



ENGLISH COMMUNICATION NEEDS OF TOURISM FACULTY UNDERGRADUATES: A COMPARATIVE STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS^{1,2}

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the needs of tourism faculty undergraduates to develop their English communication skills with a comprehensive needs analysis and to investigate if the stakeholders' views about the students' needs differ from one another. The study is considered to be important because it included all the stakeholders of tourism faculties in Turkey to provide a basis for a well-tailored vocational English curriculum and to increase the qualifications of tourism faculty graduates. In this study, graduates and undergraduates of tourism faculties, tourism lecturers and English language instructors at tourism faculties and executive representatives of the tourism sector were taken as the stakeholders. The population of the study covered all tourism faculties in Turkey. The sample was taken from six different tourism faculties using the simple random sampling method with a questionnaire. The sampling of the graduates and executive sector representatives was taken from an Antalya-based association using the simple random sampling method again. Analysis of the research data helped identify which stakeholders differed from one another in the needs of tourism undergraduates for the development of tourism undergraduates' English communication skills, especially tourism lecturers were found to have differed from almost all other stakeholders. Relevant suggestions are offered to manage the differences to increase the effectiveness of the English courses currently given at tourism faculties and possible reasons for such differences among stakeholders are discussed in the study.

1. Introduction

Tourism is a sector that has increased its importance day by day and turned into a global industry especially in the last quarter-century (Veijola, 2010: p. 84). In parallel with this, effective and sustainable management of this rapidly growing industry gains importance and more qualified labour force is needed (İçöz, 1991: p. 15; Jafari and Sola, 1996: p. 229; Kusluvan and Kusluvan, 2000: p. 251; Haven-Tang and Jones, 2008: p. 353). Tourism faculties are the institutions responsible for raising this qualified laborforce in Turkey. The graduates of tourism faculties can't reflect their tourism-related skills on the sector without having sufficient English language skills due to the international nature of the tourism sector (Kuppan, 2008; Hsu, 2010; Chen et al. 2011) because tourism is a sector where communication among individuals from different countries is intense (Davras and Bulgan, 2012: p. 231).

In the literature, there are many studies conducted on the students learning English for special purposes (Laborda, 2002; Blue and Harun, 2003; Lin et al. 2013; Lo, 2011). However, despite all the findings and suggestions of these studies, tourism faculty graduates continue to fail to use their foreign language skills as a means of communication following their graduation. In order to overcome such problems, it is necessary to determine tourism undergraduates' language needs and expectations from language teaching processes correctly to be able to plan the objectives of vocational English courses and to create course contents in line with their needs (Allwright and Allwright, 1977; Mackay and Mountford, 1978; Widdowson, 1981; Hutchinson and Waters 1987; Waite, 1989).

Considering that English communication skills are very important for the tourism faculty graduates and that the failure of the tourism faculty graduates in using English for communication purpose is common, a detailed needs analysis needs to be conducted. Only in this way, it will be possible to design English instruction effectively with the participation of all the stakeholders of tourism faculties. It is also important to find out whether there is a difference

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between the views of the stakeholders who have to jointly work to raise qualified graduates from tourism faculties. This study aims to fill in this gap in the relevant literature.

Since the services delivered in the tourism sector are generally abstract, the quality of the personnel employed in the sector increases the perceived quality of the services and reflects positively on the customer satisfaction receiving them (Kelley, 1992; MacVigar and Rodger, 1996; Leslie and Richardson, 2000; Conlin and Baum, 2003; Haven-Tang and Jones, 2008). The opposite of this occurs when employees in the sector lack adequate foreign language skills, and thus the value of the tourist attractions offered to consumers and their satisfaction levels decrease (Leslie and Russell, 2006; Ghany and Latif, 2012; Akgöz and Gürsoy, 2014). For these reasons, appropriate English teaching and course design should be implemented to make tourism graduates effective foreign language users following their graduation (Leslie and Russell, 2006).

In the present circumstances in Turkey, the language practitioners and faculty directors' views are taken into account in the design of English courses but the vocational needs of tourism undergraduates for English communication skills are generally ignored (İgrek, 2013). However, Hutchinson and Waters (1991) emphasize the need to identify undergraduates' needs and to keep students at the centre of language teaching and course design.

2. Methodology

Quantitative data collection method was used in the data collection stage in the study. The reason for this is that it is more convenient to work with large samples (Carr, 1994). The questionnaire developed by Boran (1994) was used in the study. Three different versions of the questionnaire were adapted and no change was made in the content items except the demographic questions and rhetoric language. One version was adapted for the undergraduates, one version was adapted for tourism lecturers and English instructors at tourism faculties. The third version was adapted for the representatives of the sector and the graduates of tourism faculties. Each version was piloted on a group of participants with similar characteristics to the research population. According to the reliability analysis of the pilot study, the Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient was found to be 0.89. This value indicates that the scale is a highly ($\alpha > 0.70$) reliable one (Hair et al., 2010). The questionnaire was administered between July and September 2018.

2.1. Population and Sampling

The research population consisted of all the tourism faculties in Turkey. Therefore, the research population consisted of tourism undergraduates, tourism lecturers, graduates of tourism faculties, English language instructors and executive representatives of the sector. Due to the cost and

time-related limitations, the simple sampling method was used in the sampling stage and the sample was taken from 6 different tourism faculties. In order to sample from tourism faculty graduates and sector representatives, the questionnaire was administered in an Antalya-based association whose members consist of hotel managers, using simple sampling method again. The sample size of the participants was calculated using the sample size table suggested by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) and it was aimed to administer the questionnaire on at least 384 participants.

A total of 448 questionnaires were administered to tourism faculty undergraduates by the researcher at six faculties. The questionnaire was replied by 90 tourism lecturers. A total of 32 questionnaires were delivered to the English language instructors and 22 questionnaires were returned. 130 members from the chosen regional association with around 1200 members filled out the related questionnaire. 60 of them were found to have a degree from a tourism faculty and the remaining of them were found to be sector representatives.

2.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study aims to determine whether there is any difference between stakeholders' views on the English communication needs of tourism undergraduates and to identify which stakeholders' views differ from one another. Language learners, who are the primary resources in needs analysis may not be aware of their English communication needs. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the needs analyst or course designers to determine the needs of the students by ensuring the participation of all stakeholders in the needs analysis. The findings of such a needs analysis and designing courses in line with the findings will lead to positive consequences for all stakeholders. To achieve success in practice, it is important to identify the differences in the views of all stakeholders regarding the needs of tourism undergraduates. Only with this way, it will be possible to design and successfully implement the courses that fully meet the communication needs of tourism undergraduates at maximum level, including the setting of effective course objectives, course materials, assessment tools and learning outcomes. In the study, the following hypotheses have been developed in order to determine the differences between the views of the stakeholders regarding the relevant needs of tourism undergraduates;

H1. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty undergraduates to improve their English reading skills significantly differ from one another.

H2. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty undergraduates to improve their English writing skills significantly differ from one another.

H3. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism

faculty undergraduates to improve their English speaking skills significantly differ from one another.

H4. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty undergraduates to improve their English listening skills significantly differ from one another.

H5. Stakeholders' views regarding the effectiveness of the English courses offered in tourism faculties significantly differ from one another.

H6. Stakeholders' views regarding the participation of the stakeholders in the design of English courses at tourism faculties significantly differ from one another.

H7. Stakeholders' attitudes towards English significantly differ from one another.

This study is a significant one as it conducted a comprehensive needs analysis based on all stakeholders' participation to find out the needs of tourism faculty undergraduates to improve their English communication skills and also focused on the possible difference between the views of the stakeholders regarding the needs for developing tourism faculty students' English communication skills. It is not possible to design appropriate course content, to adapt appropriate teaching methods and techniques and to achieve already set course objectives in the cases where the language needs of the target students are ignored or are not determined appropriately.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study was submitted for relevant statistical analysis to determine whether there is a statistical difference among the stakeholders' views regarding the needs of tourism faculty undergraduates to improve their English communication skills and if there is, which stakeholders differ from one another. For this purpose, percentages and frequencies were calculated with SPSS. One-way ANOVA test was used for between-group comparison because the data for the related items were found to have a normal distribution (between +2.0 and -2.0) (George, 2011). When a significant difference was found, Gabriel Post Hoc test was used to determine which groups differed.

3. Findings

3.1. Demographic Findings Regarding the Participants

As seen in Table 1, 41.9% (n = 259) of the participants were female and 58.1% (n = 359) of them were male. The number of participant students from the tourism faculties was 62.5% (n=386). The percentage of tourism lecturers was 14.6% (n=90). Then, the sector representatives and graduates followed with 9.7% (n=60). The lowest participation rate was found to be English instructors with 3.6% (n=22).

Table 1. Demographic Information About Participants

Participant	N	%
Female	259	41.9
Male	359	58.1
English Instructors	22	3.6
Tourism Lecturers	90	14.6
Sector	60	9.7
Graduate	60	9.7
Undergraduate	386	62.5
Between 17-21	242	39.2
Between 22-26	193	31.2
Between 27-31	62	10
Between 32-36	43	7
37 and above	78	12.6
Total	618	100.0

As shown in Table 2, 39.2% (n = 242) of the participants were in the 17-21 age range. 31.2% of them (n = 193) were in the range of 22-26 years and the percentage of the participants aged 37 years and above was 12.6% (n = 78). The percentage of participants aged between 32 and 36 was the lowest with 7% (n = 43)

56.3% of the participants (n = 348) suggested Intermediate level as the exit level for tourism faculties while 29.1% (n = 180) of them suggested upper intermediate level as the exit level. The rate of those stating that elementary level should be the exit level at tourism faculties was 2.6% (n = 16), while the rate of those stating that pre-intermediate level should be the exit level with 8.4 (n=52). The rate of those stating that beginner level should be the exit level was found to be 0.8% (n=5) while the rate of those stating that advanced level should be the exit level with 2.8% (n=17).

Table 2. Findings Regarding the Suggested Exit Levels for Tourism Faculties

Suggested Exit Level	N	Yüzde
Beginner	5	0.8
Elementary	16	2.6
Pre-intermediate	52	8.4
Intermediate	348	56.3
Upper-Intermediate	180	29.1
Advanced	17	2.8
Total	618	100

3.2. Findings of Between Group Comparisons

3.2.1. Findings Regarding English Reading Skills

One Way ANOVA test indicated that there is a significant difference between the stakeholders' views regarding tourism undergraduates' needs for developing their English reading skills (p = 0.001). Therefore, Gabriel Post Hoc test was conducted. As seen in Table 3, the views of tourism lecturers significantly

Table 3. Gabriel Post Hoc Test Results for English Reading Skills

(I)	(J)	MD(I-J)	SE	P
English Inst.	Tourism Lect.	-,12514	,14905	,991
	Sector	,28906	,15620	,444
	Graduate	,24091	,15620	,696
	Undergraduate	,10847	,13737	,987
Tourism Lect.	English Inst.	,12514	,14905	,991
	Sector	,41420*	,10445	,001
	Graduate	,36605*	,10445	,005
	Undergraduate	,23361*	,07336	,008
Sector	English Inst.	-,28906	,15620	,444
	Tourism Lect.	-,41420*	,10445	,001
	Graduate	-,04815	,11442	1,000
	Undergraduate	-,18059	,08697	,214
Graduate	English Inst.	-,24091	,15620	,696
	Tourism Lect.	-,36605*	,10445	,005
	Sector	,04815	,11442	1,000
	Undergraduate	-,13244	,08697	,639
Undergraduate	English Inst.	-,10847	,13737	,987
	Tourism Lect.	-,23361*	,07336	,008
	Sector	,18059	,08697	,214
	Graduate	,13244	,08697	,639

*Significant at 0.05 level

differed from the sector representatives ($p = 0.001$), graduates ($p = 0.005$) and undergraduates ($p = 0.008$).

3.2.2. Findings Regarding English Writing Skills

One Way ANOVA test revealed that there is a significant difference between the stakeholders' views regarding the needs for English writing skills ($p = 0.001$). Therefore, Gabriel Post Hoc test was conducted. As seen in Table 4, the views of tourism lecturers significantly differed from the sector representatives ($p = 0.037$), graduates ($p = 0.001$) and undergraduates ($p = 0.001$). Similarly, it was found that the views of the English instructors significantly differed from the views of the graduates ($p = 0.032$).

3.2.3. Findings Regarding English Speaking Skills

One Way ANOVA test revealed that there is a significant difference between the stakeholders' views regarding the needs for English speaking skills ($p = 0.001$). Therefore, Gabriel Post Hoc test was conducted. As seen in Table 5, the views of the tourism lecturers significantly differed from the sector representatives ($p = 0.003$), graduates ($p = 0.001$) and undergraduates ($p = 0.001$).

3.2.4. Findings Regarding English Listening Skills

One Way ANOVA test indicates that there is a significant difference between the stakeholders' views regarding the needs for English listening

Table 4. Gabriel Post Hoc Test for English Writing Skills

(I)	(J)	MD(I-J)	SE	P
English Inst.	Tourism Lect.	-,07489	,15866	1,000
	Sector	,24654	,16627	,742
	Graduate	,47749*	,16627	,032
	Undergraduate	,33268	,14623	,075
Tourism Lect.	English Inst.	,07489	,15866	1,000
	Sector	,32143*	,11119	,037
	Graduate	,55238*	,11119	,001
	Undergraduate	,40757*	,07809	,001
Sector	English Inst.	-,24654	,16627	,742
	Tourism Lect.	-,32143*	,11119	,037
	Graduate	,23095	,12180	,451
	Undergraduate	,08615	,09258	,975
Graduate	English Inst.	-,47749*	,16627	,032
	Tourism Lect.	-,55238*	,11119	,001
	Sector	-,23095	,12180	,451
	Undergraduate	-,14481	,09258	,603
Undergraduate	English Inst.	-,33268	,14623	,075
	Tourism Lect.	-,40757*	,07809	,001
	Sector	-,08615	,09258	,975
	Graduate	,14481	,09258	,603

*Significant at 0.05 level

skills ($p = 0.006$). Therefore, Gabriel Post Hoc test was conducted. As seen in Table 6, the views of the tourism lecturers significantly differed from those of the undergraduates ($p = 0.001$).

Table 5. Gabriel Post Hoc Test for English Speaking Skills

(I)	(J)	MD(I-J)	SE	P
English Inst.	Tourism Lect.	-,13973	,14663	,977
	Sector	,23064	,15366	,728
	Graduate	,26212	,15366	,562
	Undergraduate	,14707	,13514	,894
Tourism Lect.	English Inst.	,13973	,14663	,977
	Sector	,37037*	,10275	,003
	Graduate	,40185*	,10275	,001
	Undergraduate	,28680*	,07217	,001
Sector	English Inst.	-,23064	,15366	,728
	Tourism Lect.	-,37037*	,10275	,003
	Graduate	,03148	,11256	1,000
	Undergraduate	-,08357	,08556	,966
Graduate	English Inst.	-,26212	,15366	,562
	Tourism Lect.	-,40185*	,10275	,001
	Sector	-,03148	,11256	1,000
	Undergraduate	-,11505	,08556	,785
Undergraduate	English Inst.	-,14707	,13514	,894
	Tourism Lect.	-,28680*	,07217	,001
	Sector	,08357	,08556	,966
	Graduate	,11505	,08556	,785

*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 6. Gabriel Post Hoc Test for English Listening Skills

(I)	(J)	MD(I-J)	SE	P
English Inst.	Tourism Lect.	-,24444	,15787	,660
	Sector	,01944	,16544	1,000
	Graduate	-,05278	,16544	1,000
	Undergraduate	,05009	,14549	1,000
Tourism Lect.	English Inst.	,24444	,15787	,660
	Sector	,26389	,11063	,156
	Graduate	,19167	,11063	,574
	Undergraduate	,29453*	,07770	,001
Sector	English Inst.	-,01944	,16544	1,000
	Tourism Lect.	-,26389	,11063	,156
	Graduate	-,07222	,12119	1,000
	Undergraduate	,03064	,09211	1,000
Graduate	English Inst.	,05278	,16544	1,000
	Tourism Lect.	-,19167	,11063	,574
	Sector	,07222	,12119	1,000
	Undergraduate	,10286	,09211	,920
Undergraduate	English Inst.	-,05009	,14549	1,000
	Tourism Lect.	-,29453*	,07770	,001
	Sector	-,03064	,09211	1,000
	Graduate	-,10286	,09211	,920

*. Significant at 0.05 level

Table 7. Gabriel Post Hoc Test for the Evaluation of the Current English Courses

(I)	(J)	MD(I-J)	SE	P
English Inst.	Tourism Lect.	-,04836	,25407	1,000
	Sector	-,29280	,26626	,949
	Graduate	,21553	,26626	,994
Tourism Lect.	English Inst.	,04836	,25407	1,000
	Sector	-,24444	,17805	,840
	Graduate	,26389	,17805	,769
	Undergraduate	-,56366*	,12505	,001
Sector	English Inst.	,29280	,26626	,949
	Tourism Lect.	,24444	,17805	,840
	Graduate	,50833	,19504	,090
	Undergraduate	-,31921	,14825	,176
Graduate	English Inst.	-,21553	,26626	,994
	Tourism Lect.	-,26389	,17805	,769
	Sector	-,50833	,19504	,090
	Undergraduate	-,82755*	,14825	,001
Undergraduate	English Inst.	,61202*	,23416	,022
	Tourism Lect.	,56366*	,12505	,001
	Sector	,31921	,14825	,176
	Graduate	,82755*	,14825	,001

*. Significant at 0.05 level

3.3. Findings Regarding the Evaluation of the English Courses at Tourism Faculties

One Way ANOVA test was conducted to see whether there is a significant difference between the stakeholders' views towards the evaluation of the English courses given at tourism faculties, and it was found that there is a significant difference (p= 0.001). Then, Gabriel Post Hoc test was conducted. As seen in Table 7, the views of the English instructors differ significantly from the views of the undergraduates (p= 0.022). Likewise, the views of the tourism lecturers differ significantly from the views of the undergraduates (p= 0.001). It was also found that the views of the undergraduates differ significantly from the views of the graduates (p= 0.001).

3.4. Findings regarding the Participation of the Stakeholders in English Course Design

One Way Anova test was conducted to find out if there is any significant difference between the stakeholders' views regarding the participation of the stakeholders in English course design at tourism faculties revealed that there is not any significant difference (p= 0.059).

3.5. Findings regarding the Participation of the Stakeholders in English Course Design

One Way Anova test was conducted to find out if there is any significant difference between the stakeholders' views regarding their attitudes towards English in general revealed that there is not any significant difference (p= 0.179). The status of the tested hypotheses is Table 8;

Table 8. Status of the Hypotheses Tested in the Study

Hypotheses	P	Status
H1. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty students to improve their English reading skills significantly differ from one another.	0.001	Accepted
H2. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty students to improve their English writing skills significantly differ from one another.	0.001	Accepted
H3. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty students to improve their English speaking skills significantly differ from one another.	0.001	Accepted
H4. Stakeholders' views on the needs of tourism faculty students to improve their English listening skills significantly differ from one another.	0.006	Accepted
H5. Stakeholders' views regarding the effectiveness of the English courses offered in tourism faculties significantly differ from one another.	0.001	Accepted
H6. Stakeholders' views regarding the participation of the stakeholders in the design of English courses in tourism faculties significantly differ from one another.	0.059	Refused
H7. Stakeholders' attitudes towards English significantly differ from one another.	0.179	Refused

3. Conclusion and Suggestions

In light of the findings of the study, it could be concluded that tourism lecturers have the highest needs expectations for English reading skills. However, it is also significant that their perceptions of the needs for this skill are similar to those of English

instructors at tourism faculties. At this point, it is seen that there is a need for further studies examining the reasons why their perceptions are high.

The findings obtained from the between-groups analyses regarding English writing skills indicated that the views of the tourism lecturers differed from those of the sector representatives, graduates and tourism undergraduates. Again, as stated for English reading skills, the views of tourism lecturers were found to have the highest perception of needs.

The findings obtained from the between-group comparisons conducted for English writing skills also indicated that English instructors significantly differed from the tourism graduates. Graduates have lower perceptions of need than the English instructors despite their sector experience. This finding can also be attributed to that the knowledge of the English instructors regarding the tourism sector is insufficient, which needs to be handled as they are a significant stakeholder in raising labour force for the tourism sector.

The findings obtained from between comparisons regarding needs for English speaking skills revealed that tourism lecturers differed from the sector representatives, graduates and undergraduates. Tourism lecturers have the highest perception of the need for English speaking skills among all stakeholders except English instructors as in reading and writing skills.

According to the findings of between-group comparisons regarding English listening skills, tourism lecturers differ from tourism undergraduates. However, they have a similar perception of needs for English listening skills to the other stakeholders.

The findings regarding the evaluation of the current English courses given at tourism faculties revealed that tourism lecturers differed from tourism undergraduates. In other words, the perceptions of the tourism lecturers regarding the achievements in gaining English listening skills in English courses are much higher than the tourism undergraduates. Similarly, English instructors and tourism undergraduates differ in their perception of achieving English listening skills at tourism faculties. Tourism undergraduates' perception of achieving English listening skills in English courses was found to be higher than English instructors. It is noteworthy that undergraduates have higher perceptions of achievement in gaining English listening skills than the English instructor.

Similarly, it is also noteworthy that the perceptions of tourism undergraduates about gaining English listening skills in English courses differ from the graduates. This finding can be interpreted as follows. The students who believe that they have gained adequate English listening skills in their undergraduate courses understand that they have failed to acquire the relevant skills in their faculties when they attempt to use their skills in the sector, but they do not have the chance to make up for their

loss. Therefore, the awareness of undergraduates regarding their English language skills needs following their graduation is weak and needs to be improved during their undergraduate education. It was also seen that all stakeholders should be included in curriculum and course design, which may help educate better graduates of tourism with better foreign language skills, and it was also found that all stakeholders have similar positive attitudes towards English and the need for English teaching at tourism faculties.

Another finding that can be concluded from these findings is that the tourism lecturers generally differ from other stakeholders, and further studies are needed to improve their perceptions towards the communication needs of their students. This is important because they seem to be the major decision-makers at tourism faculties. It could be said that their expectations are far from realistic, and it needs to be normalized.

Another point to be emphasized is the establishment of effective coordination between the English instructors and the tourism lecturers and this will increase the effectiveness of the English courses (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: p. 45). It could be claimed that the teaching hours at faculties are limited, and implementing such a team-teaching approach will be time-consuming. In this case, one or two extra hours per week could be created in faculties for such activities. An advantage of this kind of team teaching activities is the creation of a positive perception of undergraduates that the tourism lecturers give importance to English course and English teaching (Jordan, 1997: p. 121), and this can also help tourism lecturers normalize their perceptions regarding undergraduates' needs for English communication skills. This can also help English instructors at tourism faculties to learn more about the nature of tourism sector and be better and more effective stakeholders of tourism faculties, thus can be better practitioners of English language teaching in line with the set principles by their organisations.

Besides, it will be possible to eliminate the possible missing information of the English instructors regarding tourism and to correct any misunderstanding. This coordination can also be realized with the other stakeholders so that all stakeholders can meet at a reasonable and realistic point in terms of the needs of tourism undergraduates to improve their English communication skills as they are supposed to collaborate in raising qualified graduates. As a result of this, the effectiveness of the English courses in tourism faculties could be increased and the desired goals regarding undergraduates' qualification could be achieved.

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