

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the research site, respondents and methods used in collecting data for this research. The aim of this research was to discover the language needs of police investigating officers in a crime department especially in an urban area. A qualitative research adopting the needs analysis procedure appears to be more appropriate for describing the social context of this research which examines English language Needs of Criminal Investigation officers. Creswell (1994, p. 145) defines qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of information and conducted in a natural setting As this study is qualitative in nature, there will be no quantitative measure or statistical tools utilised.

It was decided that the survey method is the most practical method to gather the data required in order to address the research questions due to the limited access to the respondents. A questionnaire and interview schedule were designed as the survey instruments. The questionnaire and interview questions are listed in the Appendix 1 and 3 respectively.

3.1 Research Site

The chosen site is the Petaling Jaya District Police Headquarters in Petaling Jaya. This Police Headquarters at one time was a part of the Kuala Lumpur District Police Station. In 1968, it was officially declared a district police headquarters. This office is divided into two divisions; they are the IPD Petaling Jaya and IPD Subang Jaya. There are eight departments in this station and one of it is the Criminal Investigation Department led by an Officer in charge of Police Department (OCPD). Under this department there are 11 divisions from D1 to D11. Each division is headed by a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP).

For this research 10 investigating officers from Division 9 that is the Serious Crime division were chosen as the respondents. Only ten could be of assistance though more officers were initially included due to their time constraint and work challenges.

3.2 The Respondents

The research began with the identification of the target group. The respondents of this research are investigating officers at a Criminal Department in the District Police Station of Petaling Jaya in the state of Selangor. These officers are in the frontline when dealing with a reported crime. They have to take down reports, gather evidence, interrogate the suspects and meet the victims. The initial respondents of this study were a group of 10

investigating officers from Petaling Jaya Police Headquarters and two senior officers attached to Bukit Aman.

The respondents finally selected for the administration of the questionnaire were the group of 10 investigating officers from Petaling Jaya District Police headquarters, Crime Department. They were from different ethnic backgrounds and consisted of nine males and one female. The age of the respondents ranged from 25 to 45 years old. Seven of them hold the rank of Inspectors, two are Assistant Superintendents and one is a Deputy Superintendent. All of them presently hold the position of criminal investigation officers or better known in the police force as IOs. All the respondents completed their primary and secondary education in the Malay medium. Six of them are degree holders in various fields, while one of the respondents holds a master's degree in Business Administration. The other three are SPM and STPM holders who were promoted as investigation officers with the rank of inspectors through rank and file.

The two senior Police officers who participated in the pilot questionnaire and gave valuable input in the interview are presently attached to the Anti - Money Laundering and Narcotics Department respectively. Both of these senior officers had years of experience as investigating officers and provided vital information about the need for the English Language for the police force.

3.3 Sampling of the Respondents

The respondents were selected by the Chief of the Criminal Department of Petaling Jaya Police District. The selection was entrusted to the person of higher authority because he would be in a better position to select suitable respondents. The selection was determined on the basis of their regular daily engagement in communicative activities. The respondents' main task involved handling the investigation of various crimes.

Despite the limited number of respondents who participated due to the nature of their job, it is hoped that they are representative of the overall profile of the investigating officers in a criminal investigating department.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The research design was divided into two stages. The first stage involved gaining entry into the organization. The second stage involved gaining the trust and acceptance of the informants. In order to carry out the needs analysis, access was first sought. The researcher wrote formally to the Chief Police Officer of Selangor State to request permission to conduct a study to determine the language needs of investigating officers at the Crime Department.

The primary objectives were stated with assurance of no intrusion into confidential matters, transparency of research work and with full cooperation of the force. The researcher also stated her background and why she had chosen the police force.

The instruments used in this study were a questionnaire followed by an interview with two senior officers. A questionnaire was first administered in the pilot study and based on the first responses was modified and refined. The modified questionnaire was given to the ten officers to elicit responses. Later, an interview was held with the two senior officers separately to gauge their responses to the need for English among the police personnel.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Though it was important to ensure that all the respondents attempt the questionnaire at the same time, in this study it was not possible due to the erratic and busy schedule of the respondents. The presence of the researcher is an important factor to ensure complete comprehension of the questions in case of a need for clarification. But due to the nature of the respondents' job, it was quite impossible to achieve a consensus in deciding on one common time. Thus the researcher was not present while the respondents answered the questions and the responsibility of administering it was given to the Chief of the Criminal Department. The researcher was present when the pilot questionnaire was administered to the two senior officers from their respective departments.

The researcher also briefed the Chief of the Criminal Department on the seating arrangements of the respondents while attempting the questions. It must be noted that in this case, though the officers sat next to one another, the space was wide enough for them not to discuss the questions. Information obtained through discussion could be considered biased, as the answers could be the result of influence from other respondents.

As the qualification and proficiency levels differ from one respondent to another, the questions were designed in a simple and straightforward manner to avoid confusion and difficulties in answering the questions. It was divided into Section A, B, C and D for easier reference. Section A comprised 8 questions that deal with the personal details of the respondents. Section B consisted 8 questions on the use of English among the investigation officers. Section C looked at the need and importance of English for the investigation officers. It also touched on the skills needed by the officers. This part comprised 10 questions and contained the bulk of information needed for this study. The last section looked at their perception towards English as well as towards an ESP programme in the police training in the future. This section consisted of only three open-ended questions.

Both open and close-ended questions were used in the questionnaire though mainly open-ended questions were asked. The researcher felt that close-ended questions would pose a disadvantage because of its inability to allow a freer expression of opinions. The routine of mechanically choosing from the options given can hinder the respondents from expressing their views truthfully. To protect the privacy of the respondents and in an

attempt to ensure that they would respond truthfully, they were not required to disclose their names.

A Likert Scale (1932) asking respondents to specify their level of agreement to each of a list of statements was used in the questionnaire. Likert Scale items are commonly used to investigate how respondents rate a series of statements by having them circled or otherwise mark the numbered categories. Likert Scale items are beneficial for gauging the respondents' feelings, opinions and attitudes. In this study, five-scale items were used.

The revised questionnaire was administered by the Head of Criminal department, Petaling Jaya District. But due to time constraints and various work commitments, all ten respondents did not sit for the questionnaire at the same time. Though it was administered on the same day, three sessions were needed to complete all ten questionnaires.

3.4.2 The Pilot Questionnaire

Prior to the actual questionnaire distribution, a pilot study was conducted to determine whether it was comprehensible and could be used as a tool to gather information. This is important to ensure that research is plausible and it is capable of providing accurate information to the research. It was administered to the two senior officers prior to the interview. Based on the questionnaire administered to the two senior officers, minor

changes were made to the questionnaire. Boxes were added to questions 3, 4 and 5 and respondents were instructed to tick the answers. This was the only amendment and the questionnaire was administered to the investigating officers.

3.4.3 Interview

The interview is another method used by the researcher to gather information and data pertaining to the study. In contrast to the questionnaire that can be administered simultaneously, the interview is more individualized and personalized, thus cannot be carried out for all respondents at one time. Despite the fact that interviews consume more time than the questionnaire, this method is sometimes considered better than the questionnaire as the information obtained is specific and concise.

Another crucial reason why the researcher chose interview as a tool was because the interview method allowed the researcher to ask more questions should they require clarification. It allowed in-depth probing, elaboration and further clarification. .

To execute the interview session, the researcher needed to ensure that the interviewee is an expert in the subject matter. Therefore, before setting an appointment with anyone, it is crucial that researcher finds out about their background and expertise in the connected area and only after such conviction that the interviewee is of credible and reliable source,

should the researcher proceed with the interview. In this study, the researcher decided on the interviewees after checking their expertise in crime investigation.

The aim of conducting the interview was to obtain information from the perspective of a senior police officer who has had vast experience as an investigating officer before holding his present portfolio. Questions posed to the interviewees were as vital as information obtained from the investigating officers themselves. This is because the interviewees were able to provide information that is not only based on assumptions but from experience.

Prior to the interviews, appointments were made to ensure that the senior officers were available for the interview. A set of questions (see Appendix) were prepared for the senior officers but it was done separately due to their time availability.

The interview sessions were conducted with two senior officers currently attached to Bukit Aman. The interviews were conducted in their respective offices. Both of them have vast experience as investigating officers. They were interviewed to obtain a more experienced insight regarding the need of English among the investigating officers.

It was hoped that their responses would be able to provide information on whether the use of English is vital for the officers and should be incorporated in their training syllabus. This was also done as a way to validate and reinforce information from the

questionnaire. The possibility for respondents to provide information that was purely based on their assumption and interest rather than the actual reality is always looming large. In addition, the interviewees having had the experience as investigating officers would be able to contribute information that is not biased.

The interviews were taped, transcribed and analysed based on content and language. This quantitative data is instrumental to the analysis. It is hoped that an interview will be able to give an in - depth information that could not be obtained via the questionnaire. Due to the flexibility of an interview the questions can be modified accordingly to their responses.

3.5 Conclusion

Though the research data was gathered from few respondents, it is hoped that the data obtained will provide an insight into the needs of English for investigating officers who are dealing with international criminal activities, foreigners, media and the public. It is hoped that the information gathered will reveal the extent of the need for English in the police force.