



LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS AS LEARNING AND TARGET NEEDS IN BUSINESS ENGLISH PROGRAM FOR TOUR GUIDE STUDENTS IN KENYA

Douglas Ondara Orang'i

Université de Djibouti

Corresponding email: orangidouglas@yahoo.com

Abstract

Any ESP course design should be informed by learners' needs in order to come up with an inclusive course. This can only be achieved after conducting a needs analysis that takes into consideration the views of all relevant stakeholders. The purpose of this article is to investigate listening and speaking skills, as learning and target needs, of tour guide diploma students pursuing an ESP course in Kenya. This article based its theoretical framework on Munbian (1978) Approach and Learning Centered Approach by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). A descriptive research design is adopted in the study. The colleges were sampled using stratified purposive sampling technique whereby all the whole student population and teachers formed part of the study. Data collection instruments were questionnaires and interview and data was statistically analysed using SPSS version 17.0. The data in this article is extracted from Orang'i (2013). The results indicate that the speaking skills of asking questions, answering questions, expressing yourself, and reacting to speech and lecture are considered the most important learning needs whereas obtaining gist and listening for taking notes are crucial for listening needs. On the other hand, the target needs ranked highly are speaking: with native speakers, non-native speakers, with

customers, in the office, in hotels, at the airport, in travel agencies, in tour operations, in transportation contexts, and in social settings for speaking skills and understanding native speakers, non-native speakers, meetings, presentations, conferences, seminars, discussions, conversations on phone, and face to face conversations for listening needs. These findings have an implication on the training of tour guide students and the appreciation of involving all stakeholders in syllabus design.

Keywords: Needs analysis, target needs, learning needs, speaking skills, listening skills

INTRODUCTION

Tour guides usually take a course in Business English in order to get the necessary proficiency that will enable them to communicate with ease in their prospective job markets. For a course to address all that is required to give learners the pre-requisite skills, it should take into consideration the learners' needs. This can only be ascertained after conducting needs analysis: the process of determining the needs for which a learner or group of learners require(s) a language and arranging the needs according to priorities (Richards et al, 1992). Ritcherich and Chancerell (1987) argued that the aim of needs analysis is not only to identify elements which will lend themselves in training but to establish relative importance, to find out what is indispensable, necessary or merely desirable. On the other hand, West (1994) goes further to state that needs analysis is essentially a pragmatic activity focused on specific situations, although grounded on general theories, such as the nature of language and curriculum.

Tourism, being one of the highest earners of foreign exchange in Kenya, should have highly trained personnel particularly in communicative competence in order to maintain and even attract tourists visiting the country. It is against this backdrop that the trainee tour guides are taken through an ESP course that is geared towards empowering them on how to communicate effectively. More often than not, this is not achieved because syllabus designers do not conduct needs analysis to establish the learners' needs and even if they do, they do not extensively seek the perceptions of different stakeholders. This article presents data collected from learners, teachers and employers. The objectives of this paper included to: find out the target and language learning needs of tour guide students from the learners' perspective, establish the perceptions of ESP teachers on the target and language learning needs of tour guide students and find out the perceptions of tour guide firms' employers on the ESP course offered to students. Listening and speaking skills are given focus in this article.

Research on learners' needs has shown that students seem to be obvious choice of informants in needs analysis and they are often the primary, sometimes the only respondents (Long, 2005). This shows that any study on learners' needs that does not incorporate the learners' views will not be considered comprehensive since the current crop of learners seem to be aware of what they want to be included in the prospective syllabus.

By the same token, teachers were suited for the study because they gave data based on their vast experience on the teaching of ESP. They were, in fact, better placed to give their perceptions of the needs since with their experience; they had known which areas learners found problematic and which areas were to be included in the prospective syllabus.

Being the ultimate employers of these tour guides once they join the job market, the employers' perception on the ESP course offered to tour guides was sought. This was informed by the fact that the time they spend with them was enough for them to give the feedback on how they communicated. Their feedback was to gauge the success of the ESP course. They were further expected to give suggestions that could be used to improve the quality of ESP course offered to tour guides.

Although this article is concerned with the needs of tour guide students pursuing an ESP course in Kenya, it should not, indeed cannot, be seen outside the international framework in which it is strongly tangled. The article seeks to establish these needs conscious of the fact that learners need to understand how and why language is used in the specific discourse of tourists. This understanding will eventually bring benefits to the tourism sector that deals with people from different cultures.

In this article, I draw on the context of Kenya and specifically Nairobi County. In my view, Nairobi provides an illustrative case owing to its cosmopolitan nature and it is also significant due to its growing number of colleges that offer tour guiding course. Accordingly, the county brings together learners from diverse cultures and backgrounds whose perceptions the researcher found very useful in the study. The rationale behind carrying out a needs-analysis on the ESP for learners in the Tour Guide course in Kenya was to establish what they need to enable them communicate effectively in the job market. This is informed by Babu (2011) who observed that many Human Resource Managers complained that a large number of fresh recruits in the tourism sector considerably lacked in critical communication skills. In addition, Kenya is one of the leading destinations of tourists globally as indicated in the 'The World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019' where the sector recorded the highest growth in score compared to other East African countries. Kenya had a score of 3.6, Tanzania a score of 3.4, and Uganda a score of 3.2 with a difference from the year 2017 being 1.0, -0.5, and -0.3 respectively. This performance of Kenya

compared to its neighbours places a tall order on the country to have competent staff who can attend to tourists. There is likely to be customer satisfaction if the needs of learners are identified in a consultative way and structures put in place to ensure learners come out of the training ready to join the job market.

On-going needs analysis allows the revision of objectives and modification of teaching techniques and materials which in turn lead to the design of a more comprehensive and inclusive course. This is done bearing in mind that initially obtained data on needs analysis allows researchers to set out course objectives and determine scientific approach to teaching. Equally, Brown (1995) pointed out that needs are not absolute and once they are identified, they continually need to be examined for validity to ensure that they remain real needs for the students involved. It can be seen that English language programmers need to conduct needs analysis as part of routine review of their curriculum. The curriculum initially developed for a program may not be adequately addressing the changes that have occurred over time and hence the need for review of any syllabus that is in use.

Needs analysis plays an important role in developing materials that meet the learners' needs. Richards (2001) strongly stated that an important concern in ESP is needs analysis. He further said that rather than developing a course around analysis of a language, ESP started instead with an analysis of the learners' needs. He goes further to state that needs analysis is the most notable characteristic of ESP. Without needs analysis, an ESP programme would only offer general English with the indeterminate flag of ESP. It is relatively easy to adapt materials for a programme that was defined in terms of needs analysis. Indeed, materials are integral to any given course and failure to carry out needs analysis means the selection of materials that may not fully meet the learners' expectations.

This article narrows to the skills of listening and speaking both as target and learning needs. The importance of the two skills cannot be overemphasized. The learning needs are those that the learners require in the course of taking their studies whereas target needs are those the learners require in order to competently carry out their duties in the job market.

This article was necessitated by the importance of the tourism sector and hence the need to have competent staff that can communicate effectively. Similarly, the desire to use the results to recommend changes to the existing ESP knowledge with an aim of improving the quality of the Tour guide ESP course offered in the Kenyan context and the competence of those who work in the hotel industry also motivated this study.

Accordingly, this article is an attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the perceptions of tour guide students on listening and speaking skills as target and learning needs?

- 2) What are the perceptions of ESP teachers on listening and speaking skills as target and learning needs for tour guide students?
- 3) What are the perceptions of prospective employers on the ESP course offered to tour guide students?

In order to find answers to the aforementioned questions, this study collected data from students, teachers, and prospective employers.

METHODS

Sampling and Sample Size

Colleges were selected for the study using stratified purposive sampling technique which illustrates characteristics of particular sub-groups of interest and facilitates comparisons between the different groups. The technique allowed the researcher to select colleges that had the information for in-depth study as per the objectives and also guaranteed the desired distribution among the sub-groups. These colleges were stratified into Government, institutional and private. Table 1 shows the number of students and teachers selected for the study.

Table: 1 Number of Students and Teachers Selected for the Study

Institution	No. of Students	No. of Teachers
Utalii College	36	02
Railway Training Institute	25	02
Dima College	11	01
Total	72	05

Three tour guide firms' managers were selected using purposive sampling technique.

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire and interview were the only data collection instruments used. A questionnaire was used to collect data from students and teachers. The questionnaires were of the Likert-type scale (unimportant, of little importance, moderately important and very important). Equally, interview was used to collect data from tour guide firms' employers.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The statistical analysis of the data was done using SPSS version 17.0 and then the percentages and frequencies of the target and language learning needs of learners were calculated. The presentation of data was done using tables.

FINDINGS

Learning and Target Needs by Students

The study found out that all the students who were respondents in this study had studied English in Kenya and done the subject in KCSE examination. This is an answer to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) framework which asks the question: **Who** are the learners? 6.9% of the respondents scored grade B, 16.7% scored C+, 31.9% scored C, 26.4% scored C- and 18.1% scored D+. Table 2 shows the KCSE performance of the students that were selected for the study.

Table: 2 KCSE Performance

Frequency	Grade scored in KCSE
5	B-
12	C+
23	C
19	C-
13	D+
N= 72	

All the respondents were in agreement that it was necessary to learn the English language at that level though their reasons for doing so were varied. 56 out of 72 students felt that they were learning English to work as tour guides and 49 students selected the reason of being able to speak with English speaking colleagues. The reason that most/some/all of the written/printed materials connected to the job were in English was selected by 41 students and 38 students stated that they were learning English to be able to pursue their course successfully since all materials were in English.

The students were asked to say whether they would choose the English course if it was optional and 89% of them felt that they would choose the course regardless of whether it was optional or not. They were required to give a reason as to why they were for either of the options. The students gave the reasons that they stood a better chance of enhancing their language skills and the importance of the English language globally. 11% of the students felt that they would not choose the English course because according to them the language skills that they learnt in secondary had empowered them quite well to do any job that required the use of English. This also conforms to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) framework which asks: **Why** are the learners taking the course? Is it compulsory or optional? This framework expects any needs analyst to establish, as unambiguously as possible, the reasons that motivated learners to take an ESP course.

The students had the perception that it was useful to learn English so that they could become well qualified professionals in the tourism sector.

61.1% of the total number of students who were respondents believed that it was necessary to learn English, 30.6% felt that it was convenient for them whereas a paltry 6.9% considered the usefulness of the English language unnecessary.

Speaking Tasks as Learning Needs

The means of the tasks ranges between 4.12 – 2.92 and the tasks with the highest importance were asking questions 76.4%, expressing yourself 76.2%, answering questions 70.8% and making presentations 69.4%. The tasks with the lowest importance were solving problems 34.7%, comparing and contrasting 33.4% and describing 29.2%. The students rated themselves as average and above average in most tasks except making presentations which was rated as below average. Table 3 shows the means of speaking tasks as learning needs.

Table: 3 Means of Speaking Tasks as Learning Needs

SPEAKING TASK	IMPORTANCE MEAN	SELF RATING MEAN
Asking questions	4.12	3.13
Answering questions	4.03	3.08
Expressing yourself	4.10	3.19
Summarizing	3.36	3.86
Describing	3.01	3.75
Comparing and contrasting	3.04	3.90
Solving problems	2.94	3.78
Reasoning	3.25	3.79
Making presentations	3.87	2.97
Criticizing	3.28	3.69
Reacting to speech and lecture	3.61	3.39
Providing correct pronunciation	3.13	3.63
Wording quickly	2.92	3.86
Using appropriate intonation and stress	2.99	3.94

The students showed need for the tasks of asking questions, answering questions, expressing yourself and reacting to speech and lecture. On the contrary, the respondents did not show any need for all the other tasks because the mean of the importance attached to the tasks was low compared to their self-rating.

Listening Tasks as Learning Needs

The means of the tasks categorized as listening learning needs ranges between the mean of 4.12 - 2.92 and the tasks with the highest importance were listening for taking notes 79.4%, obtaining gist 72.2% and obtaining specific information 51.3%. The tasks with the lowest importance were recognizing the speaker's attitude 18.1%, listening for discriminating intonation and stress patterns 16.7% and listening for translating 15.3%. The students rated themselves as average in all the tasks of listening though their ratings were low in some tasks compared to the importance, they attached to them. Table 4 shows the means of importance given to listening tasks as learning needs by the students.

Table: 4 Means of Listening Tasks as Learning Needs

LISTENING TASKS	IMPORTANCE MEAN	SELF RATING MEAN
Obtaining gist	4.07	3.47
Obtaining specific information	3.50	3.85
Listening for summarizing	3.10	3.83
Listening for taking notes	4.01	3.61
Listening for translating	2.24	3.65
Recognizing language structure	3.11	3.38
Understanding complex sentences	2.97	3.69
Deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words	2.77	3.74
Evaluating the importance of information	3.22	3.64
Extracting information not explicitly stated	2.96	3.86
Recognizing the speaker's attitude	2.39	3.38
Listening for discriminating intonation and stress patterns	2.42	3.79
Recognizing speech organization patterns	2.57	3.76

The learners exhibited need for the listening tasks of obtaining gist, listening for taking notes and recognizing the speaker's attitude. This is based on the importance attached to the tasks of listening and self-ratings on the same. The other tasks did not reveal any need as the learners rated themselves highly as opposed to the importance attached to the tasks. Students felt that listening to obtain gist and take notes were important tasks that had to be internalized if at all they were to attain the target needs that needed this skill.

Speaking Tasks as Target Needs

The means of the target needs categorized as speaking tasks ranged between 4.68-1.75 and the tasks with the highest importance were speaking with customers 95.8%, speaking in tour operations 91.7%, speaking in hotels 84.7%, speaking abroad 77.8% and speaking in travel agencies 76.4%. The tasks with the lowest importance were speaking in social settings 30.6%, speaking in the office 30.5%, speaking with colleagues 12.7%, speaking in banks for money matters 9.7% and speaking in my own country 8.3%. Table 5 shows means of speaking tasks as target needs.

Table: 5 Means of Speaking Tasks as Target Needs

SPEAKING TASK	N	IMPORTANCE MEAN	SELF RATING MEAN
With native speakers	72	3.69	2.69
With non-native speakers	72	2.67	2.56
With colleagues	72	2.61	3.10
With customers	72	4.68	2.65
In the office	72	3.18	2.67
In hotels	72	4.10	2.74
At the airport	72	3.63	2.78
In banks for money matters	72	1.75	3.48
In travel agencies	72	4.06	2.49
In tour operations	72	4.44	2.51
In transportation contexts	72	3.58	3.28
In social settings	72	3.15	2.90
In my own country	72	3.54	2.94
Abroad	72	4.18	2.44

The learners rated their competence on 'speaking in banks for money matters', 'speaking in transportation contexts' and 'speaking with colleagues' as average whereas all the other tasks were rated as below average. The speaking tasks categorized as target needs revealed needs for all except 'speaking with colleagues' and 'in banks for money matters. The students revealed needs for the speaking tasks since most of their work will involve speaking with tourists and also engaging other parties as they carry out their duties.

Listening Tasks as Target Needs

The means of the listening tasks categorized as target needs ranged between 4.46-3.04 and the tasks with the highest importance included understanding face to face conversations 93.1%, understanding native speakers 90.3% and conversations on phone 86.1%. Those with the lowest importance included understanding: TV programmes 32%, films 33.4%, the radio 33.6% and seminars at 45.9%. Table 6 shows the means of importance given to listening tasks as target needs by students.

Table: 6 Means of Listening Tasks as Target Needs

LISTENING TASK	N	IMPORTANCE MEAN	SELF RATING MEAN
Understanding native speakers	72	4.36	2.99
Non-native speakers	72	3.47	3.17
The radio	72	3.21	3.71
TV programmes	72	3.19	4.06
Announcements at different places	72	3.63	3.31
Films	72	3.04	3.83
Presentations	72	3.60	2.99
Meetings	72	3.68	3.07
Conferences	72	3.92	2.94
Seminars	72	3.43	2.90
Discussions	72	3.57	3.21
Conversations on phone	72	4.21	3.42
Face to face conversations	72	4.46	3.54

The learners rated their competence on 'listening to the radio' as above average whereas most of the tasks were rated as average except 'listening to

the native speakers', 'listening to presentations', 'listening to conferences' and 'listening to seminars' which were ranked to be slightly below average. All the listening tasks categorized as target needs revealed needs save for listening to radio and TV programmes. This can be interpreted to mean that the other listening tasks were considered important by the students to their target situation. The respondents felt that the listening tasks were vital to them because they will be expected to understand spoken discourse. It is worth noting that the listening tasks that involve the client and the tour guides have been attached higher importance and the students have rated themselves poorly on them. Tasks such as understanding face to face conversations, conversations on phone and understanding native speakers were considered to be inevitable in the target situation. This is because more often than not the tour guides will be engaging the tourists using the tasks as they visit the tourist attraction sites.

Learning and Target Needs by Teachers

The teachers' questionnaire was aimed at answering question two of the study. The questionnaire was divided into three parts whereby the first part which had 54 tasks of four language skills that sought to know the teachers' perceptions regarding the learners' learning needs. The second part of the questionnaire had 68 tasks of the language skills and it sought to establish the target needs of the learners from the teachers' perspective. The teachers were expected to rate the importance of the learning skills using a Likert-type scale (unimportant, of little importance, moderately important and very important).

Speaking Tasks as Learning Needs

The tasks with the highest importance were making presentations 100% and producing correct pronunciation, reacting to speech and lecture, summarizing and answering questions at 80%. The tasks with the lowest importance were comparing and contrasting and using appropriate intonation both at 40%.

The means ranged between 4.60-2.60. Table 7 shows the means of importance given to speaking tasks as learning needs by ESP teachers.

Table: 7 Means of Speaking Tasks as Learning Needs

SPEAKING TASK	N	IMPORTANCE MEAN
Asking questions	05	4.60
Answering questions	05	4.00
Expressing themselves	05	3.80
Summarizing	05	3.80

Describing	05	3.60
Comparing/Contrasting	05	3.00
Solving problems	05	2.80
Reasoning	05	4.00
Making presentations	05	4.20
Criticizing	05	2.60
Reacting to speech and lecture	05	3.00
Producing correct pronunciation	05	4.20
Using appropriate intonation and stress	05	2.60

The speaking tasks of asking questions, answering questions, expressing themselves, summarizing, reasoning, making presentations and producing correct pronunciation were considered by the teachers to be fundamental for the students as they pursue their ESP course. The tasks of using appropriate intonation, criticizing and solving problems were not considered vital for the learners as they strove to be competent in the work domain.

The teachers considered the basic speaking tasks such as producing correct pronunciation, making presentations, asking questions and answering questions to be very important to the learners as they learnt the speaking tasks used in the target situation. As they pursue the course, the students are expected to speak fluently with their colleagues and teachers just as it will be expected of them when they join the profession.

Listening Tasks as Learning Needs

The listening tasks regarded as learning needs had 13 tasks. The tasks with the highest importance were obtaining gist 100%, obtaining specific information, listening for taking notes and evaluating the importance of information all at 80%. The tasks with the lowest importance were listening for translating, understanding complex sentences, deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words, listening for discriminating intonation and stress patterns and recognizing speech organization patterns at 20%. The mean ranged between 4.60-3.00. Table 8 shows the means of importance given to listening tasks as learning needs by ESP teachers.

Table: 8 Means of Listening Tasks as Learning Needs

LISTENING TASK	N	IMPORTANCE MEAN
Obtaining gist	05	4.60
Obtaining specific information	05	4.20
Listening for summarizing	05	3.40
Listening for taking notes	05	4.20
Listening for translating	05	3.20
Recognizing language structure	05	3.60
Understanding complex sentences	05	3.00
Deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words/word groups	05	3.00
Evaluating the importance of information	05	4.00
Extracting the information not explicitly stated	05	3.40
Recognizing the speakers' attitude	05	3.60
Discriminating intonation and stress patterns	05	3.00
Recognizing speech organization patterns	05	3.20

The tasks with the highest importance were seen by the ESP teachers to be very handy for the students in their endeavour to be tour guides. Listening is an important skill since it enables learners to follow what they are being taught. For instance, obtaining gist, obtaining specific information, listening for taking notes and evaluating the importance of information have been rated highly because they indicate to some extent what the learners need to do in order to be competent in the target situation as far as listening is concerned.

Speaking Tasks as Target Needs

There were 19 speaking tasks regarded as target needs. Five tasks were rated 100% in importance by the teachers. They include speaking: with native speakers, with customers, in travel agencies, in tour operations and in describing tourist attractions. The tasks with the lowest importance were speaking: with colleagues, in banks for money matters and in social settings. Table 9 shows the means of importance attached to speaking tasks as target needs by ESP teachers.

Table: 9 Means of Speaking Tasks as Target Needs

SPEAKING TASK	N	IMPORTANCE MEAN
With native speakers	05	4.80
With non-native speakers	05	3.20
With colleagues	05	2.60
In the office	05	3.20
In hotels	05	3.80
In restaurants	05	3.80
At the airports	05	4.40
In banks for money matters	05	2.40
In travel agencies	05	4.80
In tour operations	05	5.00
In transportation contexts	05	3.40
In social settings	05	2.20
In their own country	05	3.00
Abroad	05	4.00
In giving directions	05	3.60
In explaining procedures	05	3.20
In describing tourist attractions	05	4.80
To paraphrase	05	3.00
With customers	05	4.40

The teachers considered the tasks of speaking with: native speakers, customers, describing tourist attractions, abroad, tour operations, travel agencies and airports to be of higher importance to the students. This can be interpreted to mean that these tasks will be carried out more often by the

students when they graduate as tour guides and subsequently employed as tour guides. The results show that the setting and interaction parameters as established by Munby (1978) approach in that the learner's interlocutors are identified and the physical setting specifying the situation where English will be used.

Listening Tasks as Target Needs

There were 14 listening tasks regarded as target needs by English teachers. The tasks with the highest importance rating included understanding: native speakers 100%, discussions 80%, conversations on phone 80% and face to face conversations. The tasks with the lowest importance rating included understanding: the radio, TV programmes, films and varying accents. Table 10 shows the means of importance given to listening tasks as target needs by ESP teachers.

Table: 10 Means of Listening Tasks as Target Needs

LISTENING TASK	N	IMPORTANCE MEAN
Native speakers	05	4.60
Non-native speakers	05	3.40
The radio	05	2.80
TV programmes	05	2.80
Announcements at different places	05	3.40
Films	05	2.20
Presentations	05	3.60
Meetings	05	3.60
Conferences	05	3.80
Seminars	05	3.60
Discussions	05	4.00
Conversations on phone	05	4.40
Face to face conversations	05	4.20
Varying accents	05	2.80

The listening tasks above indicate what the students will do receptively in their target situation and this conforms to TSA's communicative event as proposed by Chambers (1980).

Perceptions of Tour Guide Firms' Managers on the ESP Course.

All the three managers interviewed indicated that they employed only trained tour guides in their firms but one of the managers admitted that they had there before employed experienced but untrained guides. The manager said that they gradually phased out untrained guides because their firm was drastically losing customers and they partly attributed this to the incompetence of tour guides.

On the competence of the tour guides in their use of the English language, the managers had varied answers. Two of the managers felt that their use of the English language was wanting. One of them apportioned the blame to the foundation that the tour guides had in the primary and secondary schools while the other felt that the tertiary colleges offering the tour guide course were responsible for their inefficiency. The other manager was of the idea that the tour guides were competent in their use of the language but had reservations that there were some areas which were important to the profession that were either neglected or poorly taught.

The managers were unanimous that tour guides should learn English in college for it goes a long way in empowering them on how to communicate in the work domain. They were specific that the English taught in colleges should be tailored to suit the requirements of a given profession. They also felt that the ESP course offered in colleges should be improved and if possible harmonised because the competence of tour guides from different colleges was not the same as far as the use of the English language is concerned. The important place of English in the tour guiding field was indisputable according to the managers. One manager went further to argue that English has, is and shall remain the most often used language in the profession. This was due to the fact that most tourists who come from other countries are able to communicate in the language. On the same note, the other managers did not downplay other languages but admitted that the usage of English was higher compared to others.

DISCUSSION

Target and Language Learning Needs by Students

On the background information, the results obtained show that all the respondents in this study had studied English in Kenya and their performance could generally be described as average. There was unanimity on the necessity of learning English at the college level in that the majority of the students felt that it was very necessary. The students chose more than one reason on why they were learning English but majority of them settled on being able to work as tour guides and speak with English speaking colleagues as the main reasons. The students had no problem whatsoever with learning the English course at that level since they were willing to choose it even if it

was optional. The usefulness of the English course for graduating as a well-qualified professional could not be overemphasised because the respondents described it as necessary.

The speaking tasks categorised as learning needs which were regarded as most important and exhibited a need through self-rating were asking questions, answering questions, expressing yourself and reacting to speech and lecture. These tasks exhibited a need possibly because of the role that they play towards helping the learner to internalise the target needs. Those that were considered to be the least important included solving problems, comparing and contrasting and describing. Speaking is an important skill to tour guides because they will need to speak English in order to communicate with foreign clients in their routine jobs. This clearly demonstrates why students' learning needs should be unambiguously identified so that the attainment of the target needs is not compromised. This is closely related to McDonough and Shaw (1993) who stated that speaking skills materials should start from the premise that a communicative purpose can be established in the classroom by means of the information gap. The information gap in this case was established by comparing the importance attached to the learning tasks and the learners' self-ratings.

The listening tasks categorized as learning needs that were regarded as important and exhibited a need through the self-rating include obtaining gist and listening for taking notes. These tasks play an integral role in learning particularly in understanding the content as put forth by the teachers. The learners have to understand the content and take notes. This is in line with Ekici (2003) who found out that the subskills of listening are so integral to tour guides and learners considered them fundamental as they pursued their studies. On the other hand, the tasks considered less important and did not reveal any need included: recognizing the speaker's attitude, listening for discriminating intonation and stress patterns and listening for translating.

The speaking tasks categorized as target needs regarded as important and exhibited a need through self-rating included speaking: with native speakers, with customers, in the office, in hotels, at the airport, in travel agencies, in tour operations, in transportation contexts, in social settings, in my own country and abroad. The other tasks of speaking with colleagues and in banks for money matters were not regarded as important and did not reveal any need. The speaking tasks cannot be ignored in the tourism sector because they play a vital role in enhancing business just as Sucompa (1998) found out that the owners of travel agencies, managers and the administrators needed their staff to use speaking skills most. From this study, the most frequent situations in which the tour guides use speaking skills include speaking: with customers, in hotels, at the airport, in travel agencies and in tour operations.

It is interesting to note that all these tasks revolve around the customers and hence the need to tailor an ESP course to fit in the expectations of the prospective work domain or purposive domain as put forward by Munby (1978).

The listening tasks categorized as target needs that were regarded as important and exhibited a need through self-rating included understanding: native speakers, non-native speakers, announcements at different places, presentations, meetings, conferences, seminars, discussions, conversation on phone and face to face conversations. Listening to radio and television were not considered important.

Learning and Target Needs by Teachers

The speaking tasks categorized as learning needs which were considered important included: asking questions, answering questions, expressing themselves, summarizing, describing, reasoning, making presentations and producing correct pronunciation. The teachers also considered the following tasks to be less important: using appropriate intonation, criticizing and solving problems.

The listening tasks categorized as learning needs which were considered important included: obtaining gist, obtaining specific information, taking notes, evaluating importance of information and recognizing speaker's attitude. The tasks of: listening for translating, understanding complex sentences, deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words, listening for discriminating intonation and stress patterns and recognizing speech organization patterns were considered less important.

The speaking tasks categorized as target needs which were considered important included speaking: with native speakers, in hotels, in restaurants, at the airport, in travel agencies, in tour operations, abroad, in giving directions, in describing tourist attractions and with customers. On the contrary, the tasks of speaking: with colleagues, in banks for money matters and social settings did not emerge as important to the teachers.

The listening tasks categorized as target needs which were considered important included understanding: native speakers, presentations, meetings, conferences, seminars, discussions, conversations and face to face conversations. The teachers also considered the tasks of understanding: television, radio programmes, films and varying accents to be of less importance. Table 11 shows needs that revealed needs to both teachers and students.

Table: 11 Tasks that Revealed Needs to Teachers and Students

Type of Need	Language skill	Need
Learning needs	Speaking tasks	Asking questions Answering questions Expressing themselves
	Listening tasks	Obtaining gist Listening for notes
Target needs	Speaking tasks	With native speakers In hotels At the airport In travel agencies In tour operations With customers
	Listening tasks	Native speakers Presentations Meetings Conferences Seminar Conversations on phone Face to face conversations

Perceptions of Tour Guiding Firms' Managers on ESP Courses

The tour guiding firms' managers were in agreement that ESP was necessary for prospective tour guides. They stressed the importance of acquiring proficiency in the language skills that will enable them to competently carry out their duties at their prospective work stations. They also insisted that the ESP courses offered to the students should be tailored to suit the requirements of the target situation and of course this can only be possible if needs analysis is carried out. This finding is line with Keyoonwong (1998) who pointed out the dissatisfaction of employers in the tourism sector with the quality of their staff in terms of English proficiency. The same is corroborated by Babu's (2011) observation that a large number of fresh recruits in the tourism sector lacked in critical communication skills. The managers suggested that the ESP courses offered in colleges should be designed by a central body so as to harmonise what is taught. The place of the English language in the tourism industry was also emphasised by the managers whereby they stated that it is the most commonly used language. English acted as a bridge between the tour guides and the tourists.

The central importance of needs analysis in ESP came to the fore in the interviews with the managers in that the tour guiding companies do not take their employees for in-service courses. Consequently, the ESP courses offered

to students in colleges should adequately prepare the students to enter the job market.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This article set out to analyse the listening and speaking skills as learning and target needs for tour guide students pursuing an ESP course in Kenya. This was to establish what they really required in order to not only pursue their course but also communicate effectively with clients from diverse cultures in their prospective work stations. The results presented above indicate that learners have needs that ought to be taken into account when designing a course. The fact that the respondents in this study were the learners themselves, ESP teachers and employers, these results can to a greater extent be said to be inclusive.

It was established, in this article, that learners can ably articulate their needs and hence they should not at all be side-lined in any needs analysis. On the other hand, ESP teachers also based on their experience are privy to what the students need in order to learn the course (learning needs) and be competent in their prospective work stations (target needs). Equally, the employers in the tour guiding firms as major stakeholders in the tourism industry had their perceptions that cannot be overlooked in the design of the ESP course. Lastly, it has emerged from this study that needs analysis is a fundamental stage in syllabus design particularly in the tourism related courses. Needs analysis is not just a cliché. ESP practitioners should believe in it, in both form and substance. Needs analysis is the means that justify the end and if it is not conducted then the end product (syllabus) cannot be justified from the current researchers' perspective. The tourism industry demands competencies, attitudes and knowledge. Consequently, ESP practitioners in tourism have to face the challenges from the rapidly developing and changing society. This can only be done successfully by envisioning the change, engaging the changing process, updating their knowledge and having an open mind to the challenges that may emerge thereof.

Last but not least, there is need for a further research that focuses on the language skills of reading and writing both as learning and target needs. Such a study will give a glimpse on the kind of subskills that ought to be given priority in an ESP course designed for tour guides.

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