

**WHICH NEEDS ANALYSIS TOOLS IS EFFECTIVE IN
ASSESSING STUDENTS' WEAKNESSES IN LANGUAGE?****Mirzayeva Ma'mura Ubaydulla Qizi**

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Abstract: *International tourism is one of the fastest-growing global industries relying heavily on effective communication to provide quality services, guide visitors, and promote destinations. In this context, English plays crucial role as the global lingua franca, enabling tourists and professionals from diverse cultural backgrounds to interact smoothly. Supplying experts in tourism is the responsibility of teachers. To develop competent professionals, teachers must first identify learners' needs and deficiencies, and then plan appropriate syllabuses and teaching materials to address them effectively. The main aim of this research was to identify the most effective needs analysis tools. The results indicated that the interview method is the most effective among the four implemented tools, as participants were able to fully demonstrate both their strengths and weaknesses in speaking and other skills. Nevertheless, the other methods also provided valuable information, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of learners' needs.*

Key words: *Needs, needs analysis tools, ESP, Course design, poll, interview, business English, syllabus, and curriculum development.*

Introduction. Every course design begins with an approach that starts by asking the question 'Why do these learners need to learn English?' If teachers, instructors or even learners clearly understand students' needs for learning English, this awareness will have influence on what will be accepted as content in the language course. Therefore, every teacher should pay attention to two

types of questions: what is meant by 'needs' and what kind of information should a needs analysis (NA) tell us? (Hutchinson & Waters, 2010)

First, teachers need to have a clear understanding of needs analysis. What is needs analysis? The concept of needs embraces multiple aspects, including learners' goals and backgrounds, their language proficiencies, their reasons for taking the course, their teaching and learning preferences, and the situations they will need to communicate in. Furthermore, needs involve what learners already know, what they do not know and what they wish to learn, and these can be collected and analyzed through various tools and methods (Flowerdew, 2013).

Needs analysis refers to a set of techniques and tools used to collect and evaluate information suitable for course design. Richards (2001) informs that procedures for collecting information during needs analysis can be selected from interviews, questionnaires, self-ratings, interviews, meetings, observation, collecting learner language samples, task analysis, and case studies. Then, it follows with designing a needs analysis which involves choosing any given options for a comprehensive view of learners' needs.

The main focus of the study is teaching English for specific purpose (ESP) since English is now a professional lingua franca both in Uzbekistan and world. Business English is recognized as leading language in business communication, representing the key for building and consolidating international business relations around the world (Maican, 2014). This paper aims to present a research project whose objective was to identify and analyze the English language needs of tourism students so as to develop syllabus for English classes for students in tourism.

Methodology: *Learners' profile and needs analysis tools*

Needs Analysis tools were used to pay special attention to productive and receptive skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as grammar and vocabulary, in order to create a course syllabus for learners who

work in marketing in a tour agency. They should be great communicators, as finding and retaining customer is not easy in today's rapidly developing world. In this competitive environment, learners should be able to use a wide variety of communication strategies, and techniques and English language knowledge in order to promote destinations to foreign tourists. Moreover, modern marketing largely focuses on advertising to the public by writing about effective brochures, ads and other promotional materials. Learners should be able to influence costumers through persuasive speech and writing. However, this does not mean other skills, reading and listening, and sub-skills like grammar and vocabulary are ignored, they should be taught in an integrated way, with greater emphasis placed on productive skills. Alongside language development, learners also understand relevant topics and acquire professional tour agent skills to achieve effective results. These topics include welcoming tourists, giving and asking for information, suggesting places of interest, attending job interviews, providing guided commentary during tours, designing tourist brochures, and performing other related tasks.

Learners have less than one year of professional experience in this field. While they possess general knowledge of the industry, they lack specialized expertise. Furthermore, they demonstrate limitations in speaking, reading, and writing skills due to insufficient topic-specific knowledge, despite **their aspiration** to attain professional competence across all language skills. This is because they aim to achieve professional competence across all skills.

English for tour agents (ESP) address learners' needs, lacks and wants and below given four types of NA tools assist in identifying these lacks. To develop an effective syllabus for learners engaged in tour agency marketing, a needs analysis is conducted to meet learners' needs, wants and lacks during the course. Needs analysis was taken marketing professionals through four needs analysis tools:

1. Interview with a professional worker

2. Poll in a channel
3. “Can Do” List
4. Interview with three randomly chosen workers

To carry out this assignment, we contacted with learners. With their support, we got know about our learners’ lacks, needs and wants. For the first interview, we had chosen a professional worker among learners to learn about her daily responsibilities since with the help of the person’s data we can design a very good syllabus. Her experience and knowledge can be very handful when teaching low level students working in the same field.

Secondly, an online poll consisting of five questions was distributed to know learners’ needs for learning English. Additionally, the online poll helped determine learners’ preferences and desired learning styles, while also identifying situations in which English is used to create relevant learning contexts.

In the next part a “Can Do” list was employed. This component was one of the triangular approaches, facilitate learner data.

In the last part, interview was conducted in order explore learners’ needs in greater depth. During the interview, learners’ strengths and weaknesses in term of language use was identified. The interview was recorded and analyzed.

Results and Discussion

1. Interview with a professional worker of tour agency

As Mamura (2022) mentioned collected data help make conclusions about learners’ deficiencies and needs to choose teaching materials and course design. After conducting the interview, we learned which areas required particular attention for designing the syllabus.

Based on data from Ms. Nishonova, we identified certain key topics that agents should improve and they are: writing air tickets, creating advertisement tools, writing itineraries, the ways of attitude people, answering office phone calls, using different social media platforms, designing “Top Product”, meeting

with foreign tour agents and discussing about famous and destinations and travelling abroad to collect information about the countries.

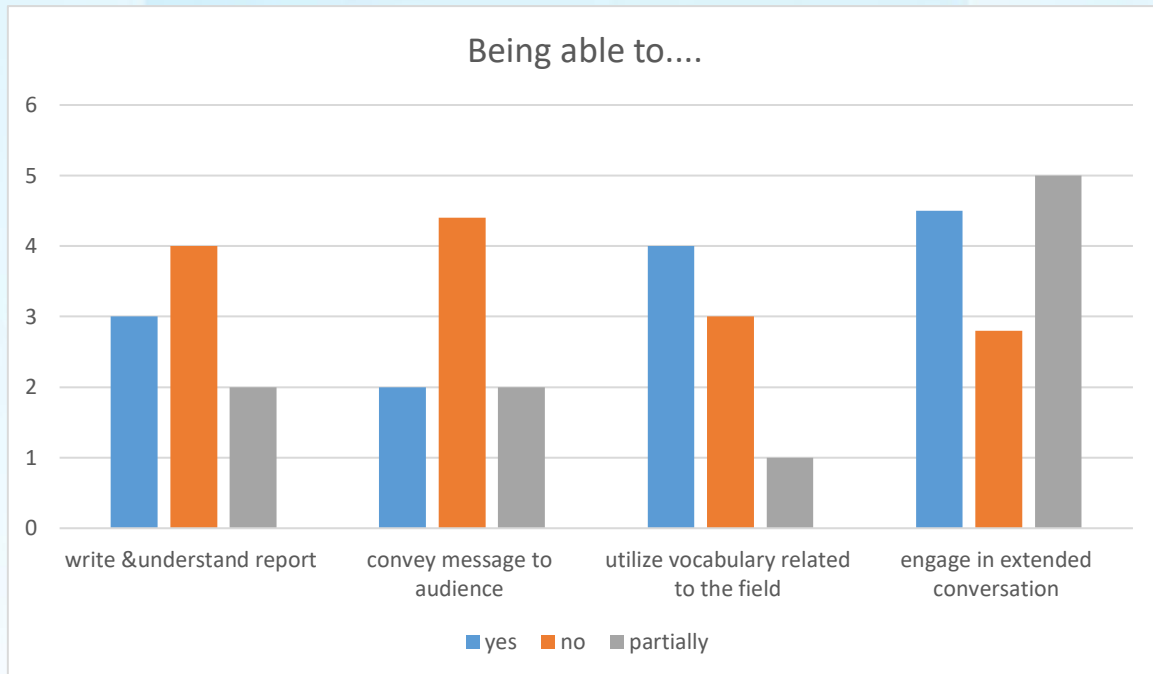
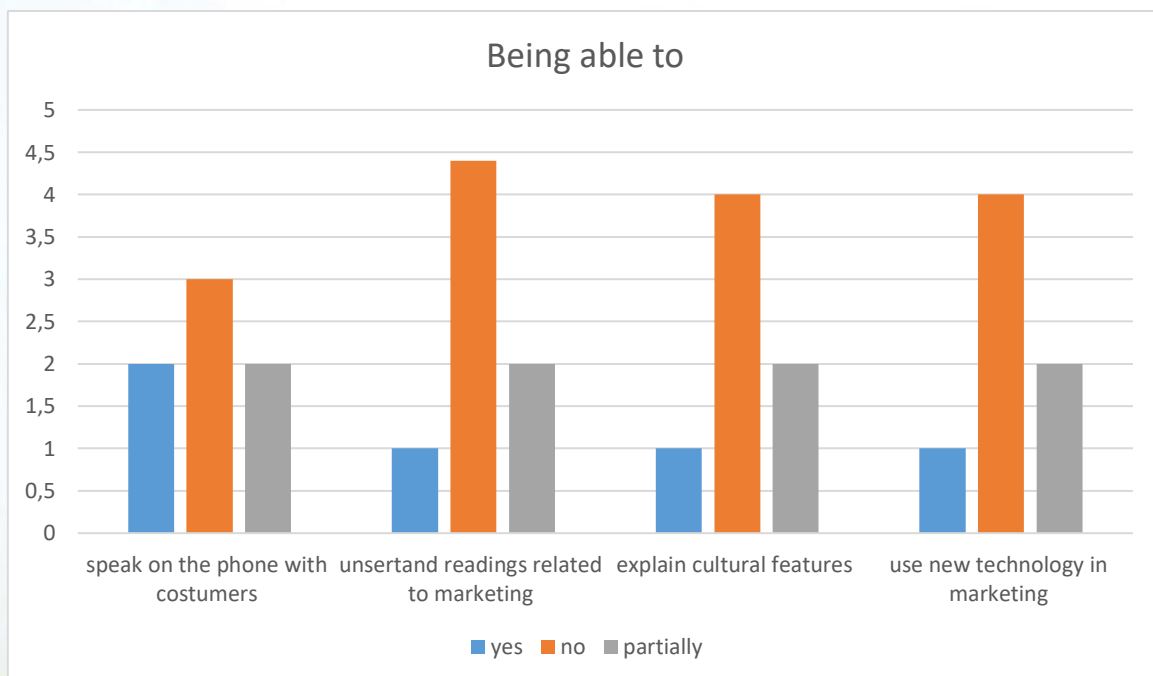
Poll

To identify learners' needs and wants, an online poll was conducted in a Telegram channel called Touristic Travel Agency. The channel was controlled by Mr. Temur, who works at Travel Agency. The poll results showed that half of the respondents (17%) wanted to improve speaking skill while only 5% want to focus on grammar and vocabulary development. When they were asked about materials they enjoy, responses varied; for 32% of participants, resources were not considered important, whereas the same proportion identified videos as the best classroom resources. Nearly half of them enjoy learning in groups rather than pairs. More than half of them prefer feedback from their peers rather than teacher grading. Moreover, poll revealed that most of the learners demonstrate auditory and visual learning preferences, as they favor learning through listening and reading.

2. "Can Do" list (Rating)

A rating was conducted with 17 learners to analyze learners' needs and lacks in terms of English language skills. Learners were asked to respond 'Yes', 'No' or 'Partially', or rate items on a scale from 0 to 2. Results showed that many learners were only partially able to write and understand a report. More than half cannot convey message effectively to audiences. However, most of them are able to use vocabulary effectively in their field and make conversations through phone calls with costumers. When they were asked about engaging in extended conversations with visitors, understanding reading materials and explaining cultural features of a country, learners rated themselves 1, indicating that they could not do these tasks fully. To know their technological skills, there was a question about using technology which revealed that some new technologies and tools must be employed.

Can do list results



3. Needs analysis tool (Interview)

The subsequent needs analysis tool is interview among interviewer and three randomly chosen interviewees. As Suprina and Rahayu (2017) mentioned to supply validity and reliability of needs, interviews are applied mostly among researchers. Responses indicated that participants' primary learning needs related to greetings and welcoming customs of various nations since almost

none of them pays attention to other countries' greeting habits while meeting them in airport. Furthermore, participants generally lacked competence in creating itineraries and promotional brochures, relying instead on pre-prepared materials and frequently neglecting essential components such as activities, time allocation for unforeseen events, and company branding. Learners also exhibited limited knowledge of packaged tour types and how to select appropriate components according to travel destinations. In addition, they lacked experience in managing client complaints, often resorting to "excuses," an approach inconsistent with professional standards, and lacked strategies for offering compensation or retaining repeat clientele. These findings underscore the necessity of teaching learners the professional principles required to handle errors effectively, including the use of polite language, active listening, and composure.

The results indicate that the interview method constitutes the most effective needs analysis tool, as learners frequently overestimate their abilities when responding to the "Can Do" list or other questionnaires. Observations during the interview revealed that participants made errors in speaking and other language skills that were not apparent in self-reported assessments tools.

Nevertheless, this does not diminish the value of other NA tools, which provide insights into areas that interviews alone may not capture. Employing a combination of methods ensures a more holistic and accurate assessment of learners' needs, gaps, and competencies.

Nevertheless, learners demonstrated basic proficiency in leveraging social media for promoting their company and marketing tour services. These insights provide invaluable guidance for ESP instructors in designing a syllabus that systematically addresses learners' needs, gaps, and professional skill deficiencies.

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