

1

2

3 **THE PROBLEMS FACED BY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN**

4 **THE USE OF ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES**

5

6

7

8

9

10 **MARYAM HARAJI ESFAHANI**

11

12

13

14

15

16 **A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT**

17 **OF THE REQUIREMENTS**

18 **FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ENGLISH**

19 **AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

20

21

22 **FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS**

23 **UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA**

24 **KUALA LUMPUR**

25 **MALAYSIA**

26

27 **NOVEMBER 2009**

28

**UNIVERSITI MALAYA
ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION**

Name of Candidate: **Maryam Haraji Esfahani** (I.C/Passport No: **R12477745**)

(I.C/Passport No: R12477745)

Registration/Matric No: **TGB060020**

Name of Degree: MESL

Title of Project Paper/Research Report/Dissertation/Thesis ("this Work"):
The Problems Faced by International Students in the Use of English for Academic Purposes

Field of Study: English for Specific Purposes

I do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) I am the sole author/writer of this Work;
 - (2) This Work is original;
 - (3) Any use of any work in which copyright exists was done by way of fair dealing and for permitted purposes and any excerpt or extract from, or reference to or reproduction of any copyright work has been disclosed expressly and sufficiently and the title of the Work and its authorship have been acknowledged in this Work;
 - (4) I do not have any actual knowledge nor do I ought reasonably to know that the making of this work constitutes an infringement of any copyright work;
 - (5) I hereby assign all and every rights in the copyright to this Work to the University of Malaya ("UM"), who henceforth shall be owner of the copyright in this Work and that any reproduction or use in any form or by any means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of UM having been first had and obtained;
 - (6) I am fully aware that if in the course of making this Work I have infringed any copyright whether intentionally or otherwise, I may be subject to legal action or any other action as may be determined by UM.

Candidate's Signature

Date

Subscribed and solemnly declared before

Witness's Signature

Date

Name:
Designation:

176 **Acknowledgements**

177 First and foremost, I would like to thank Allah the Almighty. Without His will, grace, and
178 mercy nothing is possible in the whole universe.

179 This thesis would not have been possible without the help, support, and cooperation of a
180 number of people.

181 I am extremely thankful to my supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Rajeswary A. Sargunan,
182 whose encouragement, supervision and support from the preliminary to the concluding level
183 enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject.

184 I would also like to express special thanks to the international students of the faculties of
185 Education and Computer Science and Information Technology and their respectful lecturers.
186 Without their corporation I could not have gotten such relevant data.

187 Last but not least, my deepest gratitude and appreciation goes to the people who are the
188 closest to my heart, my husband and my parents, whose love and support have encouraged
189 me to move on during the course of my life and studies. I love you more than anything else in
190 my life.

191

192

193

194

195

196

197

198

199

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE	
200		
201		
202	Original Work Declaration	ii
203	Abstrak.....	iii
204	Abstract.....	v
205	Acknowledgements.....	vii
206	Table of Contents.....	viii
207	List of Tables	xiii
208	List of Figures	xiv
209	Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
210	1.0. Overview.....	1
211	1.1. Background to the Problem and the Significance of the Study.....	1
212	1.2. The Problem.....	2
213	1.3. Significance of the Study.....	4
214	1.4. Objectives and Research Question.....	5
215	1.5. Scope and Limitations.....	5
216	1.6. Organization of the dissertation.....	6
217	Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature.....	8
218	2.0 Introduction	8
219	2.1.1 Needs Analysis.....	9
220	2.1.2 A Definition of Needs Analysis	9
221	2.1.3 The Importance of Need Analysis.....	10
222	2.1.4 The Development of Needs Analysis.....	11

223	2.1.4.1 Munby's Target Situation Analysis (TSA).....	11
224	2.1.4.2 Present Situation Analysis (PSA).....	17
225	2.1.4.3 Pedagogic Needs Analysis.....	18
226	Deficiency Analysis.....	18
227	Strategy Analysis or Learning Needs Analysis.....	19
228	Means Analysis.....	22
229	2.1.4.4 A Current Concept of Needs Analysis.....	23
230	2.1.4.5 Inclusion of Tasks and Emerging Problems in Needs Analysis.....	25
231	The Inclusion of Tasks.....	25
232	Emerging Problems.....	26
233	2.1.4.6 Summary.....	26
234	2.2 The General Problems faced by International Students.....	27
235	2.2.1 Summary.....	31
236	2.3 The Academic Problems Faced by International Students.....	32
237	2.3.1 Summary.....	35
238	2.4 The Michigan International Students Problem Inventory (MISPI).....	36
239	2.4.1 Summary.....	41
240	2.5 The Adjustment Problems Faced by International Students.....	42
241	2.5.1 Summary.....	47
242	2.6 Conclusion.....	47
243	Chapter Three: Research Methodology.....	48
244	3.0 Introduction.....	48
245	3.1 Research Design.....	48
246	3.2 Data Collection.....	49
247	3.2.1 Respondents.....	49
248	3.2.1.1 International Students.....	49
249	3.2.1.2 Lecturers.....	51

250	3.3 Instruments.....	52
251	3.3.1 Questionnaire.....	52
252	3.3.2 Interviews.....	56
253	3.4 Data Collection Procedures	57
254	3.4.1 Administration of Questionnaires	57
255	3.4.2 Administration of Interviews.....	59
256	3.4.2.1 Students' Interviews	59
257	3.4.2.2 Lecturers' Interviews	60
258	3. 5 Data Analysis.....	61
259	3.6 Conclusion.....	61
260	Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion.....	63
261	4.0 Introduction.....	63
262	4.1 Response rate.....	63
263	4.2 Areas of Language Use for Academic Purposes.....	65
264	4.3 The Most Problematic Areas.....	66
265	4.3.1 Understanding Lectures.....	71
266	4.3.2 Note Taking During Lectures	74
267	4.3.3 Reading Comprehension of the Books and Journal Texts.....	76
268	4.3.4 Writing Reviews and other Project Papers.....	77
269	4.3.5 Participating in Group Discussions and Tutorials.....	80
270	4.3.6 Oral Presentations	82
271	4.3.7 Answering Exam Questions	84
272	864.4 Lecturers' Perspectives about the Students' Problems with EAP.....	

273	4.5 Perspectives regarding the Solutions.....	89
274	4.5.1 Students' Perspectives about Solutions to their EAP Problems.....	89
275	4.5.2 Lecturers' Perspectives about Solutions to the Students' EAP Problem.....	91
276	4.6 Conclusion.....	93
277	Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations.....	94
278	5.0 Introduction.....	94
279	5.1 Summary of the Study.....	94
280	5.1.1 RQ 1: Various Areas of Language Use for Academic Purposes.....	95
281	5.1.2 RQ 2: The Most Problematic Areas.....	96
282	5.1.3 RQ 3: Lecturers' perceptions regarding international students' problems with EAP	
283	97
284	5.1.4 RQ 4: Students' and lecturers' perceptions regarding the solutions to international	
285	students' problems with EAP.....	98
286	5.1.4.1 Students' Perspectives.....	98
287	5.1.4.2 Lecturers' Perspectives.....	99
288	5.2 Overview of the Problems and Implications	99
289	5.2.1 Lack of General English Proficiency.....	100
290	5.2.2 Problems with Academic English.....	100
291	5.3 Recommendations	102
292	5.3.1 Language Requirement Policy.....	102
293	5.3.2 Language Center.....	103
294	5.3.3 Technical Writing Course in the Faculties.....	104
295	5.3.4 Electronic Groups Sharing Network.....	104

296	5.4 Recommendations for further Research.....	105
297	References.....	106
298	Appendices.....	114
299	Appendix I: Students Questionnaire.....	114
300	Appendix II: Students Interview Questions.....	117
301	Appendix III: Lecturers Interview Questions	118
302		
303		
304		
305		
306		
307		
308		
309		
310		
311		
312		
313		
314		
315		
316		
317		
318		

LIST OF TABLES

320	Table 3.1 Number of International Students in the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology (Academic Year 2008-2009).....	49
322	Table 3.2 Number of International Students in the Faculty of Education (Academic Year 2008-2009).....	50
324	Table 3.3 Lecturer Participants from the Faculties of Computer Science and Information Technology and Education (Academic Year 2008-2009).....	51
326	Table 4.1 The Percentage of Respondents from the Faculties of Education and Computer Science.....	64
328	Table 4.2 The Percentage of the Respondents from the faculties of Ed and CS based on their countries of origin.....	64
330	Table 4.3 The Most Problematic Areas of Language Use that occur ‘Always’ or ‘Usually’.....	67
331	Table 4.4 The Most Problematic Areas of Language Use	68
332		
333	Table 4.5 Problems with Understanding Lectures.....	71
334	Table 4.6 Reasons for Problems with Understanding Lectures.....	72
335	Table 4.7 Problems with Note-taking.....	74
336	Table 4.8 Reasons for Problems with Note- taking.....	75
337	Table 4.9 Problems with Reading Texts.....	76
338	Table 4.10 Reasons for Problems with Reading Texts.....	77
339	Table 4.11 Problems with Writing Reviews and Project Papers.....	78
340	Table 4.12 Reasons for Problems with Writing Reviews and Project Papers.....	78
341	Table 4.13 Problems with participating in Group Discussions & Tutorials.....	80
342	Table 4.14 Reasons for Problems with Participating in Group Discussions and Tutorials.....	81
343	Table 4.15 Problems with Oral Presentations.....	82
344	Table 4.16 Reasons for Problems with Giving Oral Presentations.....	83

345	Table 4.17 Problems with Answering Exam Questions.....	84
346	Table 4.18 Reasons for Problems with Answering Exam Questions.....	85
347		
348		
349	LIST OF FIGURES	
350	Figure 2.1: Munby's CNP Model (1978).....	12
351		
352	Figure 2.2: Munby's Parameters for CNP Model (1978).....	14
353		
354	Figure 2.3: Deficiency Analysis.....	19
355		
356	Figure 2.4 A Current Concept of Needs Analysis.....	23
357		
358		
359		
360		
361		
362		
363		
364		
365		
366		
367		
368		
369		
370		
371		
372		