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TRIANGULATION OF NEEDS ANALYSIS IN ENGLISH FOR TOURISM PURPOSES

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has become the driving force of our environment and lives and, in connection with linguistics in various fields of work, it has been calling for the need to develop communication skills on a global scale and for the need to start communicating in *lingua franca*, a shared, international language which –in many occupational fields– has turned out to be English. Linguistics-wise, globalization demanded an increase in the interest not only in the field of Language for General Purposes, but much more so especially in the field of Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) and, consequently, tourism as a business-oriented occupational field, too, has been confronted with the need to develop studies about English for Tourism Purposes (ETP).

When tourism, society and English are taken into further consideration, quite a few parallels can be drawn between tourism on the one hand, and globalization and the English language on the other. On thinking of the correlation between tourism as an occupational field in Slovenia and English used in this same occupation, one often comes across questions such as:

- Is English acknowledged as lingua franca in Slovenian tourism?
- How often is English used in tourism in Slovenia and to what extent is it important in our space?
- What is the course in English at the Slovenian College of Tourism of the University of Primorska (*Turistica*) like? What does it stress and what does it set aside in preparing undergraduate students for their future working environment?
- What is the level of professional English that a Slovenian undergraduate student of tourism should come to master in his/her English classes in order to meet the needs of his/her future working environment? How does studying at *Turistica* contribute to that?
- To what level should prospective employees in tourism raise their expert knowledge of English to be successful in their working environment in Slovenia?
- What does tourism i.e. people employed and employers in the field expect of its future work force in Slovenia, English-wise?

Finally, there is the question of the existence of a research study in Slovenia focusing on comparing opinions and needs from the point of view of learners of tourism and employees in tourism, and, subsequently, also involving opinions

coming from other reliable sources. Does such a research exist? If not, what results would it show and answers to which of the ETP-related questions above would it provide?

Since a certain level of proficiency in communication skills is essential for anyone who aspires to successfully build their career in the global arena of business and tourism, and since there has indeed not yet been a research about an ETP needs analysis (NA) in Slovenia, a research of the problem is an inevitable must.

The primary concern taken into account in this research is ETP in Slovenia focusing on a NA based on triangulation, which means that the NA featured in the research does not focus only on analysing the present and target situations trying to define learners' necessities, lacks and wants, and, to some extent, trying to include an analysis of register, discourse and genre. Rather, it is an attempt to make use of multiple sources to produce a representation and comparison of opinions about the necessities, lacks, and wants triangularly, i.e. as seen from the angle of:

- a) sophomore *Turistica* learners, academic year 2004/05,
- b) teachers of English at Turistica,
- c) employees (some also with the status of employers) working in the field of tourism, i.e. mainly in travel agencies and hotels across Slovenia.

The result of the research analysis is expected to show what it is in the field of ETP in Slovenia that needs special attention, improvements, what can be omitted and which further analyses are needed to reinforce the content and current status of ETP in Slovenia.

2. ESP BASICS

Setting up the grounds for the research, a fundamental question needs to be observed: What is ESP? When and how did it begin? How did it evolve and what is its relation to English Language Teaching (ELT)? Furthermore, where does ETP fit into the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and, on a broader level, into the context of English Language Teaching (ELT)?

2.1 ELT, ESP and ETP correlation

In their study, Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 17-18) set out to present the relationships between individual concepts of language teaching in the form of a tree (c.f. Figure 1 below) and stress that the 'roots which nourish the tree of ELT are communication and learning.' The following tree diagram represents the place of ESP within the concept of ELT and how ESP is subdivided in itself. Furthermore, at this point an attempt can be made to place ETP within the frame of ESP as shown at the bottom of the diagram:

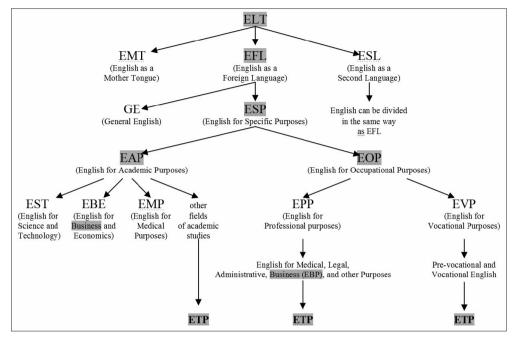


Figure 1: Tree diagram: ELT and assumptions about the place of ETP(s) within ESP.

In the ESP subdivision, the stress within English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is on the fact that in this context English is being used for *academic* purposes, which means that the language is intended for learners of a particular field of studies, in order to provide learners with explanations regarding the specificity of a certain academic field of a particular language. English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), on the other hand, is intended exclusively for people who need English at their workplace, it is intended e.g. for practising lawyers, doctors, etc. There is of course a difference in teaching EOP to learners before they start working, as they work, or even later and the content of the language course in each of these cases must be adapted to these individual situations (Zavašnik, 2002).

In Slovenia, EAP and, subsequently, thereto pertaining ETP are the primary concern of the Vocational College for Catering and Tourism Bled, and of *Turistica* in Portorož. On the other hand, there are accounts of teaching ETP pertaining to EOP, e.g. at some vocational high-schools in Slovenia (e.g. high-schools for catering and tourism in Maribor, Celje, and Radovljica) where the primary concern of the ELT programs remains on the acquisition of a vocation, i.e. it aims foremost at stressing a certain amount of specific knowledge within General English (GE) that will allow an easier and clearer application of language at work.

Given the fact that the sources selected for the research NA (cf. 3.1) belong to the academic as well as occupational fields of tourism, it is true that ETP taken into consideration is part of EAP as well as EOP. Nevertheless, since the Empirical and Analysis parts of the research (cf. Chapters 3 and 4 ff. respectively) shall,

regardless of all the other views presented, put a stress on the target situation, i.e. on the working environment aspiring tourism students will one day face, and since mastery of ETP requires a substantial amount of mastery of GE, it is then logical to consider ETP studied in the research more as part of English for Professional Purposes (EPP) within EOP.

With regard to all the facts stated so far, the diagram in Figure 1 above is -for the research- to be understood in the following way:

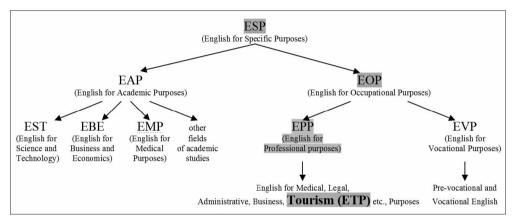


Figure 2: Tree diagram: ETP studied in the research.

2.2 Defining the concept of ESP

In the summarizing search for the foundations and basic principles of ESP, West (1997: 32) defines ESP as 'a diverse activity' and refers to it in terms of various states of various arts which, put together, form ESP. Robinson (1991: 1) comments ESP is 'a major activity around the world [...] an enterprise involving education, training and practice [and covering] language, pedagogy and the students'/participants' specialist areas of interest.' Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 19) describe it as being a 'materials- and teaching-led movement' which 'had considerable influence on ELT.' Robinson (1991, as cited in Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 3)) stresses that the 'key criteria are that ESP is 'normally goal-directed', and that ESP courses develop from a needs analysis'. Finally, Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 18), instead of focusing on what ESP is, focus on what ESP is not, namely that:

- a) 'ESP is not a matter of teaching 'specialised' varieties of English'; in its core, this means that teaching LSP does not imply teaching some special form of that language, notwithstanding the fact that certain language features are typical of a certain field of work.
- b) 'ESP is not just a matter of Science words [...], Hotel words and grammar for Hotel staff' because we need to be aware of the complexity of the structure supporting and complementing ESP. What is more, they point out that a clear distinction has to be made between 'what people actually do with the language and the range of language and abilities which enables them to do it'.

c) 'ESP is not different in kind from any other form of language teaching', although it may vary in learning content.

What the majority of ESP studies agrees upon is that prior to carrying out any ESP course the following two questions, which are, as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) report, the foundation of ESP, have to be thoroughly studied and analysed:

- 1. Why does a particular learner need to learn a foreign language?
- 2. Which approach to language learning is the most appropriate for a particular learner?

2.3 Beginnings of ESP

Taking ESP and ELT into account, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) argue that the two concepts are very closely linked and that the correlation between the two is mutual: in its development ELT (and Applied Linguistics, for that matter) influenced ESP and vice versa. However, what was it that brought about the need for ESP?

It is commonly known that the very beginnings of ESP as a concept of its own can be traced to the 1960s, although, as Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) report, the sole idea of a notion of ESP had been present even before then. This is well supported by the study by Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 6) in which they point out that ESP was 'not a planned and coherent movement, but rather a phenomenon that grew out of a number of converging trends' in the past, i.e.

- a) WW2, with scientific, economic and technical activity expanding world-wide and generating the need for an international language English;
- b) the Oil Crises of the early 1970s enhancing the need for English for Business Purposes (EBP);
- c) revolutionary changes in linguistics, which shifted attention from form to use in real communication;
- d) educational psychology, which stressed the central importance of the learner.

These and other complementing trends thus gave rise to ESP, a *branch* of ELT which has undergone several main phases of development.

2.4 Short history and development of ESP: from authenticity to learner- and learning-centredness

West (1997) speaks about the development of ESP in terms of five *conceptions* set forth by Swales (1991, as cited in West (1997: 32)): authenticity, research-base, language, need, and learning. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) speak about this evolution in terms of four intertwining phases with a fifth one on the way: register analysis, discourse analysis, target situation analysis, skills-centred approach, and learning-centred approach. Similarly, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) speak of phases in ESP development such as register and discourse analysis, analysis of study skills and of learning needs and they also question the need for and importance of the authenticity of text and purpose. Finally, all the views are contrasted to Tudor's (1996) views and comments on learner-centredness (cf. Table 1 below).

Table 1: A tabular representation of ESP development from the mid 1960s to the 1990s.

	West (1997)	Hutchinson and Waters (1987)	Dudley-Evans and St Jonh (1998)
mid 1960s – early 1970s	authenticity a. skills-based approach (reading); b. skills and strategies approach (texts);	skills-centred approach stress on the thinking processes that enable us to extract meaning from discourse	analysis of study skills (authenticity of text and purpose)
late 1960s – early 1970s	research-base a. register analysis approach (surface levels of language: word and sentence); b. 'newspeak' projects;	register analysis	register analysis
mid 1970s – mid 1980s	language a. discourse analysis approach (main criterion: language use, not form); b. genre analysis approach, seeing text as a whole - not applicable in pedagogy);	rhetorical or discourse analysis	discourse analysis
mid 1970s	need Focus on learners, their purpose, their needs. a. target situation NA approach (cf. Munby's (1978) Communicative Syllabus Design); but: focus on language rather than on learner); b. pedagogic needs analysis: deficiency, strategy, and means a.;	target situation analysis	analysis of learning needs
mid 1980s	learning focus: HOW do learners wish to learn; main concern: language learning, not use;	learning-centred approach	learning-centred approach
1980s & 1990s	Tudor (1996): learner-centred approach in LT (1980s & 1990s) focus: learners' diversity, goals, cultural background, subjective learner needs EDUCATION = MEANS OF LEARNER EMPOWERMENT		

These conceptions are intertwined, upgrade one another, and are complementary. This historical perspective of the development of ESP provides a good insight into an important part of ESP, into NA, and shows how all the trends involved in the development of ESP resulted in stressing the need to focus not only on the learner, on the teacher, or on the sponsor of an ESP course, but to focus attention to all the parties involved, and comparing their necessities, lacks and wants in order to select the right methods and sources in NA and to produce an ESP course that is truly communicative.

2.5 Central concepts of ESP: needs analysis, need

As it can be observed in section 2.4 of the research, it was within the conception of need in the development of ESP that the learner started to become the focal point of analyses in designing ESP courses and, consequently, materials. From there, the approach to ESP went to lean on the ideas of both, learning- and learner-centredness, which were then influenced also by the need for a communicative approach in ESP.

One of the most important results of all these trends, however, is that the basis for designing any ESP course to-date is to be found in NA and in the concept of need.

2.5.1 Needs analysis: a short overview

The aim of NA, as Hutchinson and Waters (1984: 109) point out, should be 'to provide the learner with the capacity to handle communication in the target situation.' It is treated in ESP literature as criterial and unique to ESP, and is often referred to as a key stage and/or as a basis of ESP.

As Jurkovič (2001) points out, NA was, in its early stages of development, mostly dominated by approaches in linguistics: it was register-, discourse- and genre-oriented, focusing primarily on the level of the word or sentence, combination of sentences into discourse, and particular text characteristics respectively.

A model which, as Tudor (1996: 67) implies, has become an 'unavoidable reference point in any discussion of NA since its appearance' is that set forth by Munby's 1987 Communicative Syllabus Design in which he, as Jurkovič (2001) comments, outlined the Communicative Needs Processor (CNP), from which a 'communicative needs profile' derives (Tudor, 1996: 71). Munby's approach to NA, however, was not communicative per se; rather, in establishing how to prepare an effective ESP course, it focused foremost on the language and on gathering information about learners' target working environment and its linguistic forms. Thus the term Target Situation Analysis (TSA) was introduced to ESP.

Munby's CNP-based approach was argued against by many authors for being too useless as an instrument for course design. As a result, other approaches to NA were proposed parallel to Munby's CNP. Richerich and Chancerel (1977, as cited in Jurkovič (2001)) believe that in order to determine learner needs in ESP focus must be directed not to the destination, i.e. to the target situation, as advocated by Munby, but rather to the starting point. Such an analysis is called

Present Situation Analysis (PSA) and its advocates argue it can be best carried out by means of established placement tests (Jurkovič, 2001). Another contradicting approach to NA in respect to Munby's CNP is that set forth by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). They agree with Munby in that TSA should indeed be of primary concern in NA; nevertheless, they strongly oppose Munby's approach for being too language-centred and propose a more learning-centred one. In their view NA involves 'much more than ... what the learners will have to do in the target situation' (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 63). What they believe should be taken into further consideration is not being concerned just with language use but also with the process of language learning.

West (1998, as cited in Jurkovič (2001)) went further in compensating for the lacks of CNP and TSA and suggested that NA should focus more on collecting data about the learner and his environment. He introduced the term *Pedagogic Needs Analysis* which covers deficiency analysis (learning about the gap between PSA and TSA focusing on the learner and the process of learning), strategy analysis (learning about learners' personal information that can affect the learning process), and means analysis (learning about the environment in which an ESP course will take place).

Similar to the conclusion proposed in section 2.4 of the research, it can be concluded from the overview of different approaches to NA that they do not exclude, but complement and, to some degree, upgrade each-other. Thus, Register Analysis, Genre Analysis and Discourse Analysis were the first to aim at learners' needs. In PSA and TSA that was further developed: the former focuses on the learner at the beginning of the language course, the latter at the end of it. While Munby's CNP focused exclusively on language use, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) proposed focusing rather on the learning process itself. These approaches were then complemented with Pedagogic Needs Analysis, which provided further deeper insight into the subject matter.

Parallel to the idea of a communicative approach with regard to the history and development of ESP, it can be argued that if NA is to be objective, rich in information and thereby more reliable, a combination of the approaches that are available should be applied.

2.5.2 Need: the root of needs analysis

In order to prepare a reliable, needs-related, functional, and content-rich ESP course which in turn fulfils the learning goals outlined at the beginning of the course, the first step is to establish what the needs of the parties involved are. To answer the question about the types of needs, the definition and subdivision of needs provided by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) is used as a basis for this discussion and is then compared to some other definitions of needs (cf. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), and Jurkovič (2001)).

As Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 53) comment, 'All ESP courses are based on a perceived need of some sort [and] What distinguishes ESP from General English is not the existence of a need as such but rather an awareness of the need.' In their approach to NA they define two sets of needs:

- 1. target needs, which is an umbrella term comprising:
 - *necessities*, i.e. the destination, or what the learner needs to know to function properly in the target situation. Necessities are thus defined by the TSA,
 - *lacks*, which stem from comparing PSA and TSA. As such lacks represent the starting point, or what the learner already knows,
 - wants, i.e. the learners' views as to what their needs are.
- 2. *learning needs*, i.e. what learners need to do in order to learn.

As was pointed out in the conclusion to section 2.5.1 of the research, it can also be argued at this point that to look at the target and learning needs alone, is not enough. Long (2005: 1), for example, suggests that instead of using a 'one-size-fits-all approach' to NA one needs to be aware of the fact that there is no absoluteness to NA. What is more, it is an ongoing process, not a 'once-for-all activity', as Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 59) suggest. What individual needs analyses differ in, however, is 'the precision with which it is possible to identify current or future uses of the L2.' (Long, 2005: 19). In accordance with these findings, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) suggest a variety of complementing approaches in determining needs in NA. They comment that making use of various approaches provides the analyst with a richer plethora of information for preparing ESP course material. Therefore they argue in favour of the search for:

- professional information about the learners (i.e. necessities and lacks);
- personal information about the learners (i.e. learning needs and wants);
- language information about the learners; this allows the analyst to learn more about the gap between the knowledge learners already posses and that which they are to posses at the end of the course (i.e. lacks);
- language learning information, i.e. gathering information on effective ways of learning the skills and language (i.e. learning needs);
- professional communication information (i.e. register-, discourse- and genreoriented approach to NA);
- information about what is wanted from the course;
- information about the environment in which the course will be run (i.e. means analysis).

Any discussion of needs in NA implies a high level of complexity and further substantiates the importance of applying a variety of approaches in NA. In connection to this, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) stress that NA produces relative, not absolute findings, and that it is only by means of applying a complex and carefully studied set of approaches that a NA can provide information for designing a sound course design and materials and reaching the course goals set.

2.6 Methodological issues

According to Long (2005) the main goal that stems from learners' and sponsors' needs – whether these be academic, occupational, vocational, or 'survival' needs – is a functional, reliable and valid target language proficiency. However, the reaching of that goal, as he continues to outline, is another story. He implies that there

is substantial dissatisfaction on the part of learners and sponsors about ESP lessons, i.e. about the course materials and methodology developed for individual courses. He criticizes the fact that too many NAs are carried out by means of questionnaires prepared by people with limited expertise and little knowledge of the field concerned, and continues to advocate that it is indeed the analyst's job to identify needs. Furthermore, he comments that although ESP literature does on the one hand boast with reports on NA, on the other hand these reports are merely NA results. What is missing is research about the methodology of NA itself.

2.6.1 Unit of needs analysis and primary methodological issues

Given the facts stated above, Long (2005) questions himself about the amount of relevance of courses to specific needs and about the fundamental methodological question: What should ESP courses be based on? He argues in favour of task as the (non-linguistic) unit of analysis, the advantages being, as outlined by Jasso-Aguilar (2005: 130-31), that:

- in contrast to text-based analyses, task-based analyses 'reveal more about the dynamic qualities of target discourse';
- tasked-based analyses 'circumvent the domain expert's usual lack of linguistic knowledge and the applied linguist's usual lack of content knowledge';
- task-based analyses minimize the 'pervasive problem of finding informants who are competent in the academic, occupational and vocational area of interest and also knowledgeable about language use in that area';
- tasks prepare learners as 'agents of social change', acting not just as observers but also as task redefiners.

In identifying the best approach, as regards what should be the unit of analysis, Long is in favour of making use of past and present knowledge:

Whatever their respective merits and limitations, the new approaches to second and foreign language instruction require NAs to be conducted using units of analysis that are compatible with the ensuing syllabus specification, methodology, materials and assessment, and all approaches to NA, new or old, could benefit from some serious work on issues of reliability and validity.'

Long (2005: 22)

With further regard to methodology, Long (2005) argues forcefully in favour of being familiar with the primary methodological issues in NA, i.e. with *sources* and *methods* available, and also with what he calls *source* × *method combinations*; furthermore, he believes that these methodological issues must be considered as the basis for carrying out a well structured NA.

Jasso-Aguilar (1999/2005) reports there have been accounts of identifying efficient methods and sources of information for NA for the workplace, yet that disturbingly often these accounts lacked clarity of some sort. She refers to, e.g., L. West (1984), who advocates *job analysis* as syllabus design basis and proposes

sources such as job description manuals, job site observations, tape recordings of conversations in the workplace, surveys, etc. but fails to make a clear representation of what a logical analysis of a job is, and of who defines it.

Another author whose findings Jasso-Aguilar (1999/2005) comments upon is Prince (1984). In addition to job analysis (i.e. description of a job), Prince (1984) proposes also *goal analysis* (i.e. company's intuitions about the needs for a course) and *language analysis* (i.e. defining work-oriented language and other job terminology) and uses interviews as the main instrument of data collection. However, what Jasso-Aguilar (1999/2005) argues Prince's (1984) study to be missing, is a clear description of the methodology.

Furthermore, Jasso-Aguilar (2005: 130) also refers to West's (1994) state of the art NA, and concludes that together with Long (2005) they 'both agree on the advantage of utilizing multiple sources, and on the importance of selecting adequate information-gathering instruments.'

Which are indeed the sources and methods (a shortened list) in NA, however, is perhaps best outlined by Long (2005), and presented in the following table:

Table 2: list of NA sources and methods

Sources for NA	Methods of NA (procedures or devices and instruments for data collection)	
 published and unpublished literature being familiar with what has already been said about NA other written sources, e.g. employee job descriptions 	expert practitioner and non-expert intuitions structured and unstructured interviews questionnaire surveys language audits participant and non-participant observation	
learners ➤ closely linked to learner needs; nevertheless, especially pre-experience learners are not necessarily a reliable source for NA	journals, diaries and logs classroom observation role-plays simulations content analysis register analysis computer-aided corpus analysis	
outsider knowledge – teachers and applied linguists ➤ outsiders, especially applied linguists, are not expected to know much about work in which they have no experience and have often proved to be an unreliable source for NA	genre analysis triangulated methods etc.	
 insider knowledge – domain experts ➤ the use of task as the unit of analysis and teaming experts up with language proficiency experts can produce successful task-based language NAs. 		
triangulation (cf. 2.6.2 below)		

2.6.2 Triangulation and triangulated sources

According to Long (2005: 28), triangulation is 'a procedure long used by researchers, e.g., ethnographers, working within a qualitative, or naturalistic, tradition to help validate their data and thereby, eventually, to increase the credibility of their interpretations of those data.' Jasso-Aguilar (2005: 128) agrees on this stating that triangulation is commonly used in anthropology and it 'involves (with many variants) systematic comparison of interim findings from two or more sources, methods or combinations thereof'.

In NA cases in which it has been used, triangulation proved to be a very good approach, yet, it has only recently started to appear in NA literature, and according to critiques expressed by both, Long (2005) and Jasso-Aguilar (1999/2005), it has been persistently ignored in NA. According to their research findings, many NAs for ESP programs did collect data by using multiple sources and/or methods, and many did find large differences in the views of different classes of informants, but they then failed to account for the conflicting findings. Referring to Jasso-Aguilar's study of Waikiki hotel maids (Jasso-Aguilar, 1999/2005), Long (2005) points out that making use of triangulation, as opposed to informal cross-checking, can not only identify discrepancies found out in NA, but sometimes also explain them. Furthermore, by using multiple sources, methods, and triangulation it is easier to overcome the problem of institutions defining needs and using them to their own advantage.

The process of triangulation can involve comparisons along two or more different sources, methods, or combinations thereof. As a result, three cases of triangulation have been reported in NA (Long, 2005):

- triangulation by sources, i.e. making use of at least two sources and keeping the method of NA constant;
- triangulation by methods, i.e. keeping the source constant and using at least two methods (i.e. at least two different data collection procedures or research designs);
- triangulation by sources and methods, i.e. making use of at least two methods and two sources at a time and comparing that to a third source.

It is of great importance to perceive ESP, NA, needs, and NA methodology in all its complexity. The developments of ESP have brought about ideas of a complex, intertwined, communicative approach in ESP language teaching, and, subsequently, also a necessity to make use of as much of what is known in relation to NA and in relation to needs themselves. In ESP there should be no one-size-fits-all approach, no once-for-all activities, but rather a great amount of awareness of a variety of approaches, flexibility, and careful selection of different sources and methods that can be applied in NAs and that these are more suitable for some NAs than for others.

Furthermore, it is of great importance to acknowledge that language intuitions of expert analysts and applied linguists have often proved to be unreliable sources of information in NA (cf. West (1997), Jasso-Aguilar (1999/2005), Long (2005)). Apart from knowing which sources and, foremost, methods to apply in

NA, it is also important to stress the need to overcome informal cross-checking of the results and start applying triangulation of sources and/or methods in ESP. Thus the value of the use of multiple sources and methods grows, different perceptions of similar (or same) situations can better be observed, the identification of reliable sources in NA is made easier, and, subsequently, the NA results themselves can be more reliable as well.

3. EMPIRICAL PART

With the theoretical framework set up, the next step in the NA featured in the research is to determine how to use the theory and apply it in practice. The main overall background aim is to use triangulation in NA, i.e. to establish a sort of connection between different sources on the same topic. The basic idea behind the project is to research the field of tourism in Slovenia in the sense of its relation to ETP, to collect opinions about ETP from various sources (i.e. to identify their needs and wants) and then to cross-check and triangulate those opinions so as to search for and interpret any possible accordance and discrepancy between them. Furthermore, one of the main aims of the NA remains setting grounds for further researches in ETP in Slovenia.

3.1 Sampling – triangulation of sources and methods for needs analysis

Given the fact that a research of such a format and small proportion does not leave enough space for a more detailed study, no control and experimental samples were used. However, in order to attempt a practical representation of the application of triangulation in NA, the following *three sources were chosen:*

- 1) learners, i.e. 22 sophomore students at *Turistica*, academic year 2004/05;
- 2) domain experts, i.e. 18 employees and employers from the field of tourism (hotels and travel agencies) across Slovenia;
- 3) two teachers of English at Turistica.

Two different methods were used in data collection process:

- 1) questionnaires (used with learners and domain experts);
- 2) structured interview (used with teachers).

Although there are two methods per se, their main purpose is to gather similar or same information and the questions prepared for all three sources are indeed to a great extent overlapping. Therefore, it can be said that triangulation in the research is achieved by keeping one method (predominantly questionnaire) constant with two different sources (predominantly with learners and domain experts) and at times complementing that by a third source, from which similar information was gathered by a method similar in content to both questionnaires (see Table 3 below).

method	source
QUESTIONNAIRE	LEARNERS
	DOMAIN EXPERTS
STRUCTURED INTERVIEW	TEACHERS

Table 3: Methods and sources chosen for NA.

3.2 The Main Aspects of Comparisons and Triangulation

Parallel to the selection of the sources themselves, it is only logical that the data to be collected from them should reflect the language situations in which individual sources can be found, or in which they function. Therefore the aspects under study cover information that is (i) general, (ii) relating to ETP, (iii) relating to working in tourism, and (iv) relating to *Turistica* and its ETP course.

The overall aim remained to gather as much information as possible about the same issues from all three sources (see Figure 3 below), then set at recognizing any discrepancy and/or accordance and at searching for any possible explanations as to why certain opinions are contradictory or in agreement with each-other.

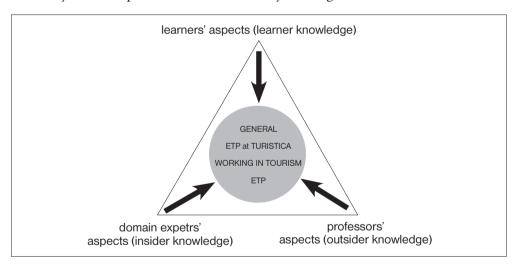


Figure 3: Gathering same information from three different sources.

Hereon the aspects to be analyzed are presented separately for every source and are grouped according to the type of information they elicit.

3.3 Outlining triangulation - research questions

The Questionnaires and Interviews were prepared and carried out in Slovenian, whereas below the questions have been translated and/or paraphrased into English so that their meaning remains the same.

3.3.1 General questions

All the general questions (see Table 4 below) included in the research were chosen primarily for sake of a smooth introduction or conclusion to data gathering, but they carry no significant weight as to the main aims of the analysis. Therefore, no hypotheses are to be made at this point.

	General research questions
LEARNERS	Q1: sex Q25: additional comments
TEACHERS	Comments and additional questions asked during the interview
DOMAIN EXPERTS	Q1: sex Q25: additional comments

Table 4: General research questions according to sources chosen for NA.

3.3.2 Questions related to working in tourism

These questions (see Table 5 below) set to explore foremost the workplace as such, i.e. learners' future workplace and domain experts' current workplace. The application of triangulation here focuses foremost on learners and domain experts as these two sources are most closely linked to the occupational field of tourism. In order to be able to explain with more clarity the possible discrepancy between the two sources, the third source, i.e. the teachers, is included in triangulation.

	Work-related research questions		
	personal information (future and current workplace)	ETP and employment possibilities	
LEARNERS	Q4: In which field of tourism do you expect to work?	Q23: On a scale from 1-5, how often do you think employers select their employee on the basis of his/her knowledge of ETP (1=never 5=always)? Q24: How often do you think knowledge of ETP affects promotion and higher personal income?	
TEACHERS	Q2: Have you ever worked / Do you work in tourism? Q3: Which are the fields of work available to Turistica graduates from the point of view of their knowledge of ETP? Q4: Do you have the information where Turistica graduates actually get employed?	Q20: On a scale from 1-5, how often do you think employers select their employee on the basis of his/her knowledge of ETP (1=never 5=always)? Q21: How often do you think knowledge of ETP affects promotion and higher personal income?	

Table 5: Work-related research questions according to sources chosen for NA.

	Work-related research questions		
	personal information (future and current workplace)	ETP and employment possibilities	
DOMAIN EXPERTS	Q3: How long have you been working in tourism? Q4: In which field of tourism have you worked the most? Q5: What is your current work position? What kind of work do you currently do? Q6: Are you in the function of an employer?	Q7: If you have/had employer status, will you/would you employ a candidate lacking knowledge of ETP if the post requires/required use of English several times weekly? Q23: On a scale from 1-5, how often do you think employers (or you as employer) select their employee on the basis of his/her knowledge of ETP (1=never 5=always)? Q24: How often do you think knowledge of ETP affects promotion and higher personal income?	

3.3.3 Questions related to ETP

Since the main stress of the NA presented in the research is on language, i.e. on ETP, the majority of questions asked in the process of data collection were ETP-related (see Table 6 below). In analyzing ETP in the research, triangulation focuses primarily on considering views presented by learners and domain experts and the results are substantiated by teachers' views.

Table 6: ETP-related research questions according to sources chosen for NA.

	ETP-related research questions	
	professional information	ETP and future workplace
LEARNERS	Q2: How long have you been learning English? Q3: How long have you been learning ETP? Q7: How do you estimate your current ETP communication skills (1=insufficient 5=excellent)? Q18: Circle your choice: how important are the four skills, vocabulary, cultural differences and grammar in relation to ETP (little, medium, very)?	Q5: Dou you think of English as lingua franca in world tourism? Q6: How often do you think English is being used in tourism? Q8: What do you think is more important in ETP, fluency or accuracy? Q9: Who do you expect to communicate with more frequently by using ETP, with native or with non-native speakers of English? Q10: In your opinion, which are some of the possible situations of applying ETP in your future working environment (e.g. talking to hotel guests, communication at fairs, business meeting with foreign business partners, etc.)? Q22: If you have done your expert practice or have ever worked in tourism, how often have you had the chance to apply your knowledge of ETP (1=never 5=always)?

	ETP-related research questions		
	professional information	ETP and future workplace	
TEACHERS	Q1: How long have you been teaching ETP at Turistica? Q10: How do you estimate your learners' current ETP communication skills in relation to future working environment (1=insufficient 5=excellent)?	Q5: Dou you think of English as lingua franca in world tourism? Q6: How often do you estimate English is being used in tourism and in which situations? Q11: What do you think is more important in ETP, fluency or accuracy? Can we speak of an optimum relation between the two? Q12: How do you think the relation fluency vs. accuracy relates to who you are communicating with at work in tourism, i.e. with native or with non-native speakers of English?	
DOMAIN EXPERTS	Q8: How long did you learn / have you been learning English? Q9: Have you ever learned ETP? If so, where and how long? Q16: Do you think that knowledge of ETP is important at all in tourism or does knowledge of GE suffice? Q12: How do you estimate your current ETP communication skills in your work environment (1=insufficient 5=excellent) Q22: Circle your choice: to what extent would you like to improve your four skills, vocabulary, cultural differences and grammar in relation to your workplace (low, medium, high)?	Q10: Dou you think of English as lingua franca in world tourism? Q11: How often do you use English at work? Q13: Who do you communicate with more frequently by using ETP at work, with native or with non-native speakers of English? Q14: What do you think is more important in ETP, fluency or accuracy? Q15: Which are some of the concrete situations you have come across in which you have applied ETP to communicate at work (e.g. talking to hotel guests, communication at fairs, business meeting with foreign business partners, etc.)?	

3.3.4 Questions related to the English course at *Turistica*

Since course design is one of the basic goals of NA, it had to be considered, in the process of outlining NA questions, what information about the *Turistica* English course could be included as part of the NA studied in the research and, furthermore, what kind of information would be appropriate for triangulation in this context.

The most intermediate sources used for triangulation with regard to the English course at *Turistica* are learners and teachers. They are both in closest connection to the language activities in progress at *Turistica*. In this case, it is the domain experts' views that are used for substantiating research results acquired via triangulation of learners and teachers. In terms of *domain experts* it was more difficult to predict how many, if any, had studied tourism at *Turistica* and had thus took part in its ETP course. So, the main aim was to ask them about their acquaintance with the English course conducted at *Turistica*, and about their assumptions as regards the organisation of that course (see Table 7 below).

Table 7: Turistica-related research questions according to sources chosen for NA.

	Turistica-related research questions		
	quantity of ETP course	quality of ETP course	
LEARNERS	Q11: The three-year study at Turistica comprises 180 hours of English classes. In your opinion, is that too little / just enough / too much? Q12: How extensive do you think the Turistica English course is in terms of developing ETP-related skills (not enough / just right / too extensive)?	Q13: Do you think the English course at Turistica is successfully preparing you for the English language demands of your future working environment? Q19: Estimate to what extent you think the four skills, vocabulary, cultural differences and grammar are represented in the English classes at Turistica (low/medium/high). Q20: In general, how often do you use the course-book designed by your teacher? Q21: Referring to the English course and to the course-book mentioned, which of the skills mentioned in questions 18 and 19 have you missed the most in your English classes?	
TEACHERS	Q7: The three-year study at Turistica comprises 180 hours of English classes. In your opinion, is that too little / just enough / too much and why? Q9: How extensive do you think the English course is in terms of developing ETP-related skills? How do you go about setting a satisfactory ETP extent?	Q8: Do you think the English course at Turistica is successfully preparing the learners for the English language demands of their future working environment? If so, how? Q13: Which of the skills (i.e. four skills, vocabulary, cultural differences and grammar) that you aim to develop in your ETP course, prepare your learners for their future working environment in the most active and most applicable sense, and should as such be dedicated the highest amount of time to? Q14: What are the levels of significance on which these skills are represented in your English classes? Q15: Are these levels reflected in the course-book you have designed and what is it that you stress among your learners when you recommend the course-book? Q16: On the basis of which criteria did you apply the mentioned skills when you were designing the course-book? ———————————————————————————————————	

	Turistica-related research questions	
	quantity of ETP course	quality of ETP course
	Q17: Are you acquainted with Turistica and its English course?	
DOMAIN EXPERTS	at Turistica comprises 180 hours of English classes. In your opinion, is that too little / just enough / too much for gaining functional and applicable knowledge for future working environment? Q19: How extensive do you think the English course at Turistica should be in terms of developing ETP (very (over 120 hours of ETP) / medium (60-120 hours of ETP) / little (less than 60 hours of ETP))?	Q20: Estimate to what extent you think the four skills, vocabulary, cultural differences and grammar should be represented in the English classes at Turistica (low/medium/high). Q21: Circle your choice: how important are the four skills, vocabulary, cultural differences and grammar in relation to ETP at your workplace (little/medium/very)?

4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are quite a few reasons to say, on the one hand, that the triangulation-based analysis results (c.f. Tonić, 2006: pp. 43-64) show the value of using multiple sources and methods in NA. They provide insight into both, accordance and discrepancy between sources and answer some of the questions outlined in the Introduction of the research. On the other hand, at this stage the analysis opens up new questions, sets up room for further discussions and invites supplementary, more detailed NAs of the Slovenian ETP to be carried out.

Needs in relation to working in tourism

One of the advantages of this part of the analysis is that it depicts the learners' expectations about their future profession and it shows that where the learners see themselves working is actually where the majority of the domain expert sample currently works, in travel agencies. On the other hand, although both teachers involved in the analysis tend to put travel agent business in the foreground when mentioning future employment possibilities, they both stress that the information about the learners' future employment is very valuable, but, at the same time, that it is still missing, the main reason being lack of ETP NAs. Nevertheless, in the research research learners give an outline of where they would *like* to work, not about where they *will* work. Therefore, the best and most reliable way of collecting objective and useful future/current employment information from the point

of language teaching methodology would be to set up a *Turistica* project which would approach learners already in the learning process asking them to stay in touch with the college in the sense that they agree *Turistica* contact them after a couple of years after graduation asking them to provide feedback about their actual employment. Thus teachers would have reliable information they could use to prepare and/or 'repair' existing ETP course materials since they would have the same sample functioning, along a certain continuum, as a two-in-one source: first as learners, and after a certain period of time as domain experts.

With regard to promotion, ETP, as analyzed in the chosen samples, proves to be relatively highly estimated. What is more, it starts to be stressed here from the teachers' point of view that in the sense of influencing promotion, ETP is especially important in expert communication. The analysis shows some discrepancy, however, within the domain expert sample itself. Based on their experience, domain experts who are also employers expect more from their prospective employees than do domain experts who do not have the status of employers. What the domain expert sample also reveals is that apart from English, other languages, i.e. German and Italian, are also important in Slovenian tourism and this is stressed by some of the learners as well, most likely due to the fact that Slovenia receives the majority of guests who are predominantly German and Italian speaking. Nevertheless, this does not undermine the status of ETP, as the teacher sample argues, primarily when expert communication is involved. Therefore, all ETP course designs need to continue to stress the importance of ETP in expert-to-expert communication and to teach their learners the value of being able to search for, read and understand expert academic tourism literature, through which they can benefit in the sense of staying in touch with the latest development trends in tourism. The majority of such literature, as teachers argue, is written in English, and the status of ETP in this sense is very highly estimated.

Needs in relation to ETP

One of the main aims of this part of the analysis was to analyze the sources' approach to ETP and their acquaintance with it. Sources were asked to make self estimations about their own ETP skills and there was some notable discrepancy between individual sources.

Learners ETP skills self-estimation is medium and they stress the importance of speaking, reading and listening, a reflection of the learners' perception of their needs. Teacher A, to whom the learners in question 'pertain', makes a similar estimation about her learners, i.e. that on average they master ETP skills on a medium level. On the other hand, Teacher B's estimation seems coinciding, but there is lack of comparison possibility and a slight distortion of the reliability of the end result as Teacher B's learners were not sampled. Surely, future analyses should make more careful sample selections, whereas for the research stress remains on the representation of triangulation in NA. What, in this respect, is more interesting, however, is the domain expert sample and their skills self-estimation. A large part of this sample never had any ETP training, yet they estimated their ETP skills on a higher average level than learners, which raises the question of accountability of the sample in question. No ETP training consequently means

lack of knowledge about the concept of ETP and therefore the sample image is distorted and no longer reliable. In this case domain experts' views cannot really be included in reference to designing course materials, at least not until their ETP skills are objectively tested, as *Turistica* had once already planned. Until then, teachers can rely predominantly on student feedback, which stresses the need foremost for speaking, reading and writing.

With further regard to future workplace, there was significant accordance as to English being a lingua franca in world tourism. However, with its expert ETP knowledge, it was only the teacher sample that could account for this. English is a lingua franca in expert communication. On lower levels, i.e. in expert-to-tourist communication the status of English in Slovenian tourism is of lesser importance, and German and Italian prevail due to the foreign-guest structure in Slovenian tourism. What should perhaps be analyzed in future researches is the amount of expert communication that is actually used in Slovenian tourism. That would provide a much clearer picture about the status of English as *lingua franca* in Slovenian as well as world tourism. Closely related to these findings is the result of the actual use of English at workplace. Domain experts' estimation was lower than the learners', probably because, at their workplace, domain experts use also languages other than English. Their estimation refers more to GE, whereas the learners' focuses more on ETP and indicates learners would use English in situations domain experts had not considered. And it is exactly this that is one of the main aims of the Turistica ETP course: to prepare their learners to be able to independently use their ETP skills when they start working. Therefore, although English may not have such a prominent status in Slovenian tourism in layman terms, it remains that much more important not only in Slovenia but around the globe whenever expert communication is involved; and ETP which belongs to the branch of EAP always involves academic, i.e. expert-to-expert communication. Therefore, regardless of the result of the domain expert sample, the value and significance of ETP at Turistica should keep growing, stressing among learners they are being prepared for their future working environment on an expert level which will allow them to be more competitive and, in the long run, also to be able to contribute to Slovenian tourism market being more competitive on a general level.

When fluency and accuracy are taken into account, learners and domain experts opt predominantly for the former. It is indeed grammar skills that learners feel are the least important in ETP and that domain experts estimate they would like to improve on a medium, rather than on a high level. Based on these assumptions, can it be said that the *Turistica* ETP course should attribute higher importance to fluency and lower to accuracy? As Teacher A stresses, the practical application of language, which is closer to both, learners and domain experts, gives advantage to fluency, but there must always be room for accuracy, especially in tourism considered as a field of expertise and in all instances of upgrading language on an academic level, which is what the *Turistica* ETP course aims to do. Therefore, when it comes to thereto referring language methodology, both, fluency and accuracy should be considered, teaching the learners to adapt their level of communication according to the receiver of their information.

Needs in relation to the English course at Turistica

Analyzing these aspects shows that only two domain expert sample members had studied at *Turistica* and again the domain expert sample can not be included as a source objective for triangulation or comparisons. This again stresses the need for *Turistica* to find a way to stay in touch with their learners so as to be able to make reliable ongoing future NAs with reliable future domain experts. The domain expert sample was included for observations since the majority of the sample was acquainted with *Turistica* and its English course.

As both, learners and teachers agree, the extent of English classes is just right, it is the domain experts that feel it is not enough extensive. However, as long as the domain expert sample does not consist of former *Turistica* learners or of learners who are also already working in tourism, their views on the extent of GE and ETP in the *Turistica* ETP course cannot be considered neither objective nor reliable. For the moment teachers thus need to rely on the learners' estimation which, as the results showed, was satisfactory. Future researches, however, must find a way to include former *Turistica* learners, as that is one of the best ways to produce reliable NA results in this context.

Referring to quality of the *Turistica* ETP course, learners and teachers were, again, the reliable sources for triangulation. Domain experts were asked only to give their opinion about the skills representation within the ETP course.

Both sources accountable for triangulation give a positive estimation about the quality of the ETP course at *Turistica* although the results show that learner awareness about the power of, especially, the skill of reading is extremely low. Therefore further attempts on the part of teachers are needed to strengthen the awareness among learners that reading plays a key role in using the acquired ETP at workplace and staying competitive.

When it comes to skills, the source that should be paid most attention to is the learners. Teacher A's learners were taken into account and they stress what they missed the most in class is gaining knowledge about cultural differences, and speaking and listening skills. This is valuable information for Teacher A, as her findings are similar: listening is represented on a low level on account of listening exercises related to ETP being scarce. Knowing where to search for them is the key to bringing the course closer to learners' wants, whereas further elements relating to cultural differences should also be included especially since Teacher A herself notices that learners are interested in such tasks.

One of the major drawbacks of the analysis here is that Teacher B's learners were not sampled, which means that the entire learner sample here is a bit questionable. Further researches in ETP NAs thus need to select samples with a greater amount of care to produce more reliable results.

The last, domain expert sample, as opposed to the learner sample, shows some accordance, but for the main part the results are conflicting. The meaning of reading was continuously stressed by Teacher A, and, subsequently, her learners estimated it is highly represented in the ETP course. On the other hand, domain experts attribute low importance to reading and estimate it is not so important at their workplace. This sets the question of realizing the importance of reading

in connection to ETP in the foreground. Learners are being made aware of how important learning is in connection to EAP and thereto relating ETP. Domain experts, however, do not realize that reading can be a source of information for them and also a way of staying competitive. On the basis of their work experience, they stress listening, speaking and writing, three skills most important in every-day tourism communication. With the exception of writing, the remaining two are, as students estimate, represented in the *Turistica* ETP course on a relatively low level in Teacher A's class, which perhaps calls for attention to raise their application in the classroom.

Nevertheless, again it needs to be stressed that the domain expert sample would be much more reliable if it consisted of former *Turistica* learners, so one of the main aims of future NA researches in ETP is to include such a source.

One of the greatest advantages of the application of triangulation in the research is that it can account for the reliability of sources and allows the analyst to exclude certain sources from the NA as unreliable. What is more, the results of the triangulation-based NA represent important feedback for all sources included in the research.

Analysts can benefit from them in the sense that for them, the results and thereto related advantages and disadvantages of the NA can represent a basis for further ETP NAs.

The results can also be seen as valuable information which teachers have missed in the field of ETP, especially when the discrepancy between them and the learners is taken into account. The process of triangulation shows and, sometimes, explains these discrepancies in the research and on the basis of the explanations it provides, teachers can decide easier on possible changes in materials design and curriculum development. This is subsequently related to improvements in the classroom, which is, of course, a gain for the learners as well.

In connection to domain experts, the results should, for the most part, call for attention in helping domain experts realize the values and contribution of the concept of ETP and making them realize – by designing tests in active foreign language knowledge (with stress on ETP), as was proposed by Teacher B – that their ETP skills are perhaps not as highly developed as they might estimate. Furthermore, what they need to be made aware of is that ETP involves no special form of a language, but, it is, however a very rich and very useful device as it enables comprehension of academic literature and vocabulary building, and at the same time, allowing for domain experts to follow and stay competitive with the latest trends and developments in tourism.

5. CONCLUSION

The research defines the place of the studied ETP within ELT, outlines the sources and methods available in NA, and argues in favour of triangulation as a procedure for comparing NA results and accounting for discrepancies arising from those results. What is more, it advocates the complexity of ESP, NA, needs and NA methodology, stressing awareness of a variety approaches in NA, its flexi-

bility, relativity, and careful selection of the analysts who gather and analyze data, and of sources and methods available in NA.

The value of the results stemming from the triangulation-based NA conducted as part of the research is undoubtedly great. Not only do the results show that the process of triangulation can allow a better insight into the discrepancy between the sources' aspects, they also show that triangulation can sometimes account for that discrepancy and even exclude sources from NA as unreliable. Therefore, triangulation should be the procedure applied also in further Slovenian ETP NAs, whereby the presented research NA results can serve as a basis.

The research NA results should, however, be complemented and upgraded with more specific samples, e.g. studying only particular branches of tourism, or including other sources and/or methods which would in turn provide a deeper insight into the problems outlined in the research. What is more, similar future researches should be carried out with larger, more representative samples, which would, in turn, produce more reliable results and a clearer interpretation of the problem under investigation.

Even though the research NA results may, due to the relatively small samples chosen, not be as representative or reliable as desired, the value of the research lies foremost in the representation and application of the process of triangulation of NA

In Slovenian tourism, on-going studies of ETP by means of applying triangulation can provide important reliable information for all the parties involved: learners, teachers and domain experts. What is more, with obtaining reliable information sound course materials can be designed preparing learners more easily to achieve the course goals set. In turn, learners can function better in their future working environment, be more competitive, and, in the long run, even contribute to raising the competitiveness of Slovenian tourism as a field of work.

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SUMMARY

Triangulation of Needs Analysis in English for Tourism Purposes

The article presents the results of my research in English for Tourism Purposes, a branch of English Language Teaching which is still relatively underdeveloped and which, in Slovenia, has been rather scarcely researched and studied. The base for the research is triangulation, the latest procedure used in the planning and realization of needs analyses. It is more reliable than informal cross-checking as it makes use of multiple sources and/or methods of acquiring information. The research thus outlines an overview of the basics of English for Specific Purposes, illustrating and stressing the use of triangulation, which has never before been used in similar Slovenian researches. Learners, teachers and domain experts are the sources used; methods are questionnaire and interview. In conclusion, the importance of using triangulation in Needs Analysis is commented upon, the reliability of study results is substantiated and grounds for further studies in English for Tourism Purposes in Slovenia are set.

Keywords: English for specific purposes, needs analysis, triangulation, tourism

POVZETEK

Triangulacija analize potreb v angleščini kot jeziku stroke turizma

Članek predstavlja rezultate moje raziskave angleščine kot jezika stroke turizma, jezikovnega področja, ki v okviru poučevanja angleščine ostaja še ne povsem izoblikovano, v Sloveniji pa so z njim povezane raziskave in študije redke. Raziskava temelji na triangulaciji, najnovejšem postopku, ki se uporablja pri načrtovanju in izvedbi analize potreb in ki je precej zanesljivejši od neformalnega navzkrižnega primerjanja, saj hkrati uporabi več virov in/ali metod pridobivanja informacij. Raziskava tako očrta pregled osnov angleščine kot jezika stroke ter v tem kontekstu prikaže in poudarja rabo triangulacije, ki v podobnih slovenskih raziskavah še ni bila uporabljena. Viri v analizi potreb so učenci, profesorji in področni strokovnjaki, medtem ko sta uporabljeni metodi vprašalnik in intervju. V zaključku raziskava komentira rabo triangulacije v analizi potreb in na podlagi tega utemeljuje rezultate raziskave ter postavlja smernice za nadaljnje študije na področju angleščine kot jezika stroke turizma v Sloveniji.

Ključne besede: angleščina kot jezik stroke, analiza potreb, triangulacija, turizem