PRELIMINARY STUDY ON E-HAILING DRIVERS NEEDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Abstract

E-hailing apps Grab and Uber have become household names, particularly among urbanites over these five years. Overall the consumer response to e-hailing services in Malaysia has been positive, with The Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) reporting that 80% of consumers prefer e-hailing over taxis. As such, many believe the availability of e-hailing services will help to boost demand, and raise property prices and rentals and help the tourism sector in locations where they are available. As the demand grows, and tourists around the globe keep rising, the means of communication plays a vital role. Hence, this article explores the Grab drivers' needs in English language learning for the purpose of successful communication in working environment. The needs are categorised into three elements: needs of English language at workplace, problems in English language usage, and preferences in learning English. A case study was carried out among 50 Grab drivers in Kuala Lumpur. The analysis of responses to the needs in English language learning among Grab drivers is hoped to fashion English language course or the syllabus to the e-hailing drivers.

Introduction

Transportation is a fundamental driver of the tourism industry as it is a precondition for travel since it facilitates mobility and the movement of tourists from their place of origin (i.e., their home area) to their destination and vice versa (Suhaimi *et al*., 2018). The growing technology has changed the customer's preferences to use e-hailing services over any other mode of transportations. With this new technology, people now have better choices to make. As the demand grows, and tourists around the globe keep rising, the means of communication plays a vital role. According to Wan Mohamad *et al.,* (2016), a modern transport and communication facilities play an important role for integrated economic development. Therefore, the result of the study shows that English language is vital for transportation industry mainly for e-hailing drivers in Malaysia for communication, translation between the drivers and foreign tourists.

Review of literature

The concept of Need Analysis in English for Specific Purposes

The concept of Needs analysis has been different along the decades. In the era of 1960s to 1970s, need analysis ranging from the process of assessing the communicative needs of the learners and the techniques of achieving the teaching objective (Otilia, 2015). However, nowadays, the concept of need analysis is more

complex as it aims to collect information about the learners and focusing into looking the target situation of learning ESP. In order to fulfil the specific needs of the learners into English language learning, need analysis can be categorized as the course establishment. Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998) posited the theoretical framework of need analysis that based on the three features of analytical procedures which are known as target situation analysis (TSA), present situation analysis (PSA) and strategy analysis (SA). All of these three components are inter-related to each other in order to cater the need of the learners in learning the language. Target Situation Analysis (TSA) is used to for the analysing and identification of the learners' required needs and skills at the end of the course that is based on the purpose of completing task in the workplace. In addition, the Present Situation Analysis is used to look for learners' strength and weaknesses in English language based on the capacity of the demand of its usage in the workplace. Last but not least, Strategy Analysis is focusing on essential skills that are needed to be taught to learners and how the course is capable of pushing learners to achieve the desired outcome.

Need Analysis of the English Language use in the E-hailing and Tourism Industry
Nowadays, the role of English is crucial for e-hailing industry as to communicate, negotiate, and execute transactions between tourists and passengers. Ten (2018) claimed that tourism industry will be affected if its e-hailing service such as Uber and Grab ceased as it is the latest trend in the global transport system. Subandowo (2017) affirmed that speaking skills has becoming an increasingly important and the most needed skills in tourism industry as it acts as a medium in conversation. As far as the importance of speaking skills is important, English serve the main purpose as the language used as a means of communication. Blue & Harun (2003) further affirmed that English language can be associated with host-guest interaction in the service business, should be termed as the "language of hospitality" as it is a means of serving the main purposes of the language. Hence, a genuine communication is needed as the ability in escorting and guiding task with the clients. Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2010) further explains that learners who lack the aspect of speaking skills will face difficulties in convincing others in term of conveying ideas and persuasions.

In delving into the real scenario cases of need analysis, Prachanan (2012) has conducted a research regarding this subject matter. A study conducted in Thailand, provided the picture of language need in tourism industry in Thailand. It concluded that speaking is the common issues encountered by tourism employees as they are lack of capability to select suitable expression and word in speaking and lack of grammar knowledge in conducting writing task. The similar case study also was conducted in Vietnam by Trang (2015) that shows speaking and listening skills are essential in tourism field.

Methods
This study employed a quantitative approach, in which a set of questionnaires was used to gather data pertaining to the needs and the problem of English use in transportation industry as well as the learning preferences of the e-hailing drivers in learning English. The instrument used to elicit data for this research study was a questionnaire. The items used in this questionnaire were adopted from scholars such as Chatsungnoen (2015) and Reid (1987). The questionnaire consists of four parts, which are Part A, Part B, Part C and Part D. Part A is the demographic profile of the respondents. The second section of the questionnaire is Part B, it talks about the needs of the English language at the workplace. It consisted 22 questions. The items in this section were adapted from Chatsungnoen (2015) and was measured using a five-point Likert scale on the level of importance on the English language skills, from 1 for do not need, 2 slight need, 3 for moderate need, 4 for extensive need and finally 5 for the most need based on the four main domains of English language skills, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Meanwhile Part C, the third section of the questionnaire is also consisted of 22 questions that also used Likert-scale ranging from 1 for never, 2 for almost never, 3 for occasionally, 4 for almost every time and finally 5 for every time which talks about problems in the usage of English language. Finally Part D, that is the last part, it consisted of 9 questions and also used Likert-scale ranging from 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree and finally 5 for strongly agree. The respondents were asked about their learning preferences in learning the English language. The items were developed by Reid (1987). To ensure the

validity of the questionnaire, the draft version of the questionnaire constructed by the researcher was modified and revised based on the suggestion of the researcher's English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course instructor.

After that, a pilot study was carried out to measure the effectiveness and the language suitability of the questionnaire. There were 10 respondents who are the grab drivers in Shah Alam, Selangor that involved in the pilot study of the research. The respondents were requested to fill in the questionnaire and to give their remarks on the content and wording of each item in the questionnaire. The population in this study were the grab drivers in Kuala Lumpur and 50 Grab drivers were randomly selected as the respondents in this need's analysis study. As the study cater into the needs and the problems of English use in the transportation industry among e-hailing community, the population of the study has to be grab drivers that deal with foreigners who work in Malaysia, tourists and so on. In this case, they are able to give their views in regards to English language use and hence increasing the reliability of this study. From the population, the researcher chose e-hailing drivers in Kuala Lumpur as the sample of the need's analysis study. This is due to the environmental situation of the industry that demands the use of English in their daily work.

Result

The results of the study are the excerpts from the SPSS analysis of the questionnaires. This is the basis for the discussion on the needs in English language learning among Grab drivers in Kuala Lumpur. The needs in terms of needs of English language at workplace, problems in English language usage, and preferences in learning English are presented and discussed in the following sections.

Needs of the English language at the workplace

To study the needs analysis of the respondents, the researchers focuses on the four main skills in language which are listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to know the aspects of language skills that needs an improvement. Thus, to tabulate the data for the needs of English language in the respondents' working place the mean and standard deviation have been calculated. Table 1 below has summarized the data collected.

Table 1. Need of language skills in the workplace.

Language Skills	Mean (X)	Std Dev.	Need Level	Rank
Listening	3.76	.661	High	2
Speaking	3.92	.702	High	1
Reading	3.72	.636	High	3
Writing	3.62	.840	High	4
Total	3.75	.709	High	-

Based on the Table 1, it shows that Speaking skills was perceived to be the most needed language skills as it has the highest mean score (X=3.76; SD= 3.92). The lowest mean score collected of the language skills needed has to be the Writing skills (X=3.62; SD=.840). There are also the mean score of Reading and Listening which has the score of (X=3.72; SD=.636) and (X=3.76; SD=.661) respectively. Hence, it can be generally concluded that the respondents rated all of four English language skills as important. It has shown that there is high needs of acquiring the four skills of language learning which is speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Problems in the Usage of English Language

This section presents the problem in English language skills encountered by e-hailing drivers when dealing with passengers. The problems were tabulated according to the four main English language skills mentioned earlier. The result of the findings was illustrated in the Table 2, 3 and 4 below.

Table 2. Problems of listening skills faced by e-hailing drivers.

Listening Problems	Freq (N)	Mean	Std Dev.
Receiving spoken instructions	50	3.40	1.133
Listening to riders	50	3.38	.981
Listening to radio or television programmes and other English media	50	3.33	.768

Referring to the Table 2 above, it can be seen that e-hailing drivers encountered difficulties in listening skills. From the Table 2 it can be noted that most of the respondents affirmed that the most difficult listening problem that they have encountered is "Receiving spoken instructions" (X=3.40; SD=1.133). "Listening to riders" (X=3.38; SD=.981) can be considered as a moderate problem that the respondents have to faced. However, "Listening to radio or television programmes and other English media" (X=3.33; SD=.768) is the least difficult problem that the respondents have to face in regards to the listening skills.

Table 3. Problems of speaking skills faced by e-hailing drivers

Speaking Problems	Freq (N)	Mean	Std Dev.
Talking to a variety of audiences	50	3.35	1.103
Asking and answering questions during 'pick up' and 'drop-off'	50	3.33	.876
Introducing yourself and others in a variety of situations	50	3.15	.737
Speaking to foreigners	50	3.35	.993
Making requests (i.e. for further information or confirmation)	50	3.30	.777
Talking over the phone	50	2.89	.687

The Table 3 above shows the problem of speaking skills perceived by e-hailing drivers. From the data collected above, the most difficult speaking problem perceived by the respondents are "Talking to a variety of audiences" and "Speaking to foreigners" as it depicts the highest mean score of X=3.35;SD=1.103 and X=.3.35;SD=.993. Besides, there are also others speaking problems faced by the respondents which are "Asking and answering questions during 'pick up' and 'drop-off'" (X=3.33;.876), Making requests (X=3.30; SD.777) and Introducing yourself and others in a variety of situations (X=3.15; SD=.737). The result also shown that the least difficult problem encountered by respondents in conducting speaking is "Talking over the phone" with the mean score of X=2.89; SD=.687.

Table 4. Problem of Reading skills faced by e-hailing drivers

Reading Problems	Freq (N)	Mean	Std. Dev
Reading manuals, instructions, or messages	50	3.60	.995
Searching the Internet English resources	50	3.45	.887
Reading office documents e.g. business letters	50	3.25	1.020
Reading signs, rules, and notices	50	3.30	1.031
Reading non-academic materials such as brochure, pamphlets and etc	50	3.21	.908
Reading books, magazines and etc	50	3.11	.667

Table 4 depicts the tabulation of data regarding the problem of reading skills. The respondents affirm that the most difficult reading problems is "Reading manuals, instructions or messages (X=3.60;SD=.995) and the least difficult reading problem based on their perspectives is "Reading books, magazines and etc (X=3.11;SD=.667).There are also other reading problems that the respondents perceived it in a moderate

difficulty which is "Searching the Internet English resources" (X=3.45;SD=.887), "Reading signs, rules, and notices" (X=3.30;SD=1.031), "Reading office documents" (X=3.25;SD=1.020) and "Reading non-academic materials" (X=3.21;SD=.908).

Table 5. The problem of writing skills among e-hailing drivers

Writing Problems	Freq (N)	Mean	Std. Dev
Writing emails	50	2.76	.827
Writing messages	50	3.37	.887
Writing letters	50	3.00	.821
Taking notes	50	2.60	.731
Filling forms	50	3.35	.894
Writing instructions	50	3.16	.726
Describing maps, diagrams, graphs and etc	50	3.16	.713

Last but not least, another set of skills derived from the research is into looking the problem of writing skills among e-hailing drivers. Table 5 above has summarized the findings about the writing skills problem among the respondents. It can be noticed that the most difficult writing problem perceived by the respondents is "Writing messages" (X=3.37; SD=.887) and the least most difficult writing problem is "Taking notes" that scored a lowest mean score (X=2.60; SD=.731). In addition, there are also other criteria of writing skills problem that the respondents have to face like "Filling forms" (X=3.35; SD=.894), Writing instructions (X=3.16; SD=.726), "Describing maps, diagrams, graphs and etc" (X=3.16; SD=.713) and "Writing emails" (X=2.76; SD=.827).

Preferences in Learning the English Language

Table 6. Learning Preferences in Learning the English Language

Preferred Learning Style	N	X	S.D.	Rank
Visual	50	4.12	.597	1
Auditory	50	3.87	.538	3
Kinesthetic	50	4.04	.526	2

The analyzed data from Table 6 told that the e-hailing drivers prefer to learn English language with the help of visual aids (X =4.12, S.D. =.597), followed by kinesthetic (X=4.04, S.D. =.526) and last but not least is auditory (X=3.87, S.D. =.538).

Discussion

The Needs of the English Language Skills of E-hailing Drivers
The respondents posited that the most needed language skills are speaking skills (X=3.92; SD=.702). This shows that the need of having a fluent and accurate communication demands huge needs in e-hailing industry. Hence, it is enormously important to see that the purpose of language as a tool for communication. People communicate to conversing ideas and messages orally (Leong *et al*., 2017). Hence, a genuine communication is needed as the ability in escorting and guiding task with the clients. Al-Tamimi (2010) further explains that people who lack the aspect of speaking skills will face difficulties in convincing others in term of conveying ideas and persuasions.

Problem in English Language Usage Encountered by E-hailing Drivers

Speaking skills play a huge demand on the needs of the e-hailing drivers, the researchers have also able to derived the data on the aspects of speaking skills that considered to be the most difficult problem encountered by the respondents. From the data tabulate in Table 3, several criteria have been laid out to determine the aspect of speaking skills that halt the process of speaking skills among the respondents. From the mean score and standard deviation tabulated on the Table 3 it has shown a positive value. Hence, the data tabulated are skewed to the right that shows a high degree of speaking skills that is needed. Referring to speaking skills, the e-hailing drivers encountered problem in talking to a variety of audiences and speaking to foreigners as compared to other problems in conducting a speaking. Respondents encountered problems specifically to talk to tourist in explaining the places that they wanted to go, culture sharing, negotiating or even having a telephone conversation. According to Wan Mohamad *et al.,* (2016) suggested that in order to deal with clients, the individual should possess a good speaking skill.

E-hailing Drivers' Preferences in Learning English Language
Most of the respondents specified that they are visual English learners than, kinaesthetic and auditory l. It is vital to put emphasis on the specific learning mediums according to the learners' inclinations when teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the course. Thus, the primary emphasis of teaching materials in the course such as the use of realia, mobile learning, gamification through online applications, virtual devices and the use of digital projectors (Motteram, 2013; Delialioglu, & Alioon, 2014) will accommodate the learners' visual needs in learning.

Conclusions

This study has portrayed all the exemplification on usefulness of need analysis in assisting the development of an English for Specific Purposes course design or English for Specific Purposes syllabus in regards of the trends in the industry. It is specifically done to cater the learners' needs in meeting the requirements of their respective tasks in the work setting. Subsequently, this will be part of the cause towards the improvement of the drivers' services in e-hailing and tourism industry to fulfill the customers' satisfactions and demands. The findings from this study can be used as the framework to establish the effective communicative English practices for the trainers or practitioners in designing English language course or syllabus to the e-hailing drivers.

Acknowledgement

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