

A Needs Analysis of Business English Programme for Tour Guide Diploma Students in Kenya. ,2014

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Abstract:

As employees enter the job market, they are expected to exhibit a high level of communicative competence that is commensurate with the demands of a particular job. More often than not, this is not possible due to lack of alignment between the ESP course offered to the learners and the target work domain. This study sheds light on one of the fundamental principles of ESP: needs analysis. The purpose of the present study was to find out the target and language learning needs of learners pursuing a Tour Guide ESP course as perceived by the students, establish the perceptions of ESP instructors on the target and language learning needs of Tour Guide students and to find out the perceptions of Tour Guide firms' Managers on the ESP course offered to Tour Guide students. The theoretical framework was based on the Munbian (1978) Approach (Target Situation Analysis and Present Situation Analysis) and Learning Centred Approach by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). Stratified purposive sampling technique was used in the study. Data was collected from ESP instructors, students and employers in the tour and travel firms. Questionnaires and interview were used to elicit data that was analysed using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that learners are able to articulate their needs as regards to what they wish to be incorporated in an ESP syllabus. It has also been proved by this study that ESP teachers have perceptions on the learning and target needs of their students pursuing Tour Guide Course. The managers of tour guiding firms equally gave suggestions on what ought to be done to make the ESP course more effective. The needs analysis discussed in this study represents a crucial addition to the literature of needs analysis. We recommend that institutions should always conduct needs analysis before the design of any ESP course. Research should also be ongoing on needs analysis and the results of this study can be used to select the content of ESP materials for tour guides. It is hoped that the study has provided a framework for analysing learner needs which can be regularly updated in respect to the ever changing curriculum and societal needs. Moreover, it is hoped the study will raise the awareness on the importance of learner's needs in designing any language course.