

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This concluding chapter is divided into a few sections namely the introduction, summary of the findings, discussion, implications, limitations, recommendations, and conclusion. It is aimed at providing a clearer idea pertaining to the English Language needs of investigation officers in a Criminal Investigation Department. This chapter mainly discusses the findings and highlights the implications and makes recommendations to improve the communicative competency of the investigation officers. It also identifies the limitations of the study like the delay involved in gathering the data and procedures employed that could have affected the information gathered. This chapter summarizes all the data obtained and explains in detail its relation to this study's research questions.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Findings**

There were three research questions in this study that the researcher hopes have been answered to a certain extent. The questions are:

- i. What language skills are most essential to the investigating officers in a Criminal Investigation Department in carrying out their investigation thoroughly?

- ii. What kind of problems do they face in using English to carry out their duties?
- iii. What are some of the strategies they wish to employ to incorporate the language among the police personnel?

The first question raised was what are the skills needed by the investigation officers. From the information elicited through the questionnaire and interview sessions, speaking is the most important skill for an investigating officer in carrying out an investigation and solving a case. These officers are considered the front liners in a police station. They deal with the complainants, witnesses, suspects, victims and the public in solving a case. From the time a complaint is lodged until the case goes to trial, the investigation officer has to communicate with various groups of people and organizations such as the registry department, Immigration Department, Chemist Department, Cyber Security Department, banks, hospitals, embassies besides getting assistance from overseas counterparts such as Interpol and Aseanpol. In all these dealings the need to be able to communicate efficiently is a primary concern.

Besides speaking, all the respondents and informants agreed that listening is closely integrated with speaking and without listening, effective communication cannot take place. As an investigation officer, the need to listen to various people to assist in an investigation is crucial in solving the case.

80% of the respondents felt that reading is necessary and important for an investigation officer. They need to read reports, documents, statements pertaining to acts, previous cases, statutes and various other related reading materials to assist them in a case and to use as evidence in court. As investigation officers, it is important to be abreast with current issues pertaining to law, criminology and other details of investigation. These officers need to be well informed and well - read while conducting an investigation because they are normally called to court to testify in a trial. Most materials are in English and the need to read and understand the information is important.

The study showed that preparing reports, investigation papers and taking down statements by investigation officers are still mainly done in Bahasa Malaysia except in cases dealing with foreigners. So writing in English is seldom put into practice in preparing legal and formal documents pertaining to a case. According to both the senior officers interviewed, these reports and investigation papers can be prepared in English as well. The senior police officers in fact stated their opinion that in future it would be a good move to have reports in English which can later assist in international cases when they have to deal with INTERPOL and ASEANPOL.

The next question addresses the problems they face in using the language in carrying out their duties. The results showed that they are more comfortable in Bahasa Malaysia and they lack the confidence in using English especially in speaking. The results also showed they prefer to prepare the reports and investigation papers in Bahasa Malaysia. It cannot be denied that all the four skills are integrated and they need to be master of all the skills to be able to perform well in their duties. Good communication skills would enhance

their career development, boost their confidence and might assist in them carrying out an investigation faster and more efficiently. Though they had learned the language for eleven years, they lack the mastery of the language and managed to complete their training without further improvements in this language.

Overall they feel the language has not been given much importance in the force but they agree that recently the need to communicate well in the language has become a need. The mother tongue interference and the lack of proper guidance to acquire the language have made them lack the confidence to use the language. Besides, they fear being ridiculed when English language errors are made.

The third research question looks at the strategies they have employed to incorporate the language among the police personnel. Due to their dealings with the foreign media, Malaysians from different ethnic groups, migrants, foreigners and expatriates, the need to master the language has become a pressing matter.

The study also revealed that all the respondents received their education in the Bahasa Malaysia medium as they are in the age range of twenty five to forty five. Most of them are comfortable in their mother tongue outside police duties and revert mostly to Bahasa Malaysia at work.

Though 80% of them do not possess a mastery of English, most of them are in the range of satisfactory to good. They do not feel comfortable using English due to insufficient exposure to English and lack of practice. These two factors account for the difficulties faced.

Though Bahasa Malaysia is used extensively, the investigation officers acceded to the fact that the need to be bilingual and proficient in English is important and a plus point for them. Most of the senior officers use English frequently and the results have yielded the fact that they encourage the officers to use the language when reporting to them or briefing them about a case or investigation. These senior officers acknowledge that English is essential because without the rudiments of the language, they will not be able to function effectively and efficiently.

According to the officers, recently a few steps have been taken by the police force to encourage the officers to be bilingual. Every officer will be chosen at random to speak in English on any topic pertaining to the force, cases or law before the morning meetings which are held daily. Though this step is seen as a burden by many officers, to others it is a step forward to accept globalization and changes in the force. In terms of promotion and career improvement, officers have to sit for a government exam at the end of a course (PTK) which includes a public speaking slot. The only setback is that this involves officers and not police personnel of rank and file. Though investigation officers are involved, the researcher hopes that in the future, police personnel like constables, sergeants and corporals will be included too.

The senior officers stated that there are courses offered at the Royal Police College where the police trainees undergo training. These courses have a short duration and are not exam based. The syllabus is not specific to police work but is more focused on English. The senior officers agreed that an ESP course would be more suitable for the trainees. They further added that a comprehensive syllabus should be designed to satisfy the need for the language. They believe further courses, workshops and trainings by ESP experts and English lecturers should be held in the police force and made compulsory for the officers regardless of their ranks.

Based on the results, it is clear that the officers need to communicate with the public, superiors and various other parties involved. Without effective communication, it is impossible for them to understand orders from their superiors, enquiries from the public and also in their dealings with suspects and witnesses. Although they can communicate in Bahasa Malaysia, they cannot avoid dealing with foreign counterparts like the Interpol, foreign media and foreigners.

## **5.2 Discussion on the Findings**

The findings of the data can be further discussed in accordance to three areas which are:

- i. Perception towards English
- ii. Usage of English in their working environment
- iii. The need of English in their profession

### **5.2.1 Perception towards English**

The study revealed that all the respondents agreed that English is important and is definitely needed to carry out an investigation efficiently. They conceded to the fact that mastering English cannot be sidelined anymore and needed to be given emphasis. They agreed that efforts are taken by the Royal Malaysian Police in collaboration with the Home Affairs Ministry in organizing various English programmes, courses, seminars and workshops to highlight the importance of English and the need to be bilingual. At the same time, factors such as lack of confidence in speaking English, interference of mother tongue and lack of emphasis on English have restricted their acquisition of the language and allowed them to be lackadaisical towards it.

Information obtained via interviews with the senior officers yielded a slightly different perception. Both officers affirmed that emphasis to be proficient in English is given in the police force in line with globalization. They also said concerted efforts are being taken to incorporate intensive English programmes in the training. They further added that they strongly believe every police officer has to be proficient in English and motivate oneself to master the language to be able to communicate effectively.

### **5.2.2 The Use of English in the Working Environment**

Next, the use of English among investigation officers is satisfactory in their working environment. The officers do use English to speak with the complainants, witnesses, suspects and the public pertaining to a case. They also used English to communicate with their colleagues and brief their superiors regarding a case. They also deal with various agencies in connection to a case besides cooperating with the Attorney General Chambers in prosecuting an offender or suspect. In all these dealings, it is impossible not to use English as a tool of communication. 70% of the respondents consider their level of proficiency as satisfactory. Though it is promising, the officers have to make a marked effort to upgrade and improve their level of proficiency to communicate effectively.

The results also showed that the officers are more comfortable with using Bahasa Malaysia in their working environment and revert to their mother tongue outside their working environment. This could be a factor why there is a barrier in mastering English. The senior officers interviewed also agreed that most of the investigation officers are able to speak the language but they lack the fluency and accuracy in speaking English. According to them, English is used daily and is a necessity in day to day work especially in cases dealing with foreigners who are able to speak English. Further they added, the investigation officers have to accept globalization and master English in the process.



### **5.2.3 The Need for English in their Profession.**

The investigation officers agreed that the need for English is vital for the police to communicate clearly and effectively with the public to avoid misconceptions, to gather evidence, to record statements and to provide valuable information regarding a case. The respondents conceded to the fact there is need for them to be proficient in English and the need cannot be viewed lightly. They added that an ESP course should be incorporated in the syllabus at the training session to meet the language needs of the police personnel. They affirmed that being proficient would enable them to communicate effectively and would enhance the opportunities for career advancement.

Both the senior officers felt that the need for English for every police officer cannot be sidelined any longer. English should be a priority for future training of police officers and English courses/programmes should be held constantly for officers who have completed their training. The present English programmes should be upgraded and work specified English courses for the officers should be prepared by the authorities in charge.

### **5.3 Implications**

When the study was conducted, it was known that it would lead to some implications. These implications need to be comprehended in order to ensure that necessary steps can be taken to improve further studies.

It can be concluded that the results have indicated that criminal investigation officers are in need of better proficiency in English. The officers are able to converse in English at a satisfactory level but they concede they have not mastered the language yet. As for now, it is undeniable that 70% of the officers are comfortable with Bahasa Malaysia but they do concede the difficulties faced because of not being proficient in English and the need to learn and master it especially when the cases involve foreigners, international agencies and groups of people who are more comfortable with English.

Another implication is the need to incorporate an ESP course in their training level where the syllabus can be planned and incorporated to ensure all trainees undergo an extensive English Course that prepares them to be able to communicate effectively and to perform their police duties well. At the moment, there are English courses at the training level for the police trainees but the syllabus is more on General English and the duration is only for two weeks. A specified English course to suit the need of police officers would be more appropriate. The course should emphasize on communicative competence through acquisition of the language skills. The need for the four skills to be incorporated into the syllabus cannot be overlooked and activities involving all the four skills need to be included into the syllabus to allow them to be able to communicate effectively and be confident in using the language besides Bahasa Malaysia.

Another implication is the attitude of the investigating officers towards mastering the language. Concerted efforts are taken by the Home Affairs Ministry and Royal Malaysian

Police in line with globalization. In fact many senior officers have adapted to the need to speak and use English with their officers. The police officers have to see their need for English in terms of necessity and make the necessary efforts to improve the skills they are weak in. In the case of investigation officers, they should understand the need to be proficient and ensure that they are able to communicate effectively, read intensively and write reports in English

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

Prior to the administration of this study, the researcher had tried to eliminate factors that could cause the results of the study to be invalid. However there were certain factors that could not be avoided.

The first limitation is in terms of the administering of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed and conducted by a senior officer, in fact the Head of the Criminal Department in Petaling Jaya. Due to constraints in terms of their nature of job and odd timing, the questionnaires were distributed without the presence of the researcher. Although the officer was briefed on the objectives as well as the interpretation of the questionnaire, some may question that the officer might not have given accurate instructions or might not have carefully attended to enquiries from the respondents.

Next the number of the respondents were drastically changed and reduced due to the difficulty in obtaining respondents to participate in the study. Some were reluctant to disclose any information, some were clearly not interested in the study conducted, some did not want to commit and some refused because of time constraint. Out of 15 respondents who agreed initially, the number dwindled to 10 respondents who took part in the questionnaire and two senior officers who agreed to be interviewed.

Due to the nature of their job which involves national security, the researcher faced various restrictions and difficulties in obtaining information pertaining to the study. This delayed the completion of the research.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

Based on the results from this study, it is highly recommended that all investigation officers be required to have a fairly good level of proficiency in the language as they deal directly with the public and need to be well-versed in the language. An English for Specific Purposes course can be incorporated into their training and they further need to attend various English courses after graduating as investigation officers. All police trainees should be exposed to language skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. These skills should be emphasized besides the importance of being bilingual in a developed country that is striving to achieve excellence.

Training should ensure that presentations, exercises, discussions, tutorials and assignments are done to allow the trainees to be confident in using English. They need to be able to speak, read and write well and comprehend the instructions from superiors and in their dealings with their colleagues and the public.

ESP instructors should use a variety of teaching methods to encourage these trainees to acquire the language skills. As mentioned earlier the trainees do not have English lessons and very few take the initiative to register for an English course on their own. Thus the Ministry of Home Affairs can consider making English as a compulsory language at the training center. It is also recommended that the ministry work together with the Royal Malaysian Police to produce a comprehensive syllabus for police trainees. The experts in the field of ESP should also be roped in to determine which areas of the English Language should be included in the syllabus. The Language Unit in the Royal Malaysian College should ensure that specified English courses for police officers are held often and officers are required to attend from time to time. Heads of Departments can identify officers who lack proficiency and encourage them to attend.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

This study has shown the importance of crime investigation officers to be proficient in English and the need to conduct a needs analysis to identify their lacks, necessities and wants before producing a syllabus suitable for the investigation officers regardless of the department.

Though this study does not involve the whole police force and its many departments but only the investigation officers in a criminal department, it is hoped that the need for English is addressed to the whole force. The researcher focused on criminal investigation officers because they are at the fore - front dealing with the cases and handling the investigation.

Due to the fact that more and more foreign individuals from English speaking countries are coming here as migrants, expatriates, tourists and vacationers, there is a greater need to be able to communicate well in English especially when they are involved in cases as the witnesses, the accused or informers.

In conclusion, the study has indicated the importance of English and the language skills needed by the investigation officers. Therefore it can be concluded that an ESP course be incorporated into the syllabus at the police training level. This will not only benefit the police force but the nation as well. English for police officers will prepare them to be more competent officers in the future.