CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to review the relevant theories and research that have guided the conduct of this study. As the study is concerned with the communication patterns in an organization, theories and models of communication will be viewed. This is followed by a discussion on the theories of communication in ESP in order to highlight the use of the English Language by the discourse community (Safety Management Team). Lastly, the principles and practices of ethnography will be viewed as an ethnographic approach has been adopted to conduct this study.

2.2   DEFINITION OF COMMUNICATION

In this section the researcher will discuss two kinds of communication, specifically communication in an organization and communication in a social setting or discourse community. There are numerous definitions of communication. However, the researcher has focused on three definitions which are most relevant for this study. They are the definitions of Burgoon (1994), Francis (1987) and J. Seiler (1996). After analyzing the definitions, the researcher has produced her own definition of communication that is appropriate for her research.

According to Burgoon (1994:11),

> "Most people agree with the assumptions that communication is a dynamic process, that communication is a transaction that will affect both the sender and the receiver, that the communication process is a personal symbolic process requiring a shared code or codes of abstraction."

Burgoon defines how communication affects the 'sender' and the 'receiver'. His approach is at the interpersonal level. By 'interpersonal level' he means the formal and informal exchange of information between two people, or interaction within a small group of people. Examples of formal exchanges are conversations such as interviews and examples of informal exchanges include talks between parents and children, spouses and acquaintances. But looking at the massive change that is occurring in the social, economic and cultural environment of the world, a reward should go beyond the interpersonal level. For this we should look at definitions given by Francis (1987) and J. Seiler (1996).

Francis is more comprehensive compared to Burgoon in defining communication. He has defined communication as a social interaction through messages and it is applicable in a community or organization involving many people. He goes beyond the interpersonal level and describes how communication functions at the organizational level. According to him, communication is a medium through which people (according to their position or hierarchy in an organization) ' lead or direct the activities of others, enhance human activity, co-ordinate and control specialist activities and understand the needs and wants of those who work within the organization and those who use the organization's goods and services.' Francis (1987:28).

Meanwhile, J.Seiler (1996) defines communication as a process where human beings participate in an active and changing event. The participation can occur at the interpersonal level or at an organizational level. He further elaborates that communication is interactional and transactional where people take turns sending and receiving messages.

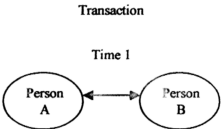**Figure 1**

William J. Seiler (1996:14)

Figure 2

William J. Seiler (1996:15)

Figure 1 illustrates the notion of interaction as a series of distinctly separate actions. The term 'transaction' is used to refer to the actions, that are the persons involved in the communication process engaged in sending and receiving messages at the same time. Figure 2 illustrates transaction as communication which occurs

simultaneously, that is, both A and B are communicating at the same time. This does not mean that they are both speaking at the same time. Rather, they are aware of each other and are reacting to one another simultaneously.

Communication is a pervasive activity which serves many important functions at an organizational level and enables the people involved in it to exert control and execute their intended goals. The researcher agrees with the general assumption that communication is a dynamic process, that the communication process is a transaction that will affect both the sender and receiver and that communication is a personal symbolic process requiring a shared code or codes of abstractions.

When analyzing the communication patterns at the construction site, the researcher found that communication signifies 'responding' to 'messages'. The messages could be sent through various appropriate channels and codes. Here 'responding to messages' is more than 'social interaction'. The communication occurs in a setting where people give directions and commands or lead a group of people to perform a task. Communication is used as a medium to establish meaningful contact between persons working at different hierarchical levels and capabilities but towards performance of the same goal. Therefore, the researcher feels that the term ' communication' here, refers to 'responding to messages,' and thus has more functional purposes in this setting – the workforce of the construction site.

2.3   MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

Although communication has been defined and its characteristics described, a method for focusing on the analysis of the structures and the functions of human

communication is still needed. In order to do this the researcher will analyze a few relevant models of communication, namely those presented by Shanon and Weaver in Burgoon (1994), and Newcomb and Maclen in Fiskie (1990).
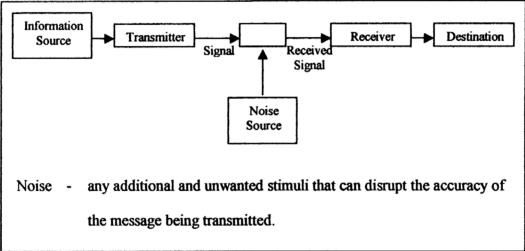

Noise - any additional and unwanted stimuli that can disrupt the accuracy of the message being transmitted.

Figure 3

Shanon and Weaver in Burgoon (1994:26)

Shanon and Weaver in Burgoon (1994:26) present the above model where communication is shown as being a linear process. The information source is seen as the initiator of a message. The message is then connected by the 'transmitter' into a 'signal' which is sent to the receiver. In order to make allowances for distortions in the message, the concept of noise has been introduced. However, Shanon and Weaver did not include the notion of 'feedback' although the notion is most typical of many linear models of communication. Besides, Shanon and Weaver's description shows that communication is more at the interpersonal level – the 'sender' and 'receiver.'

Lesswell's model (1990) is another linear model of communication. This model discusses the different stages in communication.

'Who'
Says 'what'
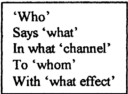In what 'channel'
To 'whom'
With 'what effect'

Figure 4

Though the different stages of communication discussed in this model will be incorporated in the investigation carried out by the researcher, this model would not be very appropriate because this model too is similar to Shanon and Weaver's model in that it fails to include the element of 'feedback' which is a vital point in the communication among the Safety Management Team at the construction site.

The important element of 'feedback', which is left out by Shanon and Weaver (1990) and Lesswell (1990) is shown in two other models, which will be discussed below. The first of these is Newcomb's model in Fiskie.
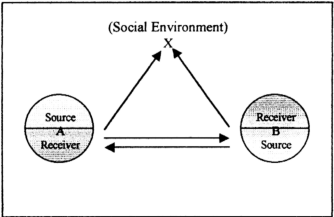

(Social Environment)
X

Source
A
Receiver

Receiver
B
Source

Figure 5

Newcomb in Fiskie (1990:33)

Newcomb presents a triangular model and takes into account the role of communication in society or a social relationship. His notion of 'communication in a society or a social relationship' can be considered as 'cultural setting' and involves interaction at an organizational or at management level. This model displays one of the essential components of communication, that is 'feedback'. A, the 'source', is the creator or initator of the message. B receives and interprets the message from A, and responds to the message. Then B sends 'feedback' (the perception and understanding of the receiver) to the 'source' - A.

Similar to Newcomb's model is the Wesley-Maclen model, which deals with 5 elements of communication: -

a)   Objects of orientation

b)   Messages

c)   Source

d)   Receiver

e)   Feedback

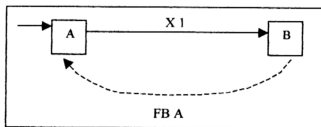Below is the simplified version of this model.

Figure 6

Wesley-Maclen in Fiskie (1990:33)

Here the source (A) focuses on a particular object or event in the environment (X) and creates a message (X 1) which is transmitted to the receiver (B). The receiver, in turn, sends feedback (FB A) about the message to the source. The 'speech event' in the 'environment' (X) could be defined as similar to the communication in the organizational level or 'cultural setting' discussed in Newcomb's model.

Both the triangular and circular models of Newcomb and Maclen emphasize the notion of 'feedback' in communication. Though these two models are appropriate and relevant to the present study, the researcher adopted the model presented by Newcomb because the element and notion of 'feedback' is clearly depicted and described by Newcomb. The researcher found that the Safety Management Team depends, to a large extent, on the 'feedback' from their counterparts in order to perform their tasks accurately. Feedback shows the understanding of the receiver and his perception of the 'source'. A clear understanding among the interlocutors helps in avoiding mishaps at the job site. The Safety Management Team considers safety as their bottom line. Therefore the importance of feedback, as a component of communication will be examined in more detail.

2.4 THE CONCEPT OF FEEDBACK

Feedback is an important element in communication. Feedback shows the 'understanding' of the receiver and how effectively a message has been conveyed to fulfill an intended goal. At the construction site, the researcher noticed that feedback plays a vital role in the accomplishment of tasks by the Safety Management Team. The role of feedback will be described clearly in the following section. According to Allwood (1976 : 27)

"feedback is a mechanism where participants in an interaction elicit and provide messages to each other."

This is essentially what Duncan (1977:17) referred to as 'back–channel behaviour.' The progress and success of the interaction depends on each participant especially with regard to the four basic communicative functions, that is contact, perception, understanding and other attitudinal reactions. In other words, through the feedback or response that it provides, a listener is able to let the speaker know whether he or she wishes to continue the contact, to continue perceiving and understanding and to react in any other way to the utterance he or she has heard. On the basis of the feedback received, participants are able to make adjustments to each other and to work towards the gradual building up of a joint understanding.

From the definition above, we know that feedback is a natural extension of effective receiving. A receiver attends to a message, decodes it and determines its intended meaning. On the construction site, most of the time, feedback is in the form of a series of verbal answers and sometimes non-verbal behaviors such as facial expressions, gestures, body movements and the use of torches and lightings. In this context, the feedback provides enough information to judge whether the receiver has accurately interpreted the message. In this way, feedback serves as a kind of control mechanism in the communication process because it is a corrective device to rectify any mistakes with immediate reaction.

Being a 'corrective' device, feedback enables the source to correct and adjust the message to fit the needs of the sender and the receiver, providing effectiveness in communication. On the construction site, the feedback mechanism acts as a powerful

means to achieve the team's intended goals. Through feedback, it is easier for the Safety Management Team to monitor the success rate of their progression in the construction site according to the needs of the site safety requirements. The researcher will look into the different stages of communications in the transmission of feedback discussed in Lesswell's model ('Wh' questions) but will focus on the philosophy of 'communication as a process' where 'wh' questions play an important role in interactions (see examples in Chapter Four).

2.5 RELEVANT COMMUNICATION TERMS

The main concern of this research is verbal communication. However, non-verbal communication is also considered because the Safety Management Team uses it, quite commonly as a strategy to achieve its goals. The common non-verbal communication strategies at the construction site are gestures, whistles and the use of visual aids such as pictures, paintings and signboards. Both the verbal and non-verbal communication practices will be analyzed from the viewpoint of the users in the various communicative events on the research site. The communication patterns are determined by, and have been studied, according to the practice of ' Wh' questions mainly 'what', 'why', 'when', 'where', 'who' and 'how.' Therefore some relevant terms and concepts of communication will be explored to explain the patterns of communication of the Safety Management Team. They are namely communicative practice, communicative patterns and communicative strategies. There is also a need for the explanation of terms such as discourse community, communicative competence, communicative event and communicative act. These will be attended to below.

2.5.1 COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICE

According to Saville Troike (1988:14), communicative practice refers to ' ways of speaking in a context.' Communicative practice occurs when language or other forms of non-verbal communicative forms are used. At the construction site, the common communicative practices are basically communicative strategies using language and non-verbal forms, such as gestures and whistles. These communicative practices give varieties of patterns such as directives, instructions, and explanations in interaction. The next section will give us a clear picture of the concept of communicative patterns.

2.5.2 COMUNICATIVE PATTERNS

It has long been recognized that much of linguistic behaviour is rule governed. It follows regular patterns and constraints which can be formulated descriptively as 'rules'. Thus, sounds must be produced in language specific but regular sequences if they are to be interpreted as the speaker intends. The possible order and form of words in a sentence is constrained by the rules of grammar. Linguistic considers any irregularities in these patterns as 'free variations' in linguistic behaviour. However, sociolinguists such as Labov (1970) and Trudgill (1995) found that these 'free variations ' in linguistic behaviour showed regular and predictable patterns. They are more concerned with how communicative units are organized and patterned in the much broader sense of ' ways of speaking' as well as with how these patterns interrelate in a systematic way with and derive meaning from other aspects of culture.

The relationship between form and function is an example of communicative pattern. Patterning occurs at all levels of communications: societal, group and individual. According to Saville - Troike,

> " At the societal level, communication usually patterns in terms of its
> functions, categories of talk and attitudes and conceptions about
> language and speakers. Communication also patterns according
> to particular roles and groups within a society, such as sex, age,
> social status and occupations ... ways of speaking also pattern
> according to educational level, rural or urban residence, geographic
> region and other features of social organization."

<div align="right">Saville- Troike, (1988:13)</div>

2.5.3   COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES

According to Brown (1994) communication strategies relate to the use of verbal or non-verbal mechanisms for successful communication. He refers to the strategies as:

> " potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents
> itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goals.

<div align="right">Brown (1994:118)</div>

Richard Bauman (1974) too gives a similar idea that communicative strategies are interactions which are 'goal–directed'. He further explains that the implication/ employment of communicative strategies should be studied with reference to the goals of the participants or the speakers of a cultural setting.

Writers such as Tarone (1983) and Ellis (1985) see communication strategies as attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the speaker and that of the interlocutor or listener in real communicative situations.

On the context of this investigation, the Safety Management Team uses a few communicative strategies in executing its tasks to achieve its common goals in accordance with the safety codes. It uses bilingual features such as code switching, code mixing and translation. Therefore the concept of bilingualism and bilingual translation will be explained first. These will be followed by the discussion of the strategy of accommodation, which is another important strategy employed by the Safety Management Team to achieve its cooperative goals.

2.6 BILINGUALISM AND TRANSLATION

The terms bilingualism and translation are relevant in this research which investigates communication strategies used by the Safety Management Team in a construction site which uses English and Malay simultaneously.

According to Weinreich (1968:73) 'bilingualism' is the ability to switch from one language to another in order to suit appropriate changes in speech situation (interlocutors topics).

Machey points out:

> "… that bilingualism is not a phenomenon of language but of its use.
> The study of bilingualism could therefore be said to fall within that
> field of 'sociolinguistics' as it is a discipline which is concerned with
> the ways in which language is used in society or cultural setting."

Machey (1968:554)

Fishman (1965:115) talks about functional bilingualism. Functional bilingualism is concerned with 'when', 'where' and with 'whom' people use their two languages

According to him, the social environment where the two languages function is crucial to understanding the bilingual usage.

Bilingual translation is important to this study because of the presence of translated phrases and sentences in interactions among the workforce. According to Siguan M. and Mackey W.F (1987:73), a bilingual is one who is able to express the same meanings of words and sentences in any of the two languages that he knows, and he can also translate the meanings of something in language A into language B. For example a bilingual can use language B to continue a conversation which he had started in language A. In other words, a bilingual can transfer the same meaning of a sentence from one language into another that he knows. A bilingual translates mainly because not all meanings can be expressed in the same language if his interlocutors are monolinguals of a different language.

At the construction setting, bilingual translation often acts as a communicative strategy to facilitate the understanding of messages or interactions clearly. (More description in chapter Four)

2.7 CODE SWITCHING AND CODE MIXING

Code switching refers to the change from one language or language variety to another (Richard and Platt, 1993:58). According to Gumperz (1977:3) code switching does not necessarily indicate an imperfect knowledge of the grammatical system in question. He states that in many cases the code switched information could be equally well expressed in any of the languages that the speakers use.

Richard and Platt (1993:57) define code mixing as a mixing of two languages or codes. According to them, code mixing usually occurs in a sentence without a change of topics. Code mixing is very common in bilingual or multilingual communities and it is usually a mark of solidarity. For example code mixing can happen in the informal speech of bilingual friends. Richard and Platt (1993: 57) also explain that code mixing can involve various levels of language. For example code mixing can occur at the phonological level, morphological level, or in the grammatical structures, or in the lexical items in a sentence.

Sridhar (1980) in Philip R.Morrow (1987:49) says, code switching 'usually occurs in response to some changes in speech situation or accompanied by a shift in the situation and it does not occur intra-sententially, wherelse, code mixing is not accompanied by a shift in the speech situation and it occurs intra-sententially'. According to Sridhar (1980), one distinguishing feature of code mixing is that it entails bilingual interaction because:

> " ... as long as the participants remain the same, a speaker cannot
> 'mix' elements from a second language unless his interlocutors
> can understand what the mixed elements mean. Therefore with
> mixing, successful communication depends on bilingual competence
> on the part of both speakers."

Sridhar in Philip R.Morrow (1980 : 47)

The occurrence of code switching and mixing is common when one has forgotten the same term for something in the language he or she is currently speaking in. It may also occur when the dominant language used does not have a specific term for a particular concept which the bilingual speaker is referring to. For example 'manhole' in

English is a term which is not in Malay. Sometimes, code switching and mixing take place to exclude a third person from taking part in a conversation.

Saville Troike's ' The ethnography of communication' (1988) reports that some participants regard switching language as a verbal strategy. This strategy is applied in order to soften or strengthen requests or commands. In other words, repeating the same message in two different languages may intensify or eliminate ambiguity. Examples of this strategy will be analysed in Chapter Four.

Pascasio (1978) investigated the dynamics of code switching and the socio-cultural factors affecting code switching among Filipinos in business transactions. Her findings revealed that in order to achieve success in business negotiations one must be equipped with communication strategies to facilitate social interaction. By investigating the dynamics of code switching, Pascasio hoped to learn the appropriate cues used in achieving effective business communication in English and Filipino .She enumerated the following conversational functions of code switching among Filipinos in the business domain: quotation, addressee, specification, interjection, repetition, message qualification, personalization versus objectivization, inquiry versus information and expression of politeness.

Pascasio's study looks at the functions of code switching in verbal communication. However the present study will look at 'code switching' as one of the communication strategies which carries conversational functions among the workforce at the construction site.

Elaine Morais (1994 : 81) investigated the patterns of code switching and code mixing and the implications of the phenomenon for the management of conflict in Malaysian business communications. Her findings revealed that code switching and code mixing occur at all the three levels of business communication - top, middle, and bottom - and that code switching and code mixing create varieties of language in a context. Like Pascasio, Morrais also drawn attention to the 'conversational function' of code switching and code mixing in that code switching and mixing convey both linguistic meanings and that is, they cover both relation and referential functions of language. Her study also reveals that code switching and mixing are 'mutual convergence strategies' which act as powerful forces in generating goodwill and thereby facilitating the goals of interaction.

Though Morais's study concentrates more on the 'varieties of English', part of her study, 'role of code-switching and code mixing ', has a direct relevance to the present study. As does Morais's study, this study also looks at code switching and mixing as a 'communicative strategy'which can enhance communication in the construction industry.

Using the same framework of Pascasio (1978) and Elaine Morais (1994) the researcher attempts to look into the 'conversational function ' of code switching among the Safety Management Team in a construction site. This study has taken code switching and mixing as effective communication strategies in a construction site. The Safety Management Team comprises an ethnically and culturally diverse community with multi nationals such as Malaysians (Malays, Chinese and Indians), Bangladeshis and Indonesians who are from different educational backgrounds. In order to be effective in their communication skills and to achieve their cooperative goals, the Safety Management Team uses code switching and code mixing as communicative strategies. (This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four)

2.8 ACCOMMODATION

The term 'Accommodation' is seen as a well-known communication strategy where speakers in a speech event ' converge' or 'diverge' to the level or proficiency of their counter-parts. Giles (1980) says that speech shifts normally occur in conversations. It is either in the form of 'convergence' in which speakers modify their speech to become similar to that of their interlocutors who are competent in using a particular language or in the form of 'divergence' in which speakers simplify their speech in order to become less like that of their interlocutors who are not well – versed or incompetent in using a particular language.

In this study, it has been observed that the construction scenario which includes the workers, supervisory and management personnel switch between the 'convergence and divergence' state as a means to accommodate their counterparts. The reasons for the use of this strategy will be analysed.

Besides all the above-mentioned terms and concepts when looking into the communicative patterns and the communicative strategies of the Safety Management Team, there are other terms and concepts which are also relevant to the study. These are discourse community, communicative situation, event and act, communicative competence, channels, medium and code, and non-verbal communication. All these terms will be discussed in the following sections.

2.9   DISCOURSE COMMUNITY

The concept of discourse community as used in this study is based on that forwarded by Swales (1990). He sets six criteria : 'common goals, participatory mechanisms, information exchange, community specific genres, a highly specialised terminology and a high level of expertise' to classify a group of individuals as a discourse community (Swales 1990:20). Unlike speech communities, members of discourse communities do not inherit their membership by birth, accident or adoption but by persuasion, training or relevant qualifications.

Boswood (1994:6) states that any discourse community is a creation primarily by its members and secondarily by outsiders, that allows its members to be characterised in terms of a range of generalised behaviour patterns constructed through a cognitive network of norms, beliefs and events.

However the notion of language takes on a new dimension in ESP. A discourse community selects

> "... whatever elements in the vast sea of linguistic resources as most appropriate for the pre-exist language they seek out the language best suited to carry them. This notion of appropriancy will be strongly influenced by tradition and precedents set by other members of the group."
>
> (Peter Roe, 1993:2)

The Safety Management Team shares a common schema among its interlocutors through communication. The workforce link up functionally for the achievement of shared cooperative goals. At times, the Safety Management Team resorts to non-verbal communication resources in order to ensure accurate comprehension. (This will be analysed in Chapter Four).

In order to describe and analyse a communication and discourse community. (Safety Management Team) it is necessary to deal with discrete units of some kind, with communicative activities that have recognizable boundaries. Therefore the researcher selected three units suggested by Hymes (1972) which are most relevant for this study: *communicative situation, communicative event*, and *communicative act.*

2.10   COMMUNICATIVE SITUATION, EVENT AND ACT

The term *communicative situation* refers to the context within which communication occurs. It can be at any location where the speech community interacts. The communicative context can be interpersonal or involve organizational levels which has its own discourse community. (Refer to Section 2.3)

Saville-Troike mentions that the *communicative event* is defined by a unified set of purposes.

> "A single event is defined by a unified set of components throughout, beginning with the same general purpose of communication, the same general topic, and involving the same participants, generally using the same language variety, maintaining the same form or key and the same rules for interaction, in the same setting."
>
> Saville-Troike (1988:27)

She further explains that the smaller unit of 'communicative event' is the 'communicative act'. It is generally coterminous with a single interactional function, such as a referential statement or request, a command, and may be either verbal or non-verbal. Being the 'performative nature of an utterance' (Austin, 1962:17) a communicative act can lead one to perform an action. At the construction site interaction

is 'performative' in nature, especially in the issuing of commands, making of requests and simplifying of information. This will be analysed in Chapter Four.

2.11 COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Communicative competence does not involve knowing only the language code. Hymes's (1972) notion of communicative competence includes a knowledge of 'what to say, when, how, where and to whom' and how to say it appropriately in any situation. Hymes's description has to do with social interaction involving real speakers and listeners who interpret, express and negotiate meaning in many different settings. Under such circumstances, a person needs to know sociolinguistic rules in addition to the knowledge of grammar rules. In this concept, the communicative competence is embedded within the notion of cultural competence for speakers to understand the situation.

Saville-Troike's (1988) description of 'communicative competence' also gives a similar picture as that of Hymes. However, the latter includes non-verbal behaviours. According to her,

"communicative competence extends to both knowledge and expectation of who may or may not speak at certain settings, when to speak and when to remain silent, whom one may speak to, how one may talk to persons of different statuses and roles, what appropriate non-verbal behaviours are in various contexts, what the routines for turn taking are in conversation, how to ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation, how to give commands, how to enforce discipline and the like - in short, everything involves the use of language and other communicative dimensions, in particular social settings."

Saville-Troike (1988: 21)

Another element in communicative competence provided by Saville-Troike is the difference between receptive and productive dimensions. In her opinion, effective communication is definitely a result of shared receptive competence. She adds that in order to be able to communicate appropriately a person has to understand a wide range of language forms although the speaker may lack the ability to produce them. In other words, members of the speech community may understand varieties of language which differ according to the social class, status and role, religion, sex, age, and ethnicity of the speaker. However, only a few may be able to speak them all.

The same observation can be made of multilingual speech communities. Although the speakers usually share receptive competence in more than one language, their ability to speak and to communicate among those of the same ethnic group or other ethnic groups may vary. This notion of 'receptive' and 'productive' dimensions of 'communicative competence' will be analysed in this study.

Hence, it can be said that communicative competence involves the communicative knowledge and skills for contextually appropriate use and interpretation of language in a community. In normal circumstances, communicative competence may vary among its individual members.

2.12 CHANNELS, MEDIUM AND CODE

Authors on communication vary in the use of the term *channel, medium* and *code*. Fiskie (1990) distinguishes 3 basic concepts in communication through *channel, medium* and *code*. He defines *channel* as 'the physical means by which the signal is transmitted'. In other words, it is the route by which messages flow between a source and receiver. He

describes 'medium' as the technical or physical means of converting the message into a signal capable of being transmitted through the *channel*. William (1989) says,

> "Sometimes a channel is taken to mean a general type of communication such as sight, print or the like, whereas a medium refers to the physical basis of communication such as light waves, acoustic vibrations or broadcast waves."
>
> William (1989:29)

In this study the researcher interprets *medium* as verbal or non-verbal communication and *channel* to mean communication conducted over the telephone, hailer, walkie-talkie and face-to-face. The researcher will investigate the verbal communication of the Safety Management Team through five main channels – over the hailer, through the walkie-talkies, through the telephone, face-to-face and through non-verbal forms.

Code is defined by Fiskie (1990) as a system of meaning common to the members of a culture or sub-culture. It consists both of signs and of rules or conversations that determine how and in what context those signs are used and how they can be combined to form more complex meanings. There seems to be a common agreement among many writers that meanings are reflected in the people who use them. In other words some meanings are specific to a particular discourse group, for example the word 'scupper drain' is only familiar among workers in a construction site.

The transmission of certain meanings in this scenario is sometimes complex. Only those who are accustomed or exposed to such activities can understand.. The overall concept of such 'meaning' (the shared codes) as realised in the language used by the Safety Management Team will be further explained in Chapter Four.

2.13   NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

The general assumption about non-verbal communication is that non-verbal communication encompasses everything that we communicate without using words.

According to Brown (1986:52), non-verbal communication includes facial expressions, hands, feet, body and vocal quality and these channels are continuously attended to and they do communicate specific messages. He further states, 'non-verbal arts such as dance, paintings and music are still used to communicate meaning, sometimes, perhaps, in more powerful ways than is possible by verbal communication.'

Another expert, William J.Seiler (1994:113) says that non-verbal communication is actually very 'credible and powerful'. It 'supplements words' or situations where 'speaking is impossible.' A research on non-verbal communication conducted by Knapp and Hall in William J. Sailer (1994:115) shows that 'some people depended more heavily on verbal messages, while others seemed to rely on non-verbal.' (Knapp and Hall in J.Seiler, Futher, Alkema and Gilmour in William J.Seiler (1994:166) in their research found that 'non-verbal behaviours or communication' is twelve to thirteen times more powerful in the form of understanding impact compared to the accompanying verbal message.

At the construction site, the Safety Management Team uses non-verbal communication as one of the strategies to achieve its goals. The work force uses visual aids such as posters, pictures, whistles, gestures and lighting to convey its messages. In certain situations, non-verbal communication appears to be the primary means of

expression in conveying its message. The effectiveness of non-verbal communication as a strategy will be analysed critically in this study.

2.14   ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Language is the main tool of communication. Having discussed communication theories and models of communication and communication strategies, the next section will explore the importance of language, especially the use of the English language in the construction site. How language is utilised by the workforce at the construction site will give us new insights into English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) which is one of the branches of ESP (English For Specific Purposes).

ESP emerged in the late 1960s and there are several factors for its emergence. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) there are three main factors for the emergence of ESP. They are the demands of an internal language for science and commerce industry, a revolution in linguistics and the focus on the learner.

ESP has developed in different ways and at different speeds in different countries. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identified five stages in the development in ESP, namely register analysis, rhetorical or discourse analysis, target situation analysis, skills and strategies approach and learning–centred approach.

The first four stages are based on descriptions of language use that is, the concern was to describe what people do with the language. Stage five is the learning centred approach (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987) where the concern in ESP is not with language used but with language learning. What they mean is, one cannot be sure that by

describing what people do with language will make a person learn the language. Learning must be based on understanding the process of language learning. The trend today is to focus on the needs of the participants (learners) in acquiring communicative competency in language, in terms of what they need the language for. Thus, EOP (English for Occupational Purpose) is an important branch in ESP. EOP courses are designed for work-related needs and training (Robinson 1991), for example, for the various professional fields such as medicine, engineering, information technology and business.

According to Tarone (1983) and Ellis (1985), ESP today has moved beyond the mere process of learning the technical terminology to the analysis of discourse in order to show the language functions in real world situations and achieve occupational aims. ESP is customised according to the specific language requirements of the participants with emphasis on the most common skills or strategies they would need for communication.

2.15   ESP IN MALAYSIA

Since the early 80s, the emergence of ESP programmes in ESL teaching and learning has reflected the importance of ESP in the local universities in Malaysia. Two of the first programmes were, the University of Malaya's English for Special Purposes Project and Spoken English Project.

These projects were launched in the hope that it was more cost-effective and timesaving to teach English related to specific purposes. UMESPP (University of Malaya's English Special Purposes Project) was launched to cater to the needs of Malay-

medium undergraduates in order to provide them access to the wealth of information in the written form. UMSEP (University Malaya's Spoken English Project), on the other hand, was focused on preparing the students to meet the outside world as professionals in their respective jobs.

Besides the University of Malaya's ESP programmes, many other ESP courses were designed for different groups of practitioners in various institutions of higher learning such as Malaysian Polytechnics and other local universities. University Kebangsaan Malaysia for example, offers a considerable number of ESP courses, as part of its undergraduate programmes. EOP (English for Occupational Purpose) is necessary for the undergraduates to obtain the level of English needed to function in the subject disciplines and to execute job specific training components such as negotiations, meetings, business correspondence and report writing (Azlina 1998).

Beginning 1995, with the co-operation of the Ministry of Education, many ESP courses were introduced into Malaysian polytechnics. A needs analysis was conducted in 1994 to gather information on students' needs. The needs analysis indicated that polytechnic students lacked communicative competence in the English language. Within these public training institutions, it was reported that programmes to upgrade skills of future workers were to be extended to include firstly, generic skills programmes, such as communication, personnel effectiveness and problem solving, and secondly, basic education programmes such as numeracy and English Language proficiency. (Hamzah 1994).

Besides the universities, the public and private institutions of higher learning have also increased efforts towards establishing a close academia-industry co-operation in

designing and developing ESP language programmes. A good example of this joint co-operation is the University of Malaya and Motorola's MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) on English language training programmes in relation to a 'study mode negotiation' developed at UM within specific aim of providing training in English communicative skills to cooperative clients. (Le Vasan and Sargunan 1994). Training should be appropriate and it should target preparing students for the workplace. The programme ought to, as far as possible, meet the needs of the target discourse community.

In sum, ESP is an important educational programme in Malaysia although it was only in the beginning of the nineties that 'it saw a sudden shift in paradigm...' (Sargunan 1994:15) where ESP caters to the increasing needs of different learners at different levels. However there is still a lack in terms of training people in the teaching of ESP and designing quality ESP courses (Chiravelu 1993 and Sargunan 1999). Therefore, more research work like the present study is needed.

2.16   NEEDS ANALYSIS

Needs analysis is an important feature in ESP although ESP is not the only exclusive educational enterprise related to it. Needs analysis has been an integral part of ESP since the idea of functionally appropriate language had become a central issue in language learning (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, Tarone, 1983).

One of the elements in today's ESP programmes is on the acquisition of communicative competence or 'communicative skills' in order to perform well in professional settings. Hutchison and Waters (1987) classify needs as necessities, lacks

and wants. Necessities, according to their view, are what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation. The learner presumably also needs to know the linguistic features of discourse which are commonly used in the target situations in order to achieve competence in his/her respective field.

Richterich (1994) states that the key concept of needs has never been clearly defined and remains at best ambiguous. This could be due to lack of 'objective reality 'about needs (Brindly in Robinson, 1991:7). The concept of needs is indeed very subjective as it depends on the preconceptions of the analyst who carries out the analysis.

> "A need does not exist independent of a person. It is people who build their images of their need on the basic of data relating to themselves and the environment."
>
> Richterich (1994:19)

Robinson (1991) lists five types or meanings of needs. The first view is goal-oriented, where the learner's job or study requirements are analysed and used as a target for the students to achieve. The second view is 'what the user-institution or society at large regards as necessary or desirable to be learnt from a programme in a language institution'. (Mountford in Robinson, 1991:7). The third view is a process-orientated divination which takes into account how the students learn. The fourth view is that needs are related to the students' own desire – what they would like to acquire from the course. Robinson's (1991) fifth interpretation of needs refers to what the student's lack, that is, what they do not have.

The foremost consideration in conducting a needs analysis exercise is what Hutchinson and Waters (1987) term as necessities. This is similar to Robinson's first type of needs, the objective or 'goal of the course' where needs are analysed by looking

at the target situation - 'What the learner has to know in order to function effectively'(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987:55). The approach to identifying necessities in a needs analysis exercise is known as target situation analysis (TSA). The researcher adopted the TSA framework of Hutchinson and Waters (1987) for this study. A few samples of field studies in needs analysis will be viewed.

Needs analysis studies are relevant to this study because their findings provide useful information on the demands of ' communicative competence or skills' in specific target situations. The findings of a needs analysis study will also provide a good basis to determine more precisely the nature of the 'communicative competence or skills' employed and needed in the construction site.

Chan Soon Keng (1994) conducted a needs analysis survey for the Information of Technology (IT) undergraduates in Singapore University by interfacing with 'end-users', (learners who will eventually use the language) institutions, where he analysed the target needs of IT undergraduates. Chan focused on three groups of subjects. They were, the IT graduates working in the industry, specialised executives who are assumed to know the specific communication skills needed, and computer science undergraduates who had trained for a six month Industrial Attachment period which had exposed them to real communication in the workplace. Questionnaires were sent out to these three groups of employees with ranking exercises on the aspects of communication, suggested activities, office automation frequency and open and close ended questions which asked for their opinions of future communication activities, previous courses and the efficiency of trainers. His findings were interesting. Though a majority of the respondents expressed satisfaction about the communicative competence of IT undergraduates, they felt that more emphasis needed to be given to oral training, especially those relating to

real life communication, human interaction and adaptability to the culture of an organization. The researcher too, intends to look at the end-user institution, that is how the workforce at a construction site discharges its responsibility by communicating in the English language. However, the methodology used in the research is not survey – based questionnaires, but an ethnographic approach which looks at the case study in a natural setting.

Other known studies on needs analysis include University Kebangsaan Malaysia's (UKM) large-scale needs analysis, Nurahimah Bt Ali's (1994 cited in Azlina 1998) study on communication needs in local companies. Her study found that the written and oral communication skills in English were the most important skills needed. The findings showed that a large percentage of employers (88%) felt that employees entering the force were unable to write and articulate their opinions in English.

This study focuses on the 'communicative competence or skills' of the employees in a construction site - The Safety Management Team. The target situation needs of the Safety Management Team will be analysed by using the framework of TSA by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as stated earlier. It is strongly felt that the theoretical framework and the various parameters given above are appropriate for the research. The researcher also aims to answer the 'Wh' questions outlined by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) in relation to the English language use among the construction workers. (Refer to figure 7).

TSA FRAMEWORK

<u>Why</u> is the language needed?
- for study
- for work
- for training
- for a combination of these
- for other purpose: eg. Status, examination, promotion

<u>How</u> will the language be used?
- Medium: speaking, writing, reading
- channel: eg. telephone, face-to-face
- types of text or discourse: eg. academic text, lectures

<u>What</u> will the content be?
- subjects: eg. medicine, biology, architecture, shipping, commerce etceteras
- level: eg. technician, craftsmen, postgraduate

** <u>Who</u> will the (user) use the language with?
- native speakers or non-native speakers?
- level of knowledge of receiver: eg. expert, layman, student
- relationship: eg. colleague, teacher, customer, superior, subordinate

<u>Where</u> will the language be used?
- physical setting: eg. office, lecture, theatre etc.
- human context: eg. meetings, demonstrations, on telephone
- linguistic context: eg. in our country, abroad

<u>When</u> will the language be used?
- concurrently with ESP course or subsequently
- frequently, seldom, in small amounts, in large chunks

Figure 7

In this study, the TSA framework will be a modified version which deals with '<u>who</u> will the <u>learner</u> use the language with?' According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) 'who' is the '<u>learner</u>' of a language but the researcher's reference of 'who' will point to the '<u>user</u>' of the language because this study looks at the end-users who are in a real working situation, which is that of the workforce of a construction industry.

2.17   ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

Although the relationship between culture and language exist, it was only recently that an approach to investigate this relationship was developed. Ethnography, defined as 'a field of study which is concerned with the description and analysis of culture' (Saville-Troike 1988:1) has its origins in the world of anthropology. It was then synthesized into the field of linguistics by Hymes in Saville-Troike (1988) who emphasised the relationship between language and culture. With this synthesis the 'ethnography of communication' was born.

Saville Troike (1988) says that ethnography of communication not only describes and understands communicative behaviour in specific cultural settings but also formulates concepts and theories upon which to build a global meta-theory of human communication. In order to understand both the specific and the general forms of communication, a broad range of data from a large variety of communication is needed.

In an ethnographic study the focus is on 'behaviour of people' in groups and on cultural patterns in that behaviour (Watson-Gegeo, 1988:577). Therefore to understand communication behaviour in a specific cultural setting, such as the Safety Management Team on the construction site, an ethnographic approach has been selected by the researcher. Ethnography involves examining the patterned interactions and significant symbols of specific cultural groups in order to identify the cultural norms (rules) that direct their behaviours and the meanings people ascribe to each other's behaviours. As Gepther (1988: 47) explains,

> "Ethnography is the use of direct observation and extended field research to produce a thick, naturalistic descriptions of a people and their culture. Ethnography seeks to uncover the symbols and categories members of the given culture use to interpret their world and ethnography thus preserves the integrity and the inherent properties of cultural phenomenon."

Ethnographic researchers report what is learned in qualitative terms and attempt to provide well-grounded rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts. (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 5). Ethnography research captures people's own specific meanings for everyday behaviour; it is basically a qualitative research.

Ethnography also emphasises studying subjective reality over objective fact-findings. Kirk and Miller (1986: 47) explain that ethnography research is,

> " A particular tradition in social science that fundamentally watching on people in their own territory and interacting with them in their own language on their own terms."

The way people think about communicating as in 'how to communicate' is greatly influenced by the social context in which communication has taken place. Certain values and expectations about communication affect their act of communication. Thus, studying the patterns of communication in a situation and the context in which people routinely communicate (Safely Management Team) to achieve their task will be explored. The method is related to ethnographic study, which is the study of the day-to-day activities in a social setting to gather the data of their communicative activities and communicative patterns.

2.18   RELEVANT RESEARCH

Ethnographic studies and approaches in ESP have become common, once the emphasis of studies shifted from text analysis to context-based studies. The need to focus on the 'delicacy of context' is reflected in several studies.

Ramani et.al. (1988) at the Institute of Science Bangalore adopted an ethnographic approach to revise and redesign an English programme for advanced students of science and technology. He knew 'the inadequacy of being an outsider observer'. So, he used ethnographic tools to collaborate with insiders who could set expert opinions on the reality of communicative events of the particular 'subculture'. Ramani demonstrated the relevance and significance of the concept of insider-member knowledge (the *bone fide* members of a cultural setting) to ESP course designs in general and needs analysis in particular. Though he used an ethnographic method, his study looks more at the academic aspects of ESP. It does not focus on the final target destination of the students – the workplace. The findings of his study are a call to ESP practitioners to witness for themselves the actual environment where the specialised text is used.

Hainol H. Ibrahim (1993) also used an ethnographic approach in her study. She used ethnographic tools in conducting a needs analysis, focusing her research on a case study of the Display Monitor Department in a Japanese Multinational Manufacturing company. Hainol, being an observant participant, discovered that communicative events and patterns in the authentic working world are not only purpose-driven activities but that these communicative patterns and events are also governed by norms and conventions and limited by time constraints. Therefore, there is a call to give more

practitioners in their responsibilities. Although, there are similarities between Usha Devi's research and this researcher's own study in the sense that both cover 'communication patterns and strategies', the areas of study is rather different. The researcher's study looks at the Safety Management Team of a construction industry whereas Usha Devi focusses on the maritime pilots.

2.19   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summarising the studies related to the present research, the researcher wishes to indicate that academic recommendations by earlier researchers are taken into consideration.   However, an identical research finding is not available. Ramani et.al. (1988) looked at academic aspects and settings, but this research focuses on members of a community who are already accepted in their culture (as users of a language) although there are similarities between Hainol (1993), and the researcher's own study in the use of the ethnographic approach and the focus on occupational target situations, the fields chosen by the two individuals vary from manufacturing to business. By looking into the 'cultural setting' of a construction site and the construction industry, it is hoped that this research will fill a small niche in the world of ethnographic studies in ESP.