A corpus-based assessment of reading comprehension in English for Tourism studies

Alejandro Curado Fuentes

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Reading comprehension in English for Tourism: A corpus-based approach

Alejandro Curado Fuentes

Universidad de Extremadura

Business and Tourism studies tend to integrate foreign language learning at our university. However, the reduced number of obligatory English courses currently demonstrates a less strong bonding with such subjects. Our ESP (English for Specific Purposes) syllabi, given these institutional constraints, must be based on a direct and specific approach to content and pedagogic criteria. Putting it differently, we must try to adjust the material to particular needs in the working environment by following real demands and interests from the academic and professional worlds. In ESP, our method relies on detailed information taken from questionnaires, interviews, and tests for the evaluation and measurement of interests, demands and needs in the target context, i.e., the business / firm as the future workplace (cf. Munby, 1978; Donna, 2000).

ESP needs analyses are conducted not only to explore and collect data about the communicative context, but also to contrast the information obtained with that of previous academic years. The results may contribute to reflect on some sections of the syllabus, in terms of both content and methodology, because of any changes or evolvement perceived in the students' profiles (i.e., their learning interests at the university and future workplace). For instance, at the beginning of the 2002 / 03 school year, in English I for Tourism (a compulsory subject), we noticed by means of level tests that there were more learners with a higher command of English than in the year 1999 / 2000. However, as we could

also observe through questionnaires, in 2003 our students read less than in 1999, and, instead of reading activities, they favored others like using the computer and internet. Indeed, at the end of the 2002 / 03 year, 57 percent of students considered computer technology very important for learning (vs. only 16 percent in 1999 / 2000).

Such data serve a useful reference for the syllabus design. For instance, the selection of a textbook for Tourism English is made on the basis of its suitability in terms of both content and language level. The book *English for International Tourism* (Jacob & Strutt, 1997) seems to satisfy those needs in our context. However, a great and increasing demand of computer-based resources for language learning is revealed in questionnaires and interviews, and, as a result, the textbook material must be complemented by the inclusion of various electronic sources every year: Academic writing forums, on-line quizzes, field project and task development sites, etc. Students do, in fact, demonstrate a positive attitude towards writing by e-mail and using applications for presenting oral and written work in class, as we have examined in previous work (Curado Fuentes, 2003), and agreeing with some scholars (e.g., Warschauer, 2001).

The aim of this presentation is to describe our evaluation method for Tourism English regarding one of the major communicative skills, reading. The main reason for focusing on this particular ability is the decreasing habit of reading, mentioned above, in contrast with some years before. In addition, as also stated, the growth of interest in the use of computers and internet for class and work (corroborated by the demanding use of electronic readings in the business

world -- Warschauer, 2002-- and the tourism sector -- Cerdá Redondo, 2002--) motivates our research. We focus on reading comprehension skills as a form of training by means of various elements: Not only text (word and image) in paper form, but also electronic formats (e.g., advertisements on the web).

Our presentation describes the follow-up of two groups of ten learners each in English III (Tourism) during the 2003 / 04 school year. The first set undergoes a series of lab activities based on a corpus of advertisements, while the second group of students does not have access to such corpus-driven work. The written test that both groups took (after the corpus activities) contributes to unveil some key aspects concerning the learners' reading comprehension degrees: For instance, their capability to integrate content knowledge or schemata with socio-cultural levels in the texts, or their use of pictures and letter size to characterize text type. Such elements significantly varied from one group of students to another. The findings lead to some theoretical conclusions related to the university learning setting that should be demanded in our case: A continuous and intensive formation based on many activities and tasks that learners can develop in great part autonomously and collaboratively, under the supervision of the ESP instructor, and responding to real needs and preferences in the academic and professional contexts.

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High quality reading comprehension worksheets for all ages and ability levels. Teachers in the classroom and at home are sure to find our materials very useful. They are fun, colorful, educational, and provide factual information about interesting subjects. Â In these reading comprehension worksheets, students can increase their understanding of colloquial and idiomatic expressions and get a feel for conversational English. They also allow several students to participate at the same time - which makes them really fun! Great for use in school or at home. Home. LEARN ENGLISH. 100. Reading Skills Comprehension: Tourism. 100. Reading Skills Comprehension: Tourism. By admin | July 7, 2019. 0 Comment. Reading Skills get sharpened by unseen passage reading comprehension test. We provide reading comprehension exercises with answers. Go through reading comprehension passages with multiple choice questions will help you in reading comprehension questions. Â The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people â€œtravelling to and staying at places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposesâ€. 1. Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. The comprehension approach is based on the research and writings of Stephen Krashen. Krashen and James J Asher asserted that students learn language through comprehensible input and that teaching should focus on helping students comprehend language. Much like a child learns, James J. Asher created a teaching method based on the comprehension approach called Total Physical Response. This focuses on comprehension and giving learners time to process language before having to speak. The main purpose of this technique, and indeed any of the methods that fall under the comprehension approach, is to