in lacking opportunity to write	3.75	75	Agree
22	I find difficulty in being unable to know how to write.	3.18	63.7	Agree
Total		3.17	63.5	Agree

The table 8 presents the problems encountered by EFL College interns in the workplace. The three most relevant problems of English using for EFL College interns were t lacking opportunity to write 3.75 (75%), communicating in English with foreigners of different dialects 3.71 (74.2%) and finding difficulty in using English because of cultural differences 3.2 (64%), respectively. On the contrary, finding difficulty in having inadequate vocabulary was the lowest problem being used.

3.2 The Results of Open-ended questions

1. Please describe the difficulties in using English language for your work.

The answers from the participants were divided into three categories: (1) difference in the accent and culture; (2) improper using in grammar and vocabulary; (3) understanding the requirements from the customers.

There were 32 participants' answer is about the difference in the accent and culture (40%). The answers from EFL college intern1, 14, and 20: "Many people for different countries that accent is different." "Accent is the big problem in my work, because of varietal tribes." "Different languages "The most of the participants answer about the problems of difference in the accent and culture.

There were 28 participants' answer is about understanding the requirements from the customers (35%). The answer from EFL college intern 40: "I can't understand the requirements from the customers sometimes." 20 participants' answer is about the improper using in grammar and vocabulary (25%). The answers from EFL college intern 23 and 36: "Vocabulary is not enough, and listening skill is not well." "Vocabulary is limited."

2. How do you want the university to arrange English courses to meet your needs?

The answers from the participants were all about the needs of training divided into two categories: English skills and tourism English. 48 EFL college interns reply that the needs of the English skills are important (60%). The answers from EFL college intern65:" More opportunity to talk,to listen,to read and to write." 32 EFL college interns response that the needs of the tourism English (40%). The answers from EFL college intern 30: "Need to know some words about hotel." According to the answers from the EFL college interns, the most difficult on the workplace is the difference in the accent and culture and needs more training about the English skills.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it is obvious that the English level of the EFL college interns in Taiwan is moderate. The four English skills should be focused and train in the college especially writing. The English accent and dialect recognizing and using should be arranged in the training coursed. The EFL college interns in Taiwan need more training before participating in the

internships. Further study on the EFL college interns in Taiwan needs and challenges should be realized more specifically such as kinds of the accent which is confused by the EFL college interns and the suggestions from the EFL college interns by the interview methodology.

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