

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Needs analysis is a procedure for discovering and outlining pertinent syllabus and instructional and administration goals in order to create valuable learning atmosphere that is absolutely related to the real life conditions of the learners. English class teachers and instructors need to know their students' needs to enable the development of suitable curriculum and more effective teaching and learning (Kaur, 2007). The notion of recommending needs analysis, which is a mode of accumulating and investigating learners' information in order to set target objectives and reasonable subject matters of a language syllabus based on the needs of the learners (Richards, 2001, p.91) is very much recommended to be carried out. Some researchers in the discipline of English for Specific Purposes agreed that the techniques and gist of second language teaching should vary due to learners' different language capacities and background to accommodate the learners' need in definite circumstances (Gatehouse, 2001; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 19). The institution and teachers must be able to indicate why the English needs of the students are paramount in order to be reasonably focused in designing the language course, where students' weaknesses can be improved and strengths can be utilized. Nunan (1998, p.5, 1996, p.24) suggested that the jump start for a syllabus outline can be an analysis of the language, information about the learner, beliefs about the learning process itself and a blend of these. Therefore, all courses offered should be based on learners' need analysis. A central question that needs to be responded is

how much time would need to be allocated to language skills, lexicon and subject knowledge acquisition. Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston (1979) wrote that some of the characteristics related with school (institution) efficiency include a better-quality percentage of study time used on the subject matter of the study. This can be done only when the needs of the learners are taken into consideration.

Needs analysis which is also termed as needs assessment plays an important function in the development of devising and implementing any language program, regardless of whether it is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or general English course. This was acknowledged by numerous intellectuals and authors (Munby, 1978; Richterich and Chancerel, 1987; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987).

Iwai *et.al* (1999, p.13) defined needs analysis as the intention that is involved in gathering information that will serve as the starting point for working out a practical course syllabus that will cater to the needs of a particular group of students. Johns pointed out that needs analysis should be the initial move in designing a course and that it grants genuineness and pertinence for all consequent course design materials (Johns, 1991 p.91). Obviously, needs analysis in an educational setting plays an important role. Richterich (1983, p.2) claimed that the notion of language needs has never been distinctly described and remains indefinite. West (1994, p.1) described broad terms of needs analysis as identifying “what learners will entail to do with the foreign language in the target circumstances, and how learners might best master the target language during the training period.”

Numerous circumstances and tasks can be aligned within the constitution of needs analysis developed by Munby (1978) in his thoughtful book entitled *Communicative Syllabus Design*. Munby recommended a '*communication needs processor (CNP)*' which has been the central part of his approach to needs analysis. His approach has been used as machinery for identifying learner's needs. The researcher will explain more on Munby's 'communicative needs processor' in Chapter Two.

Learning Needs Analysis deals on the approaches that learners engage in order to learn another language. West (1998) tried to establish how the learners desire to learn rather than what they are supposed to learn. Allwright (1991) made a difference between *needs* which refers to the plausible skills which a student sees as being essential to himself or herself, and *wants* which refers to the needs which students put a major concern in the existing or limited time, and *lacks* which refers to the disparity between the student's existing abilities and the desired proficiency. These ideas were implemented by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 54) and they concluded that learning needs analysis will notify us "what the learner needs to do in order to learn". According to them, learning needs analysis focuses more on process-oriented approach rather than a product or goal-oriented one. They added that ESP is not "an ending of a process but a strategy to language teaching which is directed by precise and apparent reasons for learning" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 19).

Jordan (1997, p. 26) quoted Bower (1980) who highlighted the significance of learning needs:

*If we accept...that a student will learn best if what he **wants** to learn, less well what he only **needs** to learn, less well still what he either wants or needs to learn, it is clearly important to leave room in a learning program for the learner's own wishes regarding both goals and processes.*

There is a need for an in-depth study which will investigate how material and non-material resources are actually gathered, organized and applied within classrooms in order to design courses that are able to meet learners' true needs. Therefore, needs analysis should be done. Needs analysis is a complicated yet fruitful procedure. It has the power to determine or generate the linguistic facets of the target situation. A needs analysis needs thorough focus, and is time consuming as a deeper research is necessary to investigate learners' background schemata, current practice and future needs which can later provide clear overview of the language needs or syllabus design. Hutchinson & Waters (1987, p.54) defined needs analysis as *target needs*, that is, what learners are required to do in the aimed situation and *learning needs*, refers to what learners are supposed to comprehend in order to perceive the objective circumstances and what learners need to do in gaining knowledge or skills. Nunan (1988, p.18) added that teachers should consider learners' individual needs which refer to their affective needs, such as their curiosities, desires, anticipations and enthusiasms. Needs analysis can be considered as an effective mechanism to recognize all the skills and knowledge the learners'

need to master, the practical and situational use of each skills or language areas in order to certify courses that supply skillful subject focus for classroom utilization. Hence, the analysis will navigate learners' focus of the workplace setting and roles that they will likely face after they complete their course.

This research looks within a polytechnic which offers a Hospitality course, in particular, to identify the proximate details of practice and experience that may account for learners' needs and benefits. A variety of ways have been proposed to classify the required needs and indeed, a number of methods were often used in combination. Berwick (1989) classified the methods as either deductive, which provide information to be used as a basis for course design, or inductive from which courses can be generalized. Schroeder (1981) suggested distribution of *questionnaires, interview, participatory observations* and *thinking aloud* as important tools to obtain the desired goals. A few researchers suggested the use of questionnaires (Al-Khatib, 2005; Boshier & Smalkowski, 2002; Jordan & Mackay, 1973; Li So-Mui & Mead, 2000; Mackey & Bosquet, 1981; Richterich & Chancerel, 1977) which would provide input of informant, a process that is “ the most common approach of conducting needs analysis study” (West, 1994), as would firstly begin with unstructured interviews(e.g. Chaudron et.al., 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Long, 2005) and then structured interviews (Fixman, 1990; Gilabert, 2005). This study requires a wide range of information which can be obtained through various methods. In order to identify needs of both students and industry, it is desirable to use more than one method. Two potentially useful methods are, in fact, considered.

The researcher combined Schroeder's, Al-Khatib's and Gilabert's methods for this research. The first is through questionnaires to generate cross-sectional data and thereby permit a more comprehensive and rigorous analysis to be carried out. The questionnaires would also offer very vital data in the targeted areas to be updated or to be retained. This research used open-ended and close-ended questionnaires, structured interviews and unstructured interviews on the personnel to gather the required data. The researcher's method was considered deductive because the result of the study can be used by the Malaysian polytechnic curriculum developers to improve the current training syllabus. This approach identifies the representative samples of the group and industry and analyzes the effects of the various factors on the achievements, needs and the expectations of both parties.

The second method proposed is through interview. Two methods of interview: structured and unstructured are chosen to gather the data. Despite the fact that such an approach tends to be time consuming, it can be extremely useful for this type of study. The implications of the findings for the individual student, institution and the education system as a whole constitute an important perspective of the research.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

A cohort group of semester five students undertaking diploma course from Politeknik Johor Bahru was chosen to be the sample of this research as they had completed their six months' internship in various hotels and resorts in Johor. This

research was carried out for the purpose of investigating the students' English language skills needed, which of the four language skills they lack and which language skills the students want to focus more on to enable them to communicate confidently during their industrial training. Most of the information for the study was obtained through questionnaire surveys. Three sets of questionnaires were prepared - for the students, the English lecturers who taught the students and the industry personnel. This research is a small scale research as it only involved one cohort group from one polytechnic. It involves both qualitative and quantitative data of information.

## **1.2 English for Hospitality students in Malaysian polytechnics**

English for Commercial Purposes is a compulsory subject that all hospitality students in Malaysian polytechnics have to study. There are five different levels of English offered from Semester 1 to Semester 6 and students have to pass at least the lower level before they can proceed to the next level. Conversely, this subject can be considered a minor subject as it does not have the same level of importance as the other core subjects. However, the students still need to complete all levels in order to fulfill their course requirements. This course has only two contact hours per week for 16 weeks throughout a semester. The syllabus contains comprehensive sub-skills, objectives and topics that are supposed to be relevant for all commercial courses. The students are assessed through quizzes, listening tests, presentations and a final written test.

The primary objective of the courses and targets is the development of human resources. The focus of the course is on students' actual achievements which bring out change in individuals. Students are expected to be able to sell themselves with their qualifications and soft skills that they learnt while at polytechnic. The Malaysian Polytechnic Division which is the governing body to prepare the entire syllabus and provide training and courses to Malaysian polytechnics works hand in hand with the industries and field experts in order to set out valuable training for the students in order to achieve its goal of realizing Polytechnic Transformation Plan (2011 Annual Report, Malaysian Polytechnic Division, pg. 38). The achievement of socio-economic objectives appears to depend mainly on the availability of a skilled and easily trainable workforce. Malaysia needs to increase the percentage of skilled workers from 23 percent to 37 percent by 2015 (2011 Annual Report, Malaysian Polytechnic Division, pg. 10). Therefore, technical and vocational teaching and training (TVET) have been carried out widely to achieve the target and upgrade the image of Malaysian polytechnics. Malaysian polytechnics have set their target to supply human capital with first class mentality and employable graduates through quality education and soft skills. All staff whether academic or non-academic staff are trained and reminded at every meeting, conference and course to work hand in hand to produce marketable candidates for the industry (2011 Annual Report, Malaysian Polytechnic Division, p. 2).

This study focused on the students' ability to use English language during their internship. The students are allowed to do their internship when they have



completed at least 50 credit hours (after semester three). They are sent for six month's internship after they have completed their three semesters and fulfill all requirements in order to allow them to undergo the training. The central idea of sending them for training is to apply their English in business circumstances and proficiency which would help them when meeting their international counterparts. They have to pass the interview arranged by the polytechnic industrial training unit officer and future training place key personnel to ensure what and how they can contribute to their future training place. The students are supposed to undergo their training for 23 to 24 weeks before they can proceed to semester 5 with a recommendation from the key personnel or polytechnic industrial training officer. Upon completion of the training, students are expected to prepare a report of what they have experienced, comments and recommendations of their strengths and weaknesses during the training. Then, they have to come back to the polytechnic to continue their studies. The students will still have about a year (two semesters) to complete their diploma program once the training is successful. The students are allowed to continue their semester 5 and 6 once the training is completed and meet the satisfactory level of the industrial training panel. Those who failed are required to repeat their internship until they can meet the requirement set up by the industrial training committee. The students are then granted a diploma when they manage to complete all six semesters. The polytechnic graduates will enter the industry as soon as they completed their diploma program without subjecting them to further refresher training by the company.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

As an instructor, the researcher sees the need for ESP and the role it plays in preparing students specifically for industrial training or internship and ultimately their future career in the hospitality field. Even after receiving more than ten years of formal English language education in school, the students still remain inadequate in their ability to use the language and to deeply comprehend its use in standard interaction both in verbal and written mode. The institution has also received many complaints from the companies where trainees from polytechnics were unable to communicate effectively during the training. The researcher therefore see the need to carry out the study in accordance with the encouragement from various parties especially the industry players to improve the social skills of their future workers with a view of upgrading their service to the customers.

However, due to time constraints, financial problem and a few other setbacks, this research was carried out in only one polytechnic and involved only a limited number of students from one cohort group. Only five key personnel were interviewed. Some hotels and resorts management have set restrictions limiting their officers to be interviewed or provide details and documents about their staff or packages. The officers need to get approval letter from the headquarters or top management officers to allow them to give statements about their hotel or resorts.

### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The study is conducted to ascertain how important are the four English language skills to hospitality students who are undergoing Hotel & Catering and Tourism

Management course during internship. In Malaysian polytechnics, students are required to choose to study either English for Technical Purposes or English for Commercial Purposes subject. These two subjects are specifically designed to focus on their occupational purposes. English for Commercial Purposes is a compulsory subject for all hospitality and commerce students in Malaysian polytechnics. Its goal is to prepare students with the level of English proficiency needed in their future workplace, that later allows them to communicate and understand English at a professional level.

Given this scenario, the rationale of conducting this study are: firstly, to identify the value of the four English language skills to the hospitality students during their training; Secondly, to examine the problems or language lacks faced by the students in terms of language skills; Thirdly, to identify the language skills wants by the trainees to communicate effectively during internship. It is vital to keep abreast with the wants and the demands of the industries in order to protect public trust towards the institution.

### **1.5 Research questions**

Three research questions aid in guiding this research. They are:

- i. How important are the four English language skills to the Hospitality students during internship?
- ii. What are the Hospitality students' English language skills lacks during internship?

- iii. What are the Hospitality students' English language skills wants during internship?

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study intends to determine the needs, lacks and wants of the students in terms of linguistic competence in a Malaysian educational setting in order to prepare them for work in the hospitality industry. In its effort to achieve the status of an industrialized country, Malaysia has given considerable emphasis to the development of human resources. An important means to develop human potentials is through the achievement of education in training. Therefore, the Malaysian Polytechnic Division which is the governing body that supervises of all Malaysian polytechnics' administration and syllabus; and the institution itself must oversee the situational requirements which represent a direct response to the needs of the manpower labour market for services. The training provided should be able to promote various professional capacities which comprised good communication skills in order to provide good quality service in the globalised industry.

On the other hand, a cohort group of hospitality students which has undergone their internship was chosen because they have acquired industrial experiences, and therefore have certain opinions and skills compared to those who are not. This group of students faced challenges in terms of communication during their training. Negative feedback from the industry personnel regarding the polytechnic's trainees' communicative ability was received for almost every training

session therefore; the researcher was inspired by the problems stated earlier to carry out a research to discover the hospitality students' English language needs. It is hoped that this study will contribute to helping the Malaysian Polytechnic Division develop and improve courses in polytechnics as a direct response to the need for trained and skilled workers. The implications for further research and course of action will also be explored. Not many studies have been done in Malaysia to analyze the needs, lacks and wants of the four English language skills for students during their industrial training per se. Thus, this study will provide additional information.

The results gathered may be of interest to curriculum developers of Malaysian polytechnics, lecturers and trainers for pedagogical reasons in helping them to develop more effective teaching and learning strategies and materials. The implications of the findings for the individual student, institution and the education system as a whole constitute an important perspective of the research effort.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

This research was carried out in only one polytechnic out of 32 Malaysian polytechnics. The selected polytechnic was Politeknik Ibrahim Sultan (PIS), chosen for its focus on hospitality as in the next Polytechnic Transformation Plan for PIS is to offer a degree program in Hospitality. This research also involved a limited number of students from only one cohort group as the number of students was determined by number of intake for each semester. Only five key personnel were

interviewed due to a limited time frame and the sessions themselves were quite time consuming and needed formal arrangements with the respective personnel such as restrictions to provide certain information for public and personnel's tight schedule. In addition, certain hotel would have expected a written formal request with at least six weeks ahead approval from a particular board before the session can be done.

### **1.8 Summary**

This chapter provided the relevant background information to the study. The main concern for conducting the study is to establish the needs of the students in a Malaysian educational setting in order to prepare them for work in the hospitality industry. The next chapter will be a review of literature on such research. Concepts on needs analysis relevant to this study will also be elaborated on.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the emergence of ESP in Malaysia particularly in the context of Malaysian Polytechnics and the methodologies used in needs analysis. A definition of needs analysis is provided as well as an overview of the various types of needs analysis that are used in English Language Teaching (henceforth ELT) and ESP. Earlier research done on ESP in Malaysian Polytechnics is also discussed.

#### **2.1 The Development of ESP**

The awareness of the importance of ESP development only came into reality in the 1960s (Widdowson, 1983). The introduction of ESP is similar to developments in communicative methods of teaching where materials are tailor made to suit students with specific language needs. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.123) recommended that ESP is described to meet explicit needs of the learner where it utilizes the fundamental approach and activities of the disciplines it serves. Moreover, they postulated that ESP may be associated with or designed for specific fields; ESP may use a diverse methodology from that of General English (GE). Additionally, ESP is likely to be intended for learners at the intermediate level of proficiency or adults with specific learning needs, but can be used with novice learners (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Furthermore, ESP is more particular in its content for specific goals as it illustrates five major features: 1) it is designed to meet

learner's special needs; 2) it is associated with special subjects, professions or research focus; 3) it uses different approach of teaching; 4) it involves discussion on syntax, lexicon, expressions and analysis of the selected subject; and 5) it is positioned as a contrast to EGP. Therefore, curriculum providers should give more attention as some programme focus on specific fields and professions.

Throughout the late 1970s, ESP curriculum designers started to carry out 'needs analyses' of their students' potential linguistic requirements by expressing in terms of concepts and purposes. Munby (1978) introduced a model for such a needs analysis known as *Communicative Syllabus Design* in which he presented a classification for 'devising appropriate syllabus requirements from sufficient profiles of communication needs' (Munby, 1978, p.3). These profiles included the rationale of communication, the communicative circumstances, and the language skills, functions and structures required. This '*communication needs processor*' was very prominent for a few years. According to Munby (1978, p.6) and Yalden, (1983), needs analysis is the underpinning for course design. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.63) described need analysis as 'the most distinctive feature of ESP course design'. In addition, Richards and Rodgers (1987, p.47) viewed needs analysis as "fundamental to the development by which relevant content for specialised language programmes were determined". The Munby model was believed as the most versatile groundwork of needs analysis. However, it has been criticized for being too complex and only paying little consideration to the insight of the learner. Later, the Munby's model was condemned for being unfeasible, (Mead, 1982) for not being



based on good hypothetical percepts, and for not having been pragmatically verified (Davies 1981; Shekan 1984; Alderson 1988). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) considered that the main setback with a Munby-style needs analysis was that it did not take description of the students themselves, their present skills, their interests, and their learning objectives. Munby's approach had its worth but he omitted broadened areas such as practicalities and limitations, teaching approaches, learning strategies and selection of materials. In addition to that, no account was taken of psycholinguistic components, and the schemata that the learners brought to their language learning were disregarded (Shekan 1984; Alderson 1988). West (1994) identified four shortcomings of the Munby's model; complexity of the model which made the instrument rigid, complicated and time-consuming, data collected were not from the learner (therefore not learner-centered) but about the learner, the placement of practical constraints and failure to provide learner's profile into a language curriculum.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) pointed out that the three reasons common to the growth of all ESP were the demands of a brave new world, a revolution in linguistics and focus on the learner. The end of Second World War and the Oil Crisis of the early 1970s effected in Western currency and knowledge flowing into the oil-rich countries where the language of this knowledge turned into English. Due to that, English language had become subject to the wishes, needs and commands of people than language teachers (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Tremendous impact of these two reasons brought changes and revolution in linguistics. Contemporary pioneers in

linguistics began to search for the center of attention on the ways in which language was used in real interaction which then the language instruction is modified to meet the needs of learners in explicit contexts. They also observed that rather than merely concentrating on the method of language delivery, more concentration was given to the ways in which learners acquire language and the differences in the ways language was acquired. In short, approaches should be the pillar rather than the outcome. Therefore, proposing explicit courses to better meet the learners' needs should be the main concerns of ESP practitioners. Nunan (1987) noted the role of the teacher as curriculum designer.

*It seems fairly obvious that if teachers are to be the ones responsible for developing the curriculum, they need the time, the skills and the support to do so. Support may include curriculum models and guidelines and may include support from individuals acting in a curriculum advisory position. The provisions of such support cannot be removed and must not be seen in isolation, from the curriculum*

(Nunan, 1987, pg.75)

Nunan also recognized the issues of skills, time and support in developing the curriculum. The teacher of ESP, in this case, should be able to develop the syllabus and select the appropriate materials for the learners. Dudley Evans and St John (1998) distinguished the five key roles of ESP practitioners: teacher, course developer and material provider, collaborator, researcher and evaluator. As a course designer, the ESP 'practitioner' (as referred by Swales (1995) to reflect the specific

scopes), has also the task to identify the appropriate types of syllabus to be applied. Therefore, needs analysis should be done to identify the fitting skills for the syllabus of a proposed course.

## **2.2 The role of needs analysis in an ESP world**

Needs Analysis is a method for categorizing and characterizing applicable curriculum and instructional and management objectives in order to facilitate learning in an atmosphere that is closely related to the real life circumstances of the student. The definition of 'needs' have been much studied by many researchers. Brindley (1989, p.63) has included the terms of objective and subjective needs, perceived and felt needs (Berwick, 1989, p.55), target situation/goal oriented needs and learning needs, product-oriented needs and process-oriented needs (Brindley, 1989, p.64), necessities, wants and lacks (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, 55).

Brindley (1989) suggested that objective and perceived needs are the needs that are obtained by outsiders from the facts, from what is known and can be verified. For example, if students learn English to fulfill their requirements for graduation, then their needs to study English are objective and perceived. In contrast, if the needs are obtained by insiders and correspond to cognitive and affective aspects such as 'to be confident' or 'to help oneself more capable in one's school or workplace' then the needs are subjective or felt needs (Brindley, 1989, p.65). However, product-oriented needs are well-suited for a target situation or goal-oriented needs. On the other hand, process-oriented needs are consistent with a

learning situation. In other words, product-oriented needs are obtained from the goal or target-situation while process-oriented needs are obtained from the learning situation.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.15) suggested that objective, perceived, and product-oriented needs correspond to a target situation analysis (TSA) whereas subjective, felt, and process-oriented needs correspond to a learning situation analysis (LSA). They also suggested one more analysis, that is, a present situation analysis (PSA) which is intended to suggest what learners already know or the schemata that they already have. Thus, the analysis can be used to find out what they lack. A TSA deals with objective, perceived and product-oriented needs of learners while LSA discusses subjective, felt and process-oriented needs; and a PSA estimates the intensity and limitation of learners in language, skills and learning process. The blend of these situation analyses would be best to give insight to the curriculum developers and linguists to set or prepare the curriculum or syllabus which can cater to most learners' needs. Even if the process of collecting and analyzing learners' situations data were sometimes quite time consuming, the end result would be fruitful.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.55) suggested two needs analysis taxonomies which are 'target needs', believed to be the umbrella term that hides a number of crucial characteristics and 'learning needs' which explained how students will be able to move from the onset (lacks) to the objective (necessities). They also

proposed similar yet different definitions and classifications concerning 'needs'. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.55) used three terms to explain 'needs' such as '*necessities*', '*wants*' and '*lacks*'. They defined 'necessities' as the type of need determined by the requirements of the target circumstances, which is what the learner should know in order to work successfully and efficiently in the aimed situation. According to them, "*the type of need is determined by the demands of the target situation, that is, what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation*" (p.58). Hutchinson and Waters stressed that merely identifying the necessities is insufficient because it is also vital to understand what the learners' existing knowledge were. Then, the target competency against the existing competency can be easily matched, and the gap between them which is learners' *lacks* will be identified (Hutchinson, Waters and Breen, 1979). When the curriculum developers have a clear proposal about the learners' necessities to the target circumstances and will certainly have a vision as to cope with their *lacks*, a more comprehensive and precise syllabus will be prepared. Learners' *wants* and their views about the rationale on why they need language should not be disregarded as well as it ascertains the learner's motivation in the learning process. The subject specialist, teachers and the industry must check and test the practicality of the syllabus by providing authentic and functional class activities and assessments in order to cater all most learners' needs. Target situation analysis (TSA) should be carried out to investigate learners' target language needs in the target working situation. TSA must be the fundamental step in materials or syllabus design. On the other hand, present situation analysis also should be done to check what learners'

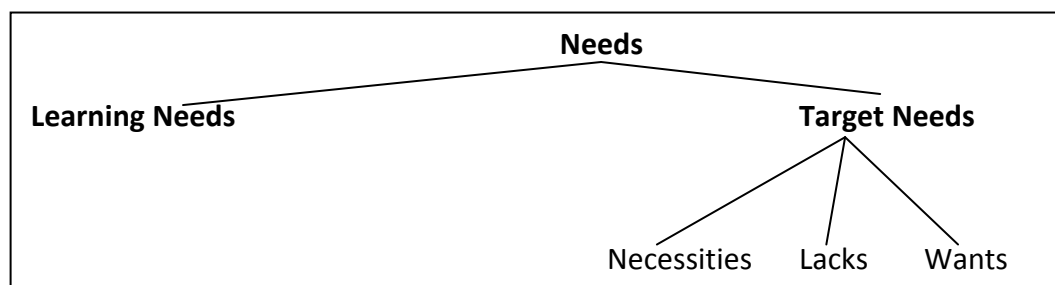
lacks was by establishing placement tests before the first course instruction. Hence, it is hoped to provide the practitioners with enough data about their current aptitudes and understanding which can thus be forecasted to some degree. Richterich (1984, p.29) commented that:

*'...a need does not exist independent of a person. It is people who built their images of the needs on the basis of data relating to themselves and their environment'*

The curriculum developers of polytechnics should consider what students *want* and *lack* through planning the learning needs and identifying the specific linguistic characteristics of the target circumstances when developing new syllabus or revamping the existing one. Students must have a clear view of the 'necessities' of the target objectives: e.g. working at the reception counter of a hotel, and have a sound outlook to their 'lacks': e.g. note-taking skills for hotel booking via phone. The researcher must closely focus what learners actually viewed their needs were. Their needs might be contrasted with the needs perceived by course designers or teachers. Course designers or teachers must be alert of such disparity and takes account of them in contemplating materials and approaches. They must be able to design activities or materials that display target objective needs and able to test how far the needs of the language use in the learning situation practical to students. The target situation analysis is able to ascertain the learning objectives of the learner. West (1998) stressed that an investigation of learners' target needs and target level

performance in the target situation establishes a starting point in materials or course design. Due to that, the researcher needs to evaluate learners' schemata. The discrepancy between the two can be referred to as learners' *lacks*. A necessity analysis corresponds to a TSA, which was suggested by Dudley-Evans and St John (1989, p.4), a wants analysis corresponds to an LSA, a learning situation analysis, and a lacks analysis corresponds to a PSA, a present situation analysis. However, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.53) had a different idea from Dudley-Evans and St John's categorization where they argued that "there is no obligatory connection between necessities distinguished by sponsor or ESP teacher and what the learners wish for or feel they need". They viewed *necessities*, *wants* and *lacks* in two different perspectives: one is perceived by course designers, which is an objective viewpoint and the other noted by learners, that is a subjective viewpoint. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) claimed that the target situation only is not a consistent indicator. They added that the conditions of the learning environment, the learner's existing knowledge, skills, approaches, and motivation for learning are of foremost importance. Figure 2.1 below demonstrates this taxonomy.

**Figure 2.1: Necessities, wants and lacks taxonomy** (adopted from Kandil, 2002)



The researcher agreed that the combination of Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Dudley -Evans & St. John (1998) work on needs analysis provided a comprehensive framework on learners' target situation analysis which grants valuable data bank to the curriculum developer. Even the researcher found that Dudley - Evans & St. John's (1998) ideas on needs analysis is a modern and more comprehensive concept compared to Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) approach which focuses too much on learners' target situation needs but Hutchinson and Waters ideas were quite specific and clear target goals. In addition, Hutchinson and Waters' approach is workable for adult learners or tertiary level institutions that offer specific occupational courses.

Hutchinson and Waters' ideas were used in this research because the researcher found the approaches were more practical and feasible in the research context. Moreover, Hutchinson and Water's framework is more convenient for analyzing the target situation and also equivalent for analyzing learning needs. The researcher found their works were useful for examining learners' communicative needs that arose from joining the course.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher will discuss the classification of needs pioneered by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.54-63) and recommended by West (1994), which are prominent in the needs analysis research. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) have started the classification of needs analysis then West (1994) brought forward the following definition:



## **1. Target situation analysis (TSA)**

For Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.59) the study of target situation needs is “in epitome a matter of soliciting questions about the target circumstances and the approaches towards that situations of diverse participants in the learning development”. It classifies the necessities or the entails of the target circumstances or in other words, what learners need to know in order to perform effectively in the target circumstances. When the language prerequisites of the target circumstances were identified by replicating, inquiring or monitoring those already in that circumstance, it will represent the destination of the LSP learner’s language learning journey. However, TSA has its own limitation because it takes little account of the present state of the learner’s present language proficiency.

## **2 Present Situation Analysis (PSA)**

The term PSA (Present Situation Analysis) was first recommended by Richterich and Chancerel (1980). According to Jordan, (1997), this approach focuses on the sources of possible data which is the learners themselves, the teaching institution, and the user-institution, for example, the place of work. Present situation analysis may be proposed as equilibrium to target situation analysis (Robinson, 1991; Jordan, 1997). If the TSA tries to determine what the learners are expected to be like upon completion of the language program, the present situation analysis attempts to discover what they are like at the beginning of it. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.123) stated that ‘a PSA measures strengths and weaknesses in language abilities, existing skills, learning experiences.’ The PSA can be done by setting up placement

tests. But, the background information of the learners like years of learning English, level of education will provide sufficient data about their current abilities which can thus be forecasted to some extent.

### **3 Pedagogic Needs Analysis (PNA)**

The term ‘pedagogic needs analysis’ was suggested by West (1998) as an umbrella term to illustrate the following three constituents of needs analysis. PNA covers *deficiency analysis, strategy analysis or learning needs analysis, and means analysis*. West stated the fact that deficiency of target needs analysis should be balanced with by gathering information about the learners and the learning process. The researcher realized that, if the difficulties and other situational factors that were faced by learners were well determined, it would help the instructors to design sound and valid objectives of classroom teaching and learning which help the learners to achieve a well-defined goal.

### **4 Deficiency analysis**

Hutchinson and Waters’ (1987) connotation of *lacks* can be associated with deficiency analysis. As mentioned earlier, the disparity concerning what the target learners grasp at current situation and what they are supposed to comprehend is considered as *lacks*. According to Allwright (1982, quoted in West, 1994), the methodologies to needs analysis that have been utilized to take into account the learner’s current needs or wants may be described as analysis of learners’ *deficiencies* or *lacks*. It is clear that deficiency analysis is the approach to cover current circumstance and target circumstance, by keeping the learning needs into

consideration. Hence, Jordan (1997) recommended that deficiency analysis can outline the starting point of the language curriculum because it should supply information about both the disparity concerning current and target extra-linguistic knowledge, mastery of common English, language proficiencies and learning approaches.

## **5 Strategy analysis or Learning Needs Analysis**

This classification of needs analysis deals with the approaches that learners utilize in order to study another language. According to West (1998), learning needs analysis established how the learners want to learn rather than what they need to learn. Allwright who established the field of *strategy analysis* (West, 1994) proposed that the analysis must set up from the students' judgment of students' needs through their own observations (Jordan, 1997). Allwright came up with the idea of making a distinction between *needs*, *wants* and *lacks* which was later adopted by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.54), who advocated a learning-centered method in which learners' study needs perform a crucial function. They stressed that, learning needs analysis will inform us "what the learner needs to do in order to learn" Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.54). Therefore, learners should be trained to acquire the skills that facilitate them to accomplish the target. The process of learning and encouragement should be regarded as well as the fact that different learners learn in different ways (Dudley –Evans and St John, 1998). Jordan (1997) quotes Bower (1980) who has observed the significance of learning needs:

*If we accept...that a student will learn best if what he **wants** to learn, less well if he only **needs** to learn, less well still what he either wants or needs to learn, it is clearly important to leave room in a learning program for the learner's own wishes regarding both goals and processes"*

(Jordan, 1997, p.26)

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) suggested a structure for investigating learning needs which consists of numerous questions where each question is divided into more specific questions. Table 2.1 illustrates the framework suggested by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) for investigation of learning needs.

**Table 2.1: Hutchinson and Waters (1987 p.62-63) Framework for Analysis of Learning Needs.**

MAIN QUESTIONS	DETAILED QUESTIONS
1. <b>Why</b> are the learners taking the course?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compulsory or optional;</li> <li>- Apparent need or not;</li> <li>- Is status, money, promotion involved?</li> <li>- What do learners think they will achieve?</li> <li>- What is their attitude toward the ESP course? Do they want to improve their English or do they resent time they have to spend on it?</li> </ul>
2. <b>How</b> do the learners learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is their learning background?</li> <li>- What is their concept of teaching and learning?</li> <li>- What methodology will appeal to them?</li> <li>- What sort of techniques bore/alienate them?</li> </ul>

<p>3. <b>What</b> sources are available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number and professional competence of teachers;</li> <li>- Attitude of teachers to ESP;</li> <li>- Teachers' knowledge of and attitude to subject content;</li> <li>- Materials;</li> <li>- Aids;</li> <li>- Opportunities for out-of-class activities</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Who</b> are the learners?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age/sex/nationality;</li> <li>- What do they know already about English?</li> <li>- What subject knowledge do they have?</li> <li>- What are their interests?</li> <li>- What is their socio-cultural background?</li> <li>- What teaching styles are they used to?</li> <li>- What is their attitude to English or to the cultures of English-speaking world?</li> </ul>

The researcher adapted this framework for designing questionnaire for students, lecturers and key personnel. This framework gave the ideas to the researcher to construct the questionnaire to get some useful information to answer the research questions. However, the framework did not cover other factors such as challenges that the industry had and situational changes in the industry that might be faced by the learners. Therefore, the framework was useful to provide basic guidelines of conducting needs analysis research.

Allwright (1982, in West, 1994) verified that the exploration of learners' preferred learning styles and approaches provide a picture of the learners' impression of learning.

## 6. Means analysis

Means analysis investigates the considerations that Munby excluded (West, 1998). These concerns were regarding issues of logistics and pedagogy that led to discussion about pragmatism and limitations in implementing needs-based language training (West, 1994). He also pointed out that some researchers considered that instead of stressing on drawbacks per se, it might be useful if course developers thought about how to execute plans in the controlled situation. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.125) stated that means analysis provides the “information about the environment in which the course will be run” and thus attempts to adapt any ESP course to the cultural environment in which it will be run. According to them also, means analysis concerns with “the acknowledgement that what works well in one situation may not work in another” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p.124)

### 2.3 Munby's (1978) *Communicative Needs Processor (CNP)*

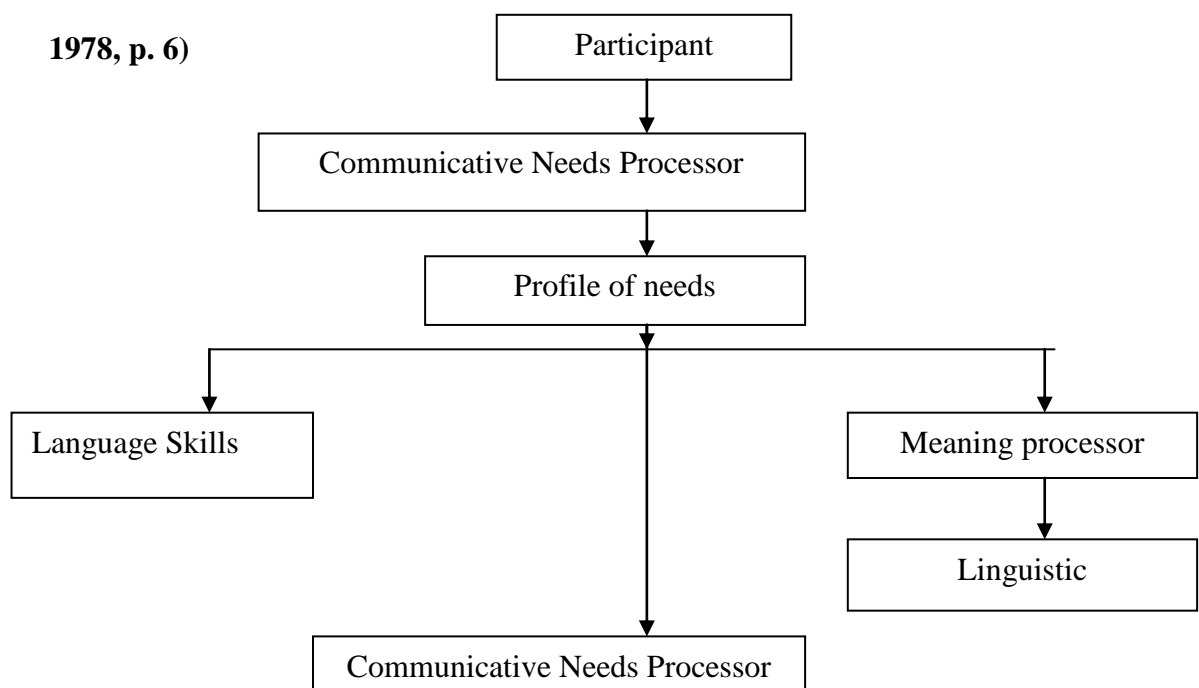
The main idea of Munby's structure of framework is the concept of the language user's capability and its relation to knowledge and communication (Munby, 1978, p.55). His work was an attempt to specify validity in the target communicative competence. He has come out with the design which was known as Communicative Needs Processor (CNP). Most ESP teachers have highly utilized his methodology to carry out the investigation of needs and accustomed his model for specifying communicative aptitude. Munby's approach has built up participant or group of participants' profile works at two levels – a **priori** and a **posteriori**. At the *a priori* level Munby included some constraints such as participant, purposive domain,

settings, communications and involvement. The details about the participant should consider the identity and language needs:

*“The data relating to identity provides information about the participant’s age, sex, nationality, and place of residence.... The data concerning language needs identifies the participant’s target language need and the extent, if any, of his command of it...”*

(Munby, 1978, p.154-167)

**Figure 2.2 The Model for specifying Communicative Competence (Munby, 1978, p. 6)**



The target area restriction for Munby specified the job-related or didactic purposes where the target language was required. In this research, English is the target language required for the course. In addition to Munby’s work, setting parameter

indicates that both physical and psycho-social background is also necessary. However, interaction parameter identified those with whom the participant has to correspond with in the target language and forecasts the association that may be expected to acquire between the speaker and the interlocutors.

At the a *posteriori* level, Munby established limitations such as dialect, target aim, proficiency event, and proficiency basis (Munby, 1978). The main characteristic of dialect here is whether it is local or national. He added that participant's target aim of command should be established in terms that will channel the advance processing through the model. Conversely, the limitations of proficiency event was concerned with what the participants need to perform, either constructively or receptively and the restrictions of proficiency basis concords with how they can succeed when involved formally in an event.

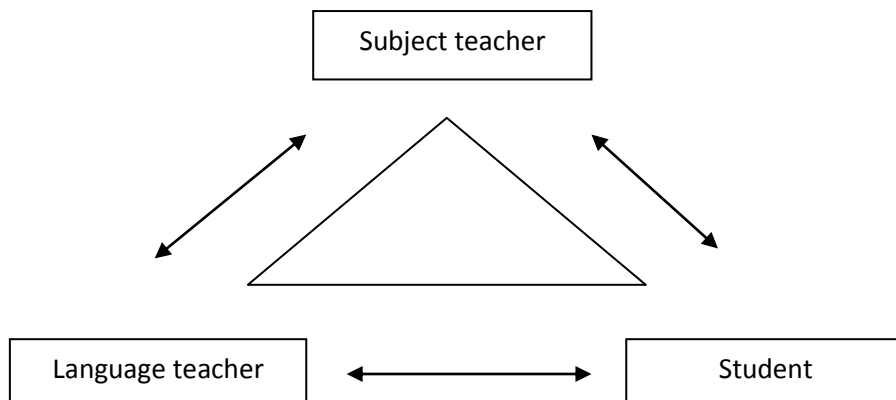
#### **2.4 Johns and Dudley-Evans' Model (1980)**

The Johns and Dudley-Evans' model emerged from an investigative effort that portrays the interactive link engaging the students, language teacher and subject teacher. It was introduced as a partnership model for ESP in 1980. This model (figure 2.3) can be expanded to make it applicable to the Malaysian vocational training education system and experience. This pioneer team-teaching model embarked on the influence of language teacher to contribute in the teamwork effort with the content teacher. The idea is not really in agreement with practice and experience in Malaysia yet but it is paramount for vocational training in Malaysian



educational system. This model is important for vocational training because it promotes learning from three different parties which will be a better combination instead of from one party only. Therefore, the participation of all parties will ensure the learning takes place and deeper understanding and broader views will be portrayed clearly by the learners. Each party actually needs other parties to complete a good learning and teaching cycle. Vocational training needs comments and ideas from industries and subject experts to help instructors fulfill learners' end needs. Due to situational changes, all comments and recommendations that can improve students' educational and personal performance must be taken into consideration to ensure they can perform well in the workplace after graduation.

**Figure 2.3- Johns & Dudley-Evans model**

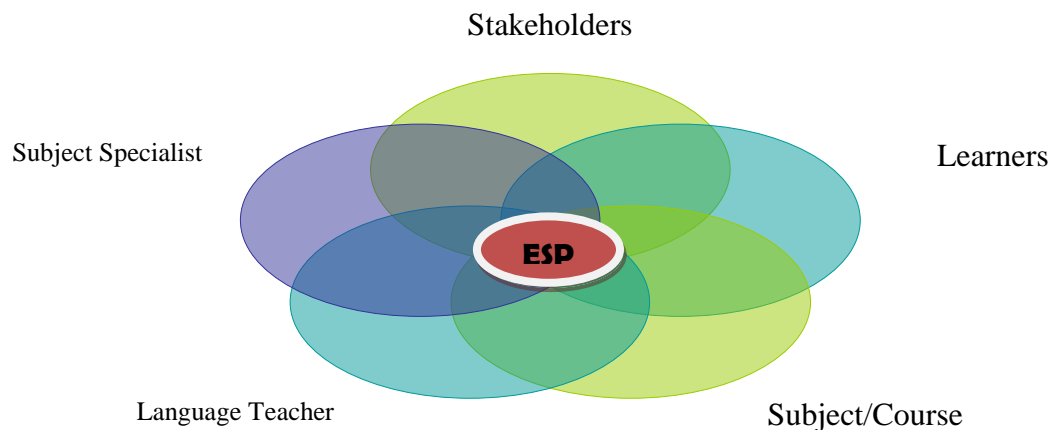


### **2.5 The ESP Reciprocal Model- Rationale**

The ESP Reciprocal model is the development of the Johns & Dudley-Evans model. The researcher set this model as the extension of parties in the teaching and learning practice. The main concern of the proposed ESP Reciprocal model like Johns &

Dudley-Evans is to advocate solidarity which ought to be evaluated in the context of ESL training especially in tertiary institutions in non-native English speaking country. The model must engage more consistent parties of the area under discussion which are; language teacher, course teacher, subject specialists, stakeholders and learners. The researcher proposed ESP Reciprocal model as an attempt to display more precisely the concreteness of the real situation with all possible parties in the practice of ESP programme and some of the relationships which have not been described in the Johns & Dudley-Evans' model.

**Figure 2.4- The ESP Reciprocal Model**



The subject/course and language teachers have been detached as an autonomous factor for major consideration of involvement. These two building blocks are associated with the stakeholders, subject specialist and learners. It is recommended that the involvement of all parties would apply a more notable

connection into the assumed design in the Johns and Dudley-Evans' model, such as the partnership between subject lecturer and language lecturer with respect to the subject/course. In an ESP teaching circumstances it may be possible that the language teacher may not be competent as an autonomous party. There is an insight of 'parasiticism' on the role of the language teacher (Widdowson 1983; Bhatia 1986; Carreon 1990). However, this perception cannot be misled in the sense that language teacher holds a dependent status. By including the parties, the viability of agreement between the subject specialists and groups of language lecturers in the Malaysian background can be more readily measured. The inclusion of the stakeholders in the ESP Reciprocal model is due to the necessary condition for subject specialist and language lecturer to interact by practical requirements of an institution. The researcher believed that this model would be able to offer a helpful insight into the restrictions for independent and collaborative attempts. All parties need each other to complete a 'perfect' cycle in achieving learners' target needs.

## **2.5 Application of the ESP Reciprocal Model to the Research Data**

The ESP Reciprocal Model is important for identifying the level and validity of the ESP training at the tertiary level. The researcher believes that the proposed model will serve as a beneficial instrument to propose correlation involving the diverse parties and agents in ESP and how self-sufficiency comes into play. It is hoped that the model will give some ideas for further research of an increasingly complex model in order to give an absolute judgment of the training of ESP. The Malaysian Polytechnic Division has started designing the syllabus since 2007 with the

involvement of all related parties to prepare future graduates for their occupational purposes. Since then, the syllabuses are reviewed every two years with further series of discussion with the said parties. The syllabus review process is actually a non-stop process. Lecturers, students, industry players are required to send feedback or comments at the end of the semester regarding the contents of the syllabus and the assessments to Instructional Division of Malaysian Polytechnic Division. The feedback and comments were then put forward for further actions and improvement. But, still after the review committee meetings, there are always loopholes. Therefore, a continuation process is encouraged to ensure the students received proper knowledge and learning experience. This model has been applied in Malaysian polytechnics since December intake of 2010.

## **2.6 Related studies on Needs Analysis in ESL and EFL Classroom**

A number of studies on needs analysis in the ESL and EFL classroom have been done. However, most of the research was done in a broader variety of language environment instead of focusing on the student's linguistic competence during their internship. Moll (1999) investigated a study on needs analysis of linguistic needs for EFL at the university level in Spain. Her study suggested students' competence level and selection of language content (i.e., a combination of their target circumstances and their actual circumstances) should be the focus in ESP courses to avoid language deficiency. Her study used the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) as the instrument to determine the students' linguistic proficiency, their existing language knowledge, potential linguistic needs and progress in linguistic aptitude. Her findings confirmed

that OPT was an effective instrument for establishing a needs analysis for beginners as well as intermediate or advanced level learners of English course.

Bosher and Smalkowski (2002) carried out a study on needs analysis and designed a course known as 'Speaking and Listening in Health Care Setting'. This course was designed to assist English as Second Language (ESL) students who put effort to join health-care courses at a private college in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In their study, the needs analysis consisted of interview sessions with a management representative, faculty of nursing course and first year students; questionnaires were also distributed to the students asking about the difficulties they were encountering in the program; and some supervision for ESL students at different levels of program in lab and medical setting. The materials and methodologies of the training were chosen based on the findings of the study. The course then developed over three years after a pilot course was proposed in Spring 1998. Bosher and Smalkowski (2002) demonstrated that the course was very rewarding in helping the nursing students to learn how to converse effectively in health-care environment. The researcher believed that the duplication of the course designed by Bosher and Smalkowski would be useful in helping hospitality students with necessary changes prior to situational needs.

Ahmad Kandil (2002) conducted a study on some needs analysis- related educational drawback in the Arab world. His focus was on ways in improving the language teaching curriculum to fulfill students' psychosocial needs and providing

them with a certain set of lexical items. Ali (2003) investigated how the needs analysis functions in a designed ESL program design in India. His work suggested the need to allow more student-autonomy in deciding their tasks based on their needs. His survey basically looked into the linguistic needs of Science and Technology students in the ELT scene. He used a questionnaire to gather the data which evaluated eight major focus; significance of English for both academic and professional purposes, proficiency, relative importance of English, student's motivation to enhance their English, which special skills should be included and focused on, students' personal preferences for an English programme, students' evaluation of the current offered courses and students' attitude towards self-study materials. The findings of the survey stated that 90% students considered English as very important for academic purposes and 84% found proficiency in English is the most essential. Research, technical and higher studies demanded English language as highly as 78% however, only moderate demand required for sales, administration and consultancy. Production and manufacturing field had a low demand (14%). The majority of students revealed (78%) that English was essential for their future careers. More than 80% believed that employers preferred fluent speakers compared to those who are not speak. They preferred English programmes that matched with their requirements and helped to boost their speaking ability.

Choi (2005) studied needs analysis of students of Tourism English in Korea. She focused on tourism students in Hanyang Women's College. The main purpose of her study was to find out what students of a two-year college course want to learn in

their tourism conversation classes and what ways can help them to achieve better results in acquiring their degree. The study was carried out on three groups of students where questionnaires were distributed in the beginning and at the end of the semester. The subjects were 120 students of three regular day-time classes, 40 night class students and 40 working students. The results gathered from the three groups were compared and discussed. Her findings suggested that conversation skills requested by the students should be included in tourism English training and how they should be trained. In addition, the contents and the teaching methods should be able to determine students' lack, want and need in order to equip them for work and later become more confident in their English. Her findings have enlightened the researcher's research aims that speaking skills, related contents and preferred teaching methods by the students were necessary to determine students' lack, want and need.

Cowling (2007) studied the needs analysis for intensive courses for the workplace at a prominent Japanese organization. His survey described the stage of needs analysis in designing a complete set of English language materials. The materials are prepared for an intensive training at a giant Japanese industrial firm which has many industrial unit and uphold exchange overseas. Therefore, English was very crucial for engineers and technicians to communicate with foreign investors. The respondents were a group of first to third year staff who would be dispersed to the field in the fourth year. This intensive course then was delivered for three days, three times a year for a period of three years. Hence, all new trainees

must finish a total of nine three-day course in their first year at MHI. A few suggested topics such as meetings, business telephoning skills and business presentation skills were topics set to be focused on. Interview sessions with training section staff, language teachers, target learners and distribution of structured open-ended questionnaire for students to be completed were the instruments used to collect the data for this study. Cowling developed two syllabi; the notional – functional syllabus and the content or task-based syllabus from the data gathered. The results suggested that the syllabus should be able to serve a conversational course where participants could utilize their existing common English knowledge into industry circumstances and supply authentic examples of language. Cowling concluded that needs analysis was able to meet the requirements and provided useful English training for the company business workings. Based on Cowling’s research, it can be justified that a syllabus provided should be able to grant its learners a good speaking course as it can improve the speaking ability through expansion of their language background schemata.

Most ESP research conducted in Malaysia and needs analysis started in the seventies and in academic setting. However, due to changes in both private and government sectors, ESP courses are in greater demand even in Malaysia nowadays. Many Malay medium students which entering the work place were unable to cope with the English language requirement set by the industries. The breakthrough of ESP research was first commenced by the University of Malaya language centre. Their research project known as University of Malaya English for Special Purposes



project (UMESPP) initiated the production and development of teaching materials and methodologies that equipped students with relevant reading skills to access Science and Technology texts (Tan & Chitravelu, 1980). The attempt was made because the University authorities apprehended that the Malay medium university students were incapable of making references independently due to limited competence in reading the specialist texts which was mostly available in English. Before initiating on this project, they defined the problems and needs using various instruments, one of which was needs analysis. Further exploration on the findings disclosed that there was a disparity in acquiring skills in English. The graduates were incapable of coping when they enter the real world. Due to that, the University's authorities foresaw that there was a critical need to guide the graduates to be able to communicate well in English. Seeing the importance of the speaking skills brought about the UMSEP (University of Malaya Spoken English Project), which was a cooperative project undertaken by the University of Malaya and the British Council, which was conducted in 1980 to gratify the oral needs of the Economics and Law faculties in University of Malaya carried out successfully. Since the offered English language syllabus was unable to fulfill this need, the university's authorities planned forward to train people to converse well and effectively in English in different situations. Therefore, the research team of this project established a needs analysis to investigate the English language functions in the target profession or industry. The fundamental issue that was asked was 'what are the particular purposes for which English is used?' A modified version of Munby's Communicative Syllabus Design

(1978), surveys and interviews were conducted across various sectors of fields as tools of enquiry of a model of the initial profiles of communication needs.

Other researcher, Ramakrishnan (2011) investigated the English language needs of investigating officers in a police department in Malaysia. She distributed questionnaires to investigating officers and had interviews with two senior investigating officers. Her findings reported that the use of English among the officers were generally adequate for their daily work environment as Malay was used as the main medium of instruction, however, they still had problems especially on the accuracy and fluency in communicating in English. The officers also had the same opinion on the importance and need for better English in their working circumstances especially in cases dealing with foreigners. On the other hand, the senior officers were come to consensus of the opinion that the officers were required to improve their English report writing skills as well good speaking ability which would be useful especially when dealing with INTERPOL and ASEANPOL. The respondents also specified that ESP courses were needed during the officers' training to help them prepare for their work requirements since the English course offered during training was only on general English. Ramakrishnan's works proved that certain job scopes and situations need different use of language skills. Therefore, the English course could not only focus on a specific language skill as some situations might use a combination of two or more skills at one time. Her works supported the research findings that learners cannot rely on one language skills only but should be able to apply more than one skill simultaneously for example when handling a

complaint from a hotel guest regarding a meal at the hotel which required a combination of speaking, listening and probably note-taking (writing) skills.

Sarjit (1997) carried out a research at an established organization in Petaling Jaya where she used needs analysis to ascertain the English language needs of Malay consultants at a company. Questionnaires, interviews and observation were used as the research tools for her research. The main focus of conducting the research was to discover the language needs of the consultants and necessary facets that should go into the construction of successful needs analysis package for the company. The result of the study reported that the consultants needed to master the speaking and writing skills instead of reading and listening skills. In this case, the socio cultural background of the respondents was vital when designing needs analysis packages for ESP courses.

Gan (1996) did a research on language needs of electrical staff in the banking and financial services in an important service industry in Singapore. The study was set out to investigate the linguistic and communicative needs of clerks since Singapore is a widely known international banking and financial centre in Asian region. English is used as its medium of communication therefore the bank tellers are required to use English competently especially in speaking. The researcher's attempt to carry out the study was to provide practical input for course design with regard to effective communication within the banking and financial industry offered in Singapore. The perception of the learners' need, the language lecturers and the job

trainers' feedback were studied by the researcher. Useful methods were used by the researcher such as interviews, questionnaires, survey and examination of a corpus of authentic written communication by the clerks. The data gathered reported that the clerks did have a problem especially in writing grammatically precise sentences and communicative discourse. The findings supported the researcher's view that the clerks needed an ESP course equivalent to EGP which focus more on grammar rules and discourse.

Huang (1984) conducted a survey in a few private organizations to identify the use of English according to job-related language needs required of the staff. The result of the survey gave evidence that all four language skills were required to carry out the job tasks despite their ethnicity or social background. However, some skills were found to be more crucial than the others were determined by the specific job related conditions of the said skills.

The researcher believed that findings of the previous research can be used with some adaptations to meet the needs of hospitality students to prepare them for professional sectors. Mostly, all job scopes need a combination of at least two language skills simultaneously. Therefore, the syllabus should not focus specifically on a language skill but also proposed integrated skills consecutively. The researcher would suggest further research to be done on classroom activities which requires a combination of language skills to fulfill learners' certain job scopes. A pilot study should be carried out to ensure the effectiveness of the 'new' syllabus due to

situational changes and industry needs. Even though there are many studies conducted in this area, not much research has been done to investigate needs analysis for internship students. In addition, most of the researchers only focused on general needs of the students to prepare them for the 'real world'. Little effort has been made to investigate the outcome of students' linguistic abilities which specifically refers to communicative competence during the internship.

In the past decades, not many remarkable changes have been seen in the instruction of English as a second language in Malaysia except some programs that change focus from General English (GE) class such as engineering, tourism, medical and etc. to English for occupational purposes (EOP) class. Therefore, language teachers are recommended to adjust their teaching methodology and tasks in order to fit learners' need. Teachers must have an idea of what kind of English their students need. In the set of circumstances of English for specific purposes in polytechnics, due to the increased demand from industrialization, and the hospitality and travel industry, the training of English for Specific Purposes has also developed and evolved. The Ministry of Higher Education set up a board of academic advisors since 2008 to ensure the syllabus prepared by the ministry are aligned with the needs of the stakeholders. This is due to the government policy that all vocational training must be able to comply with the needs of the industries. (2011 Annual Report, Malaysian Polytechnic Division, p. 2).

The board of committee members comprises CEO's, directors, academicians, professional bodies and experts from various fields. This board advises the Polytechnic Curriculum Department in preparing syllabus or ESP curriculum that can cater the needs of the students and constructing a prominent quality of English learning atmosphere through which students are prepared to develop a self-directed learning habit. However, not all proposed skills or topics were agreed on by the committee members as different job scopes need different skills. The syllabus are reviewed or revamped every two years. Within the two years, English language lecturers are advised to comment and propose their ideas for further improvement of the current syllabus for another two consecutive years through Heads of Department meetings and courses which are done every six months. They can comment on the syllabus, tasks and assessments proposed by the Polytechnic Curriculum Department. Dialogue sessions of at least once a year with the industry and respected agencies have been carried out to ensure the offered courses always comply with and are relevant to the needs of the workforce.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, a review of previous research done by several scholars and researchers was provided. This chapter reports the research methods carried out by the researcher. This research was carried out for the reason of investigating the *needs, lacks* and *wants* of semester five students undertaking diploma course in Hotel and Catering and Tourism Management in a selected polytechnic in terms of their English linguistic needs during internship. This group of students was chosen because they had undergone six months' internship in various hotels and resorts in Johor. This research was also conducted to investigate whether the industry needs are similar to the students' needs. Therefore, a needs analysis had to be done to recognize the needs of the students and the expectations of the industry personnel which represents the future employers of the students. Only 49.5 % of the polytechnic graduates in the country were employed after they had completed their diploma course (Graduates Tracer Study, Malaysia Higher Education Statistics 2011, pg 118). Therefore, the Malaysian Polytechnic Division has allocated RM20, 886,250 from the Graduate Employability Fund (GE) for the year 2011 to run finishing schools and value-added courses or workshops for future graduates to improve their prospects of employability (Malaysian Polytechnic Division, Annual Report 2011, pg 38). Future graduates are awarded a professional certification or Industrial Certification when they complete the programme. With this

effort, it is hoped that the employment statistics of polytechnics graduates will increase from year to year.

### **3.1 SOURCES OF DATA**

This research involved certain stages of data collection. Most of the information of the study was obtained through questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire and interviews proper commenced in June 2011 and ended in September of the same year. A combination group of Diploma in Tourism Management students and Hotel and Catering students were observed and given the questionnaire to determine their needs, lacks and wants; and then the lecturers and key personnel from industries were also provided with the questionnaires for the same purpose. All the subjects gave their full cooperation.

This study was conducted with both qualitative and quantitative research approach. Most of the information for the study was obtained through questionnaire surveys. Three different questionnaires were devised - for the students, the lecturers who taught the students and the industry personnel. Most of the items in the students' and lecturers' questionnaires were of the close-ended type. In addition, five open-ended questions were prepared in the lecturers' questionnaire and also in the industry personnel questionnaire to elicit more information. Selected number of students, language lecturers and key personnel also were interviewed to explore more information to support the concreteness of the research findings.



### 3.1.1 Subjects

This research was a small-scale investigation because it only comprises a small number of students at one polytechnic. The selected polytechnic was Politeknik Johor Bahru (PIS). This polytechnic was chosen due to next Polytechnic Transformation Plan for PIS is to offer a degree program in Hospitality. This research also involved a limited number of students from only one cohort group. The numbers of students for both courses was 171 as the number of students was determined by number of intake for each semester. Only five key personnel were interviewed due to a limited time frame and the sessions themselves were quite time consuming and needed proper arrangements with the respective personnel. The lecturers were fresh graduates therefore have limited teaching experience (1-2 years only). The experienced lecturers were assigned to teach technical programme students which were more familiar with technical terminologies from various engineering departments and therefore none of the experienced lecturers were interviewed as they were busy with administration works and attending courses.

### 3.1.2 Data Required

The data required for the study were linguistic competence needs mainly in four language skills. These skills were needed to adapt to students' current English communication skills to the target situation as they enter the career world. The study also demands the *lacks* which refer to the disparity of language skills between students' background schemata and the current situation; and the *needs* which refer

to the communicative ability expected by the industry. In addition, language skills requested or *wants* of the students to improve their lacks were also studied.

### 3.1.3 *Procedure for data collection /Instrumentation*

Most of the information for the study is obtained through questionnaire surveys. The questionnaires are distributed after the students had completed their internship. Three different questionnaires are devised - one for the students, one for the English lecturers who teach the students and one for the industry personnel. Most of the items in the student and lecturer questionnaires are of the close-ended type. In the industry personnel questionnaire, however, a set of open-ended questions which related to improving the level of achievement of the trainees (students) and the weaknesses of the trainees were also included. Such items generate useful additional information which could not be obtained through the structured items.

Two methods of interview which are structured and unstructured are also used in this study. The structured interview method is used on ten random selection students. The questions are carefully designed in order to get the required information. However, the unstructured interviews are only for industry personnel and lecturers who teach English language in the Hotel and Catering and Tourism Management programme.

The students, respective lecturers and the key personnel were informed of the objectives and significance of conducting the research. They were also insisted to state valid and sincere responses. Besides, they would spend in filling in the questionnaire and the interview session. In addition, they were permitted to ask for any clarifications they might need.

#### **3.1.4 Students**

The study was conducted on students in their fifth semester that had just completed their six month's internship programme in various hotel and resorts in Johor. This cohort group was chosen because the researcher believed that they would definitely require certain level of specific English language skills and have collective views regarding their English language needs. The researcher also decided to choose this group because they were expected to have adequate knowledge about their English language needs as they had studied for more than one and half years at the polytechnic. Furthermore, their wishes and wants were supreme importance in this needs analysis research as replicated in many studies done previously. The students were enrolled in a diploma course in Hotel and Catering at the Johor Bahru Polytechnic. These students were required to attend two hours of English class per week and they were from one cohort group only.

#### **3.1.5 Lecturer**

Lecturers here refer to teachers who taught the students. All of them are considered as novice lecturers as they had limited teaching experience (not more than two years'

service). They joined the polytechnic as soon as they had completed their first degree programmes. However, the institution has put efforts to improve the novice lecturers by sending them for courses, enhancement programmes, workshops and conferences and promoted extensive reading to equip the new lecturers to cater to students' needs. They were willing to give their cooperation in playing a part of this research as a way of improving their approach to teaching and for the students' benefit.

### **3.1.6 Industry personnel**

Industry personnel here refer to hotels/resorts managers/personnel where the students had gone for their industrial training. All of them were experienced officers with at least 10 years of managerial experience. They had worked in various international and local hospitality sectors and companies before. These industry personnel worked at most renowned hotels, resorts and tourism companies.

## **3.2 DATA GATHERING METHOD**

### **3.2.1 Interview**

The researcher used two methods of interview which were structured and unstructured interviews. The structured method was used on ten selected students. They were chosen randomly. The questions were carefully designed in order to get the required information. However, the unstructured method was only used for industry personnel and lecturers who taught English for Hotel and Catering and Tourism Management programme. Lecturers were interviewed on their approaches and roles in the English language classroom while the interview questions for the

industry personnel dealt with the background information about their hotels/ resorts, their working experience and what the trainees/ students' lack during their training and recommendations.

### **3.2.2 Questionnaire**

Sets of questionnaires were given to students, key personnel and lecturers. The researcher adapted the Munby's Model for Specifying Communicative Competence to set the questionnaire. The questionnaires were given at the beginning stage, before the interview sessions. The questionnaire included both open and closed questions. The types of closed questions used in the questionnaires were listing and ranking. The first part of the questionnaire for students asked their gender, the second part dealt with what students felt about the importance of the subject, and followed by questions concerning skills they thought they wanted. The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to avoid misinterpretation of the questions given. However, the first part of the questionnaire for lecturers dealt with lecturers' opinion on the importance of English and instructional practice, the second part was on open-ended questions which require them to provide their personal views. Finally, the first part of the questionnaire for key personnel dealt with their opinion on the importance of English for hospitality industry, whereby the second part was on open-ended questions which require them to provide their personal reflections on employees' training.

The sets of questionnaire were designed to ascertain the value of the English language course with regard to the hospitality students' English language needs. It was also developed to obtain lecturers' and key personnel perceptions regarding the aptness of the current English language course

### **3.3 Measures**

This research involves both qualitative and quantitative data of information. The returned questionnaires were checked and the data was keyed in over a period of six weeks, from July, 2011 to mid August, 2011. Both descriptive and percentages were used to analyze the data. Most of the items in the students' and teachers' questionnaires are in the form of 5-point Likert scale. However, the industry personnel interview questions consisted mainly of unstructured questions and only qualitative descriptions of their responses will be used. The results of the study are presented in Chapter Four.

### **3.4 Research Design/Method**

#### *3.4.1 The Theoretical Framework - The Munby Communicative Needs Processor (CNP)*

The Communicative Needs Processor (*CNP*) proposed by Munby (1978) was chosen because it focuses more on students' communicative performance. In this study, the researcher focuses on students' linguistic competence and needs to prepare them for occupational purposes. This was due to complaints by the industry that their future

employees are not linguistically competent as their business deals with foreigners and locals.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyze and interpret the data gathered for the study. The first part of the chapter describes the background and characteristics of the students, lecturers and industry personnel. The second part of this chapter analyzed data gathered throughout the study regarding the characteristics of the linguistic needs of hospitality students' *needs, lacks* and *wants*; lecturers' practices for educational outcomes in terms of students' academic achievement and needs and industry expectation towards future staff performances.

#### 4.1 The Analysis of Questionnaire

The questionnaire for students dealt mainly with questions asking students' opinion on the preferences on learning English, relevance and practicality of the English class activities, materials or tasks, questions asking what they felt they lacked and questions concerning what they thought they wanted. In the second questionnaire (for lecturers), along with some questions concerning lacks and wants, some questions related to students' need are incorporated.

##### 4.1.1 Questionnaire 1(student questionnaire) Part 1- Gender

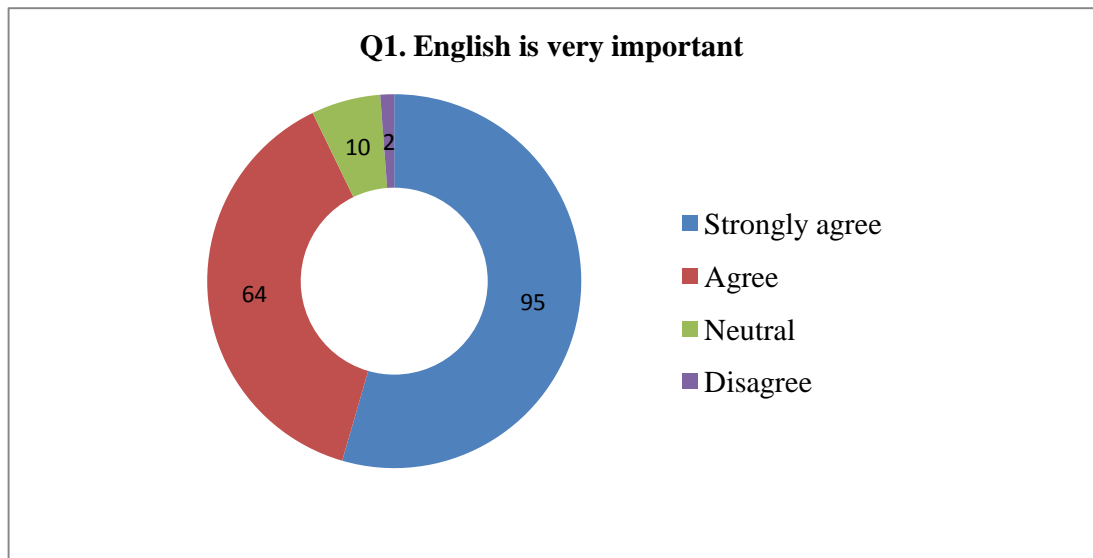
This study involved 119 (69.59%) female students and 52 (30.41%) male students giving a total of 171 respondents.



#### 4.1.1.2 Part 2 Question 1

This question was asked to obtain information on subjects' preferences about the importance of teaching and learning English for hospitality students. In Figure 4.1, the diagram shows that 95 of the total sample size (55.5%) strongly agreed that English is very important, 64 (37.4%) agreed, ten (3.85%) being neutral and two (1.2%) showed disagreement about the importance of English. Those two respondents stated that they believe they will be offered a job due to their qualification and skills not because of their fluency in English language. The percentages showed that most of the respondents (92.9%) felt that English is important for them.

**Figure 4.1 – English is very important**

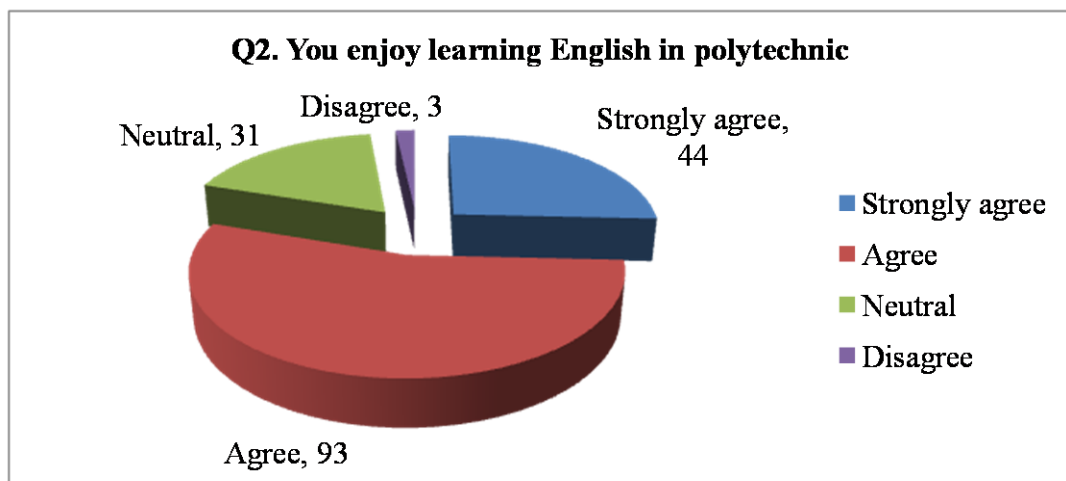


#### 4.1.1.3 Part 2 -Question 2

This question was asked to analyze the students' judgment whether they enjoy learning English in polytechnic or not. In Figure 4.2, the pie chart

shows that 44 (25.7%) strongly agreed that they enjoy learning English. 93 (54.4%) agreed, 31 (18.1%) being neutral and only three (1.8%) showed disagreement. It shows that more than three-quarters of all the respondents enjoy learning English in the respective institution.

**Figure 4.2. Do you enjoy learning English in polytechnic?**

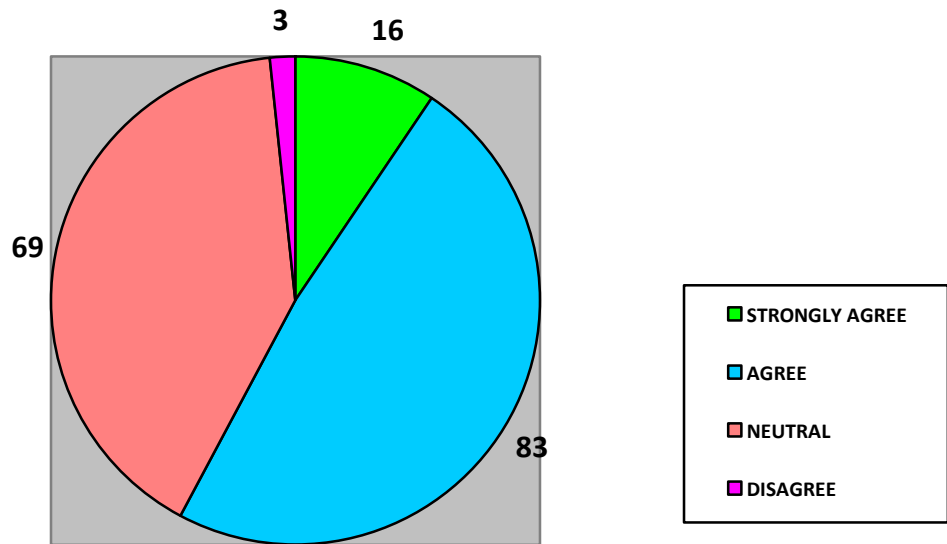


**4.1.1.4 Part 2- Question 3- Does the syllabus meet your English language needs?**

This question was asked to provide information on whether the syllabus met their English language needs. As can be seen from Figure 4.3, 16 (9.4%) of the subjects strongly agreed. 83 (48.5%) agreed and 69 (40.4%) of the subjects were neutral. However, only three (1.75) disagreed that the syllabus met their needs while undergoing their training. Here, it appears that the subjects felt that the syllabus had already met their needs but felt that there was still room for

improvement and the possibility of the course being reviewed and revamped to be considered.

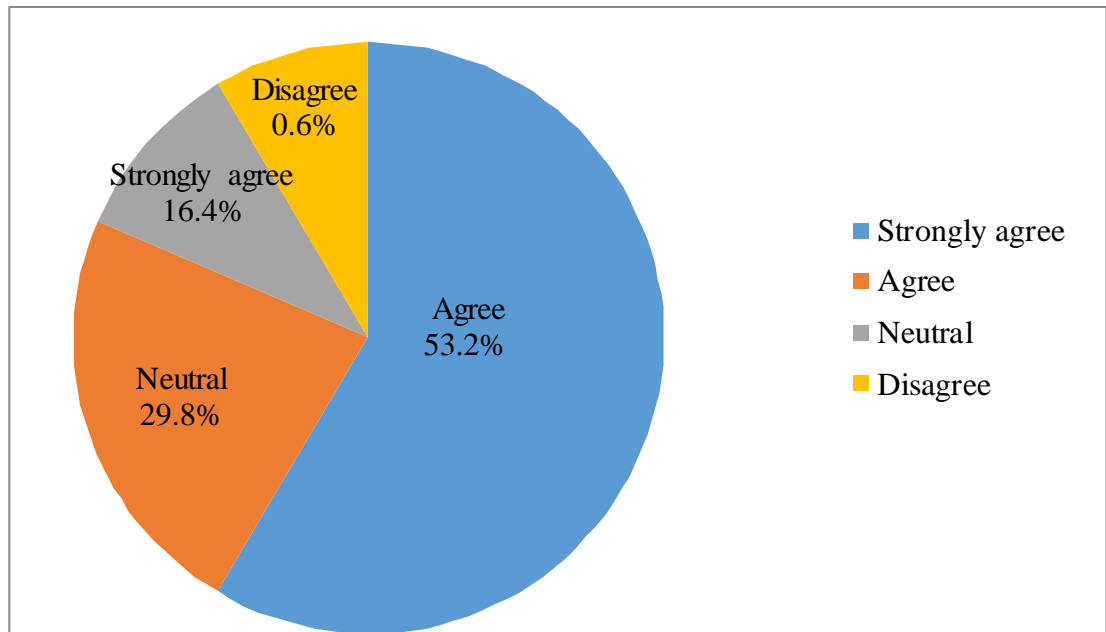
**Figure 4.3 - Does the syllabus meet your English language needs?**



#### 4.1.1.5 Part 2- Question 4

The pie chart in Figure 4.4 below shows that 28 (16.4%) subjects strongly agreed that the materials given in the syllabus helped them in their training. 91 (53.2%) of the respondents agreed, 51 respondents (29.8%) were neutral and one (0.6%) showed disagreement. Based on the data it can be inferred that the materials given in the syllabus is helpful for the students to do their training.

**Figure 4.4- Do the materials given in the syllabus help you in your industrial training?**



#### **4.1.1.6 Part 2 -Question 5**

Table 4.1 shows that 62 (36.2%) strongly agreed while 85 (49.75) agreed that speaking activities provided by the lecturer in teaching and learning in English classroom stimulated their speaking ability. However, 22 (12.9%) of the respondents were neutral and two (1.25%) showed disagreement. The results obtained suggest that the speaking activities for the students do help stimulate the speaking activity as well as confidence.

**Table 4.1 – Do speaking activities help stimulate your speaking ability and confidence?**

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Strongly Agree	62	36.2
Agree	85	49.7
Neutral	22	12.9
Disagree	2	1.2

#### **4.1.1.7 Part 2, Question 6- Question 9**

The bar graph in Figure 4.5 combines data from Question 6 – Question 9 of part 2 of the questionnaire. These four questions are concerned with the activities, tasks and texts provided in the syllabus or classroom instruction. Question 6 asked students whether activities provided by the lecturers gave them the opportunity to practise the language skills thoroughly (speaking and listening) or not. 47 (27.5%) strongly agreed, 86 (50.3%) agreed and 37 (21.6%) being neutral that the activities given them enough room to practice the listening and speaking skills freely. But, only one (0.6%) respondent showed disagreement.

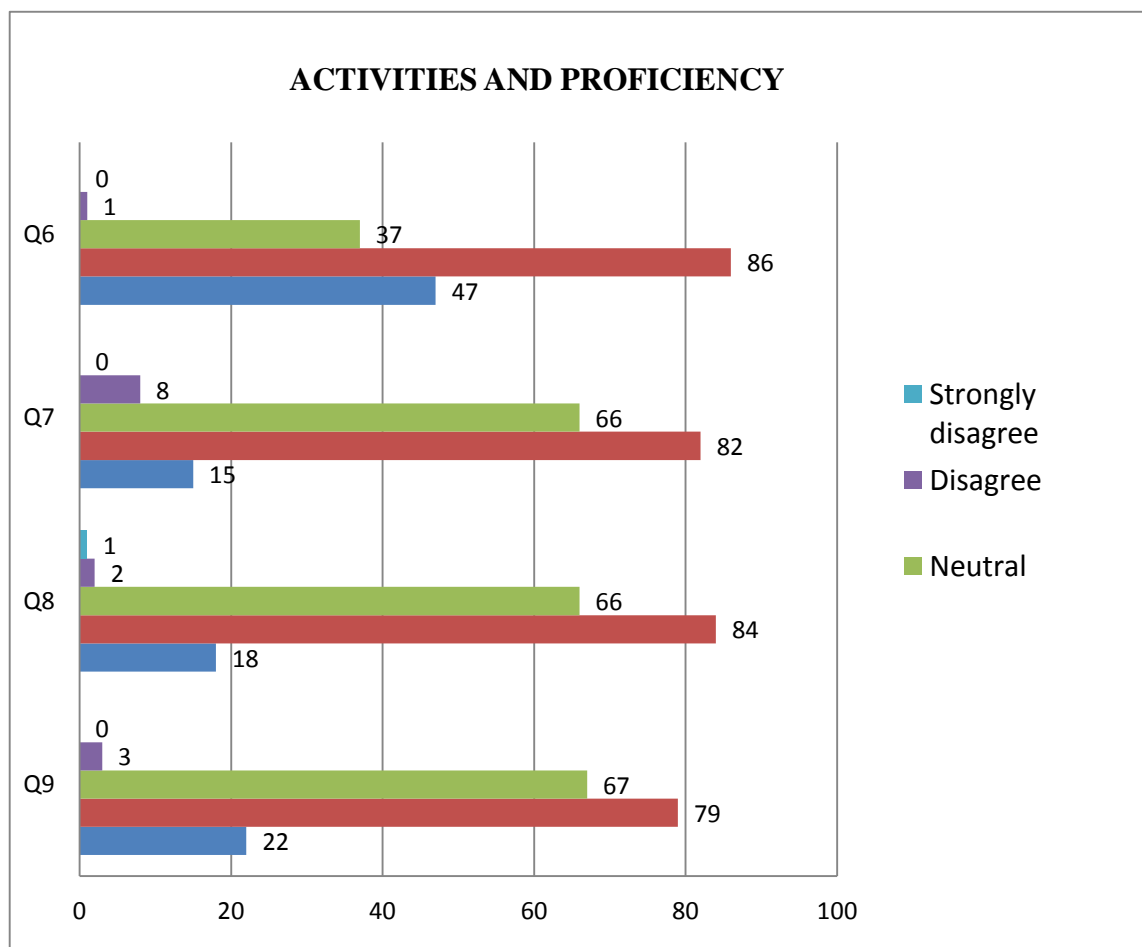
Question 7 asked respondents whether the texts and tasks in syllabus suited their English language ability and level of proficiency of English or not. 15 (8.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 82 (47.9%) agreed that the

text and tasks in the syllabus were appropriate for their ability and level of proficiency. This data validates that the texts and tasks have already met students' ability and level of proficiency. However, 66 (38.6%) of the subjects were neutral and eight (4.7%) disagreed that the texts and tasks in the syllabus are suitable for their ability and level of proficiency.

In Question 8, students were asked regarding their perception of the usefulness of the activities, tasks and materials used in the English language class. 18 (10.5%) strongly agreed and 84 (49.1%) agreed that activities, tasks or materials are useful for them. 66 (38.6%) of the subjects were neutral whether to agree or not about the usefulness of the activities, tasks or materials. On the other hand, two (1.2%) disagreed and one (0.6%) strongly disagreed about the practicality of the classroom materials and activities.

Question 9 was asked to provide details of whether the activities in the syllabus were meaningful to the students or not. The analyzed data shows that 22 (12.9%) of the subjects strongly agreed, 79 (46.2%) agreed whereby, 67 (39.2%) were neutral that the activities provided in the syllabus are meaningful to them. Only three (1.7%) of the subjects doubted the meaningfulness of the activities in the syllabus.

**Figure 4.5- Students' perception on suitability of classroom activities**



**4.1.1.8 Part 3 Question 1 and Question 2**

This part 3 of the students' questionnaire was prepared to obtain data about students' problems and difficulty in learning and communicating in the target language. As can be seen from Table 4.2, 73 (42.6 %) of the subjects had problems speaking English confidently but 35 (20.5%) did not have problems using the target language confidently. However, 63 (36.9%) of the subjects

were not sure whether they had problems conversing confidently in English or not.

On the other hand, Question 2 part 3 was asked to obtain information on whether the students had difficulty understanding English conversations or instructions. 78 (45.6%) of the subjects did have difficulty understanding the conversation or classroom instruction. 44 (25.8%) of the subjects did not have difficulty and 49 (28.6%) of the subjects were not sure whether they found it difficult to understand the L2 or not. Based on the data provided, the lecturers should pay attention to the classroom instructions given, whether to simplify or use vocabulary that students comprehend.

**Table 4.2 Problems and difficulty faced by students.**

Part 3/ Question no.	Question	Scale		
		Yes	No	Not Sure
1	Do you have problems to speak English confidently?	73	35	63
2	Do you have difficulty to understand English conversation/instruction?	78	44	49



#### 4.1.1.9 Part 3- Question 3

This part provides details to the researcher to check which language skills is most needed among students to improve their English language competency. Students can choose more than one language skills if necessary. Table 4.3 summarizes the results that were obtained. 19 (11.1%) students believed that they need listening task to improve their ability to mastering the language. 79 (46.2%) of the subjects felt that their language proficiency could be improved through speaking tasks. 16 (9.3%) agreed they only needed reading skills as they can practice their pronunciation and learn sentence structure. Reading skills would help them collect the necessary information and facilitate better understanding among them. Besides, six (3.5%) reached to an agreement to have more writing tasks to improve their English as they would practice the English grammar and functions in their writing. 13 (7.6%) students said they needed a combination of listening and speaking skills, four (2.4%) wanted a combination of listening and reading skills, seven (4.1%) thought combination of reading and speaking skills were able to improve their ability as they must have the knowledge to speak the language competently. One subject (0.6%) thought his or her English could be improved through combination of speaking and writing skills to attain better proficiency level. Three subjects (1.7%) thought that a combination of reading, speaking and writing skills would contribute to enhance their language competency. On the other hand, two (1.2%) of the subjects indicated that they needed reading, speaking and writing skills should be able to assist them acquiring the language better and also two (1.2%) opted combination of three language skills; listening, speaking and

writing skills were necessary to improve their mastery level. 19 (11.1%) believed their competency level with combination of all four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing would be needed to enhance their language competence.

**Table 4.3 Which language skills can help students to improve their language competency?**

<b>Language Skills</b>	<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Listening</b>	19	11.1
<b>Speaking</b>	79	46.2
<b>Reading</b>	16	9.3
<b>Writing</b>	6	3.5
<b>Listening &amp; Speaking</b>	13	7.6
<b>Listening &amp; Reading</b>	4	2.4
<b>Reading &amp; Speaking</b>	7	4.1
<b>Speaking &amp; Writing</b>	1	0.6
<b>Listening, Speaking &amp; Reading</b>	3	1.7
<b>Speaking, Reading &amp; Writing</b>	2	1.2
<b>Listening, Speaking &amp; Writing</b>	2	1.2
<b>Listening, Speaking, Reading &amp; Writing</b>	19	11.1

#### **4.1.2. Questionnaire 2 (lecturer's questionnaire)**

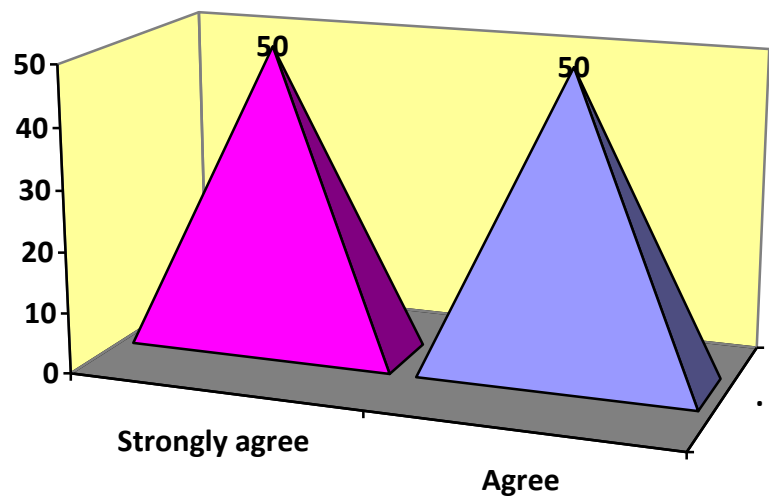
This questionnaire dealt with questions asking lecturers' personal information, followed by questions asking about the about the relevance and practicality of

the English class and teacher's attitude concerning student's need on the last part of the questionnaire. Question in Part 1 were aimed at gathering lecturers' personal information.

#### 4.1.2.1 Part 2. Question 1

This question was asked to obtain information on respondents' point of view about the importance of teaching and learning English. In Figure 4.6 below, the 3D pyramid chart shows that two lecturers (50%) strongly agreed that English is very important and the other two lecturers (50%) agreed. It shows that all of them were positive that English is very important.

**Figure 4.6-English is very important**

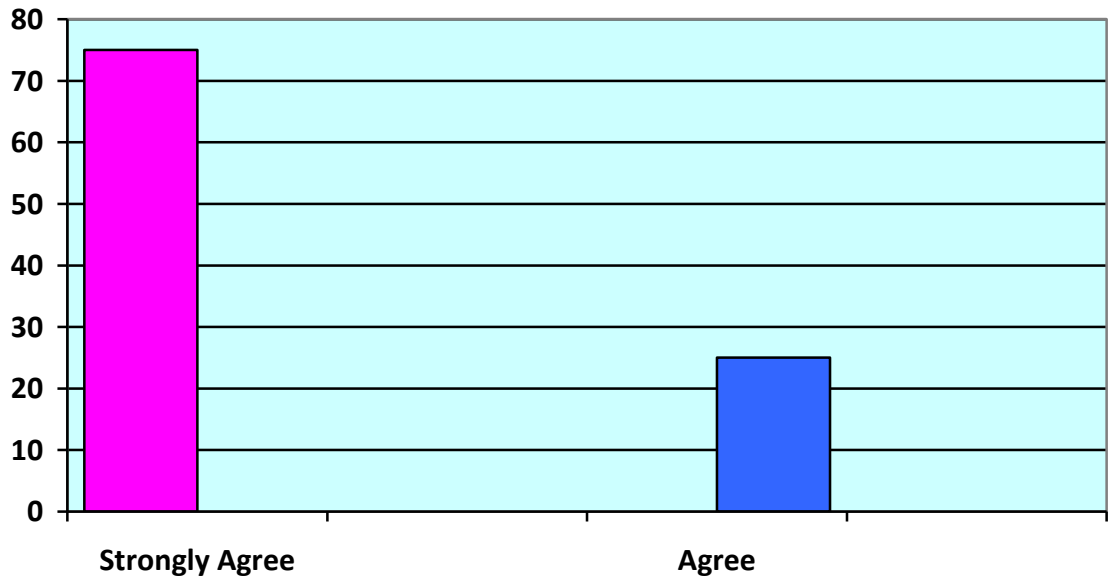


#### 4.1.2.2 Part 2- Question 2

This question was asked to analyze teachers' involvement in developing students' interest in using English. In Figure 4.7, the bar graph shows that

three (75%) lecturers strongly agreed that teacher must help students to develop interest in using English whereby only one (25%) agreed upon the same question. It shows that three-quarter of the subjects believed that teacher plays important role in cultivating students' awareness exercising English in their study and daily life.

**Figure 4.7- Teacher must help students to develop interest in using English.**



#### **4.1.2.3 Part 2- Question 3, 4 and 5**

Table 4.4 combines data from Question 3 – Question 5 of part 2 in the lecturer's questionnaire. These questions are concerned with classroom instruction and syllabus. Question 3 asked the respondents if classroom instruction must be taught in interesting ways. Two (50%) respondents strongly agreed and two (50%) agreed. Based on the percentages, the researcher

suggested that teacher should make the lesson enjoyable yet beneficial for the students.

Question 4 was to elicit the lecturers' opinion on whether the syllabus taught should be able to prepare students for work. Two (50%) respondents indicated that strongly agreed and two (50%) agreed. At the interview session, the respondents verified their answers by saying that syllabus must be carefully designed to cater to students' needs and specifically focused for their work. This data confirmed that the proposed syllabus must be able to prepare future graduates for occupational purposes.

Question 5 requested the respondents to answer whether the syllabus taught was able to improve students' basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening or not. Two (50%) respondents strongly agreed and two (50%) agreed that syllabus were able to build up students' four language skills. Based on the interview data with the lecturers or instructors, they agreed that English classes must concentrate on speaking skills rather than concentrate on reading and grammar. Having more role plays and speaking activities will help students to boost their confidence level. However, they noticed that the students might have problem dealing with cultural aspects as classroom instructions only stressed on general English.

**Table 4.4 Lecturers' perception on classroom instruction and syllabus.**

<b>Question No.</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Question 3	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Question 4	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Question 5	2 (50%)	2 (50%)

#### **4.1.2.4 PART 3**

Part 3 of the questionnaire was designed to obtain information about lecturers' willingness to help students improve their English and lecturers' perception of students' attitudes towards the subject. All questions in this part were designed as open-ended questions. Question 1 was asked to verify lecturers' readiness in providing individual assistance to students who sought their help. All subjects gave different answers. One instructor stated that she was always willing to help her students at any time she was being approached by them, one wrote she only provides individual assistance when the topics taught were difficult and needed more explanation and deeper understanding while one male lecturer would help his students only when they approached him and one female lecturer indicated that she would aid the students based on their needs, for example if they needed to improve their proficiency, she would do more drilling practices and presentations. The answers are portrayed in the Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5 How often do you provide individual assistance to students who seek your help?**

No of lecturer	Lecturers' answer
1	She always willing to help her students at anytime being approached
1	She only provided individual assistance when the topic taught were difficult and needed more explanation and deeper understanding
1	He helped students only when they approached him
1	She aided the students based on their needs

#### **4.1.2.5 Part 3-Question 2**

This question was asked to analyze lecturers' judgments on their students' attitude towards the English subject. In Table 4.6 below the bar graph shows that one lecturer stated that his students were motivated towards the subject while one stated her students' showed their interest to learn English and one wrote that her students liked the English class very much. However, one female lecturer stated that her students found English class a challenging subject. It shows that more than three quarters of all the respondents showed positive attitude towards learning English. Diploma in Tourism Management offered three classes where each class consisted of 28 students and Diploma in Hotel and Catering also had three classes with 28 students.

**Table 4.6 What is your students' attitude towards the English subject?**

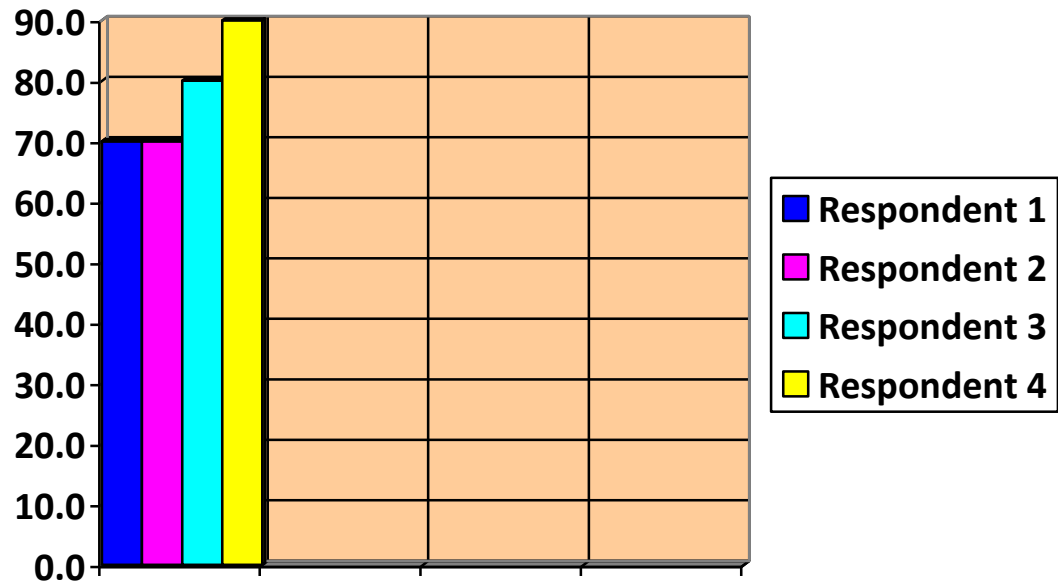
<b>No of lecturer</b>	<b>Lecturers' answer</b>
1	Students were highly motivated towards the subject
1	Students showed interest to learn the subject
1	Students liked English class very much
1	Students found English class a challenging subject

#### **4.1.2.6 Part 3- Question 3**

Question 3 asked lecturers to rate the value of assessments (presentation, role-play, listening tests, and quizzes) for students' achievement. The lecturers were informed earlier by the researcher that the descriptor range was from 1 to 10. 1 is considered as the lowest rate, 5 is medium rate and 10 is the highest rate. The rating procedure was applicable for Question 3 and 4 in Part 3 of the questionnaire only. Based on the answered questionnaire, two lecturers rated 7 over 10 (70%), one lecturer rated 8 over 10 (80%) and one lecturer ranked 9 over 10 (90%). Based on the ranking given by the respondents, it can be judged that the value of assessments for students' achievement was quite high. That means all respondents valued the prepared assessments for students. The lecturers' perceptions on the value of assessments are portrayed in the Figure 4.8 below.



**Figure 4.8 Lecturer's perception on value of assessments for students' achievement and performance towards the preparation for workplace.**



#### **4.1.2.7 Part 3 Question 4**

Part 3 Question 4 needed the respondents to assess students' performance towards the preparation for workplace. For this question also, the lecturers were required to apply the descriptor range as used in previous question. 1 is considered as the lowest rate, 5 is medium rate and 10 is the highest rate. In this question, one lecturer valued students' performance towards the preparation for work as 6 over 10 (60%), whereby one lecturer rated as 7 over 10 and the third lecturer considered 8 over 10 (80%). Only one lecturer rated 9 over 10 (90%). None of the respondents rated 10 over 10 (100%) for this question. It can be evaluated that students' linguistic performance towards

their occupational experience were almost achieved from the perspective of the lecturers but should be under scrutiny.

#### **4.1.2.8 Part 3 Question 5**

This question was the last question of the lecturers' questionnaire which asked whether the respondents practised student-centered learning or not in the teaching and learning procedure. The researcher asked this question because the institution encouraged all lecturers and tutors to apply the student-centered learning style in classroom teaching since it is believed that this style is able to promote students' high achievement in all four language skills.

Two lecturers (50%) practised this style and one lecturer (25%) applied both student-centered and teacher-centered style and the other lecturer (25%) only carried out the style depends on the topic learned by the students. The researcher then asked the reason for practising the mixed style from the respective lecturer. This female respondent claimed that she practised the combination of student-centered and teacher-centered due to topic taught. If the topic was a bit hard to understand by the students and need further explanation and deeper understanding, she applied teacher-centered style and vice versa.

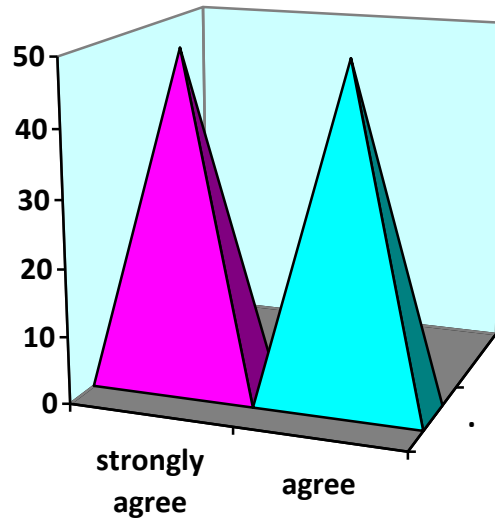
#### **4.1.3 Questionnaire 3-Part 1**

Questionnaire 3 was designed to obtain information from the key personnel. The key personnel acted as the supervisor for the training students. They were chosen by the company due to their extensive experience in the field. This study involved four female supervisors and six male supervisors giving a total of 10 respondents. Six of them had been working in the industry for six to ten years and three of them had been working for more than ten years in various hospitality sectors and companies locally and internationally.

##### **4.1.3.1 Questionnaire 3 Part 1- English is important for hospitality industry**

This question was asked to obtain information on subjects' perception about the importance of English. In Figure 4.9, the 3D pyramid chart shows that five of the total sample size (50%) strongly agreed that English is very important for those who involved in the hospitality industry, five (50%) agreed about the importance of English. The percentages showed that all of the respondents felt that English is important for those involve in the industry.

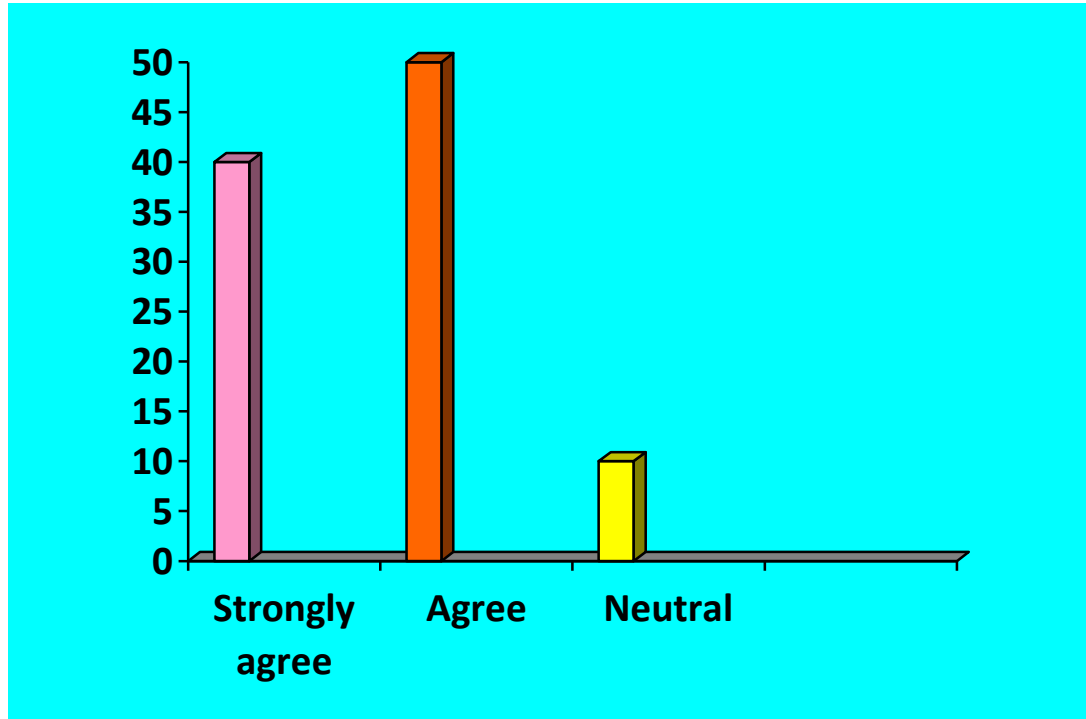
**Figure 4.9 English is very important for the hospitality industry**



**4.1.3.2 Part2, Question 2 - Employer must provide training to employee to converse in English successfully**

This question was asked to check whether the company would provide training to the staff in order for them to speak in English successfully with the clients. Four supervisors (40%) strongly agreed that the employer or company should provide necessary training to improve employees' communication skills. Five of them (50%) agreed while one supervisor (10%) was being neutral about providing training to the employee. The bar graph below shows the percentage of the data.

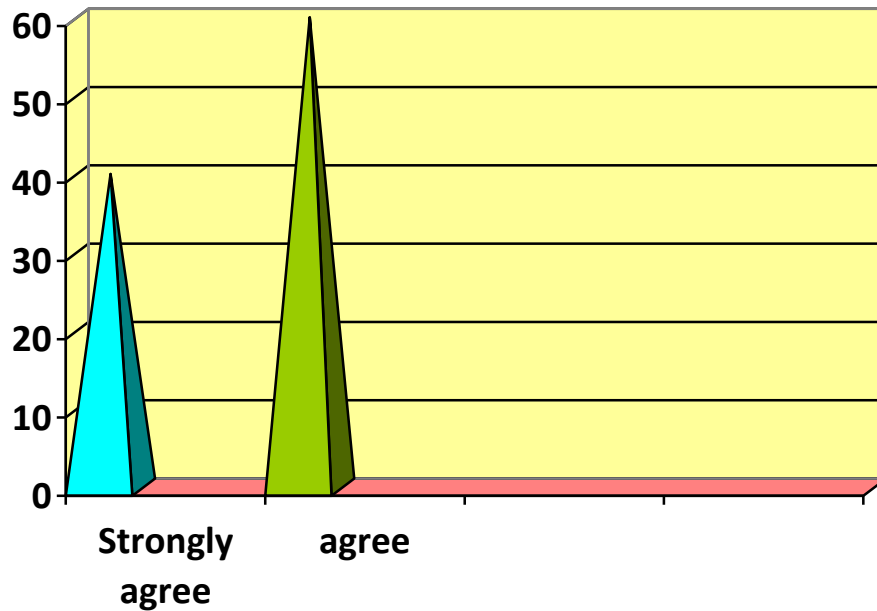
**Figure 4.10 Employer must provide training to employee to converse in English successfully**



**4.1.3.3 Part 2, Question 3 – Training should be provided occasionally due to situational changes of the industry**

This question was designed to get information from the key personnel whether the company should provide training to the employee occasionally due to situational changes of the industry. Four personnel (40%) strongly agreed while the rest of the respondents six (60%) agreed. This shows that training was one of the ways to upgrade employee knowledge and skills to be on par with the fast changes of the industry. Figure 4.11 below shows clearly the data in non-linear form.

**Figure 4.11 Training should be provided occasionally due to situational changes in the Industry**



**4.1.3.4 Part 2, Question 4- Employer would prefer future employee who can speak English fluently**

Key personnel were asked this question because the researcher wanted to know companies or industries' preferences of their future employees' English communicative ability. Six (60%) of the key personnel strongly agreed and four (40%) of them agreed that future employee with good English speaking skills are most preferred compared to those with limited English speaking ability. This data shows that the graduates should have good English speaking ability in order to join the industry.

**4.1.3.5 Part 2, Question 5 – The syllabus taught must be able to improve students’ basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening before they are sent for training.**

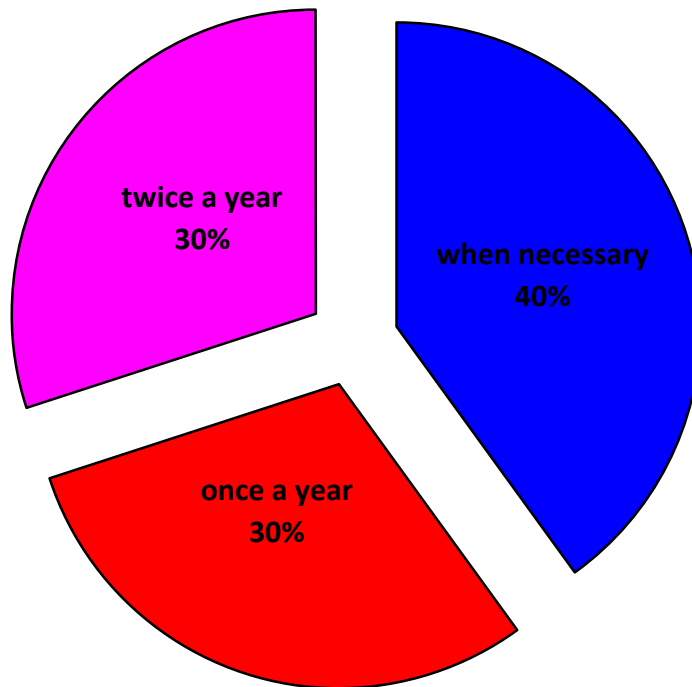
This question was designed to get key personnels’ opinion on the quality of the English syllabus for polytechnic trainees. Six of the respondents (60%) strongly agreed and four of them (40%) agreed that the syllabus taught must be able to improve students’ basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening before they are sent for training. When the personnel were asked to clarify why, they claimed that trainees with good English mastery level would have limited problems dealing with both clients and the management of the company. The company also did not have to send the trainees or their employees for training which can save them a big sum of money.

**4.1.3.6 Part 3, Question 1 and 2**

All ten key personnel wrote that the company has provided training or course to their staff or employee. The training was normally done in series of two or three sessions until the company was satisfied with the employees’ performance. The training was handled by the Training Section under the Human Resource Department of every hotel or resort. Figure 4.12 shows data for question 2 for part three of the questionnaire. This question asked the key personnel regarding the frequency of training or courses provided by the organizations to their employees in a year. Four key personnel (40%) stated that the training would be provided when necessary if the management agreed

that the employees needed training to enhance their existing skills or abilities. Three of them (30%) stated that training would be provided once a year only and the rest, another three key personnel (30%) from different hotel and resorts stated that their companies provided training twice a year to their employees. The pie chart below summarizes the results for question 2.

**Figure 4.12 Frequency of the company providing course to their employees**



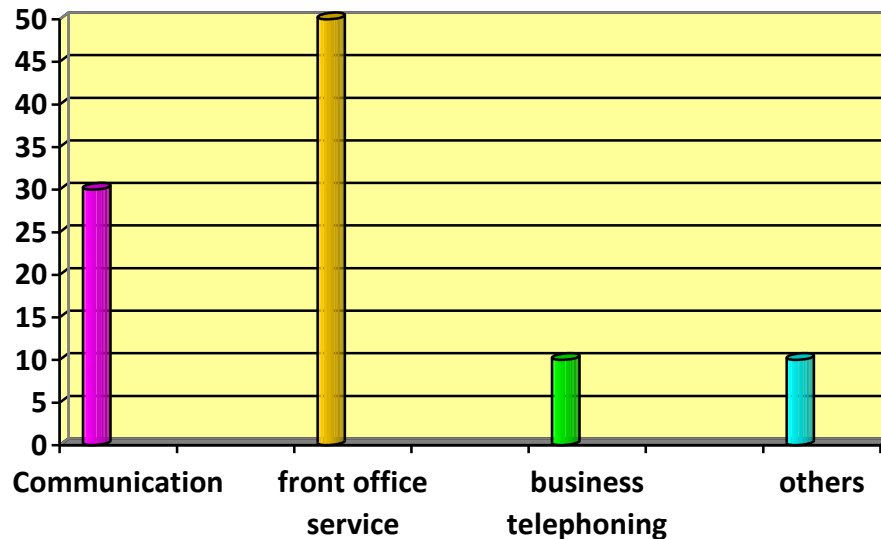
#### **4.1.3.7 Part 3, Question 3**

Question 3 asked the key personnel on the focus of training or course to their staff. Three key personnel (30%) claimed their company conducted communication courses, five of them (50%) conducted front office service courses, one person (10%) on business telephoning and note taking and



another one person (10%) on other focus such as management, business presentations and ethics. Based on this data, it shows that training will be provided to the employees to improve their knowledge of existing skills. All key personnel stated the training was provided to their employees to ensure they offered good service to their clients. Figure 4.13 shows the data on the focus of company training.

**Figure 4.13 Company’s focus of providing training to the employee**



#### **4.1.3.8 Part 3, Question 4.**

This question was asked to know the level of performance of polytechnic students’ towards the preparation for work in the industry. The key personnel were asked to rate the trainee students’ linguistic performance. The key personnel were informed earlier by the researcher that the descriptor range was from 1 to 10.

1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest. One key personnel (10%) rated 6, three personnel (30%) rated 7 and six personnel (60%) rated 8 over 10. This data shows that polytechnic trainee students' performance was above average. The researcher believed that students' language performance could be improved with serious training and useful courses offered when they come back to polytechnic for their final year study.

#### **4.1.3.9 Part 3, Question 5**

This question was asked to give ideas to the researcher on students' most needed language skills. This data was important so that necessary action could be taken to improve the level of language mastery ability among the trainees. Six of the key personnel (60%) listed listening and speaking skills for front office services, two (20%) listed three specific skills which were listening, speaking and writing which are for business telephoning and note taking and; another two (20%) named speaking skill only which is for business presentations and communication. Speaking skills in this research area deal with greetings and introduction, enquiries and asking opinions, interrupting, requesting, making clarifications, making suggestions and counter suggestions. Giving advice is necessary when the tour company is unable to fulfil client's request upon tour package or when the menu or hotel room is not available. However, listening deals with listening for details and confirmation. This data showed that most students had problem with speaking

in English. Therefore, further actions to improve speaking mastery level were needed.

#### **4.1.3.10 Part 3, Question 6**

This question asked key personnel to write their recommendation towards improving students' language competency. Four key personnel (40%) suggested conducting specific courses of communication to improve students' language competency, three of them, which amounts to 30% of the total respondents suggested using authentic materials and situations; and another three personnel (30%) stated that student's language competency could be improved by providing good assessment and simulations.

## **4.2 The Analysis of Interview data**

The interview methods used in this research were structured and unstructured interviews. The structured method was used on ten selected students. However, the unstructured method was only used for lecturers who taught English for Hospitality and Catering and Tourism Management programme and five selected industry personnel. The interviewed students, English language lecturers and industry personnel were chosen randomly.

### **4.2.1 Students' interview data**

Based on the interview with the subjects, they claimed that they only had limited opportunities to practise the English language due to limited contact

hours with the English language lecturers and the students were also unaware of what kind of language areas need more practice. In addition, six subjects who were interviewed felt dissatisfied with the existing English syllabus as they found the activities uninteresting and useless. They would prefer to study English through self-access materials and speaking activities that would be able to improve their communicative ability and confidence. The other four subjects felt the current syllabus already met their needs but with minor changes on the tasks and assessments.

On the other hand, they felt very uneasy and wanted to avoid prolonged conversation with their English language lecturers as quickly as possible. The students believed this situation happened due to their weaknesses of mastering the English language skills and lack of confidence. They had problems on how to converse with the foreigners due to cultural differences and accents like Westerners e.g. American, Italian and British.

The interview data collected from the students demonstrated that all four language skills were required to carry out the job tasks. However, some skills were found to be more vital than other skills especially when the students were given tasks that dealt directly with clients or customers, for example, front desk receptionist and tour guiding. The students must be able to listen to details and respond directly to the details. In addition, the students noticed that certain circumstances and job scope needs a combination of speaking and

listening skills especially when taking orders from the clients in the restaurant or café. They also must be able to give suggestions and counter suggestions to the customer. Giving advice is also necessary if the restaurant or the tour company is unable to fulfil the customers' request. Writing skills (note taking skill), listening and speaking were needed if they were given the task to work at the front desk as receptionist and discuss tour packages through phone calls. Hence, they must have ability to use varieties set of academic proficiency formally or informally such as listening to request and details, giving suggestions and counter suggestions, note-taking skills and responding to customer's request.

The data reported that most of the students had problems with speaking skills. Most of the problems centred on when students needed to begin conversation or respond to foreigners. The respondents were quite unsure about the correct conversation starters. Mostly, the interviewed students commented that they have problems in social skills especially communicating in English with their superior or co-worker and customers (two-way communication). Basically, they can understand the command or request from their superior or co-worker and customers but due to lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and pronunciation problem hamper the two-way communication process. This interview data was supported by findings

from the students' questionnaire as well as the interviews with the personnel of the industries.

The researcher also found from the interview sessions that students sometimes misinterpreted the information or ideas during communication and got confused when the foreign clients or tourists spoke too fast or used contractions in their speech. The situation happened due to lack of practice in speaking class where they did not really expose to variation of intonation and varieties of English accents. They tended to code switch every time they did not know the right words or expressions to express their ideas or feelings. This was happened due to lack of vocabulary and unsure the correct forms and functions in the respective situations. They were also likely to feel embarrassed to pronounce the words when they were unsure of its correct pronunciation. Therefore, lecturers should emphasize more on phonetics in order to familiarize the students to the correct pronunciation. Lack of speaking and listening skills among students have been one of a major weakness that leads to communication breakdown.

On top of that, the interviewed students were also asked which English language classroom activities were challenging to them. The students stated that in speaking activities, they were more challenged by presentations and role plays, not knowing the best way to pronounce in English, while in listening, they were confronted by listening to auxiliaries and contractions of

various accents of English. In terms of writing, students had difficulties understanding vocabulary, structuring sentences, developing ideas and understanding the main ideas of a text. Grammar was considered as the most difficult aspect of English for them. The students did not have many problems in reading skills except pronunciation of the words and reading according to punctuations (when to pause or stop). All of them wanted to improve their general listening comprehension, pronunciation and oral presentation skills and writing skills. The findings from the interviews with the students suggested that there was a strong relationship between the difficulties they faced in learning English and the skills they wanted to improve or overcome. The least needed language skill mentioned by the students was writing skill because only senior/permanent staff was given the authority to prepare reports.

#### **4.2.2 Lecturers' interview data**

The data obtained from interview session with the lecturers suggested that the speaking activities for the students did help stimulate the speaking ability as well as confidence. The lecturers claimed that they always considered the differences in the students' proficiency level, and this was done to avoid obstruction in understanding the instructions which could hamper the students' speaking ability.

In addition, the lecturers also suggested that more time should be allocated for activities on speech and articulation; and vocabulary especially on technical terms and jargon. Much time should be spent on communication for the workplace. Those lecturers proposed more activities focusing on speaking should be carefully designed or spent on communication in the specific working situation so that, students would have enough time and chance to incorporate and perform the restricted repertoire learned.

A lecturer stated that cultural differences might sometimes cause difficulties to the students because the students were not exposed much to the cross cultural classroom activities and assessments. Therefore, lecturers were convinced to include cultural aspects activities such as showing the differences between tea drinking ceremony among Japanese and Chinese cultures during their speaking class by focusing on the conversation starters and taboo topics during the ceremony. This statement was supported by students that they felt embarrassed during their first encounters with foreign guests because of differences in cultural aspects. They always thought that foreign tourists or clients were superior in terms of language ability. This was not due to students' inability to understand the command or request but lack of confidence, limited vocabulary and poor pronunciation which hampered two way communications. Despite the challenges and lacks their students faced, the lecturers agreed their students (research subjects) gave their full commitments in all classroom



activities. Two of the lecturers stated that their students' high motivation and another two believed that the students' intention for need for English class contributed to the smooth running of the English classes.

Based on the interview with the lecturer, they suggested to having more role-plays as class activities and simulations to practice for overcoming related problems. The key personnel however suggested having simulation as one of the assessments and educational field trip to some hotel, resorts and tour company as one of the activities which can help students see the situation in the real world. The researcher found the combination of suggestions by the lecturers and respective key personnel useful and effective to help the students to improve their lacks especially the linguistic competencies. The data gathered from the distributed questionnaires and interview sessions answered all the three research questions.

#### **4.2.3 Key personnel's interview data**

Based on the interviews with the key personnel, they stressed that reliability of the classroom activities and assessments should play a major function in the course which incorporated realistic tasks in students' assessment and learning environment. The key personnel also considered that the courses the students had attended were able to give them the expectation to adapt their current English skills to business circumstances

they will come across during their working lives. Finally, it was specified by the personnel in the industry that the course should at least involve one ‘issue’ of business English, such as business telephoning, business presentations, speaking in formal contexts, understanding, and the translation of information and knowledge of specific or technical language of business.

Based on the findings of the interview session with students, lecturers and key personnel, it can be concluded that a good language course not supposedly focus on language facets only but other aspects such as motivation, confidence level and time allocation so that learners have ample time to practice the language. The details of conclusion will be drawn clearly in the Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The study focused on the language needs of graduates of the hospitality programme in a Malaysian polytechnic. Specifically, the study was related to the communication needs for hospitality students from the Tourism Management programme and Hotel and Catering programme.

The first research question was intended to determine students' *needs* in terms of language skills to communicate confidently in English during their internship. The findings of the study demonstrated that all four language skills are required to carry out the job tasks. However, some skills are found to be more vital than others especially when the students were given tasks that dealt directly with clients or customers, for example, front desk receptionist and tour guiding.

The second research question was to discover the *lacks* faced by students in using English during their internship. The researcher found out that confidence was one of the factors that contributed to difficulty in using English among students as they were not confident enough to respond to conversations. This was due to uncertainty in the use of correct sentence structure and their concern about speaking with correct grammar.

The third research question was to obtain data on what is/are the most essential language skills *wants* by the students. The findings showed that speaking skills was the most essential language skills needed by students in order to prepare them for the hospitality industry. This finding was supported by findings from the students' questionnaire as well as the interviews with the personnel of the industries. However, certain circumstances and job scope needs a combination of two or more language skills in order for the students to perform better in communication. The data gathered from the distributed questionnaires and interview sessions answered all the three research questions.

## **5.1 Summary of the findings**

### **5.1.1 Students**

The data gathered from students' questionnaire and interview sessions verify that students' needs should be a paramount focus when considering an ESP course. The assessments and activities must be able to cater to students' needs and provide unlimited opportunities to use the target language freely and confidently. Real simulations are very much encouraged to expose the learners with the real life situation and prepare them for 'real world'. Willis (1997) agreed that the authenticity would permit for the 'simulation of the learners' and offer the learners the attempt to practise how the language skills that they already have could be familiarized to different working circumstances and job scopes.

### **5.1.2 Lecturers**

English language lecturers should play a major role in aiding the learners with new body of knowledge of the existing language skills. Terminologies taught must be referred to subject experts or subject lecturers to ensure the aptness of the usage. Different approaches might be needed in order to cater to students' various proficiency level. English language lecturers must always be creative and update themselves with the current teaching techniques and activities that can boost students' proficiency and confidence level.

### **5.1.3 Key personnel/industry**

Key personnel industry or industry itself should work together as recommended in the ESP Reciprocal Model in order to complete a 'perfect' cycle- not only as the end-user but also as the 'mould' for future trainees before entering the real working world. Criticism and comments by the industries should be taken as a positive aspect to reshuffle or revamp the existing syllabus to a better ESP course.

## **5.2 Discussion on the findings**

This research has attempted to look at the students' needs, lacks and wants in terms of language skills of English communication during their internship. The research is important because of limited research done on situation

analysis during internship and its application to developing a proper curriculum. All interviewed students stated that educational and job requirements were the major purposes that triggered them to learn English language. Considering this, the first step that should be taken by the instructor or lecturer was making the curriculum goals consistent with those reasons. Lecturers also must consider students' social needs and interests in identifying the gist of the courses, designing classroom planned activities and selection of materials as selected by the English language course lecturers. Cultural aspects should not be ignored as one of the subtopics or themes when selecting the materials for activities or assessments as this was much needed by the students as it was directly related to students' challenges that they faced during internship.

The data from the students' questionnaires has been beneficial in analyzing the problems related to the four language skills and the abilities students would like to improve. It is significant that all the students agreed that those skills were very important or important to success in the field. However, based on the interview findings, it cannot be established if speaking skill was more difficult than the other skills for the students. Therefore the proposed syllabus must be able to prepare future graduates for occupational purposes.

### **5.3 Implications**

The research done has brought positive changes to the institution as the research result were discussed in the department meeting for programme's improvement. The findings of the research have been taken into consideration by the management of the language department in the respective institution and more value would be given to the most essential language skill which is speaking skill-greetings and introduction, making enquiries and requests, making suggestions and giving advice for the learners in this explicit learning setting. The idea of conducting the research was duplicated for other semesters which offers English language programme. Teaching materials were also being reviewed and adapted to match the students' needs and competency. The proposed teaching materials, texts or activities were adapted to suit students' proficiency level and needs. The classroom activities are later changed to more role-plays and presentation to promote speaking activities for students. Subject experts were invited to sit together to evaluate the assessments and classroom activities to ensure the proposed activities were relevant and useful for learners. In order to provide superior English language syllabus, knowledge about learners' differences of specific needs must be incorporated and associated directly with the designed process, so that the teaching materials are not only adaptable, but also supportive for various range of students and proficiency level also accommodating a broader scope of learning modes. Further research into the application of ESP Reciprocal Model for needs analysis would provide interesting insights into how the model could be adapted or developed for language teaching and learning classroom. By

providing this data, it is hoped that all parties as suggested in the model work hand in hand whether to review or to re-design the syllabus and classroom activities so that students will be able to communicate in the target language freely and confidently.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the study**

This study has limitations. This study focuses on a Malaysian polytechnic and only one cohort group involved. Due to limited number of participants, the sample population is not accurately representative. The involvement of other polytechnics with similar cohorts of students might reinforce the consistency of the study. This needs analysis research should be done at all Malaysian polytechnics for every semester to ensure the validity of the curriculum and to produce graduates that meets employers' requirements and expectations. Funds should be allocated by the Ministry of Higher Education to carry out this research. Lecturers, programme experts, industries and other related parties should sit together to discuss and review the curriculum every year due to situational changes. Additionally, this research focuses on learners' aspects in situation analysis only. The findings might have been more comprehensive if the aspects of other facets such as assessments, classroom activities or specified programme were also discovered. In spite of the relatively small scale and limited range of the study, its results might not be similar to other higher learning institutions as different group of students had different difficulties.



## 5.5 Recommendations

To be successfully communicative in an occupational setting, students must be able to use the particular terminology characteristics of their particular occupational perspective. Hence, they must have ability to use varieties set of academic proficiency formally or informally such as listening to request and details, giving suggestions and counter suggestions, note-taking skills and responding to customer's written request. Writing skills (note taking skill), listening and speaking were needed if they were given the task to work at the front desk as receptionist and discuss tour packages through phone calls. On the other hand, students should know how to converse effectively, regardless of job-related situations. They also must be able to give suggestions and counter suggestions to the customer. Giving advice is also necessary if the restaurant or the tour company is unable to fulfil the customers' request. Therefore, lecturers must be able to ensure that all the skills listed above are integrated in the curriculum by re-designing or adapting the proposed activities in the syllabus. Students should be exposed to variation of intonation in speaking class and listening to varieties of English accents in order to prepare the students for diverse situations. Lack of speaking and listening skills among students have been a major weakness that leads to communication breakdown.

White (1998, p.41) stated that needs analysis should not only be regarded as a pre-stage for the development of language courses; in fact, it is an 'on-going cycle'. It is also can be used as an evaluation, to re-design, enhance and

execute language programme. As Brown (1995) pointed out, needs are unconditional, but once they are recognized they continually need to be explored to ensure that they remain bona fide needs of the learners involved. Due to that, English language courses need to carry out needs analyses as part of schedule review of its syllabus. The syllabus initially designed for a program which may not be tolerably addressing the adjustment that have occurred over time and therefore need to be reviewed and revamped. It is important for lecturers and curriculum developers to investigate how learners perceived target language which need changes over the program of English language. Identifying students' background, proficiency level and problems would serve as constructive and rich information for the curriculum developers or lecturers in determining students' needs.

It is hoped that the data obtained from this research might be useful to improve the proficiency or linguistic competence of the students and to serve as a model to what should be done in order to build better teaching and learning curriculum enhancement and evaluation.

## **5.6 Conclusions**

English language programmes worldwide have become risingly alert of the need of curriculum evaluation to cater both industry needs and situational alteration taking place. Therefore, English language courses need to be modified with the course syllabus where reviewing process should be put into practice routinely in

order to make required changes that are able to sustain outcomes for that particular program or course. As Nunan (1989, p.176) proposed, “the efficiency of a language course will be dictated as much by the modes and the expectations of the learners by the requirements of the official syllabus”. Comments and recommendations collected from industries and professionals are very much needed for the learners who will enter their specific field especially for vocational training as it has become beneficial to ascertain the overall needs of the learners.

The researcher’s own experience as an instructor also noticed that when the learning strategies were able to get learners’ interest, the process of teaching and learning was easier and useful. The language learning ambience was fun and students’ showed high interest in joining the planned activities. Students also scored higher when they preferred the learning topics or sub-topics and teaching approach. The researcher concluded that learners’ preferred learning styles or strategies also played an important factor in determining learners’ learning needs.

