English Language Communicative Needs Perceived by Information and Technology Professionals: Target Situation Needs Analysis

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ABSTRACT

English language teaching has become very important because of the global status of English (Mackey, 2002 as cited in Boroujeni and Fard, 2013, p.35). Needs analysis has a vital role in the process of designing and carrying out any language course whether it is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or general English course (Songhori, 2008, p.2). The purpose of this study was to investigate the English language communicative needs of Information and Technology (IT) professionals in order to provide empirical data serving the ESP context of IT education in Satya Wacana Christian University (SWCU). The study used the framework of needs analysis to investigate the extent of English use in the careers of IT professionals, the required level of the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in different activities, and the perception of IT professionals towards their English language preparation during their previous college study. The participants were five graduate students from Information and Technology program study of IT faculty at SWCU. Through interview, the findings of the study indicated that the English language was used extensively at the workplace and played an important role in the careers of IT professionals. The findings also indicated that the receptive skills (e.g. reading and listening) were perceived as more important than the productive skills (speaking and writing). Finally, the findings revealed that the English language courses that IT professionals took at the college level were inadequate in relating the English language use to their IT needs.

Keywords: ESP, needs analysis, target situation analysis, IT professional