

535

CHAPTER TWO

536

REVIEWE OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

537

538

539 **2.0 Introduction**

540 Malaysian universities have recently admitted a large number of international students who
541 are planning to do their higher education studies in different fields and at different levels
542 (Ministry of Tourism Official website, updated September, 2008). In order to be able to
543 provide quality education for these students, the managers and planners need to be familiar
544 with their academic needs, on one hand, and the problems they may face during the course of
545 their studies, on the other. In spite of the above-mentioned fact that there are many
546 international students who study in Malaysian universities, there is a lack of research in
547 investigating their academic problems in general, and English language and issues related to
548 the use of it for academic purposes in particular.

549

550 There have been a lot of studies regarding the problems of international students in
551 American and Australian universities and these studies have taken into consideration many
552 factors that might pose problems for the international students, including social, cultural, and
553 academic ones (Ballard,1982,1987;Burns, 1991;Samuelowicz,1987). There are also a lot
554 more studies in the form of unpublished doctoral dissertations in American universities on
555 these issues (Han1977; Ellis, 1978; Antanaitis, 1990; Koyu-Fogel, 1994). There is however a
556 need for research to be done in the Malaysian context to study the problems that the
557 international students face with the use of English for academic purposes.

558 This review of literature includes different sections on the various aspects related to the
559 current study. The following sections will be covered in this chapter:

- 560 • Needs Analysis and related issues.
- 561 • General problems faced by international students.
- 562 • Academic problems faced by international students.
- 563 • The Michigan International Students Problem Inventory (MISPI)
- 564 • Adjustment problems of international students.

565

566 **2.1.1 Needs Analysis**

567 In this part of the literature review, needs analysis will be defined and some issues related to
568 it will be discussed and elaborated.

569 **2.1.2 A Definition of Needs Analysis**

570 Needs analysis in second or foreign language teaching is referred to as the process of
571 understanding what to teach to the L2 learners and how to teach it. This is one of the
572 ‘enduring conceptions’ in English for Specific Purposes and it has been part of the English
573 language pedagogy for some 20 to 30 years (Long, 2005). Needs analysis in general involves
574 activities and actions undertaken in order to collect information about the language learners
575 and many other things to design and implement curriculum and syllabuses that respond to the
576 particular needs of a specific group of L2 learners (Iwai *et al.*, 1999).

577

578

579

580 2.1.3 The Importance of Needs Analysis

581 Needs analysis has an essential role in English Language Teaching (ELT); this analysis is
582 usually made in order to recognize the specific aim(s) that a group of learners share; it plays a
583 crucial role in the processes of designing and implementing any kind of language course,
584 specially when it is English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and essential role has been
585 acknowledged by several ELT researchers and practitioners throughout years (Munby, 1978;
586 Richterich and Chancerel, 1987; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Berwick, 1989; Brindley,
587 1989; Tarone and Yule, 1989; Robinson, 1991; Johns, 1991; West, 1994; Allison *et al.*
588 (1994); Seedhouse, 1995; Jordan, 1997; Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998; Iwai *et al.* 1999;
589 Hamp-Lyons, 2001; Finney, 2002).

590 Many teachers assume that learners of ESP have a particular goal for which they will be
591 following a course of study (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). In fact, the learners and users of
592 the language use the language in any area of study to achieve a specific goal, and the purpose
593 of language use in that specific field of study is the most crucial part of the ESP curricula and
594 is the major concern of most ESP needs analysis. In other words, ESP needs analysis intends
595 to identify the needs that users have and the purposes for which they use the language so that
596 they can prepare the language course that is most suitable for them. According to Hutchinson
597 and Waters:

598 ... if we had to state in practical terms the
599 irreducible minimum of ESP approach to
600 course design, it would be needs analysis,
601 since it is the awareness of a target situation—
602 a definable need to communicate in English
603 that distinguishes the ESP learner from the
604 learner of General English.

605

606

(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: p. 54)

607 **2.1.4 The Development of Needs Analysis**

608 A review of literature reveals that needs analysis has gone through several stages of
609 evolution. In the beginning stages, i.e. during the 60s and early 70s, ESP was influenced by
610 language-centered approaches, especially register analysis. It was the discrete language items
611 (grammar, lexis) which were used to define needs. In the late 70s, however, the emphasis
612 shifted to functions. However with the introduction of Munby's Communicative Syllabus
613 Design (1978) to the field of ELT, 'situations' and 'functions' were given the central focus in
614 the realm of needs analysis. He introduced the 'communication needs processor' (CNP) in his
615 book which was the basis of his approach to needs analysis. Following Munby's model,
616 Chambers (1980) introduced Target Situation Analysis (TSA) to the field, and since then,
617 several other scholars have introduced several new terms to the field, such as, Present
618 Situation Analysis (PSA), Pedagogic Needs Analysis (PNA), Deficiency Analysis (DA),
619 Strategy Analysis (SA) or Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) (Haseli Songhori, 2008).

620

621 **2.1.4.1 Munby's Target Situation Analysis (TSA)**

622 As stated earlier, needs analysis as a functional approach was practically established in the
623 middle 1970s (West, 1998). Prior to that time, needs analysis mainly involved linguistic
624 and/or register analyses; needs were viewed as discrete grammar and vocabulary language
625 items (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998). However, research showed that functions and
626 situations were equally fundamental (Hutchinson and Waters 1987). In fact with the
627 introduction of Munby's Communicative Syllabus Design in 1978, needs analysis changed its
628 directions towards regarding the learners' aims as central within needs analysis and
629 consequently the concept of target needs became of great importance and interest.

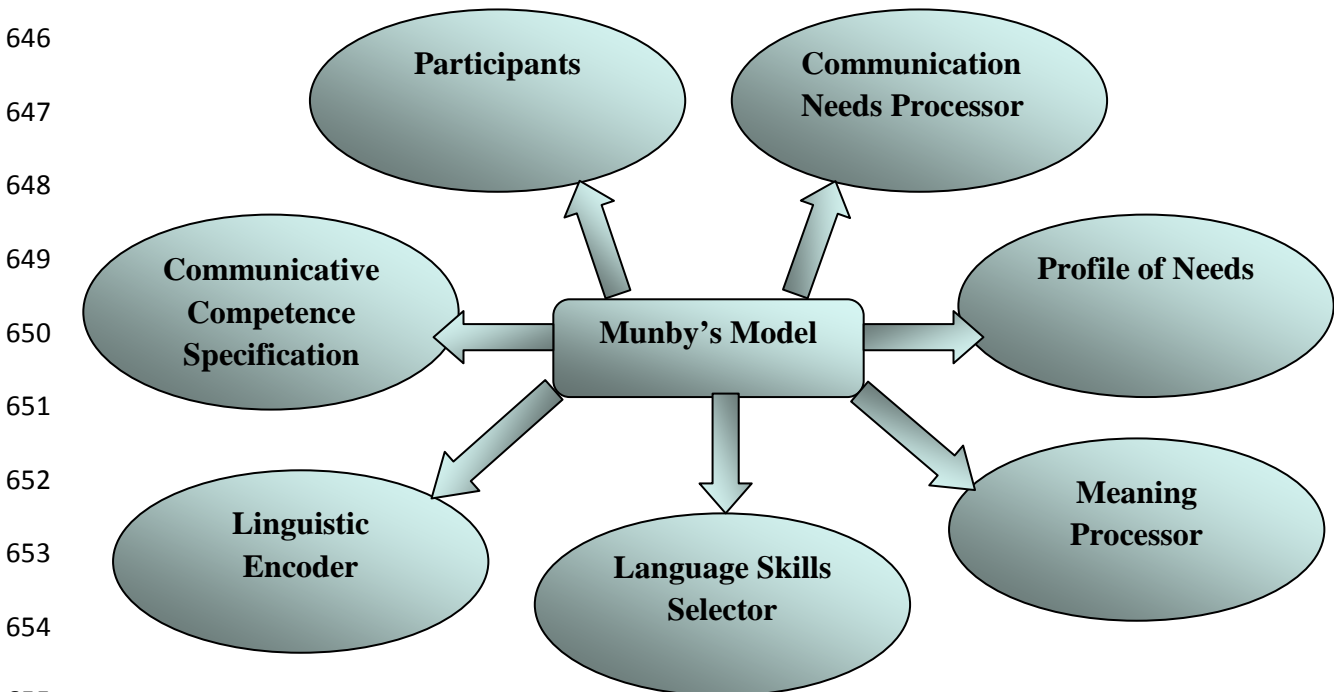
630

631 Munby first introduced the Communicative Needs Processor (CNP) in his 1978
 632 Communicative Syllabus Design which was greatly appreciated by other ESP scholars:

633 With the development of the CNP it seemed as if ESP had
 634 come of age. The machinery for identifying the needs of any
 635 group of learners had been provided: all the course designers
 636 had to do was to operate it.
 637 Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 54)

638 In earlier models of needs analysis, lists of vocabulary and grammatical structures were used
 639 as the predictor of the learners' future language needs. However, according to West (1998),
 640 in Munby's CNP model, by studying the target situation, the target needs and target level
 641 performance of the L2 users are identified; in fact, his model generally places needs analysis
 642 as central to ESP materials or course design.

643 In CNP, Munby (1978: 32) takes into consideration "the variables that affect communication
 644 needs by organizing them as parameters in a dynamic relationship to each other". His model
 645 generally consists of the following parameters (see Fig. 2.1):



655
 656 Figure 2.1: Munby's CNP Model (1978)

657 I. **Participants:** information about learners' personal and linguistic backgrounds such as
658 gender, age, country of origin, current proficiency of the target language, and information
659 about the other languages they know and the their proficiency levels in those languages;

660
661 II. **Communication Needs Processor:** information about the specific communication needs
662 of the second or foreign language learners based on socio-cultural and stylistic variables,
663 what the prospective users really need in order to be able to use language that is socio-
664 culturally sound and appropriate, which together with a profile of such needs of the user of
665 the language will help the learners to be able to function efficiently in the target situation;

666
667 III. **Profile of Needs:** information obtained through the processing of data in the CNP in
668 order to give a picture of the needs;

669
670 IV. **Meaning Processor:** attempts to assign semantic values with relevant pragmatic
671 dimension to the communication needs in the socio-cultural profile of the communication
672 needs;

673
674 V. **The Language Skills Selector:** "the specific language skills that are required to realize
675 the events or activities that have been identified in the CNP" (Munby, 1978: 40);

676
677 VI. **The Linguistic Encoder:** "the dimension of contextual appropriacy" (Munby, 1978: 49)
678 that is, whether the linguistic choices which have been allocated to various events and
679 activities are appropriate with regard to the context;

680
681 VII. **The Communicative Competence Specification:** a description of the expected
682 communicative competence of the ESP language user which is in fact the ultimate goal of the
683 needs profile.

684 From the seven mentioned components of Munby's model, the most important one or at least
685 the one which has mostly been based on or referred to in the literature of needs analysis is the
686 Communication Needs Processor (CNP) (Haseli Songhori, 2008). CNP is in fact the basis of
687 needs analysis in Munby's framework which, through processing of eight elements, provides
688 a rather thorough profile of the specific communication needs for an ESP language learner.
689 Those eight parameters introduced by Munby (1987) are given in figure 2.2:

690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707

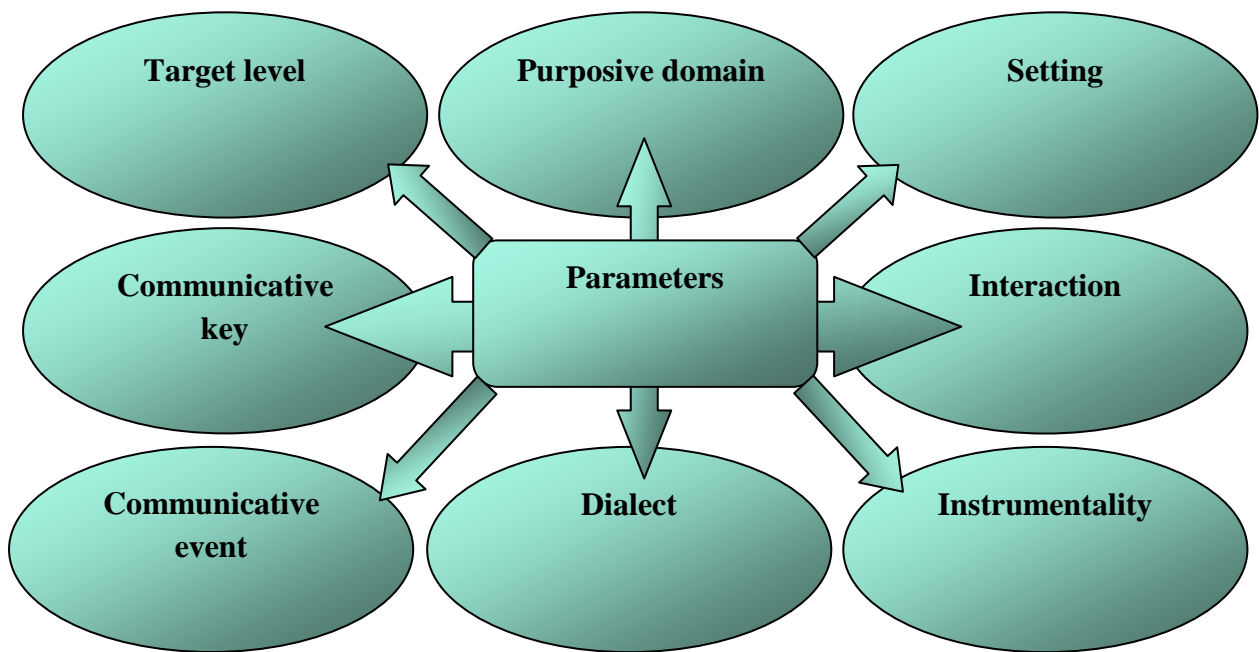


Figure 2.2: Munby's Parameters for CNP Model (1978)

708 I. **Purposive domain:** in this area the goals for which the second language would be used by
709 the learner at the end of the ESP training will be considered and investigated.

710
711 II. **Setting:** in this area certain physical and psychological aspects of target situations where
712 the learners would use the language would be considered. Physical aspect involves the spatial
713 and temporal features of the situation and the psychological aspect investigates the
714 environment in which the language might be used.

715
716 III. **Interaction:** this area investigates the learners' prospectus interlocutors and their
717 relations.

718
719 IV. **Instrumentality:** this area investigates the *medium* of the language to be used- whether
720 written or spoken-, the *mode* of the language to be used- whether in monologue, dialogue or
721 any other form-, and the *channel* of communication in the language to be used- whether face
722 to face, on the phone, or any other.

723
724 V. **Dialect:** this area investigates the dialects of the target language that learners need to be
725 familiar with in order to both understand and produce the language properly in terms of the
726 spatial, temporal, and social aspects.

727
728 VI. **Communicative event:** this area studies the L2 users' needs in order to be able to
729 produce and comprehend the target language efficiently.

730
731 VII. **Communicative key:** this area involves the socio linguistic aspect of the use of the
732 target language and focuses on appropriate language use, like being polite in different events.

733
734 VIII. **Target level:** this area predicts the language proficiency level of the L2 users by the end
735 of ESP training, which might not necessarily be the same for all skills.

736 Munby's main objective in CNP was actually finding a comprehensive account of the target
737 language forms that L2 learners would most probably use in their prospective L2 situations;
738 in fact, for learners to be able to function efficiently in the target language situations, they
739 need to be taught according to the data which has been produced by the means of Munby's
740 communication needs processor (CNP). And according to Robinson (1991), for the reason of
741 being so thorough and comprehensive in terms of the data regarding the learners and their
742 target language situations, Munby's framework was applied by a lot of ESP researchers
743 thereafter.

744 Very closely related to CNP was TSA, Target Situation Analysis, which was first introduced
745 by Chambers (1980). For him, target situation analysis referred to communication in the
746 target situation. However, most researchers followed the CNP framework rather than TSA;
747 for example Hutchinson and Waters came up with a list of questions by answering which the
748 needs analysts were able to define a thorough target situation description leading to target
749 situation analysis (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

750 Despite the great benefits and potentials that Munby's framework had to offer, there were,
751 however, some problems associated with that. For example, as Dudley-Evans and St. John
752 (1998) mention, although the model included micro functions in the CNP, they had not been
753 prioritized, nor had been any affective factors included in the model. Or as Hutchinson and
754 Waters (1987) state, using CNP would be too time consuming to be applied for each learner,
755 it also takes into consideration the analyst's points of view and not of the learners' and
756 others', and finally learning needs, wants and necessities have not been considered and
757 included either.

758

759 One of the other critics of Munby's Model was West (1994) according to whom the
760 drawbacks of CNP would be summarized in the four following categories:

761

762 I. **Complication:** Since the model tries to be as thorough as possible, it would obviously be
763 time-consuming and complicated.

764 II. **Learner:** Although the model claims to be learner-centered, data collected is most of the
765 time *about* the learner. In a learner-centered approach, the data should have been gathered
766 from the learner.

767

768 III. **Limitations:** According to Munby, limitations should be dealt with once the needs
769 analysis has been carried out, while to many others, constraints of practicality have to be
770 taken into consideration at the onset of needs analysis or any other course planning or
771 designing.

772

773 IV. **Language Syllabus:** Munby does not practically provide guidelines and the processes of
774 translating language learners' needs profile into a practical language syllable.

775

776 **2.1.4.2 Present Situation Analysis (PSA)**

777 As the name indicates, present situation analysis (PSA) is the counterpart of target situation
778 analysis (TSA). Whereas in TSA the analysts consider the learners' expected target situation
779 linguistic features and expected language proficiency level, in PSA they take into
780 considerations learners' present proficiency level and their other characteristics at the start of
781 or prior to the course. Once it is established where the learners are at the onset, it would be
782 more possible to practically take them where we expect at the end. "A PSA estimates
783 strengths and weaknesses in language, skills, and learning experiences" Dudley-Evans and St.
784 John (1998).

785 Richterich and Chencrel first introduced Present Situation Analysis to the field of needs
786 analysis and ESP. In their approach, information regarding the learners was obtained from the
787 learners themselves and the situations they were at the time of need analysis. In order to
788 obtain a profile of the learners and their current proficiency levels, they used questionnaires
789 and placement tests. The questionnaires would collect data on the learners' current situation
790 like the languages they knew, their special abilities, their level of education and others, and
791 the placement test would determine their language proficiency level at the beginning of the
792 course.

793 However as can be seen, although PSA complemented TSA by providing data on the
794 learners' situation at the beginning of the course, it did not necessarily address and resolve
795 the problems, one of the most serious ones being the issue of practicality and limitations, that
796 were ascribed to TSA. As a result, there was still a need for the new frameworks and models
797 to be introduced to the field.

798 **2.1.4.3 Pedagogic Needs Analysis**

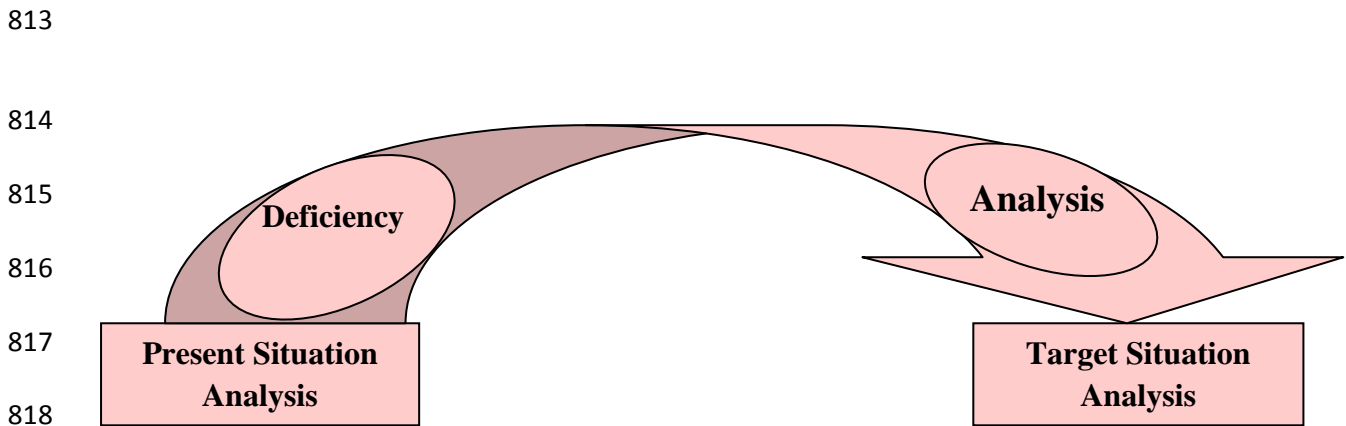
799 As mentioned earlier, West (1998) mentioned four main problems with TSA developed by
800 Munby (1978). In order to compensate for the shortcomings of Munby's models, West
801 introduced the general term 'Pedagogic Needs Analysis' (PNA); PNA itself consisted of three
802 subcategories namely: Deficiency Analysis (DA), Strategy Analysis (SA) or Learning Needs
803 Analysis (LNA), and Means Analysis (MA) West (1998).

804 **Deficiency Analysis**

805 Deficiency analysis which is mainly understood from the learners' present situation analysis
806 is actually an analysis of what it takes to take the learners from their present situation to the
807 target situation. In other words, it needs to draw on the data on both sides. Firstly, it needs to
808 understand the learners' current situation and their present proficiency level in the target

809 language and secondly, it needs to predict the learners' expected proficiency level in the
810 target situations. It would address the gap that needs to be filled between the current situation
811 and the target situation.

812 The following figure is a graphic realization of deficiency analysis:



819 Figure 2.3: Deficiency Analysis

822 **Learning Needs Analysis or Strategy Analysis**

823 So far and as far as the different approaches to needs analysis such as present situation or
824 target situation analyses are concerned, the models have been entirely focusing on the
825 language or the learners themselves but not on the strategies applied by the learners in the
826 process of learning. However, in Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) or Strategy Analysis (SA)
827 the focus is on the learners' strategies in second language learning.

828
829 According to Jordan (1997), the first ESP scholar who used SA was Allwright who in his
830 research and practices got the learners to state in their own words their viewpoints regarding
831 language learning and their perceived language needs.

832 He also introduced and differentiated needs, wants and lacks. By ‘needs’ he meant the skills
833 that the learners regarded as relevant to themselves, by ‘wants’ he meant the needs which
834 were prior to the learners based on their situations, and finally by ‘lacks’ he meant what the
835 learners perceived would be the gap between what they knew about the language at their
836 present situation and what they expected to acquire in the end. This model was later applied
837 in Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) approach because to them the learners’ learning needs
838 were of great importance and their model of language teaching generally favored a learning-
839 centered teaching approach and they believed that LNA would provide the educators with
840 what needs to be done for the learners to learn the language. To them ESP was not an end by
841 itself but a means to the end. In other words, they advocated a process oriented approach to
842 language teaching rather than a product oriented one.

843 This approach was welcomed by others such as Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) who
844 believed that we need to teach learners skills that make them capable of reaching their second
845 language learning goals and central to this is consideration of certain learners’ factors such as
846 their motivation, learning strategies and processes, and learning styles. The other advocate is
847 Jordan (1997: 26) who quotes Bower (1980) on the significance of learning needs:

848 If we accept...that a student will learn best what he **wants**
849 to learn, less well what he only **needs** to learn, less well still
850 what he either wants or needs to learn, it is clearly important
851 to leave room in a learning programme for the learner’s own
852 wishes regarding both goals and processes.
853

854 Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) model of SA or LNA consists of four groups of questions
855 which are themselves divided into more in depth ones. Their framework is given in the
856 following by quoting from Haseli Songhori (2008):

857

858

859 1. **Why** are the learners taking the course?

860 • Compulsory or optional;

861 • known needs or unknown reasons for learning;

862 • Are status, money, and promotion involved?

863 • What do learners think they will achieve?

864 • What is their attitude towards the ESP course? Do they want to improve their English or do

865 they resent the time they have to spend on it?

866

867 2. **How** do the learners learn?

868 • What is their learning background?

869 • What is their concept of teaching and learning?

870 • What methodology will appeal to them?

871 • What sort of techniques bore/alienate them?

872

873 3. **What** sources are available?

874 • number and professional competence of teachers;

875 • attitude of teachers to ESP;

876 • teachers' knowledge of and attitude to subject content;

877 • materials;

878 • aids;

879 • opportunities for out-of-class activities.

880

881

882

883

884 4. **Who** are the learners?

885 • age/ sex/ nationality;

886 • What do they already know about English?

887 • What subject knowledge do they have?

888 • What are their interests?

889 • What is their socio-cultural background?

890 • What teaching styles are they used to?

891 • What is their attitude to English or to the cultures of the English speaking world?

892 (Hutchinson and Waters (1987) quoted from Haseli Songhori (2008))

893 **Means Analysis**

894 As stated earlier, a major drawback of Munby's model was the fact that it had not taken the
895 issue of practicality into consideration. In other words, the framework would not be able to
896 predict and react to the probable constraint and limitations in the process of implementing the
897 courses. However, in mean analysis the focus is on the viability of the designs and plans in
898 the course of teaching and learning. And the question is "Would what we have planned be
899 possible to be practiced based on the circumstances of the situation and the environment?"

900 There are two other relevant issues in this regard. One is the culture; that means if culture has
901 been considered in the course of planning and teaching and whether the course is culturally
902 sensitive enough not to cause any misunderstandings or cultural conflicts. The second issue is
903 that as Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) mentioned there might be cases where a plan or
904 course that produces great results in one situation might fail in another situation.

905

906

907

908

909 **2.1.4.4 A Current Concept of Needs Analysis**

910 One recent and rather thorough concept of needs analysis is probably the one proposed by
911 Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998: 125). This approach contains all and even more than what
912 was mentioned above regarding various approaches to needs analysis. Their model of needs
913 analysis is summarized in figure 2.4 below:

914

915

916

917

918

919

920

921

922

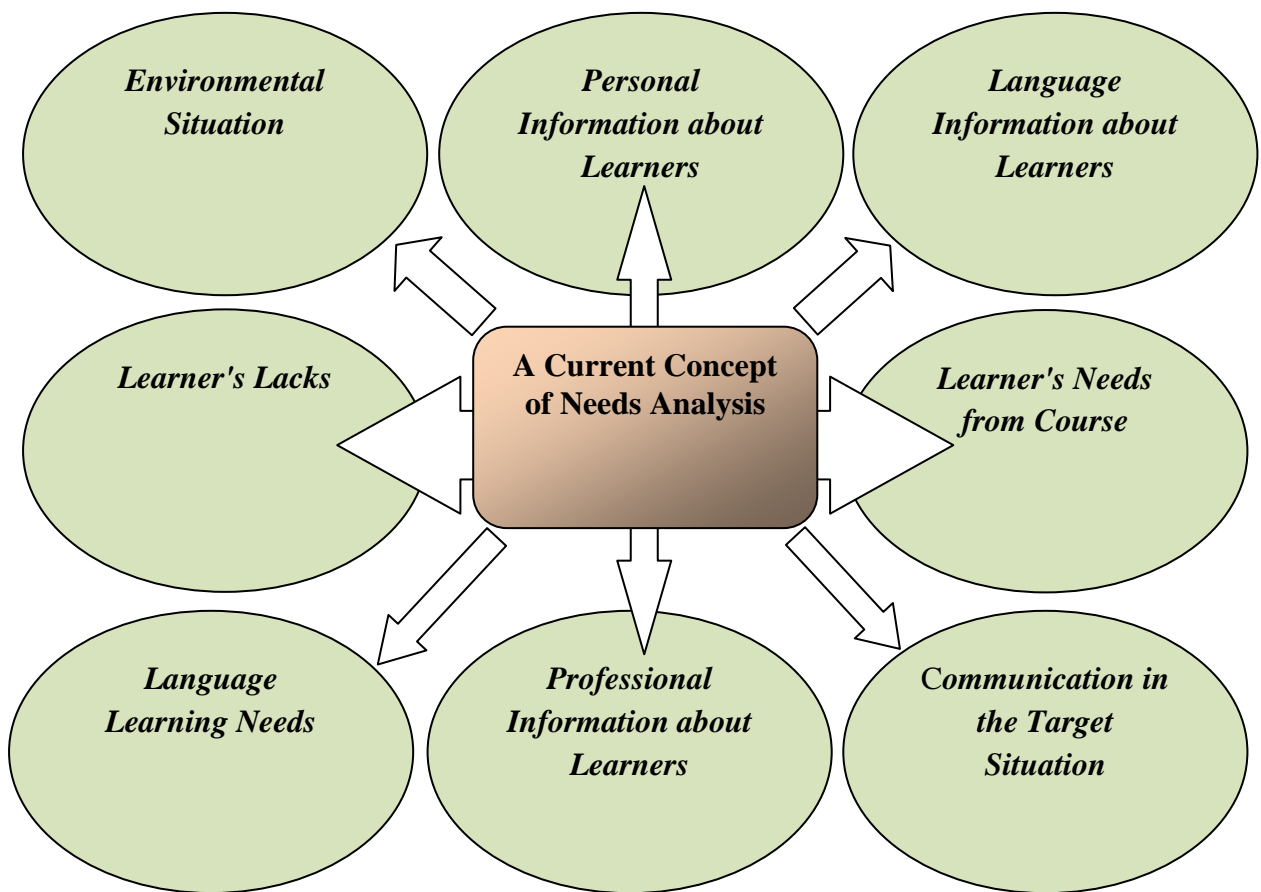
923

924

925

926

927



928

Figure 2.4 A Current Concept of Needs Analysis

929

930 **1. Environmental situation** - information about the situation in which the course will be run
931 (means analysis), such as the environment where the course will be run and the costs;

932

933 **2. Personal information about learners** - factors which may affect the way they learn (wants,
934 means, and subjective needs), such as age, gender, learning strategies, motivation;

935
936 **3. Language information about learners** - what their current skills and language use are
937 (present situation analysis), such as their proficiency level and years of language instruction
938 they have had;

939
940 **4. Learner's lacks** - the gap between the present situation and professional information about
941 learners), such what they lack in language as shown by diagnostic tests;

942
943 **5. Learner's needs from course** - what is wanted from the course (short-term needs), such as
944 the course objectives and the learners' expectations;

945
946 **6. Language learning needs** - effective ways of learning the skills and language determined
947 by lacks, such as new strategies that could help the learners improve their skills;

948
949 **7. Professional information about learners** - the tasks and activities English learners are/will
950 be using English for (Target Situation Analysis and objective needs), such as their future
951 positions;

952
953 **8. Communication in the target situation** – knowledge of how language and skills are used
954 in the target situation (obtained through means such as register analysis, discourse analysis,
955 genre analysis).

956 (Adapted from Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) and Haseli Songhori (2008))

957
958 It is, however, worth mentioning at this end that the various kinds of needs analyses that we
959 reviewed here or exist elsewhere in the literature are not necessarily exclusive but rather
960 complementary; each of them play their own role in completing the overall task.

961

962 **2.1.4.5 Inclusion of Tasks and Emerging Problems in Needs Analysis**

963 All the works done in ESP have sought to promote the communicative nature of language
964 teaching, because starting with register analysis and formal structural analyses of the
965 language, ESP teachers have been very concerned with the needs of students as they used the
966 language, rather than language per se. In this regard and according to what has so far been
967 discussed, there are still two issues which seem to be necessary and related to the current
968 study; one is the concept of task and the other is the issue of emerging problems which is the
969 central focus of this work.

970 **The Inclusion of Tasks**

971 As mentioned earlier, there are analyses of needs which focus on the structural and detailed
972 linguistic properties of the language (e.g. Cameron, 1998) in order to design and develop
973 language programmes for the people who are going to use the language as their second
974 language. However, these detailed analyses have been shown to be not comprehensive and
975 sufficient enough to predict future competency of the second language user unless they are
976 complemented by functional analyses (Cathcart, 1989).

977 Furthermore, research has shown that it is not often the lack of linguistic competence per se
978 that makes learners unable to perform adequately at work or a foreign university course
979 (Marriot and Yamada, 1991; Marriot, 1991). The second language users in these studies were
980 relatively competent in the use of grammar and also of the vocabulary of the second
981 language. However, they were not very well aware of the cross cultural pragmatic differences
982 which was the reason for their failure in the successful fulfillment of the *task*. So the user's
983 inability to perform the task successfully could depend as much on socio cultural factors as it
984 could on the second language linguistic knowledge (Marriot, 1991; Jacoby and McNamara,
985 1999; Medway and Andrew, 1992); that is why for these researchers the unit of analysis is
986 *task*, and they usually collect samples of discourse which are involved in the fulfillment of

987 the tasks relevant to the communicative needs of the particular groups of learners (Long
988 2005).

989 **Emerging Problems**

990 The other issue which needs to be discussed in this literature review with regard to needs
991 analysis is the emerging problems of the users of language, here English, for specific
992 purposes. So far, we have considered the needs of the learners and users at various points and
993 levels. However, there might still be some problems that emerge as the users are involved in
994 the course of the actual performance of the tasks involved or associated with the use of
995 English for specific purposes. What this study is mainly trying to achieve, after identifying
996 the various tasks that the international students have to perform as part of their academic
997 venture in the university, is to identify the problems that the users face in the course of
998 performing those tasks. Attending to these problems would lead to more successful task
999 fulfillment and as a result the students would have better academic achievements. There is
1000 lack of research in this area, which is identifying the problems that arise while performing the
1001 tasks as far as using English for specific purposes is concerned, and this research attempts to
1002 contribute to the literature and methodology of needs analysis by investigating it.

1003

1004 **2.1.4.6 Summary**

1005 In this section, a review of the developments in needs analysis was presented. First, there was
1006 an introduction of the early accounts of needs analysis. Then, further developments and
1007 reforms in the approach were discussed and later, the section provided a more recent and
1008 multi faceted needs analysis process. The section ended with two remaining issues which
1009 were the role of task in needs analysis and the emerging problems in the course of task
1010 fulfillment that this study tries to investigate.

1011

1012 **2.2 The General Problems Faced by International Students**

1013 As mentioned in the introduction, there is not much research available considering only the
1014 English language problems of the international students. Most researchers have concentrated
1015 on the general problems confronting international students, one of which has often proven to
1016 be English language problems.

1017 To begin with, there are studies in the literature which have investigated different problems
1018 of international students who have chosen to study in an English speaking country. These
1019 students reported various problems that they had to challenge including English language
1020 problems. Han (1997) when studying Eastern universities in Pittsburg concluded that for
1021 Korean students, “English language” along with “health service” was the most serious
1022 problem area.

1023 Moon (1991) carried out another survey among the Korean students which had the same
1024 result. The study showed that among different factors considered in the study, English
1025 language proficiency was the most problematic area in educational issues. Parr, Bradley, &
1026 Bingi (1992) mentioned that international students face major hurdles with essay
1027 examinations and taking notes while the lecturer is speaking due to the lack of English
1028 proficiency. On the other hand, their performance as teaching assistants led them to be
1029 confronted with problems; because of their different accents, expressions and teaching
1030 methods, their American students could not understand the lesson (Pedersen, 1991).

1031

1032

1033

1034 Joseph Kee- Kuok Wong (2003) in another research, tried to find out the problems of the
1035 Asian International Students. The survey was conducted among 78 first year to fourth year
1036 Asian international students in a university in South Australia. In order to get further
1037 information on the actual problems faced by these international students, the researcher
1038 carried out some interviews with nine of these students. According to this research, the Asian
1039 international students' problems were categorized into three groups: different learning styles,
1040 cultural barriers and language problems. The students, due to their previous system of
1041 education, faced a lot of barriers in studying in Australia. Most of them had been used to be
1042 spoon-fed by their instructors in their home countries: this was not the case in their host
1043 country. The participants reported several problems which were based on their lack of
1044 knowledge of English. They found it a big hurdle to take notes while the lecturer was
1045 speaking. First of all, they had to understand the lecture. The Australian accent of the
1046 lecturers made this an even more difficult task. Thus it affected the note-taking process also.
1047 The other areas of difficulty were doing the assignments, and participating in group
1048 discussions.

1049 And finally, Yeh and Yang (2003) investigated the experience of Asian graduate students in
1050 the United States. The research was conducted to discover the students' reasons for choosing
1051 some specific universities and to clarify the ways they had used to improve their situation at
1052 their arrival at U.S colleges, and also their problems. According to the results of interviews
1053 conducted with 12 graduate students, "English language" knowledge was the most serious
1054 barrier for the students. The students confronted a lot of difficulties while they were trying to
1055 discuss a matter or show their feeling or opinion toward an issue. All the students had scored
1056 well in the TOEFL test, however. Among the English language competency problems,
1057 problems in reading fast, writing and speaking were the most crucial ones.

1058 There are also studies which have considered the psychological and stressor factors in
1059 students' academic lives; here too, English language problems were prominent among those
1060 problems which made their academic lives difficult. For example, Lin, Jun-Chih Gizela and
1061 Yi, Jenny K (1997), provided an overview of socio-demographic characteristics of
1062 international students and common stressors Asian international students experienced in the
1063 United States. According to this study, one of the main problems the international students
1064 had was adjusting to the English language and even the educational system. The research
1065 shows that the international students had various problems such as understanding the accent
1066 of the lecturers, comprehending the tests, reading relevant texts and limited vocabulary
1067 knowledge. In addition, some of these Asian International students were assigned as teaching
1068 assistants, causing other problems. The students who participated in their classes sometimes
1069 had complaints about their foreign accents. As a result, chances of miscommunication in
1070 these classes increased and the affected students had less comprehension than the others.

1071 In another study, Cheng, Ding, and Perez (1998) evaluated the East Asian student Stressor
1072 Inventory. They examined different areas of difficulty like English efficiency, family
1073 pressure, social support, academic performance, culture shock, and financial difficulties. The
1074 study showed that "English language" proficiency had a very important effect on students'
1075 stress.

1076 Lin & Yi (1997) believed low level of English language proficiency could be related to
1077 academic performance; furthermore, it could affect international students' psychological
1078 health. Sandhu (1994) in a study on the psychological needs of the international students
1079 mentioned that those international students who came from non-English speaking countries
1080 were more likely to have problems than the others. According to the researcher, these
1081 students were at a high risk of developing psychological problems, especially as these
1082 students could not express their concerns because of lack of language and social skills.

1083

1084 Another group of studies revealed how lack of language proficiency hinders the students
1085 from using the service and facilities provided by the university optimally. Deirdre Coghlan et
1086 al (2005) conducted a survey among the international students and professionals in Ireland.
1087 The research aimed to analyze access to higher education and recognition of professional
1088 qualifications. In this research different areas were analyzed, among which there was once
1089 again problems with performing in English Language. As was obvious, a lot of students faced
1090 problems with English. The most significant problem was the inability to integrate and
1091 communicate with the professionals who provided services for the foreign students. A large
1092 number of students in their study could not be successful in the required English proficiency
1093 examinations required for studying at the universities (like TOEFL or IELTS exams). Those
1094 students who entered the university still had problems with English language proficiency and
1095 had to pay a lot to attend extra English classes. One of participants in the study said,

1096 “I think the language barrier is still the big problem, no matter
1097 what you want to do, even if you just want to buy something. The
1098 first thing is to solve this. I studied hard, because the culture is
1099 different and the communication skill is very different. Even
1100 though I’d been learning English since grade 4 in elementary
1101 school- maybe 9 years old. That’s a standard course in China,
1102 you must do it. They even start from 6 now. But we are very
1103 good at grammar or words but most Chinese people are very poor
1104 at Spoken English and listening. Mostly even if they understand
1105 the words, they can’t speak very well.”

1106

1107

1108

1109

1110 As English language is the main means of communication for the international students, lack
1111 of knowledge of the English language might prevent them from enjoying the facilities of the
1112 foreign universities, since they cannot understand English very well. Hajar Safahieh & Diljit
1113 Singh (2006) in a study at the University of Malaya surveyed the information needs of
1114 international students at this Malaysian university. Among the 54 participants, the main
1115 information needs were related to the faculty, university and their programmes of study. The
1116 researchers found that many students could not use the facilities provided at university, like
1117 the library, because of the English language barrier. As a result, English language
1118 competency was assumed to be the main hurdle for the information needs. The participants
1119 were asked to rate their English language knowledge along with some other skills like
1120 computer and internet proficiency. According to the results, almost half of the respondents in
1121 their study were not able to get sufficient information about their majors or the facilities
1122 available in the university due to their low proficiency level in the English language.

1123

1124 **2.2.1 Summary**

1125 This section presented a number of different studies in American and Australian universities
1126 which had investigated the problems of the international students in general. In all of the
1127 studies the students mentioned problems with English language as being one of the major
1128 difficulties that confronted them along with other challenges of studying and living in an
1129 English speaking country.

1130

1131

1132

1133 **2.3 The Academic Problems Faced by International Students**

1134 As several researchers have looked into the general problems among international students,
1135 others have focused their attention specifically on academic problems in relation to students'
1136 English language proficiency. Gradman and Hanania (1991), for example, found a strong
1137 correlation between TOEFL scores and the amount of reading in which the students had
1138 engaged in out of the classroom. Also the effect of contact with native speakers on their
1139 general language proficiency and how all these would help them overcome their language
1140 barriers. Xu (1991), on the other hand, did not find any correlation between their TOEFL
1141 scores and perceived academic difficulties in an American graduate school. Xu's findings
1142 showed that their self-rated language proficiency was the biggest predictor of the magnitude
1143 of academic difficulty. And he concluded that attending language preparatory programmes is
1144 important for international students before they pursue advanced degrees in the United States.
1145 By academic difficulty he does not only mean and include language use problems but others
1146 such as understanding the content itself and dealing with exams and assignments. This means
1147 perfect performance in the university as far as use of the language is concerned involves
1148 successful fulfillment of a variety of tasks that one has to accomplish in his or her academic
1149 life such as understanding lectures, text books and exam questions, on the one hand, and
1150 producing language in giving presentations, writing projects, and answering exam questions
1151 on the other.

1152

1153 In various surveys, a lot of students were reported to have problems with the use of English
1154 for academic purposes; English language proficiency was chosen to be the most serious
1155 barrier for most of the international students. For example, Spaulding & Flack (1976) cited
1156 from Sharma's study on foreign students attending North Carolina; among the problems with
1157 English for academic purposes, "giving oral reports", "participating in class discussions",

1158 “preparing written reports”, “taking notes in class”, and “understanding lectures” were the
1159 most significant (p.47).

1160 Ali (1991), using questionnaires and interviews with Malaysian and Indonesian students in an
1161 American university, also found that “participation in whole class activities”, “writing
1162 academic English for term papers and examinations”, and “reading large quantities of reading
1163 assignments” were among the most serious problems of the students in their academic life
1164 along with the other problems that the students faced abroad.

1165 In general, foreign students had a severe problem in using English for academic purposes. As
1166 claimed by a research, such a problem was more apparent among the arts and humanities
1167 students due to a lack of EAP instruction. Angelova (1998) stated that the international
1168 students studying in humanities had the most serious problem in academic writing compared
1169 to the students of science and business communications. Angelova found out that for the
1170 students of science and business communication faculties, the conventional disciplinary
1171 discourses were relatively well defined because these students had been forced to attend
1172 remedial classes to improve their writing skills because of their lack of proficiency in
1173 academic writing. Unlike these students, students in the faculties of arts and humanities faced
1174 more problems with writing complicated genres because of the lack of intensive writing
1175 courses and as a result less preparation.

1176

1177 Some researches took a further step into understanding the academic problem of students
1178 with English and tried to identify the language skills which were lacking. Hull (1978) stated
1179 that Asian students compared to the other international students, had lower performance in
1180 the following areas: “writing papers, reading speed, reading comprehension, speaking in
1181 class, understanding discussion, and understanding lectures.” (p. 60) According to this

1182 research, among the four components of English language, reading, writing, speaking and
1183 listening, writing was reported to be the most challenging component.

1184 Angelova (1998) concluded that the difficulties faced by international students in academic
1185 writing were due to various pitfalls. According to this study, academic writing was a very
1186 difficult process in which various skills were required to be successful: grammar and
1187 formatting, knowledge of technical vocabulary, critical thinking ability, mastery of the
1188 American rhetorical style, understanding of text structure and organization, and mastery of
1189 the conventions of a discipline. These areas were great hurdles for foreign students.

1190 Dolan (1997) also reported that many international students do not have the courage to
1191 participate in classroom discussions. According to him, the low language proficiency of the
1192 students leads to their fear of participating in the class discussions when speaking in English.
1193 On the other hand, because of limited listening skills, their understanding of the classroom
1194 discussion is affected. As a result, they might not demonstrate a good performance in the
1195 classroom.

1196 Phongsuwan (1997), trying to figure out the problems of Thai students in an Eastern
1197 American university, also found that besides difficulties with the new social life, customs,
1198 cultures, and learning methodology, the students reported English language problems with
1199 pronunciation, inadequate vocabulary, low reading and writing speed ,and native speaker
1200 speaking rate.

1201 Also, Isvet Amri Novera (2004) conducted a research on Indonesian postgraduate students
1202 studying in Australia. In this research the students' academic, social and cultural experiences
1203 were examined. The study confirmed the results of many others (for example, Robertson, et
1204 al., 2000: Li, et al., 2002: Bayley, et al., 2002) in finding that language difficulties were a
1205 significant hurdle for learning by Indonesian students, and a major factor in their cultural and

1206 educational adjustments. In Isevat's research 23 out of 25 of the participants were reported to
1207 have faced at least some English language problems in an academic setting. Among the
1208 problems, writing essays and making oral presentations were the most frequently mentioned
1209 ones. As the researcher mentioned, it was almost impossible for Indonesians students not to
1210 make grammatical mistakes. Such a problem leads to difficulties with English in academic
1211 settings.

1212 Cummins (1984, in Borland and Pearce, 2002: p.109), on the other hand, noted that it took
1213 longer for language learners to become competent in the academic context. The research
1214 showed that some of the students had speaking problems, too. The problem was due to
1215 insufficient practice in conducting class presentations and their unfamiliarity with the topics
1216 of discussions. The above problems caused the Indonesian students of his study to be inactive
1217 and the local students to dominate the classroom. In addition, some of the participants
1218 complained about their reading comprehension and writing abilities. They were not very
1219 competent writers and readers, since they did not have sufficient practice in their pre-
1220 university setting in their own country.

1221

1222 **2.3.1 Summary**

1223 In this part of the literature review, the researcher presents some studies that investigated the
1224 academic problems of international students and difficulties they had with using English in
1225 various areas. Some studies had also discussed the skills that were lacking in the international
1226 students' English language proficiency which contributed to their problems.

1227

1228

1229 **2.4 The Michigan International Students Problem Inventory (MISPI)**

1230 A large number of dissertations have used the Michigan International Students Problem
1231 Inventory (MISPI) as their measuring instrument. The MISPI consists of several problem
1232 areas which include 132 items: The problem areas include:

- 1233 • admission-selection,
- 1234 • orientation service,
- 1235 • social-personal,
- 1236 • living-dining,
- 1237 • health service,
- 1238 • religious service,
- 1239 • student activity,
- 1240 • academic record,
- 1241 • English language,
- 1242 • financial aid,
- 1243 • and placement service.

1244 Porter, as cited in Breuder (1972), mentions that this questionnaire has been developed to
1245 help international students highlight their problems, and this study shows the differences in
1246 answers, which might be related to different sub-groups of International students. Along with
1247 the mentioned instrument, researchers have considered some other factors such as age,
1248 gender, nationality, academic status (that is being an undergraduate or a graduate student),
1249 marital status, length of study/stay in America, and field of study.

1250

1251 A number of Asian researchers from South East Asia and the Middle East have used this
1252 questionnaire to study the Asian students' problems in American universities. Poorshaghghi
1253 (1993) conducted a survey in a college to come up with the various demographic variables
1254 which could influence the students-perceived problems. According to Poorshaghghi's study,
1255 "English language" was the most frequently mentioned problem by students.

1256 Shabeeb (1997) also used the MISPI instrument and conducted the survey among Saudi and
1257 Arabian Gulf students from six colleges and universities in the East of the United States. The
1258 aim of the survey was to identify and study adjustment problems and concerns of these
1259 students while studying at colleges in eastern Washington. Shabeeb, like many other
1260 researchers used the MISPI (Porter, 1966). The questionnaire was mailed to 150 Arab
1261 students in the fall of 1995. In total, 103 of the questionnaires were investigated, and different
1262 factors such as gender, marital status, age, scholarship status, level of study, and major fields
1263 were evaluated. Like the other studies, the results showed that "English language" was the
1264 most problematic area for these students. Female students reported more problems in the area
1265 of academic records, which means results they got from different examinations in the subjects
1266 of their areas of study. Male students, on the other hand, faced more problems with English
1267 language than female students did. There were some other problems that the students faced as
1268 well, like social-personal, living-dining, academic services, and financial aid. The most
1269 noticeable fact is that "English language" was ranked as problem number one!

1270 Like Shabeeb, Xia (1992) chose students from eight different Asian countries to find out the
1271 problematic areas of difficulty among this group. Like the other studies, he realized that the
1272 "English language" was the biggest problem area. It is worth mentioning that Xia's research
1273 showed that there were differences among the participants from different countries. For
1274 example, Korean and Taiwanese students had the biggest problems with English language
1275 compared to the other students. On the other hand, Indian students had the fewest difficulties

1276 in the area of “English language” use in the academic setting probably because of the
1277 language use background (English was the language of instruction in their schools).

1278 In another study, Payind (1979) surveyed the problems of Iranian and Afghan students at nine
1279 universities in the United States. The researcher conducted the survey with the use of
1280 questionnaires and individual interviews. The questionnaires were mailed to the students and
1281 later some students were interviewed. The students answered to the Likert-scale
1282 questionnaires to evaluate and analyze the degree of the eight areas of difficulty. They
1283 English language was reported to be the most serious problem. The students complained
1284 about the lack of English language proficiency. The areas of concern were: the use of English
1285 for academic work, answering exam questions, and expressing thoughts in English.

1286 And finally, Mahdavi-Harsini (1981) conducted a research among Iranians, Malaysians,
1287 Nigerians, Saudi Arabians and Taiwanese. The research was done with the help of the MISPI
1288 questionnaire. Conducting the research showed that among the above international students,
1289 “living-dining”, “English language” and “financial aid” were the most highlighted problem
1290 areas. Unlike many other researches, the “English language” problem was the second area of
1291 difficulty for students: “Social-Personal” problems were ranked the first. Saudi Arabian and
1292 Taiwanese students stated that “English language” problem was the most serious problem for
1293 them, though.

1294 One study, however, included international students from a variety of countries; Galloway &
1295 Jenkins (2005) sent questionnaires to 417 foreign students in California and Texas 215 of
1296 which were completed and returned. The research aimed to do a comparison between the
1297 international students and administrative perceptions at two private, religiously affiliated
1298 universities. The MISPI was used as the instrument for conducting the research. As a result,
1299 three of the areas were reported as the major problematic ones: financial aid, placement

1300 services and the English language. Despite the fact that problems with English language
1301 along with two other areas were the obstacles, English was reported to be the most serious
1302 area of difficulty. Students had difficulties in different areas mostly because of their
1303 deficiency in the English language.

1304 Some researchers used the MISPI and included other factors; for example, Breuder (1972)
1305 surveyed some special areas causing problems for international students. He used the MISPI
1306 to do a comparison between the international students attending public junior colleges in
1307 Florida with the foreign students at a university. In his research, he considered the following
1308 factors:

1309 a) Students' use of English out of the classroom,

1310 b) Gender,

1311 c) The amount of time spent on campus,

1312 d) School environment (rural or urban),

1313 e) Size of international student body (fewer or more than fifty students in one college).

1314 The study showed that having problems with financial aid along with the difficulty with
1315 English language as being the most serious problem areas.

1316

1317

1318

1319

1320 There were researches that included interviews as well. Moshfegh (1989) did a study on
1321 Iranian students' problems in the U.S. universities; Individual interviews were conducted
1322 among the Iranian students with the aim of finding their social, academic and personal
1323 problems. The questionnaire covered all the eleven problem areas of MISPI. Along with the
1324 expressed social and personal problems, some language problems were expressed, too. As far
1325 as academic problems were concerned, none of the students reported a serious problem,
1326 though. Some of the students mentioned that they had difficulties with "speaking in the
1327 class", "competing with American students", "insufficient time to do school projects",
1328 "taking notes in the class", "writing reports", and "typing papers". According to Moshfegh,
1329 interviewing the students was much more beneficial than mailing them the questionnaire.
1330 According to her, there were four advantages in conducting the interview which were the
1331 following:

- 1332 a) Mailing the questionnaire mostly results in ignoring it and not getting the response;
- 1333 b) while the students answer the questionnaire in the interview session, the interviewer can
1334 process and proceed conveniently because the respondents are available for clarifications and
1335 the researcher does not have to wait to see if he or she would get responses or not;
- 1336 c) the interviewer can ask follow-up questions during the interview to make sure of his/her
1337 understanding of the responses;
- 1338 d) it is much cheaper because they do not have to pay the mailing costs.

1339 Ellis (1978) accomplished a research like what Moshfegh did. Like her, Ellis used
1340 constructed interviews among some randomly selected international students from different
1341 countries except Canada and European countries. The researcher did not mail the
1342 questionnaires to the students but organized individual interviews to get detailed answers.

1343 The survey covered the problem areas as mentioned in the MISPI along with some other
1344 academic issues such as teaching methods, applicability of the education to the home country,
1345 quality of academic programmes, availability of desired courses, department advisors, and
1346 students' experience in classrooms. In order to categorize the English language problem area
1347 into detailed ones, the researcher developed detailed questions and got the following results.
1348 Almost most of the students had problems with:

1349 a) reading rate: they had to spend more time studying than the others,

1350 b) conducting oral presentations in the classroom,

1351 c) translating the English texts to their mother tongue language for better understanding, and

1352 d) understanding colloquial English.

1353 The survey proved that among all the above problematic areas, "Speaking English" was the
1354 most problematic one compared to "writing problems". As a matter of fact, speaking
1355 problems could lead to their failures in the academic and social aspects of their student lives.
1356 According to Ellis, there was a "vicious cycle" where students could not integrate with the
1357 others; the students were afraid of being humiliated because of their insufficient command of
1358 the English language. The mentioned problem could lead to their frustration and they could
1359 not improve their speaking ability.

1360

1361 **2.4.1 Summary**

1362 This section reviewed the studies which had used the MISPI as the main means of data
1363 collection to identify the problems of the international students. In most of the researches

1364 conducted by the use of MISPI, “English language” was often present among the academic
1365 problems of the international students as a relatively serious problem.

1366

1367 **2.5 The Adjustment Problems Faced by International Students**

1368 A lot of studies have been carried out to discover the adjustment problems of the students. In
1369 these kinds of studies, a lot of factors have been surveyed among which there were language
1370 issues. These researches have shown language barrier along with other barriers that the
1371 international students from different parts of the world face and have to adjust to.

1372 Some studies used questionnaires to investigate the adjustment problems of the international
1373 students from different parts of the world in American universities. Yeung (1980) in a study
1374 explored the adjustment problems of international students at the North Texas University in
1375 America. This study was conducted to clarify the special adjustment problems the
1376 international students faced upon arrival at a foreign university. The students had anticipated
1377 some specific adjustment problems, but there turned out to be different upon arrival. 67
1378 participants took part in the survey and the problems were categorized into seven categories:

1379 a) Communication and language,

1380 b) international student advising,

1381 c) academic,

1382 d) psychological-personal,

1383 e) financial,

1384 f) health, and

1385 g) food.

1386 The most serious problems were understanding American idioms and slang, class
1387 participation, adjusting to different accents, expressing ideas and emotions in English, writing
1388 project papers, developing English vocabulary, getting scholarship from the university,
1389 making friends in America, and adjustment with food. As far as language problems were
1390 concerned, the researcher suggested remedial English classes as a solution to their problems.

1391 In another study, Junius (1987) surveyed international students' adjustment problems at the
1392 Northern Arizona University. A sample of 121 international students were studied to identify
1393 the different areas of difficulty like: personal services, admission, orientation, academic
1394 process, social, living-dining, English Language, students' activities, health services,
1395 financial aid, religious services, placement and international student services. The study
1396 showed that the students' greatest problems were living-dining, English language and health
1397 services.

1398 In the meantime, some others incorporated interviews in their studies to further validate their
1399 findings. Kono (1999) in a qualitative research surveyed adjustment experiences of students
1400 and the strategies the students used to cope with those barriers in America. The researcher
1401 conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 foreign students from 13 countries. Each
1402 participant had to answer six open-ended questions. Audio-recording was used to record their
1403 speech. Using Spradley's (1979 and 1980) ethnographic analysis procedure, Kono realized
1404 that language, academic and social factors were the most serious barriers. The major
1405 suggestions of this study were remedial English language classes and counseling facilities.

1406 The other study which used a qualitative approach was Nezahat Guluca's (1993). Nezahat
1407 Guclu in a study examined the adjustment problems of international graduate students
1408 attending the University of Pittsburgh and coping strategies and sources of help utilized by

1409 these students in their efforts to deal with the problems they faced. The survey was
1410 conducted among five hundred international students from 90 different countries. The
1411 researcher used a questionnaire plus three additional open ended questions to accomplish the
1412 research. Among the researcher's findings, having problem with English language along
1413 with financial problems were the first problems reported by international students. The
1414 research showed that those students who had obtained high English proficiency scores had
1415 fewer problems than those who had low English proficiency scores.

1416

1417 The issue of the relationship between English language proficiency and the adjustment
1418 problems was studied in further detail in a number of other studies. Lin, Jun-Chih Gisela and
1419 Yi, Jenny K (1997) did a research on the Asian international students' adjustment issues. As
1420 they reported in their findings, international students face different problems like racial
1421 discrimination, language problems, accommodation difficulties, dietary restrictions, financial
1422 stress, misunderstanding, and loneliness. The study showed that most of these problems were
1423 due to their low level of English language proficiency. These students had academic
1424 problems because of the language barrier. As a result, these academic problems were
1425 correlated with adjustment. Students reported various problems which had a great effect on
1426 their adjustment issues. They had difficulty with understanding the accent of the lecturers,
1427 which resulted in not understanding the lecture and not being able to participate in the class
1428 discussions. In addition, students were not able to comprehend the test constructions.
1429 Students had to allocate more time to reading the text books because of their low level of
1430 English language proficiency. Moreover, they could not answer the exam questions
1431 successfully due to the lack of vocabulary. Many Asian international students confronted this
1432 major problem which led to experiencing a great deal of stress in the United States (ibid).

1433 Poyrazli et al. (2004) also reported that low level of English language proficiency along with
1434 lack of social support led to a lower level of adjustment among the international students.
1435 And finally, a study investigated the relationship between the language competency and the
1436 students' GPAs. Poyrazli et al (2001) surveyed the adjustment issues of Turkish college
1437 students studying in the United States using ISAS (Instrument of Student Adjustment Strain).
1438 The survey was conducted among 79 Turkish college students in the age range of 19 to 34
1439 years. The results showed that those who were competent English language users had better
1440 Grade Point Averages. Moreover, those young students who had better reading and writing
1441 English language skills could adjust better than the others. Generally, the research showed a
1442 strong relationship between the age factor and proficiency in reading and writing English
1443 language with adjustment level in studying at an overseas university.

1444 However, a high proficiency test score did not necessarily guarantee students' perfect
1445 adjustment and performance in the foreign country. Helen Huntley, (1993) investigated
1446 Adult International Students Problems of Adjustment in American Universities. According to
1447 this study, the first barrier the students encountered was the English language problem.
1448 Although the students had passed TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) they were
1449 not yet competent users of English language. They needed English language competency for
1450 formal and conversational situations. One third of the participants in this survey had rated
1451 their English language competency inadequate for carrying out their studies when entering
1452 the university. Therefore, many of these students had to register for specific English classes
1453 to enhance the necessary knowledge of English language. Consequently, they had to spend
1454 more time and money on English learning instead of starting their academic studies at the
1455 university.

1456

1457 Huntley, quoted from her participants stating that understanding lectures, taking notes,
1458 answering questions, and writing project reports were the most serious problems the Asian
1459 students faced:

1460 “Teachers say, “Why are Chinese quiet?” Understanding
1461 problems causes silence and vocabulary causes difficulties. My
1462 skill of writing is quite poor. Sometimes I do poorly in exams
1463 because my English isn’t enough. I express things in my own
1464 way and the Profs don’t get it”

1465

1466 Moreover, the students due to the study backgrounds in their own countries were not used to
1467 giving oral presentations in the class which led to them having a serious problem in giving
1468 oral presentations in the class and participating in group discussions:

1469 “Usually, I don’t participate. It is cultural that I don’t do it.
1470 I’m not used to it. Other Chinese students are active when the
1471 Prof asks the class to list facts, but when there should be
1472 discussion and defending points, Canadians take over. We are
1473 not taught to be argumentative. We are taught to listen”.

1474

1475 There were also some students who might have been good at reading and writing, but due to
1476 their poor knowledge of listening and speaking they could not communicate with their peers
1477 at university. They usually did not understand the native speakers’ accents, idioms and jokes:

1478

1479 “We learn Standard English in China, but we know little
1480 idiom. People here speak with southern accent, talk in
1481 idioms, so that we hardly understand. I have trouble
1482 understanding American jokes. When they laugh, I don’t
1483 know what they are laughing about, which makes me feel
1484 bad”.

1485

1486

1487 **2.5.1 Summary**

1488 In this section, the researcher reviewed the studies which had investigated the adjustment
1489 problems of the international students in English speaking countries. As shown above,
1490 English language problems here too are among the serious problems that the students have to
1491 face in order to be able to adjust themselves to the new academic setting.

1492

1493 **2.6 Conclusion**

1494 This chapter surveyed the related literature concerning needs analysis and the studies which
1495 have so far investigated various problems of the international students with regard to different
1496 aspects of education in an English speaking academic setting. Although, as we observe, a lot
1497 has been done in this area of research, this study still would add to the current literature due
1498 to two major reasons. First, in the literature of needs analysis no studies have focused on the
1499 ESP problems of the users of the second or foreign language. Secondly, there are no other
1500 studies which have investigated the ESP problems of the international students in Malaysia.
1501 Having these two deficiencies in mind, the researcher conducted this study. The methodology
1502 and data analysis results will be presented in the following chapters.

1503

1504

1505

1506

1507

1508

1509

1510