SPOKEN COMMUNICATION NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR INFORMATION DESK PERSONNEL

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FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
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KUALA LUMPUR

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ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

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Personnel

Field of Study: Language for Specific Purposes

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ABSTRACT

English is considered as the medium of communication in different social and professional contexts. It is important to have the ability to communicate using the language in order to be successful in the job field. In the customer service industry which is a part of the business world, employees especially Information Desk Personnel are expected to have good communication skills as well as the ability to use the language to perform their duties as required.

The purpose of this study is to examine the spoken English Language needs and challenges faced by Information Desk Personnel working in shopping malls in Malaysia. The main aim of this research is to conduct a needs analysis of Information Desk Personnel in shopping malls, explore their needs, problems faced in terms of speaking skills and propose a course design focusing on speaking skills.

This study is a qualitative study complemented with quantitative findings in terms of frequency counts and percentages. A total of 40 questionnaires were distributed to Information Desk personnel from three different shopping malls. To obtain in-depth perception of the issue, 3 managers from the shopping malls were interviewed, 10 customers were chosen randomly to know their views on this issue and an observation session was conducted by the researcher to get a clear picture of the scenario involved, focusing on the communication between the Information Desk Personnel and customers.

The key findings showed that the English language, especially speaking skills, is important for the Information Desk Personnel. The participants agreed that speaking is the main skill they use the most in their routine job and findings reveal that grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency are important aspects of their speaking skills.

This study incorporated the Target Situation Analysis (TSA), Present Situation Analysis (PSA) and Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) in order to collect the information required. Recommendations on how to overcome some of the English language challenges faced by Information Desk Personnel working in shopping malls, particularly in Malaysia are included in Discussion (Chapter 5). Based on the findings, a course design was proposed to cater for the English language needs of Information Desk Personnel in shopping malls. The results of the survey would help related organizations such as the Tourism of Malaysia to design appropriate language training to meet the needs of Information Desk Personnel. Moreover, it is hoped that the study could also raise the awareness of learners' needs, which are important factors for designing the language course.

Keywords: Needs Analysis, Present Situation Analysis, Target Situation Analysis, Learning Situation Analysis, Course Design

ABSTRAK

Bahasa Inggeris adalah bahasa komunikasi dalam konteks sosial dan profesional yang berbeza. Ia adalah penting untuk mempunyai keupayaan untuk berkomunikasi menggunakan bahasa tersebut dalam usaha untuk berjaya dalam perspektif kerja. Seperti dalam industri Perkhidmatan Pelanggan yang merupakan sebahagian daripada dunia perniagaan, pekerja terutama Maklumat Personel Meja dijangka mempunyai kemahiran komunikasi yang baik serta keupayaan untuk menggunakan bahasa untuk melaksanakan tugas mereka seperti yang dikehendaki.

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pertuturan keperluan Bahasa Inggeris dan cabaran yang dihadapi oleh Maklumat Personel Meja bekerja di pusat membeli-belah di Malaysia. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk menjalankan analisis keperluan Meja Maklumat Personel (IDP) di pusat membeli-belah, meneroka keperluan mereka, masalah yang dihadapi dari segi bercakap kemahiran dan mencadangkan reka bentuk kursus dengan memberi tumpuan kepada kemahiran bertutur dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

Kajian ini merupakan kajian kualitatif dilengkapkan dengan penemuan kuantitatif dari segi kiraan frekuensi dan peratusan. Sebanyak 40 soal selidik telah diedarkan kepada kakitangan Meja Maklumat daripada tiga pusat membeli-belah yang berbeza di bawah sebuah syarikat. Untuk mendapatkan persepsi yang mendalam mengenai isu ini, 3 pengurus dari pusat membeli-belah telah ditemuramah, 10 pelanggan telah dipilih secara rawak untuk mengetahui pandangan mereka mengenai isu ini dan pemerhatian telah dijalankan oleh penyelidik untuk mendapatkan gambaran yang jelas tentang senario yang terlibat, memberi tumpuan kepada komunikasi antara maklumat persoel meja dan pelanggan.

Dapatan utama menunjukkan bahawa bahasa Inggeris, terutama kemahiran berbahasa adalah penting untuk Personnel Meja Maklumat. Para peserta bersetuju bahawa kebolehan bertutur dalam Bahsa Inggeris adalah kemahiran utama yang mereka gunakan dalam tugas rutin mereka dan penemuan mendedahkan bahawa tatabahasa, perbendaharaan kata, sebutan dan kefasihan adalah aspek penting dalam kemahiran bertutur mereka.

Kajian ini menggunakan cadangan *Target Situation Analysis (TSA)*, *Present Situation Analysis (PSA)* dan *Learning Situation Analysis (LSA)* untuk mengumpul maklumat yang diperlukan untuk kajian ini. Cara- cara untuk mengatasi beberapa cabaran Bahasa Inggeris dihadapi Maklumat Personel Meja bekerja di pusat membeli-belah, terutamanya di Malaysia telah dibincang dalam Bab 5. Berdasarkan kajian ini, kursus yang direka telah dicadangkan untuk menampung keperluan Meja Maklumat Personel di pusat membeli-belah. Keputusan kaji selidik itu akan membantu pertubuhan berkaitan seperti Lembaga Pelancongan Malaysia untuk membentuk latihan yang sesuai Bahasa Inggeris untuk memenuhi keperluan personel meja Maklumat. Selain itu, adalah diharapkan kajian ini juga boleh meningkatkan kesedaran terhadap keperluan pelajar, yang merupakan faktor penting untuk mereka bentuk kursus bahasa.

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Suchatra Singaran

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

IDP : Information Desk Personnel

ESP : English for Specific Purposes

TSA : Target Situation Analysis

PSA : Present Situation Analysis

LSA : Learning Situation Analysis

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a general explanation about the job duties of the Information Desk Personnel (IDP - this term will be used throughout this study) working in shopping malls will be described. In addition, the research problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, research designs and scope of the study will also be presented in this chapter.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reasons for learning". Various studies have been conducted in the field of English for Specific Purposes such as in the tourism, hospital staff, nurses, engineers and many more. This present study investigates the spoken English language needs of IDP in shopping malls.

It is important for IDP to have good communication skills as their job involves interacting with customers. According to Katz and Gibson (1987), to flourish in customer service; product, service provided and professionalism of customer contact must be considered. They stated that professionalism in customer contact means possessing good English Communication Skills.

In addition to this, as cited in the newspaper article 'Congratulations, you fit our bill!' by Azizan (2007), Deputy Human Resources Minister Datuk Abdul Rahman Bakar states that the lack of soft skills such as communication skills, problem solving and team work skills are largely responsible for the difficulties faced by some 90,000 young people in finding employment in Malaysia. Therefore, it is obvious that communication skills are the main requirements in gaining employment. According to

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Mehta and Mehta (2007) recent research on communication skills suggested that good communication skills are needed in order to achieve success. They suggested that good communication skills are seen as vivacious. Any business organization will perceive professionals having strong hold on communication skills as an advantage.

The importance and role of English communication in the workplace have been studied worldwide. The Graduate Employability Blueprint 2012-2017, released by the Higher Education Ministry, reported that graduates lacked several "key characteristics" such as a strong command of English, the right attitude and the ability to solve problems.

According to Chang (2004), proficiency in English means the ability to present ideas, explain issues and problems, to speak up in a constructive manner, to resolve problems, to understand issues and problems faced by companies and to come up with workable solutions to problems. These are all good communication and interpersonal skills sought after by employers. Hence, employees are expected to be able to speak fluently in English in order to 'survive' in their working worlds.

In Malaysia, communication skills play a vital role at workplace environments. Stivers (2000), has stated that oral communication skill in English is an important skill for employees to have in order to perform tasks efficiently at the workplace. However, a study by Kassim and Ali (2010), reported that a number of staff face problems in communicating well in English and they often face problems speaking fluently when performing their job tasks. One of the reasons behind this issue is that Malaysia is a non-native English-speaking country which uses English as an international language in professional areas, so it is expected for us to experience difficulty in using the language. The main problems which the employees face in using English are the inability to

produce correct sentences, lack of sufficient skills and knowledge of vocabulary and grammar (Thaveeprayoon, 2011). There can be many reasons due to these inabilities such as average level proficiency or ignorance of the importance of acquiring the language during tertiary education.

As this study focuses on IDP in Malaysia, the use of English language has been proven as one of the important skills needed to perform well in their job. Malaysia is well known of its various shopping malls that attract customers from all over the world and due to this; IDP need to have the ability to interact in English as the shopping malls are visited by the foreigners all the time. One of the main difficulties faced by the IDP in shopping malls is the incomprehensibility of certain foreign accents, such as the Indian or the Australian accent (Chenaksara, 2005). This is just one of the issues faced by the IDP. There are many other issues or problems that the IDP encounter while interacting with customers as they are considered as little ambassadors of Malaysia. Thus, it is important for the IDP to be able to use the language to communicate effectively with others so that they will have the confidence to handle customers worldwide.

With the importance of English in the business world, most companies have recognized the need to improve their employees' English language skills for the success of their tasks. Though a number of studies have been conducted to examine the needs of English in the customer service industry, none has focused on the area of English language needs for IDP in shopping malls. Thus, this study is conducted to assist and guide IDP who are working in shopping malls by conducting a needs analysis and proposing a course design focusing on spoken English language communication.

1.2   Job Description

IDP are the people whom the customers go to when they encounter problems in shopping malls. Efficient IDP are considered as excellent communicators and strong administrators. They must comfortably interact with individuals from of all levels or backgrounds. Employees who are in charge of the information desk in shopping malls usually carry a number of responsibilities. These responsibilities can be divided into four categories and the information stated was from the data collected based on the pilot study (Refer to Appendix A).

1.3   Research Problems

The speedy development in the business world is likely to affect language needs in particular communication needs and patterns. IDP working in the shopping malls are feeling the pressure of being forced to communicate efficiently because they are exposed to the varieties of English used by the customers who visit the malls. There is an important need to equip the IDP with oral communicative skills to meet the challenges of the business world. Many IDP are unable to communicate with their respective customers using English language. They tend to avoid speaking in English to customers as they are unable to speak fluently using the language. They also have difficulties in handling their job duties which require them to use the language to perform those duties.

According to the Corporate Recruiters Survey 2015 Report released recently by the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), 89% of employers placed emphasis on strong oral communication skills. This shows that oral communication skills especially using the English language plays a massive role in determining the

ability and performance of job seekers in Malaysia. This also applies to those IDP who work in shopping malls as one of their main job tasks is to communicate effectively with customers who visit the shopping malls. Their job tasks may not be as easy as it may seem as they have various tasks to be fulfilled as mentioned earlier. Their job scope requires them to have the ability to perform all four skills of the language, specifically spoken skills in order to fulfill their duties as IDP. In short, it is crucial for these employees to have the ability to use spoken English language efficiently in order to avoid communication problems or miscommunication with their customers.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study was undertaken to identify spoken communicative English needs of IDP in shopping malls, with an objective to ascertain and understand problems of their English communication ability and propose a course for them. Thus, the objectives of this study are as follow:

1) To investigate the spoken communication needs of IDP in fulfilling their job tasks.
2) To design a spoken English language course for IDP based on their spoken communication needs.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to carry out a needs analysis of IDP in shopping malls and propose a course design based on the findings.

1.5   Research Questions

In relation to the above objectives, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1) What are the spoken communication needs of IDP in shopping malls?

2) How would the stakeholders prefer the spoken communication needs be incorporated in a spoken English language course for the IDP?

1.6   Significance of the Study

This study will certainly help IDP as none has focused in the context of a shopping mall have been conducted particularly in this sub field. The following reasons will explain the importance of this study:

1) This study will provide an opportunity for IDP to improve themselves in terms of spoken English language skills.

2) The participating shopping malls can use the information from this research as to decide on the language ability criteria for recruiting new staff.

This study will help to increase the body of knowledge that is available in terms of course design and content pertaining to speaking skills in the business world of IDP. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be helpful to all IDP working in shopping malls.

1.7   Research Design

This study takes a qualitative approach to explore the spoken English language needs of IDP. Three research instruments were used to collect data which were the questionnaire, interview and observation. Some frequency counts were included in the findings based on the questionnaire to support this qualitative study. Next, separate interviews were conducted with three managers and ten customers at the shopping malls to gather valid information in order to support the data from the questionnaire. Last but not least, observation was done to get more information on the interaction between the IDP and customers.

1.8   Scope of the study

The focus is on the spoken English language needs of the IDP working in shopping malls. The details of setting and sample size of this study are as follow:

1) The study was conducted at three shopping malls in Malaysia. These shopping malls were chosen because they are situated at strategic places where they are most visited by customers; locally and internationally. The names of the shopping malls will not be revealed due to ethical considerations. The shopping malls are:

> i)   Shopping Mall A, Klang (15 participants)
>
> ii) Shopping Mall B, Klang (10 participants)
>
> iii) Shopping Mall C, Cheras(15 participants)

2) The participants were 40 IDP working in the shopping malls mentioned above where they serve approximately 50 English speaking customers per day. The researcher could only involve 10 participants from Shopping Mall B because

there were only 12 of them and 2 of the IDP were not willing to participate in this study. Due to ethical considerations, they were not forced to participate in this study. On the other hand, 3 managers (1 from each shopping mall) in charge of the IDP participated in this study and lastly, 10 customers (5 from Shopping Mall A, 3 from Shopping Mall B and 2 from Shopping Mall C) were selected randomly to become the participants for this study.

1.9   Conclusion

To sum up, the focus of the study is to conduct a needs analysis on the spoken English language communication of IDP in shopping malls. This study will benefit IDP working in shopping malls, customers who visit shopping malls and also shopping malls' management as it would help to enhance the image and performance of IDP working in shopping malls and provide opportunities to IDP to improve themselves in spoken English language communication.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses related literature on needs analysis in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The chapter is divided into eleven sections which are as follow:

1. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

2. Needs Analysis

3. Needs Analysis Techniques

4. Theoretical Framework

5. ESP Course Design

6. Parameters for Course Design

7. Learning-Centred Approach

8. Task Based Language Instruction

9. Components of Speaking Skills

10. Previous Studies

11. Conclusion

2.2   English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

To communicate effectively, it is believed that language especially English is very important to the students, employers, employees and everyone in the world. In keeping in line with globalization, the teaching and language learning has evolved enormously that leads many course designers and language experts to improve their teaching methodology and approaches to suit the learners` needs and the expectation from outside world.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define ESP as "an approach to language teaching rather than product in which all decisions such as content and method are based on the learners' reasons for learning". ESP course is designed specifically to help learners to deal with various situations that they will have to encounter in the real world and this course certainly acts a guide for them to face situations boldly based on their job specifications.

According to Mackay and Mountford (1978), the word 'specific' in ESP ought to do more with the purpose for which the learners learn. Mackay and Mountford define ESP as the teaching of English for clearly effective purpose. The purpose they refer to is defined by the need of learners which could be academic, occupational, or scientific. These needs determine the content of the ESP curriculum to be taught and learned. Mackay and Mountford also define ESP by certain participants. They stated that those participants are usually adults because they are conscious of the reasons to attend courses and there is a need for them to participate in courses (as cited in Romo, 2006).

Other ESP practitioners such as Strevens (1988) provide an extended definition of ESP of its absolute and variable characteristics. In addition to that, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) provide a modified definition by removing some of the absolute characteristics and adding more variable characteristics. Below are the characteristics of the modified definition:

- <u>Absolute Characteristics</u>

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners
2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves

3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

- Variable Characteristics
 1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
 2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English
 3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level
 4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
 5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems

This modified definition of ESP will be helpful in understanding what ESP is. It is vital that rather than simply focusing on the method of language delivery, more attention should be given to the ways in which learners acquire language and the differences in the ways language is acquired. With the variant of English to suit the learners' needs, designing specific courses to better meet these individual needs is usual in ESP. Taking these into considerations, an ESP course should be designed with students' interests and needs in mind, with regard to whatever their work or study needs.

It is believed that what ESP practitioners are really involved in is not so much of teaching English for specific purposes but teaching English for "specified people". This means the focus is on specific participants whose job needs them to communicate and use the language effectively with everyone around them. It is always important for the participants of ESP courses to be able to communicate effectively as communication plays a massive role in any working environment nowadays.

In conclusion, ESP course is not only about language proficiency but it is a course designed based on the learners' reasons for learning the language. There are a number of other definitions and characteristics of ESP but in general, ESP refers to a method which is based first on the learners' needs.

2.3   Needs Analysis

Needs analysis has always been one of the main aspect and essential part of English for specific purposes (ESP) practitioners in various perspectives that involve the researchers, course designers, material developers, testers and evaluators. It is the process of inaugurating what and how a course will be conducted. According to Piyanappa (2004), needs analysis is a way to recognize what a learner receives and helps to create the ESP course they require. The needs analysis which emerged in 1960s is a required beginning stage in an ESP course (Koster, 2004). It is the stepping stone in getting to know the needs of learners and design a course which caters their needs for the specific target language.

Ellis and Johnson (1994) add that needs analysis is a method of obtaining a detailed description of learner needs or a group of learner needs. It takes into account the specific purposes for which the learner will use the language, the kind of language to be used, the starting level, and the target level which is to be achieved. Information can be obtained from a range of different people such as company staff, trainers, and the learners themselves. It will have implications for the future training approach. According to Richterich (1972), needs analysis is about the process of gathering information both on the individual or groups of individuals who are to learn a language and expected to make use of the language they have learned in the real world depending

on the varied context of the usage. Besides, needs analysis is regarded as a systematic collection of information and the information is important in describing and validating a complete curriculum (Brown, 2006).

On the other hand, according to Iwai (1999), needs analysis generally refers to the process of collecting information about learners in order to know their needs for which the language needs are required to design a curriculum (Songhori, 2007). It is important to know the problems they faced in terms of language so that appropriate content and materials can be developed to help and guide them to improve in their required areas. Not only that, needs analysis can be defined in terms of linguistic deficiency; which is, describing the differences between the present knowledge of a language and what the students want to do at the end of any training period (Richards, 2001). In other words, needs analysis is a mean to know what learners already know and what they need in order for them to perform successfully in the target language exposed to them.

Needs analysis has a very important role in the process of designing and carrying out any language course. According to Iwai (1999), needs analysis means the activities done to gather information which in turn will serve as the foundation for coming up with a course design that will fulfill the needs of a particular group of students. Many authors and scholars such as Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998; Robinson, 1991; Jordan, 1997 and many more have recognized the concept of needs analysis.

Needs analysis has gone through various stages which have begun with the publication of Munby's Communicative Syllabus Design in 1978. Munby introduced 'communication needs processor' which is the basis of his approach to needs analysis. Chamber (1980) came up with the term Target situation Analysis based on Munby's

work and since then, various terms have been introduced: Present Situation Analysis, Pedagogic Needs Analysis, Deficiency Analysis, Strategy Analysis or Learning Needs Analysis, Means Analysis, Register analysis, Discourse analysis, and Genre Analysis.

2.3.1   Needs Analysis Techniques

In needs analysis, selecting appropriate data collection techniques determine the quality of data collection. The techniques of data collection play a huge role in helping or guiding the researcher to collect the necessary information about the learners and their surrounding in order to incorporate the appropriate content in the course design. Some of the most used data collection techniques are described as follow:

A. Existing information

Existing information comprises data sources within an institution or a company such as files or records which includes the important information required. Makalister and Nation (2010) mention that existing information is the simplest method of data collection as all the information required can be gathered easily from the available sources. The purpose of these secondary data is to employ any pre-existing information to confirm, modify and contradict findings (Hughes, & Tight, 2006).

B. Observation

Observation involves watching an individual or a small number of individuals and recording the behaviours that occur, then analysing the findings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Macalister and Nation (2010) identify behaviour observations as formal processes in which the researcher depends on checklists that are usually developed to investigate particular behaviour or actions. Long (2005) argues that observation is the most naturalistic data that may be collected as the researcher is

involved in the process, but it takes a lot of time to comprehend these behaviour and actions. Thus, it is considered as a time consuming method.

C. Meetings

Marczyk (2005) believe that meetings are structured methods in which participants can achieve certain tasks based on opinions and views. Their main resolutions are to discuss differences in opinions. They are regarded as a means for reaching an agreement at the end of the discussion.

D. Interviews

Interviews are the most common data collection technique to endorse understanding and gathering the truth. They are an open-ended type of instrumentation which involves questioning or discussing issues with people (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). They are two ways of doing it which are, it can be conducted individually: "the researcher and the interviewer", or in a group which includes interviewees that have the same interests (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

E. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are one of the most commonly used techniques since they are effective for gathering information on a large scale in comparison with any other measures (Nation & Macalister, 2010). They are easy to prepare, they can be used with large numbers of subjects, and they obtain information that is easy to tabulate and analyse (Ruane, 2005). A disadvantage of questionnaires is that the information obtained maybe fairly superficial or vague and often they need to be followed up by other research techniques like tests or interviews. On the other hand, questionnaires enable a researcher to collect data without requiring any personal contact with the respondent which means that they can surpass most barricades of time and space.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Although these terms have their own functions but Dudley-Evan and St. John (1998) came up with a recent model of needs analysis which includes aspects of all the approaches involved in needs analysis. The theoretical framework of the study is based on this model which is illustrated below:
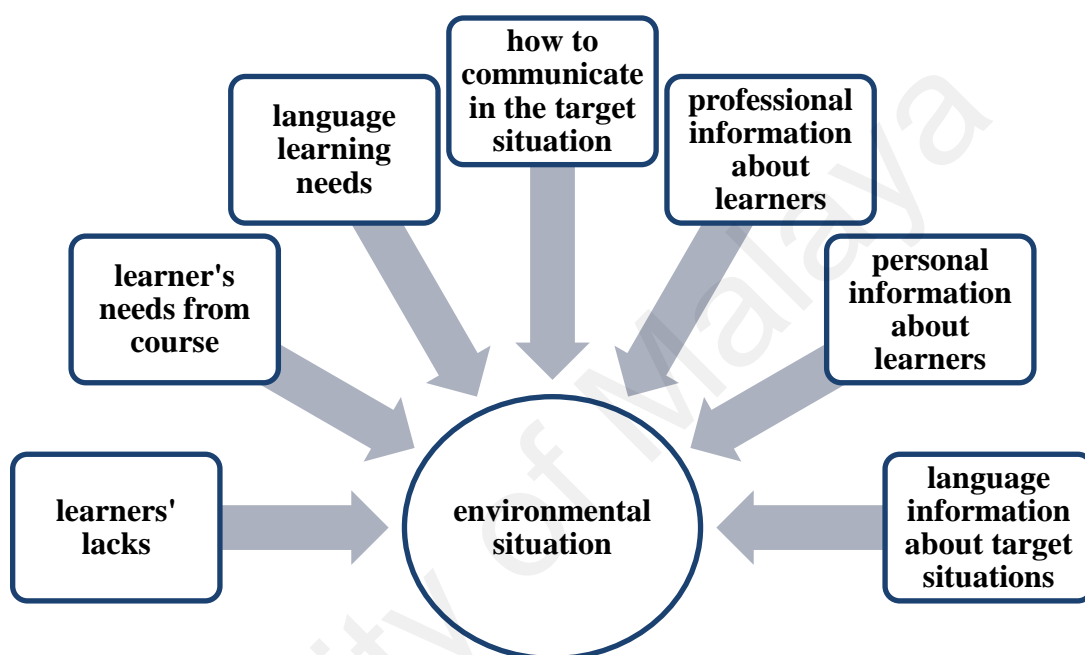
Figure 2.1: What needs analysis establishes (Dudley-Evan and St John, 1998)

Figure 2.1 illustrates the theoretical framework suggested by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998). This model can be viewed as the most comprehensive model for ESP needs analysis. This model of ESP needs analysis formulated by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) focuses on learners' professional information, learners' personal information, and learners' language information about the target situations, learners' lacks, and learners' needs from course, language learning needs, communication information in the target situation, and environmental information. These aspects of language needs analysis defined by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) are as follow:

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- Environmental situation - information about the situation in which the course will be run (means analysis);

- Personal information about learners - factors which may affect the way they learn (wants, means, subjective needs);

- Language information about learners - what their current skills and language use are (present situation analysis);

- Learner's lacks (the gap between the present situation and professional information about learners);

- Learner's needs from course - what is wanted from the course (short-term needs);

- Language learning needs - effective ways of learning the skills and language determined by lacks;

- Professional information about learners - the tasks and activities English learners are/will be using English for (Target Situation Analysis and objective needs);

- How to communicate in the target situation – knowledge of how language and skills are used in the target situation (register analysis, discourse analysis, genre analysis)

ESP is understood to be about preparing learners to use English within academic, professional, or workplace environments, and a key feature of ESP course design is that the syllabus is based on an analysis of the needs of the students. Thus, in ESP, language is not learnt for its own sake or for the sake of gaining a general education but to smooth the path to entry or greater linguistic competence in these environments (Helen Basturkmen, 2006). Needs analysis is an essential key to developing a course that will help learners to gain knowledge in a particular environment that gives them the opportunity to broaden their knowledge in various fields.

2.5   Language Needs Analysis

The key stage in ESP is needs analysis. Needs analysis is the corner stone of ESP and leads to a focused course (Chambers, 1980; Dudley Evans & St.John, 1998); Ellis & Johnson, 1994; Jordan, 1997). According to Robinson (1991), "needs analysis is generally regarded as critical to ESP, although ESP is the only educational enterprise which makes use of it". Hutchinson and Waters (1997) argue that "any language course should be based on needs analysis". Dudley-Evans & St John (1998) state that "needs analysis is the process of establishing the *what* and *how* of a course".

Needs analysis should be undertaken by ESP practitioners. The main sources for needs analysis are the learners, people working or studying in the field, ex-students and documents relevant to the field, clients, employers, colleagues and ESP research in the field (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998). The main instruments for conducting needs analysis study are questionnaire, analysis of authentic spoken and written texts, discussions, structured interviews, observations and assessments (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Robinson, 1991).

2.5.1   Components of Language Needs Analysis

In the section, the researcher would describe Target Situation Analysis (TSA) and Present Situation Analysis (PSA) and Learning Situation Analysis (LSA).

2.5.1.1   Target Situation Analysis (TSA)

Target Situation Analysis (TSA) is a form of needs analysis, which emphasizes on identifying the learners' language requirements in the occupational or academic

situation they are being prepared for (Ewer and Hughes-Davies, 1971 cited in West, 1994). The initial TSA procedures were designed to determine 'how much English' was used (Ewer and Hughes-Davies, 1971 cited in West, 1994). Robinson (1991) argues, "a needs analysis, which focuses on students' needs at the end of a language course, can be called a TSA (Target Situation Analysis)". Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) refer to TSA as tasks and activities where learners will be using English for target situation". According to them, TSA generally uses questionnaire as the instrument. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) explain that "TSA includes objective, perceived and product-oriented needs".

2.5.1.2 Present Situation Analysis (PSA)

According to Robinson (1991), "PSA (Present Situation Analysis) seeks to establish what the students are like at the start of their language course, investigating their strengths and weaknesses". Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998) state that PSA refers to the strengths and weaknesses of ESP learners in language, skills and learning experiences. Richterich and Chancerel (1980) suggest that there are three basic sources of information: the students themselves, the language-teaching establishment, and the 'user-institution', for example the students' place of work. For each of these, an ESP practitioner seeks information regarding students' respective levels of ability, resources and views on language teaching and learning.

2.5.1.3 Learning Situation Analysis (LSA)

"Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) includes subjective, felt and process-oriented needs" (Dudley-Evans & St. John 1998). LSA also refers to what do learners want to learn. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) state that LSA refers to effective ways of learning the skills and language. According to them, LSA also refers to why do learners want to learn. They explain that subjective and felt needs are derived from insiders and relate to cognitive and affective factors. Therefore, 'to feel confident' is a subjective/felt need (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998).

2.6   ESP Course Design

It is important to know what language is to be taught when creating a course design. In order to specify what language will be taught, items are typically listed and referred to as the syllabus. Table 2.1 shows a general view of the syllabus.

1. Consists of a comprehensive list of content intems (words, structures, topics) and process items (tasks, methods)
2. Is ordered (easier, more essential items first)
3. Has explicit objectives (usually expressed in the introduction)
4. Is a public document
5. May indicate a time schedule
6. May indicate preferred methodology or approach
7. May recommend materials

Table 2.1: Characteristics of a syllabus

There has always been misperception in the literature between the terms 'curriculum' and 'syllabus'. It is vital to address this confusion since these terms can be very close in meaning. According to Grave (1996), curriculum is considered as a broad statement of

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the philosophy, purposes, design and implementation of the entire language teaching course and the syllabus as a specification and ordering of content of a course. As for this study, language was construed as a set of communicative purposes where a list of various pragmatic functions or speech acts of language (such a request, report, and describe) have been included in the course content.

It is understood that it is not possible to teach all the aspects of a language, so teachers and course designers must be selective in choosing the appropriate language items that is required by the learners. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the selection of course content reflects the ideas of language learning

2.6.1   Parameters for Course Design

Course design refers to the process of organizing and arranging the elements of curriculum into a coherent pattern. To develop a course design, a researcher needs to consider or ask a list of questions in order to provide the necessary information for the process of designing a syllabus (Hutchinson and Waters, 1986). In designing ESP course, some experts in language curriculum suggest recognizing the foundation, principles or theories fundamental to the arrangement of course elements. Having recognized all this information will help a researcher to come up with a course design that caters to the needs of learners.

In today's globalized teaching and learning contexts, ESP courses incline to relate to both language teaching and language training at the same time but tend to focus on the process-oriented approach in arranging students' needs with their present working scenarios in an equivalent form.

With these concerns in mind, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) had discussed the criteria for ESP course design and set forth useful steps for ESP teachers and course

designers to mull over. These concerns surrounding course design were itemized by them in the form of the following questions:

- Should the course be *intensive* or *extensive*?
- Should the learners' performance be *assessed* or *non-assessed*?
- Should the course deal with *immediate needs* or with *delayed needs*?
- Should the role of the teacher be that of the *provider* of knowledge and activities, or should it be as *facilitator* of activities arising from learners' expressed wants?
- Should the course have a *broad* focus or *narrow* focus?
- Should the course be *pre-study* or *pre-experience* or *run parallel* with the study or experience?
- Should the materials be *common-core* or *specific* to learners' study or work?
- Should the group taking the course be *homogenous* or should it be *heterogeneous*?
- Should the course design be *worked out by the language teacher* after consultation with the learners and the institution, or should it be *subject to a process of negotiation* with the learners?

Prior to planning the course design, ESP teacher can be well informed by asking these questions if the teacher has to balance some of these parameters which are correlated to institutional and learner expectations (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998). With regards to this, these parameters of course design were reflected upon and adhered to by the researcher in designing the course at the end of this research.

2.7 Learning-centered Approach

Learning-centred approach considers the learners' learning needs at every step of the course design. Consideration must be given to the learning needs at the time of the needs analysis. One must be aware of factors such as why learners want to learn, how

learners learn, who they are, what resources are available, and other factors and others while designing the course. A learning-centred approach to learning and teaching sees learning as the active construction of meaning and teaching as the act of guiding, scaffolding and facilitating learning. This approach is built upon the learners' prior experience (Hutchinson and Waters. 1987).

A learning-centered approach provides opportunities for students to practice critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and decision making. This involves recall, application, analysis, synthesis, prediction and evaluation; all of which contribute to the development and enhancement of conceptual understandings. A learning-centered approach also encourages students to demonstrate rights of their ideas and to reflect on and monitor their thinking as they make decisions and take action. In this approach, a teacher's role is minimal in which the teacher is expected to guide the learners to the right path and the rest of the learning process will be the learners' responsibility to be taken care of.

In the learning-centred class, learners do not depend on their teacher all the time. They value each other's contributions, and they cooperate, learn from each other, and help each other. The emphasis is on working together- in pairs, in groups, and as a whole class. The teacher helps them to develop their language skills. A learning-centred classroom is a place where learners' needs are considered, as a group and as individuals, and they are encouraged to participate in the learning process all the time (Jones, 2007). In this method, the teacher is considered as a member of the team, as a participant in the learning process.

Widdowson (1983) says that a basic principle underlying all communicative approaches is that learners must learn not only to make sentences grammatically correct

but must also develop the ability to use language to carry out various real-world tasks. In this present study, a learning centred approach was used in creating the course design for the Information Desk Personnel as they are believed to use the language as a communicative purpose in their working environment.

According to Prabhu (1987), learning is more than just presenting language items or skills and strategies. In other words, it is not just the content of what is learnt that is important but also the activity through which it is learnt. So, it is important to conduct enjoyable activities based on the content so that the learners will develop the interest to learn and gain knowledge by participating actively in the activities conducted. In a learning centred approach, learners' interests, enjoyment, influence and their involvement need to be taken into consideration so that the course design created can be used in a more dynamic way that will motivate the learners in all perspectives. The simplest way of achieving this is to break down the course design process in two levels (See figure 2.2). The ESP syllabus is usually derived from a detailed analysis of the language features of the target situation but it is unnecessary to analyse language features in detail before the materials are started. A general syllabus outlining the topic areas and the communicative tasks of the target situation is all that is required at the beginning. This general syllabus can be used as the basis for the initial selection of activities or materials. This gives the opportunity to the materials writer to consider the factors emerging from the analysis of the learning situation. The materials themselves will produce a detailed language syllabus. This materials-generated syllabus can then be checked against an independent syllabus produced from the needs analysis and necessary adjustments can be made. The role of the syllabus in a learning centred approach is shown the figure below:
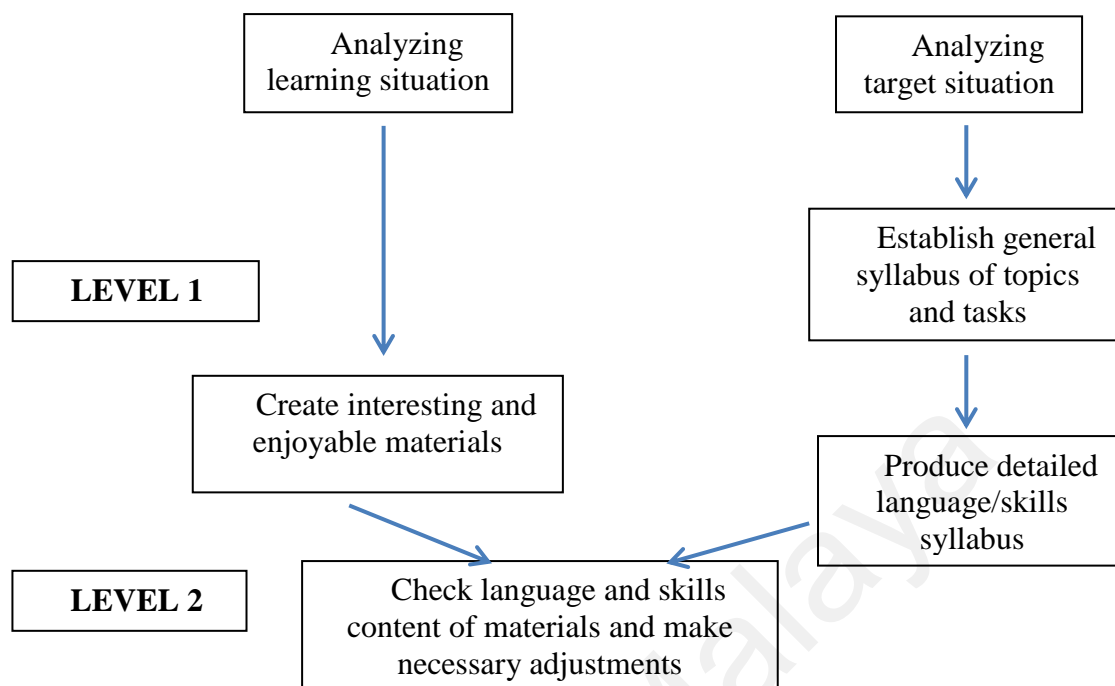
Figure 2.2: Role of Syllabus in a Learning Centered Approach

(Helen Basturkmen, 2009, pg23)

2.8   Task-based language Instruction

Identifying an organizational structure for a course is very crucial as it involves the learning process of the learners at every stage of the course. A course is designed for an ESP program focusing mostly on task-based instruction at the end of this study, and was designed especially for Information Desk Personnel working in shopping malls. Being capable of using a particular language in real-world communication has become the main objective in the field of language teaching (Richards, 2001). Using a particular language especially English to communicate is considered as the most important task in every industry or institutions today. It is clear that in a teaching learning process, conducting activities that involve learners to perform tasks by themselves will help them to build confident in dealing with situations in real world.

In task-based instruction, learners participate in communicative tasks in English. Tasks are defined as activities that can stand alone as fundamental units and that require comprehending, producing, manipulating, or interacting in authentic language while attention is principally paid to meaning rather than form (Nunan, 1988). Instead of beginning the design process with lists of grammatical, functional-notional, and other items, the designer conducts a needs analysis which yields a list of the target tasks that the targeted learners will need to carry out in the 'real-world' outside the classroom. Hutchinson and Waters (1983) suggest that the best work in the ESP area usually focuses on a process rather than a product. However, in real world situations, language often acts as a means in completing tasks. Therefore, ESP should pay attention to not only the process of learning, but also the outcome.

Teaching enjoyable tasks can create encouraging learning conditions for learners' who study ESP. Involving learners in performing tasks that are relevant to their profession, increases learners' motivation. Task- based learning in language teaching has become an important approach in the recent years because it endorses communication and social interaction, referring to learners doing authentic tasks (Ellis, 2003).

2.9   Components of Speaking Skills

According to Jordan (1997), speaking for specific purposes is used to describe spoken language in various academic settings. Speaking for specific purposes refers to participation in tutorials and seminars, asking questions in lectures, oral presentations, verbalizing data and giving oral instructions in seminars and laboratories and social

interaction with other learners. On the other hand, Syakur (1987) state that there are five components of speaking skill and they are as follows:

Skill	Description
1) Pronunciation	Pronunciation is the way for learners to produce clearer language when they speak. It deals with the phonological process that refers to the component of a grammar made up elements and principles that determine how sounds vary and pattern in a language. In short, pronunciation is a way for someone to produce appropriate utterances.
2) Grammar	It is required for learners to arrange a correct sentence in conversation. The learner's ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical form in appropriate ones.
3) Vocabulary	This means the use of appropriate diction in communication. Without having good vocabulary knowledge, one will not be able to convey messages.
4) Fluency	Defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency in speaking is the aim of many language learners. Signs of fluency include a reasonably fast speed of speaking and only a small number of pauses. It is about a speaker's skill in the speed of speaking and he or she does not spend a lot of time to convey the intended idea.
5) Comprehension	It is a subject to respond to speech as well as to initiate it. It is important to understand the message received in order to be able to respond correctly.

Table 2.2: Five Components of Speaking Skills

In other words, firstly, pronunciation is the method for learners to produce clearer language when they speak. Next, grammar is arranging a correct sentence in conversation, followed by vocabulary which is the words used to express their ideas. Thirdly, fluency is the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Finally, comprehension is a subject to respond to speech as well as to initiate it. These components can be used to make ESP learners improve their speaking in classrooms and as for this present study, these components were related to the findings and a detailed explanation was given in the discussion (chapter 5).

2.10   Previous Studies

Although studies on Information Desk Personnel in shopping malls have not be conducted before but a number of studies in the area of ESP such as engineering, nursing, travel agents, front desk officers in hotels and so on have been carried out worldwide. Since this study focuses on the speaking skill practiced or used by the Information Desk Personnel, it is important to pay attention on the language use and functional explanations of language. Table 2.3 below shows an overview of the past studies in the field of ESP which are related to the present study.

	RESEARCHER/ YEAR	STUDY/BOOK	FINDINGS	APPROACH/ METHOD/ PARTICIPANTS
1.	Kuen (2001)	An investigation into the Communicative Needs in Sales in a Malaysian Business Context	Sales personal needed to communicate in English both in spoken and written mode.	**Ethnographic approach:** 1) Observation 2) Questionnaire 3) Interview 4) Examination of document **Participants:** Staff of a group of companies specializing in the supply of specialist electrical equipment
2.	Ravisuda Aunruen (2005)	Needs Analysis of English for Travel Agents in Chiang Mai	Travel Agents mostly required English language especially speaking skills to communicate with clients.	**Quantitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire 2) Interview 3) Observation **Participants:** 365 travel agents from 109 registered travel agencies in Chiang Mai
3.	Jin Long (2007)	The English Proficiency of the hotel front desk staff in communication with their guests in Chiang Mai	Hotel front desk staff required the speaking and listening skills most.	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire 2) Interview **Participants:** 120 Hotel front desk staff
4.	Sansanee Yhouyhen (2008)	English Language Needs of Information Officers at the Bangkok Tourist Division	Respondents had the biggest problem with speaking and listening.	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire **Participants:** 50 information officers at the Bangkok Tourist

				division
5.	Liang Ting (2010)	An ESP Course Design for Airport Information Desk Staff	Information desk staff working at airports rely on language abilities (spoken and written) and communicative skills to deal with enquiries and requests of traveler.	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire 2) Interview 3) information from airport's website **Participants:** 40 Information Desk personnel at Beijing International airport
6.	Kamiwan Charunsri (2011)	The needs and problems of English Language Skills for the Hotel Front Office Staff in China Town Bangkok	Speaking skill is the most important skill needed in communicating in English with customers.	**Mixed-Method:** 1) Questionnaire 2) Semi-structured interview **Participants:** 450 Thai professional from local and international companies in Asoke, Sukhumvit business area in Bangkok, Thailand.
7.	Nalini Arumugam & Naginder Kaur (2011)	Needs Analysis on the Importance of English Communication Skills for Medical Assistants	Medical assistants need English language for career needs and function in society. Language skills such as grammar, speaking, listening, writing and reading were all marked as being vital to their job.	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire 2) Interview **Participants:** 1) 50 Medical assistants 2) Administrator of the Human Resource Department 3) Deputy Director of the hospital
8.	Mohammad Ali	English language Oral Communication	Communication skills (speaking and listening)	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire

	& Noor Aireen (2012)	Needs at the Workplace	play the fundamental role at workplace situations.	**Participants:** 136 Human Resource Development undergraduates in UTM
9.	Nawamin Prachanant (2012)	A needs analysis on English Language Use in Tourism	Speaking is most important skill and the three most relevant functions in using English language are giving information, providing services and offering help	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire **Participants:** 40 tourism employees
10.	Josiane Gass (2012)	Needs Analysis and Situational Analysis: Designing an ESP Curriculum for Thai Nurses	Nurses lacked speaking and listening skills as well as vocabulary related to work.	**Qualitative approach:** 1) Questionnaire 2) Observation 3) Interview **Participants:** 1) Nurses 2) Patients 3)Hospital Directors

Table 2.3: Overview of Previous Studies

Kuen (2001) examined the communicative needs in sales in a Malaysian business context. This ethnographic study looked at the communicative needs of sales personnel of a Malaysian owner-managed group of companies. More specifically, it focused on the productive skills of speaking and writing which sales personnel needed in their job, and the types of communicative events sales personnel were involved in and the communicative skills that they needed. The research design is divided into two parts in which the first part is the pre-field where the researcher identified and specified the sales personnel and the second part is the in-field in which the researcher focused on finding out the background of the study. The methodology included observation,

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questionnaire, interview and examination of documents. The findings showed that sales personal needed to communicate in English both in spoken and written mode to perform effectively in their job. The speaking skills were divided into four different areas which were the grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. The four methods used in collecting data for the findings have helped Kuen to collect adequate information in order to find out the language needs of the sales personnel. This research is related to the present study as the focus is on speaking skills and various instrumentations were used when collecting information in order to ensure the data collection was valid.

Ravisuda Aunruen (2005) carried out a needs analysis of English for travel agents in Chiang Mai. 365 travel agents were chosen as the participants for this study and the enormous number of participants' feedback helped him to enhance the findings of the study. Thus, the findings revealed that the travel agents required English language mostly to communicate orally with clients. The most important skill they used in performing their job tasks was speaking skill. Grammar and pronunciation were also needed but considered less important. Besides, they faced most challenges with speaking skill, followed by grammar and listening respectively. The researcher collected his data using three different techniques which were questionnaire, interview and observation.

Apart from that, Jin Long (2007) conducted a study on the proficiency of the hotel front desk staff in communication with their respective guests in Chiang Mai. The research finding showed that the hotel front desk staff required the speaking and listening skills most. The major issues were listening and speaking English in communicating effectively with their guests. An interview was conducted with the front desk staff to know their view points on the importance of English. However, it would

have been better if an interview session had been conducted with the managers of the participants as that would have helped the researcher to collect reliable and valid information to enhance the findings in all perspectives.

Sansanee Yhouyhen (2008) investigated the English language needs of information officers at the Bangkok Tourist Division. The finding showed that the respondents had difficulty in speaking and listening, so they needed to improve these two skills for better work performance. However, reading and writing skills were considered less important for their work. The researcher could have applied more than one research instrument such as interview and observation. This would have given the researcher more information about the needs of the officers in detail. It is important to know which aspects or functions of the skills that these officers need in order to provide them the necessary training or knowledge.

Besides, Liang (2010) conducted an ESP Course Design for Airport Information Desk Staff in which the focus was on the process of designing a course for airport ground staff working at the Information Desk. Information desk staff working at airports rely on language abilities and oral communicative skills to deal with enquiries and requests of traveler. Since Liang was not allowed to conduct observation, he decided to collect information from the airport's website as guidance for his research. This can be considered as a good method to collect data if other methods are not applicable.

In a different study conducted by Kamiwan Chanrunsri (2011) on The needs and problems of English Language Skills for the Hotel Front Office Staff in China Town Bangkok, the findings have proven that speaking skill is the most important skill needed to use in communicating in English with customers. This study was conducted with 60

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participants who are the hotel front desk staff using questionnaire with opened ended questions. The data gathered were analyzed using SPSS system. The findings also showed that the respondents would like to increase their level of English proficiency if they have the chance to do so. This study could be improved in various ways such as the qualitative research should be conducted along with quantitative study to gain more details and information. This could be done by incorporating different methods of data collection such as documentation, interview with the front desk staff and managers or even observation instead of using one form of data collection. By using different methods, Kamiwan would have been able to collect more accurate findings for his study.

The next study was conducted to identify the communication needs of medical assistants in the general hospital with the aim to make recommendations for course design. The study was carried out in Nalini Arumugam and Naginder Kaur (2011) from MARA University of Technology, Malaysia. A sample of 50 Medical Assistants (MAs) from the General Hospital, Seremban, Negeri Sembilan were involved in this study. The study is based on the investigations carried out by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Dudley-Evans and St John's (1998) who define needs as "target needs and learning needs". The focus of this study is an analysis of the target needs of MAs at the workplace.

A questionnaire was adopted for this study and to obtain in-depth information, the administrator of the Human Resource Department and the Deputy Director of the general hospital were interviewed. The findings of this study revealed that MAs need English language to function in society. Grammar, speaking, listening, writing and reading were all identified as important skills in their job. It was also revealed that even though the MAs can cope with their daily tasks, they are unable to carry out their duties

efficiently and with confidence in English. The results also showed that MAs only use English when there is a necessity at the workplace although English is the main medium of communication at the hospital.

Besides, Mohammad Ali & Noor Aireen (2012) conducted a study on English Language Oral Communication Needs at the Workplace which reported on an investigation of English Language Oral Communication Needs of Human Resource Development (HRD) undergraduates. The researchers used questionnaire to collect information from their respondents. They have stated that conversational skills, oral presentation skills, and discussion skills are skills which must be given emphasis in English courses. This research can be improved by employing various methods for data collection so that valuable information can be collected to prove the validity of the research. Besides, designing a course that caters the need of the respondents focusing on oral communication needs which will help them to improve in the areas mentioned can also be considered by future researchers.

In addition, Nawamin Prachanant (2012) conducted a needs analysis on English Language Use in Tourism study with 40 tourism employees. He used a set of questionnaire to find the needs of the staff and the findings have shown that speaking is the most important skill and the three most relevant functions in using English language are giving information, providing services and offering help. In additional, his findings also showed that problems related to English use are the inability to understand foreigners' accents, inappropriate words and expressions, inadequate vocabulary, and lack of grammar knowledge.

A study that includes a needs analysis and a situational analysis of designing an ESP curriculum for Thai nurses was carried out by Gass (2012). The researcher collected

data via questionnaires, observation and interview sessions with the nurses, patients and with the hospital's director. The findings revealed that the nurses lacked speaking and listening skills as well as vocabulary related to work. The researcher has selected his respondents carefully in which he had triangulated the findings received from three different respondents in order to gather accurate information.

All the studies above focused their attention on the importance of speaking skills in the business world. The employees in the business world are expected to be able to communicate fluently in English as their job tasks mostly require them to use English as they have to deal with customers and clients from all over the world. So, it is vital to be able to communicate efficiently in English. Besides, these studies also have employed various data collection techniques such as observation, questionnaire and interview. It is important to employ more than one technique when it comes to qualitative study because it helps the researcher to collect more valuable information that will help to strengthen the data collection in various ways. Apart from that, the results or findings of the studies showed that oral communication skill is seen as the most important as the ability to interact using English language is required by most companies' nowadays. Employers tend to hire employees who are able to use English to communicate with others because that is the best way to perform well in their job tasks.

On the other hand, based on the studies discussed above, none of the research has taken the step to design a course for the respondents based on their language needs. Recommendation were given in the studies that a course should be developed to train the respondents in their required areas when it comes to speaking skill. This links to this present study as the researcher attempted to design a proposed course which focuses on speaking skill based on the areas that were identified after the data collection. It is

important to design a course to see whether the problems mentioned by respondents can be resolved by developing a course that serves their language needs.

From the review of related research on the needs analysis for English language teaching above, a number of studies have investigated the needs and problems of using English related to the business field. As in customer service industry, only a few studies have been carried out on Information Desk Personnel and none had been conducted in the context of shopping malls which the researcher has undertaken as a stepping stone for other researchers to do further research in this sub field.

2.11   Conclusion

This chapter has discussed definitions of key terms and theories related to needs analysis studies. The literature review suggests that speaking skill plays an important role in the business world especially when it comes to Customer Service Industry. Information Desk Personnel are expected to be able to communicate effectively in English in order to perform successfully in their job tasks. Therefore, it is important to design a course based on the Information Desk Personnel's' weaknesses to help them improve in the required ways. It is important to evaluate the course from time to time to ensure that the goals in fulfilling the learners' needs as well as the needs of the industry are achieved.

As not many studies have been conducted in Malaysia in the area of ESP especially in the context of personnel working in shopping malls, it is hoped that more attention will be given so that more studies would be conducted in this field as the important role of Information Desk Personnel cannot be taken lightly. It cannot be denied that the role of English language does play a huge role in their working situations and due to this,

proper training should be provided for the Information Desk Personnel so that they can perform well in all perspectives. In Chapter 3, aspects related to the research design will be discussed and interpreted clearly.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

The aim of this study is to investigate the spoken English language needs of IDP in shopping malls. This chapter presents a description of the research design, theoretical framework, the respondents, research instruments, research procedures, ethical considerations, data analysis procedure and the pilot study.

3.2   Research Design

This study is primarily a qualitative study complemented by frequency counts from the questionnaire. The data was collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and observation done by the researcher. The questionnaire identified the spoken English language target needs of IDP, the semi-structured interview and observations were used to get in-depth information on the needs of the Information Desk Personnel.

3.3   Theoretical Framework

A needs analysis was conducted which covers Target Situation Analysis (TSA), Present Situation Analysis (PSA) and Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) (refer Chapter 2, pg18) as well as other aspects according to the theoretical framework of the needs analysis of the study. This theoretical framework was used in redesigning the questionnaire for IDP which focuses on speaking skills only. These analyses are suited to the present study because the questionnaire was developed to discover learners' language requirements in their job environment. Apart from that, the questions also focused on the strength and weaknesses of the IDP in English language skills which is

closely related to PSA. Last but not least, LSA was also incorporated in redesigning the questionnaire to investigate the reasons for IDP to learn the English language.

In addition, Dudley-Evans and St-John's (1998) parameters of ESP course design was also used in designing a proposed English language spoken course for IDP (as described in Chapter 2). The 9 parameters were identified using the data collected from the questionnaire, interviews and observation.

Both the frameworks are connected to one another as the first framework answered research question one which focused on spoken English language needs of IDP in ESP which led to the second research question in designing a proposed English language course based on the parameters of Dudley-Evans and St. John.

3.4   The Respondents

There were three different respondents for this study. They were the IDP (40), managers (3) and customers (10). Details of the respondents are as follow:

Shopping Malls	Participants
A	1) IDP: 15 2) Managers: 1 3) Customers: 5
B	1) IDP: 10 2) Managers: 1 3) Customers: 2
C	1) IDP: 15 2) Managers: 1 3) Customers: 3

Table 3.1: Respondents' Details

3.4.1   The Information Desk Personnel

A total of 40 IDP working in three different shopping malls completed the questionnaire. These IDP were chosen based on their experience because they have been working in the shopping malls for 3-10 years and they have encountered various problems in dealing with customers when it comes to oral communication using English language. The researcher went to each shopping mall respectively and met the IDP, 15 of them in Shopping Mall A, 10 of them in Shopping Mall B and 15 of them in Shopping Mall C, in the meeting room. They were informed beforehand that they would be briefed by the researcher. Before giving the questionnaire, the IDP were asked to sign a consent form prepared by the researcher. Next, these IDP were given the questionnaire and the purpose of the questionnaire which was stated on the cover page was explained to them in order to encourage them to participate in the study. The researcher also took this opportunity to explain each question in the questionnaire so that the IDP would not have any trouble in completing the questionnaire. The IDP were given time to go through the questionnaire again after the explanation by the researcher and they were given the opportunity to ask the researcher questions about the study or the questionnaire.

3.4.2   Managers

Three managers from the management office in the shopping malls, one from each shopping mall were interviewed. The managers are in charge of the Information Desk in the shopping malls and their responsibility is to guide IDP in handling their job duties as IDP. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three managers right after the researcher sought permission from them and after getting them to sign a consent form. The managers requested not to record the conversation, so the researcher took notes

during the interviews. The managers were expected to provide some feedback on the effectiveness of the IDP in their shopping malls in terms of spoken English communication with customers. They were also asked about the job performance of the IDP in order to know their strength as well as the weaknesses from the managers' perspective. Their interview feedback was felt to have greater construct validity in determining to what extent the objectives and the needs of the IDP were achieved.

3.4.3   Customers

10 customers (5 from Shopping Mall A, 2 from Shopping Mall B and 3 from Shopping Mall C) were chosen randomly to be interviewed. Their perspective on the communication process between the customers and the IDP were taken into consideration because IDP deal with customers most of the time. IDP were expected to be able to speak confidently in handling issues or problems faced by customers. Their feedback was important in determining the speaking skills needed by IDP while interacting with customers. Four out of ten customers were form English-speaking countries who were visiting Malaysia. The rest were local customers who spoke English language.

3.5   Research Instrumentations

A questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and observation constituted the data collection instruments for the current study. Although questionnaires are the most commonly used instrument for needs analysis studies (Robinson, 1991), the data from them are not precise and comprehensive enough (Hyland, 2006). Hence, in order to compensate for these inconsistencies as well as to increase the validity and reliability of

the results, a triangulation of the instruments and sources was utilized in this study as it is recommended by Jasso-Aguilar (1999) and Long (2005). To create a strong overall needs analysis, a combination of three information gathering process procedures were used in this study and they were developed by the researcher for the purpose of this study.

3.5.1   Questionnaire

A pilot study was undertaken using a questionnaire adapted from Yuwaree Tongvivat's study on Needs assessment for English skills of ICCU nurses in a private hospital in Bangkok. Questionnaire used in Yuwaree Tongvivat's study focused on needs analysis of all four speaking skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing). From the pilot study conducted, the researcher found out that the main need of the IDP is the speaking skills. Thus, the questions in the questionnaire were redesigned based on the following components of needs analysis (see Appendix B), adapted from the model by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998):

1. Target Situation Analysis (TSA) -objectives needs and target needs

2. Personal information about students-IDPs' wants

3. Present Situation Analysis (PSA)-language information about IDPs-present needs

4. Learning Situation Analysis (LSA)-learning needs

5. IDPs' needs from course-learners' lacks

The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

Part 1: Background Information

This section was on demographic information, language skills and language use of each IDP.

- Items 1 to 5 were questions regarding the respondent's personal information, mother tongue and English language qualification.

- Items 6 to 8 were aimed to know their working experience in the shopping mall.

- Item 9 aimed to seek the respondent's language abilities.

- Items 10 to 13 were related to the use of English in their daily routine, which aimed to know the importance of English in their job tasks and their language use.

Part II: Language Functions and Structures

- Item 1 comprised of 7 sub-items dealing with IDP's job tasks. The purpose of these sub-items was to investigate the language difficulties they faced for each job task.

Part III: Course Design

Section A:

- Items 1 to 4 aimed to seek their interest in joining an English language course.

- Item 5 was related to the learning preference, which aimed to know their preferred learning activities in class.

Section B:

- Items 1 to 4 required IDP's opinion on the timing of the course to be held.

3.5.2   Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the following respondents:

  i.   Managers

 ii.   Information Desk Personnel

iii.   Customers

i.   Managers

  Semi-structured interview for the respondents of the three selected shopping malls was constructed on the basis of the theoretical framework of the language needs analysis of the study. The interview questions were open-ended items. The questions in the interviews were constructed on the basis of target needs (TSA) (information on how a language course can be run) and on the basis of the theoretical framework of the study. Semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C) were conducted with the managers to add validity to the study. Interviews were done to find out from the managers what they felt about their IDP in terms of language used; their interest in providing necessary English language communication skills training for them and their recommendations on the type of activities that would benefit the IDP. The researcher interviewed each of these managers in English for 15 minutes and the responses from the managers were written down as the researcher was not allowed to record the interview session. The interview sessions were conducted at the management's office located in the shopping malls.

ii.   Information Desk Personnel

  Interviews were conducted with 6 IDP (two each from the three shopping malls) after analysing the questionnaire in order to gather more information (see Appendix D).

The researcher could not interview all the respondents' as not all of them were available due to their working hours. Interview questions for the IDP were created after analysing the data. As there was not much difference between the responses given by the managers and IDP, only three questions were asked to them in order to get further explanation based on the questionnaire given to the IDP. As stated by Weisman (1985), interviews are very important as it is meant to check on the questionnaire being used in obtaining the data.

iii. Customers

The interviews were conducted with ten customers at the shopping malls to gather more accurate and valid information for this study (see Appendix E). They were conducted after the observation session conducted by the researcher in the shopping malls. The researcher chose the customers who approached the IDP for various purposes. Consent forms were given to the customers before they were interviewed. A questionnaire (see Appendix F) was used while interviewing the customers. The questionnaire consisted of two sections in which Part 1 was about the customers' background information and Part II was about their opinion on the effectiveness of the IDP in handling their problems.

3.5.3 Observation

An observation session was done randomly in three shopping malls which were the workplaces of the IDP. The observation session was conducted during one weekend in December. The researcher conducted the observation at shopping mall A and shopping mall B on the first day and shopping mall C on the following day. The purpose of the observation was to identify the English language skills used by IDP when interacting

with customers in English. A checklist was used during the observation (see Appendix G).

3.6   Research Procedures

The researcher approached the managers at the management office which is situated in the shopping malls to seek permission to carry out the study in the respective shopping malls. A permission letter from University Malaya was given to the managers and the purpose of the study was explained. The researcher then sought permission from the managers to involve the IDP in the study and consent forms were given to all the participants before they participated in this study (refer Appendix H). Firstly, the researcher conduct a semi structured interview with the 3 managers (one each of the shopping malls). Once the researcher finished conducting the interview, the researcher met the IDP, sought permission to involve them in the study, had a brief conversation with them and collected information regarding their job tasks. The IDP were given the questionnaire and the procedures and questions in the questionnaire were explained to them. They were given two days to complete the questionnaires. 15 copies of the questionnaires were given to Shopping Mall A, 10 copies were given to Shopping Mall B and 15 copies were given to Shopping Mall C. The return was 100%; 40 were completed and used for the data analysis. The researcher took two weeks to analyse the questionnaire and went to the shopping malls to meet the managers, IDP and customers. The researcher interviewed the managers again and also the Information Desk Personnel to see the similarity of opinions and views between both parties. In addition, 10 customers were chosen randomly on the same day and consent forms were given to them before participating in this study. They were interviewed to gather more information regarding the communication process between the customers and IDP.

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Besides the interview, the 10 customers were also given a questionnaire based on the language difficulties faced by the IDP. Last but not least, observation sessions were conducted at the shopping malls by the researcher to know the immediate needs of IDP when they interacted with customers. The data consisted mainly of information from the questionnaires, interviews and observation. The analysis of the questionnaires given to IDP was presented using tables. The data collected from the interviews from the managers, customers and observation were analysed and summarized. The procedure for data collection is summarized and shown on the chart as follows:

<div style="border:1px solid black; text-align:center; padding:1em;">
The researcher met the malls'

managers
</div>

↓

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">
1) The researcher explained the reason for this study by showing the permission letter from UM. Sought permission to involve the IDP in the study and the participants signed the consent form.

2) The researcher conducted the first interview with managers.
</div>

↓
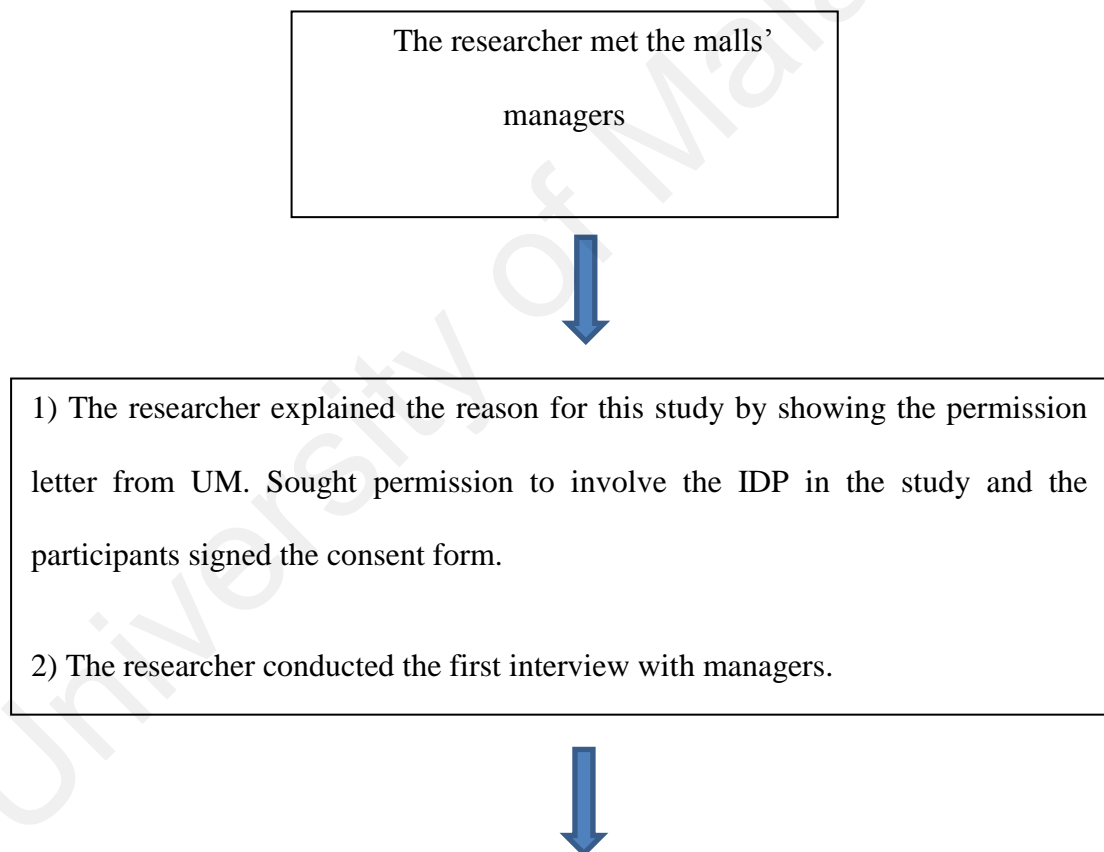
1) The researcher met the IDP, sought permission to involve them in the study and got the participants to sign the consent form.

2) The researcher had a brief conversation with them, collected information regarding their job tasks.

3) Questionnaires were distributed and the procedures and questions in the questionnaire were explained. They were given two days to complete the questionnaires.

1) 40 questionnaires were given and collected. The IDP were given two days to complete the questionnaire.

1) The researcher took two weeks to analyse the questionnaire.

2) The researcher went to the malls again to meet the managers, IDP and customers.

3) The researcher interviewed the managers for the second time to get additional information.

4) The researcher also interviewed 6 Information Desk Personnel to clarify information collected from the questionnaire.

To see the similarity of opinions and view between the managers and IDP.

1) After interviewing the managers and IDP, the researcher chose 10 customers and got them to sign the consent form.

2) 10 customers were interviewed and questionnaire was given to them to gather more information regarding the communication process between them and the IDP.

Information attained from the interview was analysed and compared with the information from the questionnaire. (To check the reliability of the data collected)

$$\Downarrow$$

Information was identified and the necessary spoken communication skills needed were specified.

Figure 3.1: Research Procedure

3.7   Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the participating malls by showing the cover letter given by University Malaya and research proposal prepared by the researcher. The participants were also given consent form for them to sign before participating in the study. The information provided by the respondents was treated with confidential due to the request of the shopping malls. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the study in a cover letter attached to the questionnaire. The managers of the shopping mall requested the researcher not to reveal their shopping malls' names, their personal information, the IDP's personal information and not to record the interview sessions. Their requests were fulfilled due to ethical considerations.

3.8   Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was qualitative (supplemented with some frequency counts from the questionnaire) in this study. Data gathered from the 40 questionnaires were manually

analysed using frequency counts and converted into percentages. The use of tables was considered adequate to provide simple and clear explanations of the results. The tables were drawn based on the feedback obtained from the set of questionnaires. The data gathered from interview with the managers and customers was interpreted in a descriptive manner in which the data was summarized and explained based on the research questions stated in Chapter 1. Last but not least, the data gathered from the observations conducted was also interpreted in a descriptive manner focusing on the problems faced by IDP while communicating with customers orally.

3.9   Pilot Study

The pilot study involved two well-known shopping malls in Klang. The instruments adopted for the pilot study included interviews, a questionnaire and observation. The IDP were given the questionnaire and an interview session was conducted with the management from the two shopping malls and data was collected from the A questionnaire and interviews. A list of customer service job tasks were given to the IDP and they were asked to choose the job tasks related to their working environment and the job tasks which require speaking skills were included in the questionnaire used for this present study. The findings showed that 80 percent of the respondents felt it was vital to master English in order to carry out all of their duties effectively and when it came to whom they communicated English with, 100 percent said they communicated with customers, 25 percent said with other staff and 25 percent said with their management. Besides, when asked whether they would be interested to join the course if given a choice, 62.5 percent said yes. Apart from that, the management claimed that the IDP have not been sent to any English course so far but they are encouraged to attend one to improve their mastery of the English language. They are also willing to

send their IDP for an English course if it is offered to them and arrangements will be made for the IDP to attend the course at the required time. Last but not least, although the managements are satisfied with the IDP working manner but still if given the opportunity, the management would like them to improve their English language in order for them to communicate effectively with their customers. This pilot study has given evidence that it is important for IDP to be able to speak in English and the focus is on speaking skills. Besides, the questionnaire used for the pilot study was redesigned and adapted based on Dudley-Evans and St. John's framework (1998) to collect more accurate information which focuses on speaking skills and the course design.

3.10   Conclusion

This chapter discussed a number of significant topics of the research design and methodology in detail. This chapter has provided a clear explanation regarding the major aspects of the study such as research design, theoretical framework, the respondents, the research instruments, research procedures, ethical considerations, data analysis procedures and the pilot study. The analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaires, interviews and observation are reported in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented based on the data gathered through questionnaires, interviews and observation. The analysis of the data is described in detail in this chapter. For the purpose of data analysis of the questionnaires, frequency counts and percentages are used and presented in table form. Several aspects, which are, perceptions and suggestions about employees' needs, course content, teaching and learning materials, time allocation, evaluation system, problems faced and overall perception of the needs of English language are analysed together. The data from the interview was used mainly to support the questionnaire and was summarized and presented together with the analysis of the questionnaires. In short, the analysis and the findings of the questionnaires and interviews are combined and summarized under each of the aspects mentioned above. All the data collected will be discussed based on the research questions:

1) What are the spoken communication needs of the Information Desk Personnel in the shopping malls?

2) How would the stakeholders prefer the spoken communication needs be incorporated in a spoken English language course for the IDP?

4.2   Analysis of Respondents' Demographic Profile

4.2.1   Analysis of Questionnaire for IDP, Part 1: Background Information

Table 4.1 shows the analysis of the demographic profile of the IDP.

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variables		Number	Percentage
Age	18-25	12	30
	26-35	18	45
	36-45	10	25
	46-55	-	-
	55 & above	-	-
First Language	Bahasa Malaysia	26	65
	Mandarin	11	28
	Tamil	3	7
Education	SPM	-	-
	STPM	7	18
	Diploma	25	63
	Degree	8	19
	Masters	-	-
	PhD	-	-
Position in shopping mall	IDP	40	100
Working Experience	0-1 year	-	-
	1-3 years	15	38
	3-5 years	33	81
	6-10 years	8	19
	More than 10 years	-	-
Full-Time Employee	Yes	40	100
	No	-	-
Working Hours/per week	9-12 hours	-	-
	12-15 hours	-	-
	15-18 hours	-	-
	More than 18 hours	40	100

Table 4.1 shows the analysis of the background information of the IDP. The first

analysis is on the respondents' age. Eighteen (45%) of the respondents were from 18 to

25 years old, twelve (30%) respondents were from 26 to 35 years old and ten (25%)

respondents were from 36 to 45 years old. 65% of the IDP's first language is Bahasa Malaysia, 28% is Mandarin and the rest is Tamil.

Next is the analysis of respondents' academic background. Based on the findings, 18% of the respondents' were STPM leavers, 63% were Diploma leavers and 19% graduated with a Degree in Business management. All 40 respondents hold the position of Information Desk Personnel in their respective shopping malls. The next analysis is respondents' years of working experience as IDP in shopping mall. 38% has 1-3 years of experience which is considered as juniors. Besides, 81% has experience working as IDP for 3-5 years whereas 19% has 6-10 years of experience. The analysis of respondents' working status showed that 100% of the respondents work as full time employee in the shopping malls as Information Desk Personnel.

Where working hours are concerned, all 40 respondents indicated that they work more than 18 hours in a week as they only get a day off in a week.

4.3   Analysis of Respondents' Language Skills & Language Use
4.3.1   Analysis of Question 9

This question of Part 1 requires the IDP to choose the difficulties faced while completing their job tasks that involve four different skills which are the speaking, listening, grammar and vocabulary skills. Respondents were asked to rate their skills based on four different levels stated (Poor, Satisfactory, Good and Excellent). This question aims to find out the language difficulties faced by IDP while performing their job tasks.

Table 4.2 shows the analysis of respondents' language skills level based on four different language skills.

Table 4.2: Analysis of Respondents' Language Skills Level

Language Skills	Level	Number	Percentage
Speaking	Poor	-	-
	Satisfactory	38	95
	Good	2	5
	Excellent	-	-
Listening	Poor	-	-
	Satisfactory	25	63
	Good	25	27
	Excellent	-	-
Grammar	Poor	25	63
	Satisfactory	12	30
	Good	3	7
	Excellent	-	-
Vocabulary	Poor	26	65
	Satisfactory	12	30
	Good	2	5
	Excellent	-	-

Based on table 4.2, 95% of the respondents rated their speaking skills as satisfactory and 5% as good. Next, 63% rated their listening skill as satisfactory and 27% as good. 63% of the respondents rated their grammar skill as poor, 30% as satisfactory and only 7% chose good. Last but not least, 65% rated their vocabulary skill as poor, 30% as satisfactory and 5% as good. None of the IDP chose the option 'Excellent' for this question.

4.3.2 Analysis of Question 10-13

These three questions are to find out the IDP's language use in their working environment.

Table 4.3: Analysis of Respondents' Language Use

Language Use		Number	Percentage
Importance of English in Present occupation	Yes	40	100
	No	-	-
If Yes, how often do you English?	Regularly	15	38
	Often	25	62
	Occasionally	-	-
	Seldom	-	-
Whom do you speak English to?	Foreign customers	27	67
	Employer	38	95
	Colleagues	17	42
	Others: Local Customers	12	30

Table 4.3 is to show the analysis of respondents' language use in their working environment. All the IDP (100%) indicated that English language is important in their present occupation. 38% of the IDP use English regularly whereas 62% use English often. 95% IDP speak English to their employer, 67% speak to foreign customers, 42% speak to colleagues and 30% speak to the local customers.

4.3.3 Analysis of Questionnaire for IDP: Course Design (Part 3, Section B, Question 1-2)

Question 1: How often do you face situations that require you to use English to communicate with foreign customers in a day?

Table 4.4: Analysis of Frequency of Respondents dealing with Foreign Customers in English

	Number	Percentage
All the time	-	-
Frequently	23	58
Sometimes	17	42
Never	-	-

Table 4.4 shows the analysis of how often the respondents face situations that require them to use English to communicate with foreign customers in a day. 58% deal with foreign customers frequently and 42% deal with them sometimes.

Question 2: What difficulties do you face while communicating with foreign customers? Please elaborate.

When asked whether they faced any difficulties while communicating with foreign customers, most of the Information Desk Personnel responded that it was difficult to understand their accent as they speak too fast which results in the respondents not able to grasp what they are trying to say. Besides, some respondents mentioned that they are unable to use appropriate vocabulary to explain to the customers the directions in the shopping malls and this often leads to miscommunication as both parties are unable to exchange information.

4.4   Research Question One (1)

What are the spoken communication needs of Information Desk Personnel in the shopping malls?

Research question one was answered based on the questionnaire, interview and observation. The data to answer this research question was collected through a questionnaire survey, interview sessions with managers and customers and observation notes.

   i.   Questionnaire for IDP, Part 2: language Functions and Structures (Question 1)
   ii.   Interview questions with managers (Questions 1-5)
   iii. Customers' Questionnaire
   iv.   Interview questions with customers
   v.   Observation by the researcher

4.4.1   Analysis of Questionnaire for IDP, Part 2: Language Functions and Structures (Question 1)

This section of the questionnaire is separated into two questions. The first question requires them to choose the difficulties faced while completing their job tasks that involves all four language skills listed in the first question. As for the second question, the information desk personnel were asked to provide any other job tasks that require them to use the language besides the tasks listed in the second question. In short, this section aims to find out the language difficulties faced by IDP while performing their job tasks.

1: Respond to daily requests for information and enquiries by customers.

Table 4.5 shows the difficulties faced by respondents when they respond to daily requests for information and enquiries by customers.

Table 4.5: Respond to daily requests for information and enquiries by customers

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	36	90
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	33	83
Unable to pronounce words correctly	32	80
Unable to understand foreign accents	21	53
Lacking confidence in speaking	18	45
Customers speak too fast	11	28
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	8	20
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	7	18

90% of the respondents lack knowledge of grammar and structure. 83% have inadequate vocabulary knowledge. 80% do not have good pronunciations skill in English language in which they are unable to pronounce words correctly. Only 18% indicated that they are unable to understand the meaning of certain words correctly.

2. Respond to general information requests and enquiries by telephone.

Table 4.6 shows the difficulties faced by respondents when they respond to general information, requests and enquiries by telephone.

Table 4.6: Respond to general information requests and enquiries by telephone

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	38	95
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	34	85
Unable to understand foreign accents	30	75
Unable to pronounce words correctly	29	73
Lacking confidence in speaking	28	70
Customers speak too fast	26	65
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	23	58
Using inappropriate words in speaking	18	45
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	12	30

95% find it difficult to speak fluently as they lack grammatical knowledge. 85% of them indicate that they have inadequate vocabulary usage. 75% finds it hard to understand foreign accents while communicating with foreign customers and this is followed by70% who lack confidence in speaking English. On the other hand, only 30% of the IDP indicated that the customers' voices are too soft to be heard clearly.

3. Inform customers about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall.

Table 4.7 shows the difficulties faced when the respondents have to inform customers about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall.

Table 4.7: Inform customers about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Unable to pronounce words correctly	32	80
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	31	78
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	29	73
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	27	68
Lacking confidence in speaking	17	43
Customers speak too fast	15	38
Unable to understand foreign accents	13	33
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	10	25
Using inappropriate words in speaking	2	5

80% of the IDP are unable to pronounce words correctly and 78% have inadequate vocabulary knowledge. 73% also indicated that they lack knowledge of grammar and structure in which they are unable to produce complete sentences in English. 68% of the respondents are unable to understand the meaning of the words used by customers but only 5% agreed that they tend to use inappropriate words while speaking in English.

4. Give directions to find the required places/stores in the shopping mall.

Table 4.8 is about giving directions to find the required places or stores in the shopping mall.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	37	93
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	34	85
Unable to pronounce words correctly	26	65
Lacking confidence in speaking	23	58
Customers speak too fast	11	28
Unable to understand foreign accents	9	23
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	7	18
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	-	-
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-

93% of the IDP have insufficient vocabulary usage, 85% lack knowledge of grammar and structure and 65% have difficulties to pronounce certain words correctly. On the other hand, only 18% of the respondents indicated that the customers' voices are too soft to be heard clearly.

5. Promote any events or programs organised by the shopping mall.

Table 4.9 shows the difficulties faced by respondents when they have to promote any events or programs organised by the shopping mall.

Table 4.9: Promote any events or programs organised by the shopping mall

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Unable to pronounce words correctly	35	88
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	32	80
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	29	73
Lacking confidence in speaking	20	50
Customers speak too fast	-	-
Unable to understand foreign accents	-	-
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	-	-
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	-	-
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-

The IDP's main concern is being unable to pronounce words correctly (88%), having inadequate vocabulary knowledge (80%) and lack of grammar knowledge (73%). All these inabilities lead to the lack of confidence in speaking (50%) to their respective customers using English language.

6. Greet customers in shopping mall.

Table 4.10 shows the difficulties faced by the respondents when they greet customers in shopping malls.

Table 4.10: Greet customers in shopping mall

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Unable to pronounce words correctly	36	90
Lacking confidence in speaking	17	43

90% of the IDP were unable to pronounce words correctly and due to this 43% of the respondents lack confidence in speaking. Greeting customers is one of their main job tasks and they often find it hard to pronounce words correctly when greeting customers.

7. Expressing regrets/offering apologies

Table 4.11 shows the difficulties faced by respondents when they express regrets or offer apologies to customers in certain situations when the customers face problems such as parking ticket cannot be used, strollers are not in good condition, unable to find stores after being directed and so on.

Table 4.11: Expressing regrets/offering apologies

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Unable to pronounce words correctly	38	95
Lack confidence in speaking	29	73

Respondents are encouraged to express their regrets and apologize to customers as polite as they can whenever they are unable to fulfil customers' requests. 95% of the respondents were unable to pronounce words correctly and 73% do not have enough confidence speaking in English.

4.4.2 Analysis of Interview with managers (Question 1- 5)

Interviews were conducted with three managers, each from one shopping mall –

Ms. A, Mr.G and Ms.S.

Q1: What do you think about the level of English language proficiency of the IDP in this shopping mall?

According to managers, not many have the ability to speak English well; their proficiency level is not up to the level that would enable them to speak as how they are able to speak in their mother tongue. They often have trouble answering customers' questions in English. Although they have sufficient level of English proficiency but the managers felt that it would be better if they are able to improve themselves in particular areas such as responding to customers' inquiries, ability to provide them with the necessary information and so on.

Q2: What is the basic requirements/qualification to become an IDP in your shopping mall?

As for the basic requirements or qualification to become Information Desk Personnel, they must be able to speak and write in any three languages (Malay, Tamil and English) and they ought to have at least SPM qualification. Experience is not required as training will be provided for them. Besides, they must be able to think critically as one of their main job tasks is to handle customers' needs and they must be able to solve problems as expected by the customers.

Q3: What are the job tasks of IDP which require them to use English language?

When asked about the job tasks of the IDP which require them to use English, Mr.G said that making announcements and explaining to customers about their enquiries require them to use English. On the other hand, Ms.A mentioned various job tasks which are sending mails to liaise with other shopping malls or departments, dealing with important guests during important events as sometimes they are required to host the program or even prepare script. Not only that, the most common task is to communicate with foreign customers as they use English besides their mother tongue. As most of the tasks require them to speak in English, it is important for them to be able to use the language confidently and fluently.

Q4: Do you think the IDP in your shopping mall are qualified and experienced in performing their duties? If (yes/no), why do you think so?

The next question was about the opinion of the IDP's performance in which all the managers have provided different opinions. According to Mr.G, he thinks his IDP members are qualified and experienced because they are trained by their senior staff who are highly experienced and this has motivated his IDP to perform well in their job.

On the other hand, Ms.S thinks that most of her IDP members are inexperienced as they have only attended a few trainings and they do not have the confidence to speak especially in English because of their low proficiency level. Last but not least, Ms.A thinks that her senior staff members have experiences which help them to face challenges but her junior staff are not that experienced and they often encounter problems dealing with customers. If the problems encountered are too complicated, then the manager needs to resolve the issues with customers. This may create a bad impression on the shopping malls. Thus, the managers are trying their best to guide their IDP in possible ways so that they will be able to avoid problems in the future.

Q5: What are the main difficulties faced by the IDP in conversing with customers?

This question focused on the main difficulties faced by IDP in conversing with customers. Ms.A mentioned that her IDP are able to manage the questions from customers if it is related to their shopping mall but if it is about information outside of their mall, that's when they find it difficult to explain. For an example, if they are asked about the facilities available in the mall, they will be able to provide the information as they have knowledge about it but if they are asked about direction of places nearby the shopping malls, they have problems to provide the required information as they are unable to construct sentences appropriately and they tend to use unsuitable words.

Besides, Mr.G mentioned that the main difficulty is to understand the needs of customers because if the IDP do not provide them with the required information, there are high possibilities that the customers might write complaint letters or send emails to the superiors. This not only gives a bad impression on the IDP but the managers as well, so they try to avoid such problems.

According to Ms.S, IDP also tend to code-switch from English to Malay as they speak with customers. This happens because they are unable to produce suitable words

while speaking and it has become a habit for them to code switch while speaking. This occurs when they speak with foreign customers too, who get confused as they do not understand the language that the IDP speak. It takes a long time for the IDP to explain to foreign customers in English. Overall, it can be concluded that IDP code-switch because of not being able to speak English fluently.

4.4.3   Analysis of Customers Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to find out the customers' perceptions about IDP's language difficulties while speaking in English.

4.4.3.1 Part 1: Background Information of Customers

Table 4.12: Background Information of Customers

Background Information		Number	Percentage
Age	18-24	3	30
	25-32	4	40
	33-40	2	20
	41-47	1	10
	48-54	-	-
	55-60	-	-
Education Background	High School Graduate	-	-
	Diploma	3	30
	Degree	7	70
	Masters	-	-
	PHD	-	-
Preferred Language	English	8	80
	Bahasa Malaysia	2	20
	Mandarin	-	-
Employment Status	Employed/Self-Employed	10	100%
	Homemaker	-	-
	Retired	-	-
	Student	-	-

Table 4.12 shows the analysis of customers' age group. 40% of the customers were from the age group of 25-32. 30% were from the age group of 18-24 and 20% were from 33-40. Last but not least, 10% were from the age group of 41-47. Analysis of customers' education background shows that 70% are degree holders and 30% are diploma holders. Analysis of customers' preferred language to be used in a shopping mall with Information Desk Personnel shows 80% of the customers preferred to use English to communicate and 20% preferred to use Bahasa Malaysia. Last but not least, the analysis of customers' employment status shows that all 10 of them were either employed or self-employed.

4.4.3.2 Part 2: Analysis of Information Desk Personnel's Language Difficulties

Tables 4.13 to 4.20 show the analysis of IDP's language difficulties based on the job tasks.

Table 4.13: Analysis of IDP responding to information inquired regarding the shopping mall.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	8	80
Unable to pronounce words correctly	7	70
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	7	70
Lacking confidence in speaking	7	70
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	6	60
Unable to understand foreign accents	5	50
Staff speak too fast	2	20
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	2	20
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-

80% of the customers felt that the IDP have inadequate vocabulary usage while speaking in English and 70% of the customers felt that the IDP are unable to pronounce words correctly, unable to understand the meaning of words used by them and the IDP lack confidence in speaking. On the other hand, 20% of the customers indicated that the IDP speak too fast and their voices are too soft to be heard clearly.

Table 4.14: Analysis of IDP responding to queries about the opening hours and hours of operation during weekends.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Unable to pronounce words correctly	5	50
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	3	30
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	3	30
Staff speak too fast	3	30
Unable to understand foreign accents	3	30
Lacking confidence in speaking	2	20
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	2	20
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	-	-
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-

50% of the customers think that the IDP are unable to pronounce words correctly when responding to the queries about the opening hours and hours of operation of the shopping mall. On the other hand, 20% of the customers felt that the IDP lack confidence in speaking and their voices are too soft that they are unable to hear it clearly.

Table 4.15: Analysis of IDP clarifying about any specific information

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	8	80
Unable to pronounce words correctly	7	70
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	5	50
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-
Unable to understand foreign accents	4	40
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	1	10

80% of the customers felt that the IDP have inadequate vocabulary usage and they lack knowledge of grammar and structure when clarifying information. On the other hand, only 10% of the customers think that IDP tend to speak too fast and their voices are too soft to be heard clearly.

Table 4.16: Analysis of IDP responding to queries about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	8	80
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	7	70
Unable to pronounce words correctly	7	70
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	6	60
Lacking confidence in speaking	4	40
Unable to understand foreign accents	2	20
Staff speak too fast	1	10
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	-	-
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-

80% of the customers think that the IDP lack knowledge of grammar and structure while speaking in English when responding to queries about the services and facilities. This is followed by 70% of them who felt that the IDP also have inadequate vocabulary usage and they are unable to pronounce words correctly. Only 10% of the customers indicated that the IDP speak too fast while communicating with them.

Table 4.17: Analysis of IDP giving directions in finding specific shop/stores.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	10	100
Unable to pronounce words correctly	9	90
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	8	80
Lacking confidence in speaking	6	60
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	6	60
Staff speak too fast	3	30
Unable to understand foreign accents	2	20
Using inappropriate words in speaking	2	20
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	1	10

Table 4.17 shows that 100% of the respondents have inadequate vocabulary usage when it comes to the task of giving directions in finding specific shop or stores in shopping malls. 90% of the customers were unable to pronounce words correctly while speaking. The customers also felt that most of the IDP do not have the confidence to speak boldly due to their low proficiency in English language (60%). Apart from that, according to the customers, the IDP were unable to understand the meaning of the words used by customers especially when it comes to foreign customers (60%). On the

other hand, 10% the customers indicated that the IDP's voices are too soft to be heard clearly.

Table 4.18: Analysis of IDP providing information about any events or programs organized by the shopping mall.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	9	90
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	8	80
Unable to pronounce words correctly	7	70
Lacking confidence in speaking	3	30
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	2	20
Staff speak too fast	2	20
Unable to understand foreign accents	2	20
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	1	10
Using inappropriate words in speaking	-	-

The customers felt that the IDP lack knowledge of grammar and structure (90%), followed by having inadequate vocabulary usage (80%) when providing information about events or programs in the shopping mall. 70% of the customers indicated that the IDP were not able to pronounce words in English correctly and only 10% stated that the IDP's voices are too soft.

Table 4.19: Analysis of IDP giving assistance in using the facilities available.

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	9	90
Unable to pronounce words correctly	8	80
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	7	70
Lacking confidence in speaking	7	70
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	5	50
Staff speak too fast	3	30
Unable to understand foreign accents	2	20
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	1	10
Using inappropriate words in speaking	1	10

90% of the customers think that the IDP have inadequate vocabulary usage in giving assistance in using the facilities in shopping mall followed by 80% who indicated that the IDP were unable to pronounce words correctly and another 70% felt that the IDP lack knowledge of grammar and structure and lack confidence in speaking. 10% of the customers indicated that the IDP's voices are too soft and they also use inappropriate words in speaking.

Table 4.20: Analysis of IDP responding to enquiries about the services provided

Language Difficulties	Number	Percentage
Having inadequate vocabulary usage	9	90
Unable to pronounce words correctly	9	90
Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure	8	80
Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers	7	70
Lacking confidence in speaking	5	50
Using inappropriate words in speaking	3	30
Staff speak too fast	2	20
Unable to understand foreign accents	2	20
Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly	1	10

According to Table 4.20, 90% of the customers had problems with IDP's vocabulary usage and pronunciation. This is followed by their lack of knowledge of grammar and structure (80%) and inability to understand meaning of the words used by the customers when they respond to enquiries about the services provided. Only 10% of the customers indicated that the IDP's voices are too soft to be heard clearly.

4.4.4   Analysis of Interview with Customers: Information Desk Personnel's Language difficulties (Question 1-5)

Q1: Have you ever approached an IDP?

The customers were asked whether they have ever approached an IDP and all the 10 customers have experience in approaching the Information Desk personnel for various reasons.

Q2: If yes, what was the reason? What kind of problem you had?

The customers were asked to list the problems they had which required them to approach an IDP. Four of the customers were foreign customers in which they approached the IDP to ask for the direction of the stores in the mall. Three of the customers approached the IDP to enquire about the facilities available. Last but not least, another three customers approached the IDP for the assistance in using the facilities or services provided**.**

Q3: What language do you prefer the IDPs to use while communicating?

Besides, the customers were also asked what language they prefer to use while communicating with an IDP. Eight of the customers preferred to use English as they are not so fluent in Bahasa Malaysia and four of them were foreign customers. On the other hand, two of the customers preferred to use Bahasa Malaysia as it is their mother tongue and their find it comfortable using Bahasa Malaysia to communicate.

Q4: Were they able to solve your problem?

Apart from that, when asked were the IDP able to solve their problem, all the customers mentioned that the IDP managed to solve their problems although they had difficulties to pronounce certain words in English and they also had the problem in explaining fluently in English.

Q5: Were they able to communicate using English?

The customers were asked whether the IDP were able to communicate using English and they responded that the IDP were able to communicate in English but not fluently as they found it hard to speak confidently due to their low level of proficiency in English language. They tend to code switch such as 'Yes Encik, you can go straight,

ambil lift, go to 2nd floor, belok right and the shop is there' while speaking because they are unable to explain things clearly due to lack of knowledge in vocabulary and grammar.

4.4.5   Analysis of Observation by the Researcher

This section of the observation focused on the language difficulties faced by IDP in interacting with customers. As observed, customers from foreign countries prefer to converse in English as they do not understand Malay language. On these occasions, the IDP would then reply in English. The IDP's language was comprehensible though not accurate or fluent. There were also few instances where the IDP had to alternate between both English and Bahasa Melayu in order to communicate with the customers so that the information needed could be relayed.

Not only that, it is to be noted that when the IDP were conversing in Bahasa Melayu, polite modal verbs and expressions such as 'Sila' and 'Boleh' were used. The former meant please and the latter could either mean may, can, shall or other modal verbs of obligation, possibilities and permission. When conversing in English, there seemed to be a lack of polite expressions and modal verbs used because they lack knowledge in producing appropriate sentences. The sentences were short and succinct although the tone of voice implied politeness. There was also evident of L1 influence when they were speaking as the use of sentence structure was similar to their L1 structure. Below are the examples of utterances by IDP while communicating with customers:

1. *'Sir can get discount for ticket for parking'*: This utterance was made by the IDP while providing information about the parking ticket to the customer who visited shopping mall B. This is another example of direct translation of their L1 which is 'Encik boleh dapat diskaun untuk tiket parking'. The correct sentence

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structure in English would be' Sir, you can get a discount on the parking ticket'. The IDP was unable to produce grammatically correct sentence due to their L1 influence and lack of grammatical knowledge.

2. *'You go third floor, you can see the shops there'*: This an incomplete sentence used while giving directions to customer in shopping mall C. The IDP could not give proper direction to the customers and the IDP was struggling to provide the necessary information. Although the customer could understand what the IDP was trying to say but the communication between the IDP and the customers was not a smooth one. Example of suitable utterance that could have been used by the IDP is 'Sir, you can take the escalator and go to the 3rd floor. Turn left and walk straight. You can see the shop on your right. It is the 3rd shop from the corner.' A clear direction could not be given to customers and they lack knowledge of polite expressions and model verbs while speaking to the customers.

3. *'You can go ground floor and see the parking ticket customer service'*: This is another example of sentence used by the IDP while dealing with one of the customer who had parking ticket problem. The customer could not use the ticket while paying using the machine and he had to approach the IDP for assistance. While speaking, the IDP mentioned this sentence to the customers. A proper sentence such as' Sir, please go the ground floor and you can see our office there. You can approach our customer service and they will help you with this' was not used. Instead, direct translation was used which means 'Sila ke tingkat bawah untuk berjumpa dengan khidmat pelanggan parkir' in Bahasa Melayu.

The examples above were just some of the important utterances related to this study that the researcher could note down while the IDP were speaking to their customers.

The given examples show that the IDP do have difficulties in speaking English with their customers. Their short and succinct sentences were not helpful to create a smooth communication with customers and inability to produce clear and grammatically correct sentences without the influence of L1 is required in order for them to be able to speak confidently to their customers.

4.5 Research Question Two (2)

How would the stakeholders prefer the spoken communication needs be incorporated in a spoken English language course for the IDP?

Research question two (2) was answered based on the questionnaire and interview. The data to answer this research question was collected through the analysis of:

   i. Questionnaire for IDP, Part 3: Course Design (Part 3, Section A, Question 1-5)

  ii. Questionnaire for IDP, Part 3: Course Design (Part 3, Section B, Question 3-4)

 iii. Interview with managers

 iv. Interview with customers

4.5.1 Analysis of Questionnaire for IDP: Course Design (Part 3, Section A, Question 1-5)

This section of the questionnaire comprises two parts. The first part consists of questions that provided information about the respondents' preferences about the in-service course, their learning strategy and preferred learning activities. On the other hand, the second part includes questions about their needs in terms of language to be incorporated in the course design and their preferred timing if there is an English language course for them to participate in the future.

4.5.1.1 Section A: Respondents' preferences about the English language course

Table 4.21 shows the information about the respondents' preferences about the English language course.

Table 4.21: Information about respondents' preferences about the English Language course

Questions		Number	Percentage
Q1: Interest in joining an English Language course	Yes	**30**	**75**
	No	**-**	**-**
	Maybe	**10**	**25**
Q2: Choice of Venue	At my working place	**27**	**68**
	Outside of my working Place	**13**	**32**
Q3: Preferred method to learn English	Individually	**-**	**-**
	Group Work	**12**	**30**
	Out of class activity	**13**	**33**
	Pair Work	**10**	**25**
	Whole-class activity	**5**	**12**
Q4: Preferred Learning Strategy	Visual (Pictures)	**18**	**45**
	Audio (Listening)	**2**	**5**
	Music	**11**	**28**
	Kinaesthetic (Body Movements)	**9**	**22**

The analysis of respondents' interest in joining an English language course shows that 75% of the IDP would like to join the course and 25% may join. 68% preferred the course to be conducted at their working place and 32% preferred it to be outside of their working place. As for the preferred method to learn English, 30%

indicated that they would prefer group work, 33% preferred class activity, 25% preferred pair work and 12% preferred whole class activity. As for the IDP preferred learning strategy, 45% chose visual, 28% preferred music, 22% chose kinaesthetic and 5% chose audio.

4.5.1.2 Analysis of Question 5

Table 4.22 shows the information about the respondents' learning habits to be incorporated in the course design.

Table 4.22: Respondents' Learning Preference

Tasks		Number	Percentage
Completing a task through a problem-solving activity	Not enjoyable /Important	-	-
	Enjoyable & Important	27	68
	Most Enjoyable & Important	13	32
Acting out a role-play exercise	Not enjoyable /Important	-	-
	Enjoyable & Important	33	83
	Most Enjoyable & Important	7	17
Taking decisions about personal learning activities (learning-centred)	Not enjoyable /Important	6	15
	Enjoyable & Important	25	63
	Most Enjoyable & Important	7	12
Prefers a teacher-directed lesson with explanations	Not enjoyable /Important	37	93
	Enjoyable & Important	3	7
	Most Enjoyable & Important	-	-
Completing imaginative and creative activities-project work	Not enjoyable /Important	-	-
	Enjoyable & Important	21	53
	Most Enjoyable & Important	19	47

Based on Table 4.22, 68% of respondents have chosen completing a task through a problem-solving activity as an enjoyable and important learning preference, 83% of them have chosen the acting out a role-play exercise as enjoyable and important. Based

on the interview with the IDP, they think this activity will give them the opportunity to practise real life situations and find out the possible solution. Besides, 63% respondents prefer taking decisions about personal learning or learning- centred as these respondents are adults and based on the interview conducted with the IDP, they believe they have to be given the preference to make decisions in determining their strengths and weaknesses. 93% respondents felt that a teacher-directed lesson with explanation is not going to be helpful to them. According to them, they would prefer learning-centred as long as the teacher guides them. Last on the list, 53% preferred completing imaginative and creative activities such as project work

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4.5.2 Analysis of Questionnaire for IDP: Course Design (Part 3, Section B, Question 3-4)

Question 3: As an Information Desk Personnel, in what aspects (conversation skills, professional vocabulary development, pronunciation skills, etc) do you want to improve through an ESP course?

When asked this question, most of the respondents felt that speaking skills, vocabulary and pronunciation skill are important and they want to improve these through an ESP course. This is because they think it is important to be able to speak clearly using the appropriate vocabulary as that helps to make the communication process smooth. On the other hand, a few of them felt that they will be able to gain confidence if they attend the course as the course will give them the space to improve themselves in English language skills.

Question 4: If you are given an opportunity to attend a short ESP course to improve on your communicative skills, which are your preferred days, timing and duration in a week?

Based on Table 4.23, 85% preferred the class to be on weekdays because they will be busy during the weekends. On the other hand, 73% preferred the course to be conducted in the evening, possibly after their working hours as that will give them the time to concentrate in class well. 100% of respondents preferred the class to be conducted for one hour only as they felt they will be able to concentrate more in class.

Table 4.23: Preferred days, timing and duration for the course

Days/Time/Duration		Number	Percentage
Days	Weekdays (Monday-Friday)	34	85
	Weekends(Saturday& Sunday)	6	15
Timing	Morning	11	27
	Evening	29	73
	Night	-	-
Duration	1	40	100%
	1 1/2	-	-
(Hours)	2	-	-
	2 1/2	-	-

4.5.3   Analysis of Interview with Managers (Question 6-11)

Question 6: Which are the vital skills required by the information desk personnel (e.g. listening, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc) in attending to customers' needs?

The managers were asked about vital skills they think are required by the IDP in attending to customers' needs. Mr.G has mentioned that all the four skills listed which

are listening, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. According to him, these four skills are needed as the main task of IDP is to communicate with customers and it involves speaking skill. Both Ms.A and Ms.S stressed on the importance of vocabulary knowledge and pronunciation. They said that it is important for IDP to be able to pronounce words correctly and listen attentively to customers' needs in any situation. So, it is vital for IDP to have all the four skills in order for them to attend to customers' needs in all perspectives.

Question 7: If your staff are given an opportunity to attend an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course, what aspects of English language would you like them to acquire (e.g. conversation skills, professional vocabulary development, pronunciation skills, etc)?

The managers were asked for their opinion on what aspects of English language they would prefer their IDP to acquire if they are given an opportunity to attend an ESP course and the managers mentioned conversational skill as it will be very helpful for them in their job scope which will help them to enhance their pronunciation skills. Besides, vocabulary needs to be given attention as it is a part of conversational skill which plays an important role in their job environment.

Question 8: Which is the best strategy to acquire English language in an ESP course (e.g. visual, audio, music, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, etc)?

As their IDP are adults, so it is important to know what learning strategies will be suitable for them and this question was asked to their managers as they should know their IDP well. Two managers mentioned audio listening because listening will help them to understand the sentence pattern and they can practice by listening to it. Not only that, learning through music is also another strategy as music arouses students' interest

in learning a particular topic. Group discussion is another strategy which will be helpful as it encourages IDP to speak in English and express their opinions and views in English. As they practise speaking in English, they will definitely improve themselves. Last but not least, it is important for IDP to participate in any activities conducted in class so that IDP get the chance to experience real life situations and have the ability to practise speaking.

Question 9: How would you like the ESP course to be conducted (e.g. teacher-centred, student-centered or both)?

The next question was about the managers' opinions on how they would prefer the course to be conducted (teacher-centred/student-centred). All the managers agreed that the course should be conducted in both ways in which the IDP should be guided and probably the initial stages could be teacher-centred and gradually becomes student-centred. It is not possible to make it student-centred completely as the IDP need to be guided and they do not have enough exposure to explore things by themselves. They should be given the opportunity to participate in classroom activities and it would be good if they are grouped together. With the guidance of the ESP trainer, they will definitely be able to gain knowledge.

Question 10: In your opinion, if your staff are given an opportunity to attend a short ESP course, which would be the appropriate days, time and duration that is convenient for them?

As the managers are the superiors for the IDP, they were asked about the appropriate days, time and duration which they think will be convenient for their IDP to attend a short course in the future. Ms.A responded that her IDP are working based on shifts. Probably the course can be conducted one hour before the work begins or one hour after

the work ends depending on the timing of their shifts. Mr.G has also responded that courses should be conducted on weekdays because the IDP would be busy during weekends as more people visit the malls on Saturdays and Sundays. As for the duration of the course, all the managers mentioned that a 3-6 months course would be suitable but it still depends on their level of proficiency but they think the course shouldn't exceed 6 months as it will cause stress to their IDP as they do not have enough time to focus on studies and job at the same time.

Question 11: Do you have any specific recommendations on the topics, types of activities and materials that are beneficial to be included in the course design?

Last but not least, the managers were asked to give specific recommendations on the topics, type of activities and materials that are beneficial to be included in the course design. All the managers gave different recommendations. Mr.G mentioned drilling on sentence patterns as he feels it will be helpful for the IDP to produce correct utterances. On the other hand, Ms.A said that having role play by asking the IDP to share the situations they have encountered in the mall so that they will be able to share their views and opinions about the situations. As for Ms.S, she feels that the IDP should be taught on how to attend to customers' enquiries by providing them suitable vocabularies so that they will be able to communicate more effectively with their customers.

4.5.4   Analysis of Interview with Customers (Question 6)

Question 6: Would you like to provide any suggestions on how these IDP can improve themselves in terms of language skills?

The customers were asked to provide suggestions on how these IDP can improve themselves in terms of language skills. Several suggestions were given by the customers. The suggestions are as follow:

i.   Speak confidently in English

ii.   Try to improve by speaking fluently

iii. Avoid code switching and interference of L1

iv.   Use appropriate words (Vocab) while interacting with customers

4.6   Summative Table of the Language Needs

4.6.1   Summative table of IDP's Language Difficulties

Table 4.24 shows the summary of the findings based on the language difficulties based on the job tasks of IDP.

Table 4.24: Summative table of IDP's Language Difficulties

Tasks (Job Tasks of IDP)	Percentage (%)	Language Needs
1)Respond to daily request for information and enquiries by customers (Table 4.4)	✓ 90 ✓ 83 ✓ 80	1) Grammar 2) Vocabulary 3) Pronunciation
2)Respond to general information requests and enquiries by telephone (Table 4.5)	✓ 95 ✓ 85 ✓ 73	1) Grammar 2) Vocabulary 3) Pronunciation

'Table 4.24, continued'

3)Inform customers about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall (Table 4.6)	✓ 80 ✓ 78 ✓ 73	1) Pronunciation 2) Vocabulary 3) Grammar
4)Give directions to find the required places/stores in the shopping mall (Table 4.7)	✓ 93 ✓ 85 ✓ 65	1) Vocabulary 2) Grammar 3) Pronunciation
5)Promote any events or programs organised by the shopping mall (Table 4.8)	✓ 88 ✓ 80 ✓ 73	1) Pronunciation 2) Vocabulary 3) Grammar
6)Greet customers in shopping mall (Table 4.9)	✓ 90	1) Pronunciation
7)Expressing regrets/offering apologies (Table 4.10)	✓ 95	1) Pronunciation

According to table 4.24, the higher percentages for all the job tasks have been reported based on the tables discussed in Chapter 4. These percentages show that the focus of the course should be on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation which lead to the ability to speak fluently while communicating with customers (fluency).

4.6.2 Summative table of IDP's Language Difficulties (Customers' Opinion)

Table 4.25 shows the summary of the findings based on the customers' opinion on the IDPs' spoken language communication.

Table 4.25: Summative table of IDP's Language Difficulties (Customers' Opinion)

Job Tasks	Percentage (%)	Language Needs
1)IDP responding to information inquired regarding the shopping mall (Table 4.12)	✓ 80 ✓ 70 ✓ 70	1) Vocabulary 2) Pronunciation 3) Comprehension
2)IDP responding to queries about the opening hours and hours of operation during weekends (Table 4.13)	✓ 50 ✓ 30 ✓ 30	1) Vocabulary 2) Pronunciation 3) Comprehension
3)IDP clarifying about any specific information (Table 4.14)	✓ 80 ✓ 70 ✓ 50	1) Vocabulary 2) Pronunciation 3) Comprehension
4)IDP responding to queries about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall (Table 4.15)	✓ 80 ✓ 70 ✓ 60	1) Grammar 2) Vocabulary 3) Comprehension
5)IDP giving directions in finding specific shop/stores (Table 4.16)	✓ 100 ✓ 90 ✓ 80	1) Vocabulary 2) Pronunciation 3) Grammar
6)IDP providing information about any events or programs organized by the shopping mall (Table 4.17)	✓ 90 ✓ 80 ✓ 70	1) Grammar 2) Vocabulary 3) Comprehension
7)IDP giving assistance in using the facilities available (Table 4.18)	✓ 90 ✓ 80 ✓ 70	1) Vocabulary 2) Pronunciation 3) Grammar
8) IDP responding to enquiries about the services provided (Table 4.19)	✓ 90 ✓ 90 ✓ 80	1) Vocabulary 2) Pronunciation 3) Grammar

According to table 4.25, the higher percentages for all the customers' opinions of the IDPs' language difficulties when performing their job tasks have been reported based

on the tables discussed in Chapter 4. These percentages show that the focus of the course should be on vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and comprehension. All these the language needs lead to the ability of speaking fluently in English. Due to their language difficulties, they are unable to speak fluently to their customers.

4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided analysis of the data obtained through the questionnaires, interviews and observation. In the analysis of the findings, the important aspects were emphasized and the possible reasons for the weaknesses also indicated to support the results. The findings from the questionnaire and interviews also revealed that there were similarities and differences in the perceptions and suggestions about the needs of English language skill, focusing on spoken communication. Most of the respondents agreed that they are not proficient when it comes to speaking in English with customers and they believe an English language course will help them to improve in the necessary areas of speaking skills.

The analysis of findings had given valuable information and all the ideas and information provided was used to design a proposed course which is discussed in Chapter 5. In the next chapter, a discussion of the findings will be presented according to the research questions as stated in Chapter One.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the important findings that were revealed in the data analysis in the previous chapter are summarized and presented according to the research questions. The results obtained from the questionnaire, interview and observation are combined and discussed together.

The summary here will provide answers to the two research questions stated in Chapter One. In addition, the important aspects as identified will be highlighted in this chapter, so that initial steps can be taken by the relevant authorities to improve this study if necessary.

5.2   Findings

The aim of this study was to conduct a needs analysis with the purpose of identifying the English spoken needs of IDP. A course design for IDP focusing on their speaking skills is proposed. This chapter will provide answers to the two research questions respectively:

i) What are the spoken communication needs of Information Desk Personnel in shopping malls?

ii) How would the stakeholders prefer the spoken communication needs be incorporated in a spoken English language course for the IDP?

5.2.1 Research Question One

What are the spoken communication needs of Information Desk Personnel in shopping malls?

The data obtained has shown results in which these IDP certainly have difficulties in completing the tasks mentioned due to their average proficiency level in English. The main spoken communication difficulties that have been identified through the data analysis are as follow:
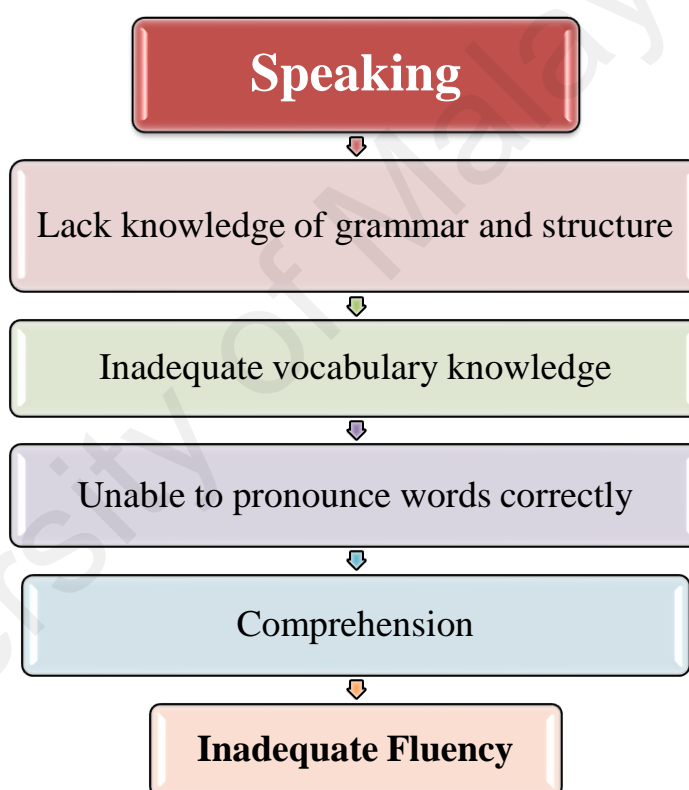
```
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │                 Speaking                  │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
                            ⬇
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │    Lack knowledge of grammar and structure │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
                            ⬇
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │        Inadequate vocabulary knowledge     │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
                            ⬇
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │      Unable to pronounce words correctly   │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
                            ⬇
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │               Comprehension                │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
                            ⬇
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │             Inadequate Fluency             │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 5.1: Spoken Communication Difficulties

These are the four main verbal communication skills which have been identified as the difficulties faced by IDP in completing their job tasks. Firstly, the data collected showed that IDP felt that they lack knowledge of grammar and structure due to their average proficiency level in English. They always produce sentences which are grammatically incorrect and also they tend to produce sentences which are not

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appropriate or suitable to the context required. Some example of sentences observed by the researcher were, instead of responding to customers using sentences such as 'Yes sir/madam, let me help you with this' or 'Please give me a few seconds, I will get back to you as soon as I can', the IDP used sentences such as Yes sir/madam, wait ye', 'Sir/madam, wait for a while, I can help' and so on. This is when they tend to code switch to their L1 as that is the easiest way for them to be able to attend to customers' needs. According to Ravisuda Aunruen (2005), grammar was needed for travel agents in Chiang Mai in order for them to communicate with clients but it was considered as the lowest needs, but in this present study, the needs analysis results showed that grammar is the major concern for IDP when it comes to communicating with their customers in shopping malls.

The next difficulty encountered is inadequate vocabulary knowledge. They have insufficient vocabulary knowledge in English in which they often fail to use the appropriate words while interacting with customers. This often occurs when they have to give directions to the stores in the shopping malls to customers especially foreign customers. Findings in chapter 4 showed that 93% of the IDP felt that they have inadequate vocabulary when giving directions. As we know, foreign customers do not understand Malay and English is the commonly used medium of instruction in the world for people from different countries to communicate. So when the IDP have to use English with foreign customers, they find it hard to communicate with them. Based on the interview with customers, it was found out that the IDP tend to code switch when they could not speak fluently in English. Examples of sentences given by the customers were 'Yes Encik, you jalan straight', "You can ambil the lift there and go to 2nd floor' and 'You can belok right'. Not only that, based on the findings, 93% of the IDP have insufficient vocabulary knowledge and due to this, they often give directions in short

sentences such as 'Go right, take the escalator', 'You can see a store' and so on. Instead of giving proper directions with suitable vocabulary, they end up giving directions based on their ability in using English. These findings can be related to the findings of a study conducted by Nawamin Prachanat (2012). His findings showed that one of the problems faced by tourism employees is having inadequate vocabulary while communicating with clients.

Besides, these IDP also have difficulty in pronouncing words as some words appear to be new to them and they do not know how to pronounce them correctly. Mispronouncing certain English words can lead to misunderstanding in interaction which may lead customers to have inability to exchange information with the IDP. For an example, according to the findings in chapter 4, 80% of the IDP felt that they were unable to pronounce words correctly and due to this, they always end up producing grammatically incorrect sentences while speaking in English. Some examples noted by the researcher during the observation session were such as 'You can keep your bag, I take care' and 'Aunty can use this for your baby'. Proper utterances that could be used are 'You may use this charger to charge your phone, 'Aunty, you may use this stroller for your baby' and 'You may keep your belongings here and we will keep them safe'. Apart from that, based on the interview conducted with the customers, they mentioned that although the IDP managed to communicate with them, they still had difficulties in pronouncing words in English. It is important for these IDP to know how to pronounce words such as 'stroller', 'belongings' and so on which are related to their job tasks so that they will be able to use those words in their conversation confidently and produce grammatically correct sentences.

Apart from that, the final difficulty faced by IDP is comprehension. This language need can be derived from the language difficulties stated in the questionnaire such as

75% of the respondents mentioned that they are unable to understand foreign accents and due to this they do not understand their customers' request (Table 4.6). Besides, according to table 4.20, 70% of the respondents are unable to understand the meaning of the words used by customers. These findings show that the IDP have difficulties in comprehending the customers' requests due to their inadequate knowledge in English language.

Last but not least, due to the difficulties mentioned above, the IDP are unable to speak fluently in English. Inability to pronounce words correctly, unable to use grammatically correct sentences and lack of vocabulary knowledge are the reasons for them not to speak fluently in English language. They often end up speaking in broken English or Bahasa Melayu to their customers. In addition, their inadequate fluency in speaking English makes them lack confidence in speaking English. They felt it is important for them to improve themselves in the identified areas so that they will be able to converse in English appropriately.

5.2.2   Research Question Two

How would the stakeholders prefer the spoken communication needs be incorporated in a spoken English language course for the IDP?

According to Syakur (1987) which was earlier mentioned in the Literature review (Chapter 2), there are at least five components of speaking skill which are comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. The findings of this study matches well with what Syakur has stated. The components of speaking skills that play important roles in the Information Desk Personnel's job tasks can be summarized as follow:

Grammar

Vocabulary

Pronunciation

Comprehension

Fluency

Figure 5.2: Components of Speaking Skills

Firstly, the focus is on grammar component in which the IDP are required to speak grammatically correct sentences. As for these IDP, it is important for them to be able to produce complete sentences while speaking in English in order for the customers to understand the message which is trying to be conveyed by the personnel. Table 4.5 in Chapter 4 showed that 90% of the respondents felt that they lack knowledge of grammar and structure. Due to this, they find it difficult to speak in English to customers. It is not a must for them to produce complex sentences but producing grammatically correct sentences will help them to communicate easily with their customers.

The next on the list is Vocabulary knowledge. IDP will not be able to communicate effectively or express their ideas if they do not have sufficient vocabulary. It is possible to convey messages without having grammar skill but it is not possible to convey a message if one does not have sufficient vocabulary. These IDP must be exposed to vocabulary related to their job tasks so that they can use the vocabulary learned while interacting with customers. In this way, they will be able to explain information to customers effectively without having the need to code switch to another language which may not be a mutual language. Table 4.8 in Chapter 4 shows that 93% of the

respondents have chosen the option of having insufficient vocabulary knowledge and often they have difficulties in using appropriate words in communicating with customers.

On the other hand, pronunciation is another concern when it comes to speaking skill. Pronunciation is a way for IDP to produce clearer language when they speak. It is related to how sounds and pattern in a language works. Pronunciation plays a vital role in speaking in order to make the process of communication easy to understand for both parties. Table 4.10 shows that 90% of the respondents were unable to pronounce words correctly while communicating in English. These IDP must be exposed or taught the various patterns and sounds in English so that they will be able to learn how to pronounce words by themselves in the future. They will not feel intimidated for being unable to pronounce words while interacting with customers.

Apart from that, comprehension is the ability to comprehend or understand the message which is trying to be conveyed by both parties. IDP are not able to communicate efficiently with their customers due to the language problems they have which were mentioned above. IDP will be able to provide the necessary information if they have the ability to understand the conversation which is occurring between them and the customers. If they do not know how to comprehend the messages, then smooth interactions will not take place.

Finally, fluency is the last aspect of speaking skill which has to be given importance as it is important for IDP to speak fluently to their customers. The IDP are not expected to spend a lot of time searching for the language items needed to express their message. They need to have the capability to speak fluently in English so that they will be able to attend their customers' needs in every possible way. A little exposure by giving them

the appropriate content required will help them to improve themselves in speaking the language confidently to fulfil their job tasks successfully when it comes to tasks that involve speaking skills.

Overall, the skills or content required in the proposed course design are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension. These language skills or content were incorporated in the course designed for the IDP to help them improve their English language speaking skills.

5.3   Spoken English Communication Needs to be incorporated in a Language Course for IDP

The English language course for IDP was designed based on the parameters of course design which was itemized in the form of questions by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) as listed below:

a) Intensive course – The course will be an intensive course focusing on the speaking skill. This course will be dealing with urgent language training needs within a short period of time (a three -month course) which will involve small groups of IDP. It is believed that this intensive course will enhance their performance in the areas required despite the short duration of the course because the course will focus on specific spoken needs which were identified through the needs analysis.

b) Assessed course – Although the IDP will not be assessed through questions, exams or tests, they will be assessed based on presentations and role play that will focus on their improvement in fluency, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

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c) Delayed Needs – This course will focus on the delayed needs of the IDP to help them improve in terms of speaking skills for their use in the future. The needs to improve in speaking skills will become more significant in fulfilling their job tasks in the future.

d) Teacher as facilitator/consultant – The ESP trainer will be flexible and negotiate with the learners about the content and activities that can be included in the course. The IDP will be given the priorities when it comes to decision making in class as they are expected to perform activities and tasks in class independently. The focus will be on fluency, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation and the content will be derived from the IDP's working experiences so that the IDP will be more familiar with the situations and they will be able to work on the tasks given.

e) Narrow Focus – This course will be designed by concentrating on speaking skills only as that is the main skill which plays a huge role in the IDP job tasks.

f) Parallel with experience – This course will run parallel with the experiences the IDP have had as these IDP have encountered various situations that required them to use English language. Their experience will guide them to grasp the necessary skill and content to gradually improve in the required areas.

g) Authentic materials – The materials that will be used will be drawn directly from their professional area as the materials will be based on their job tasks as an IDP. This will provide them the opportunity to learn better as it is something that they experience in their daily job.

h) Homogeneous group – The trainees for the course will be from one profession in which all of them will be IDP who are working in shopping malls.

i) A flexible negotiated course design – This course design will be designed in a way that will cater to the needs of IDP and there will certainly be room for changes as the course goes on based on feedback given by the IDP.

5.3.1   Course Content

Most of the IDP (75%) who participated in this study have expressed their interest in joining an English language course which was designed at the end of this study. The content of the course was based on the spoken needs of the IDP which have been discussed in research question one. Their job tasks were taken into consideration and the difficulties faced by them in the job tasks were given importance. In short, the course design focuses on the four main aspects of communication which are:

I.   Grammar:

The focus will be on speech acts which are a key concept in the field of pragmatics, the study of speaker intent and what speakers mean when they use a particular sentence (Hatch, 1992). According to Crandall & Basturkmen (2004), non-native speakers have difficulties in communicating because they inappropriately transfer speech act realisations or strategies from their first language or have misconceptions about the target language. This can be clearly seen from the data collected in which the IDP often tend to code switch words in the target language. They are unable to produce complete sentences due to their inability to use English fluently. A set of speech acts in the form of negotiating based on the findings will be exposed to IDP as these speech acts are used by them in fulfilling their daily job tasks. Example of speech acts that will be taken into consideration are as follow;

- Expressing opinions as one of the IDP's job tasks is to express their view and opinions based on the various questions asked by customers.

- Asking for clarification in which the IDP are required to clarify information which is not clear to them while speaking to customers so that they will be able to resolve the problems as required.

- Querying in which IDP are encouraged to ask questions to customers politely to begin their conversation as they need to know what the problem is before asking for further information.

- Offering advice as the IDP will have to offer their advice to customers in certain circumstances if the customers are confused or are not sure of what to do or react when they face problems in the shopping malls.

- Expressing regrets or apologizes when the IDP are unable to guide the customers in certain situations and they have to inform the customers or express their regret in a polite manner so that the customers will not feel offended in any ways.

Apart from speech acts, modal verbs are another concern when it comes to grammar. Modal verbs such as *may, might*, *could*, *would*, and *will* is one way of indicating the degree of certainty of a speaker's commitment to a statement or claim. In this context, the IDP are not exposed to the various modal verbs that they can use to express their views or explain to their customers in a polite way. They often use words such as 'Sila' or 'Boleh' in Bahasa Melayu to guide their customers because they do not know the modal verbs in English. So, exposing

them to these modal verbs will help them to speak politely to their customers in English.

Last but not least, sentence structure will be given importance as well because majority of the IDP agreed that they lack grammatical knowledge and due to this, they always end up producing incomplete sentences with many grammatical errors. It is believed that by introducing simple sentences which are related to their job tasks will be helpful to them as they are not required to produce complex sentences but simple sentences that will make both parties understand the message.

II. Vocabulary:

The importance of teaching vocabulary in ESP is now widely accepted (Swales, 1983). Technical vocabulary needs to be exposed to the IDP as they need help with words which are completely new to them when it comes to their working environment. Technical vocabulary is words or phrases that are used primarily in a specific line of work or profession. It is important for IDP to get familiar with words or terms related to their profession in order for them to use the words to communicate. Trainers could prepare a glossary of new terms with straightforward explanation of the terms so that the IDP may use the terms while communicating with customers. According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), it is important to differentiate between vocabulary needed for comprehension and that needed for production. As this research focuses on speaking skills in terms of oral production, storage and retrieval are significant when it comes to teaching vocabulary. It is crucial to provide the appropriate vocabulary terms to the IDP as those terms will be useful for them in interacting with customers.

Appropriate vocabulary will be practised throughout the course as it will be a part of each unit of the course.

III.   Pronunciation

Pronouncing words appropriately is required as mispronunciations will lead to unsuccessful interaction process. Pronunciation skill is part of speaking skill. Thus, pronunciation will be given equal importance during the speaking tasks in which the IDP will be encouraged and motivated to pronounce words correctly and appropriately during the lesson and their presentation to ensure effective communication with their customers.

IV.   Comprehension

The ability of responding to speech as well as to initiate them will be easier for IDP when they have the ability to utilize the content in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation areas. When they practise speaking in English of the, they will be able to grasp the messaged conveyed to them and they will also be able to start the conversation with customers without hesitation.

V.   Fluency

Once the IDP have acquired the necessary content mentioned above, fluency in producing speech will not be a huge issue for them. They will be able to produce sentences accurately and this will give them the confidence to speak confidently to their customers in English. It is important to encourage them to speak in English during the course so that they will be able to learn from their mistakes and also realise the errors that they have been making all these while.

Although pronunciation, fluency and comprehension will not be included directly in the course design as the content, these needs will be incorporated with the activities stated in the course design. For an example, activity such as role play (Week 4) will motivate IDP to be able to speak fluently with correct pronunciation and they will also need to understand the request of their customers in order to respond appropriately. Besides, one of the activities in the course content (Week 9) requires the IDP to offer advice to customers when they have encounter problems in the shopping mall and IDP are required to understand their customers' problems before offering the required advice to them. Thus, all the activities in the course design is believed to help and guide the IDP to improve in all the language needs that has been identified through the data collected.

5.3.2   Duration

The findings showed that the IDP prefer to have duration of a three-month course that will cater to their needs in helping and guiding them to improve their speaking skills. The choice for the duration is chosen based on the opinion of the IDP and their managers as both parties believed that the course should not exceed 6 months because the IDP will not be able to concentrate for a long time as they have to juggle between work and studies. Based on the researcher's point of view, a three- month course is not sufficient enough to cater the needs of the IDP as they need more exposure in terms of speaking skills but since it is requested by the IDP and managers to design it only for a short term, their preferences were taken into consideration. So, this proposed three-month course will act as guidance for them to improve in the areas that have been identified and provide them with fruitful information to be used in their job tasks.

5.3.3 Time Allocation

Time allocation for each class was set for an hour as requested by the managers as well as the IDP themselves. Findings in chapter 4 showed that 100% of the IDP chose the duration of one hour for the English course to be conducted. However, the researcher felt that the IDP will not be able to learn much in an hour and the course would have to be compact. Since the IDP only have a day off from their working duties, so they felt it would be better if the classes could be conducted before or after their working hours, depending on their shift hours. In this case, the IDP could be grouped under the same working hours and classes could be conducted twice a week for two different groups. It is not possible to group all of them in one single class due to their shift hours. The IDP have two working shift hours which is 9-6pm and 2-11pm. Based on the researcher's point of view, it would be advisable to have the class before their working hours, which is probably 8am for the first group and 1pm for the second group so that they can apply the knowledge they have gained in class in their job tasks. As we know, nothing is practical until it is put into practise. This will be a great chance for them to practise the knowledge they have gained and improve themselves in any possible way. So, the time allocation should be one hour for each class. Besides, there should be 14 weeks all together and each week can be allotted for one hour. The IDP can be grouped according to their shift hours so that the classes will not clash with their working hours and everyone gets the chance to participate in the class. As mentioned above, time for the classes should be suggested and if the time is not suitable, it should be changed to according to the preference of the IDP.

5.3.4 Teaching Methodology

The IDP prefer group work (30%) in class as they think working with their colleagues will help them to share and exchange ideas and views and they will be able to learn more through this kind of activity. As these IDP are adult learners, it is important to know their preferred learning strategy in order for the ESP trainer to conduct activities that will grab their attention and arouse their interest in class. Next, most of the respondents preferred to learn through visual (45%) and music (28%). As for them, pictures and music will keep them on the right track as they are considered as interesting learning methods. They believe they can learn more by looking at pictures and listening to music will keep them awake and active during the lesson. Due to this, videos that include music will be shown to the IDP for most of the units that will be taught to them in order to grab their attention towards the lesson and encourage them to participate actively in the tasks assigned. As for the activities in class, most of them chose role play; problem solving activity and imaginative activity as their preferred learning methods in class. These activities also should help the IDP to think critically as they need to respond to customers appropriately and they need to fulfil the customers' needs for a guaranteed satisfaction. Based from the interview conducted with the IDP, they feel these activities can help them to improve their English language. The researcher has included all the activities mentioned above in the course design in order for the IDP to practise the language effectively as required by them. All these clearly show that the IDP prefer a learning-centred classroom and they would like to explore things by themselves rather than being taught by a trainer all the time. It is important for an ESP trainer to guide these IDP but the decision making should be given to the IDP as they are the main concern here. The managers also have given their opinions in which they believe the lesson should be conducted in a way which the IDP should be given more importance and the ESP trainer should guide them to the right track. Most of the

tasks in the class will require the IDP to involve in activities and an ESP trainer will act as a guide to the IDP so that they will have more opportunity to use the English language in class.

5.3.5   Evaluation

All the respondents (100%) mentioned that they prefer not to have test or quizzes as their assessment because they do not have the time to study at home and they are not in the favor of using books or notes in class. If they have to be evaluated, they prefer to be evaluated through presentations and role-plays. This can be a good way of assessing the IDP as their main job tasks require them to speak in English and all the activities that will be conducted in class will be based on their job tasks, focusing on speaking skills. So, assessing them through presentation will be a good way to know whether they have improved themselves in the areas that will be emphasized throughout the course. Three weeks can be allotted for evaluation of the IDP. The first evaluation can be conducted in week 7 in which they will be evaluated based on the content that they have acquired from weeks 1-6. IDP will be asked to work in groups and each group will be given different situational issues faced by customers and how will the IDP attend to the customers' needs. They will be required to use the phrases and modal verbs learned during weeks 1-6 to complete the activities. They will be assessed and given feedback on their ability to handle the situations focusing on their speaking skills. The second evaluation can be conducted in weeks 13 and 14 in which the IDP will be evaluated based on the content they have learned throughout the whole course (weeks 1-12). During these two weeks, interesting tasks will be assigned to the IDP. They will be involved in real life situations in which they will face their customers in attending to

their requests and will be observed by the trainer. It is hoped these kinds of evaluations will not burden the IDP and it will encourage them to perform better in their job tasks.

5.4 English Language Course Design for IDP

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher has designed a proposed ESP course, tailor made to suit both the needs of the learners and the shopping malls involved.

Objectives: • Identify the important job tasks that involve speaking skills of Information Desk Personnel to prepare them for real world experience. • Provide Information Desk Personnel with the necessary speaking skills to handle internal and external customers. • Help Information Desk Personnel to gain confidence to speak in English with customers by providing them with the required knowledge.
Duration: 14 weeks
Credit hours: 1
Learning outcomes: Upon completing this course, trainees should be able to • Use grammatically correct sentences while interacting with customers • Use appropriate vocabulary with correct pronunciation in their conversation • Perform an effective two-way interpersonal communication • Speak fluently in English while interacting with customers • Comprehend and understand the needs and request of their customers in English
Teaching – learning and assessment strategy: • Questioning (Q & A sessions) • Explanation (Presentations) • Demonstration (Role Play) • Collaboration (Group/Pair work)
Synopsis: • As our global community evolves, the Information Desk Personnel must be adaptable to meet changing needs. This understanding is at the core of help desk. The syllabus gives trainees a skill set that will allow them to adapt and use the skills to perform their job tasks. Ultimately, the goal of this course is to provide trainees with the speaking skills they will need to thrive in the real world.

5.4.1 Weekly Plan

Week 1	
Unit 1	**WELCOME!** • Getting started • Making Introductions • Define Customer Service
Speaking	• Asking for and giving personal information • Share working experiences with each other
Vocabulary	• Myself • Personal pronouns
Activities	• Introduction session and getting to know each other • Discussion in groups about their job scope • Give opinions or views on the important aspects of their job scope • Sharing working experiences with each other

Week 2	
Unit 2	**ISSUES** • Discuss common problems faced by the IDP • Categorize problems into various speaking functions
Speaking	• Sharing common problems while communicating
Activities	• Get into groups and share the common problems faced while working • Brainstorm on the cause and effects of the problems • List the possible ways to solve the problems • Present ideas in class • Trainer categorizes the problems.

Week 3	
Unit 3	**GREETING** • Initiating Conversation • Greet people in a pleasant manner
Speaking	• Introducing and starting a talk • Greeting people • Role Play conversation
Vocabulary	• Forms of greeting people http://www.articlecity.com/videos/education/English-Lesson---Customer-Service-Vocabulary-p2-153370484.php
Grammar	• Question Formation • WH-question
Activities	• Watch videos on how to greet a customer appropriately • Role Play • Discussion on ways to be friendly to customers

Week 4	
Unit 4	**PLACES** • Interpret maps and give directions
Speaking	• Asking for and giving directions. • Pronunciation of phrases.
Vocabulary	• Vocabulary for places • Prepositions of place http://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/grammar-lesson-prepositions-place.php
Grammar	• Present Simple (taught incidentally)
Activities	• Describing places based on the pictures provided • Giving directions based on prepositions introduced • Role Play

Week 5	
Unit 5	**RING RING!** • Telephone etiquette • Opening calls • Taking messages
Speaking	• Answering calls
Vocabulary	• Phrases to use when answering phone calls
Grammar	• Question form
Activities	• Watch videos on telephone etiquette • Personnel identify errors in the video • Highlight the errors and emphasize on the important phrases

Week 6	
Unit 6	**HOW MAY I HELP YOU?** • Questioning techniques • Attending to requests
Speaking	• Making requests • Responding to requests by understanding the needs of customers
Vocabulary	• Using expressions to make/respond to requests
Grammar	• Modal Verbs for making requests (e.g. can you.. could you.. will you.. would you mind..)
Activities	• Notes on the phrases of making/responding to requests. • Role Play

Week 7
EVALUATION WEEK: 1) Participants work in groups 2) Each group will be given a situation randomly 3) They will have to act out the situation based on the content from Week 1-6 4) They will be assessed based on the ability to use the suitable phrases/modal verbs learned Language Skills Focus: Pronunciation, Comprehension, Sentence Structure & Critical Thinking

Week 8	
Unit 7	**ASKING/CLARIFYING INFORMATION** • Asking and clarifying for information/questions
Speaking	• Clarifying information
Vocabulary	• Using expression/phrases to ask and clarify for information
Grammar	• Modal Verbs for asking/clarifying information (e.g. could you..; Excuse me..; Pardon me...)
Activities	• Notes on the phrases of asking/ clarifying information • Role Play

Week 9	
Unit 8	**GIVING OPINION** • Expressing opinions • Defending opinions
Speaking	• Express and defend opinions • Share opinions
Vocabulary	• Use expressions to express opinions
Grammar	• Modal Verbs for giving opinions (e.g. might be, could, may)
Activities	• Notes on the phrases of expressing/defending and sharing opinions • Role Play

Week 10	
Unit 9	**GIVING ADVICE** • Offering advice
Speaking	• Asking for and giving advice • Role Play Conversation
Vocabulary	• Using expressions/phrases to offer advice
Grammar	• Modal Verbs for giving advice (e.g. If I were you, I would..; you should..; you ought to...)
Activities	• Notes on the phrases of asking for and giving advice • Role Play

Week 11	
Unit 10	**ETIQUETTE** • Complaints/Responding to complaints • Expressing regrets/Offering apologies
Speaking	• Complain politely • Talk about etiquette
Vocabulary	• Using context clues to find meaning • Use idiomatic expressions
Grammar	• Could and Would in polite question
Activities	• Notes on the phrases of receiving and responding to complaints politely • Role Play

Week 12	
Unit 11	**FACILITIES** • Providing necessary service
Speaking	• Practice scripts • Role play conversation
Vocabulary	• Vocabulary related to shopping mall
Grammar	• Simple sentence structure (taught incidentally)
Activities	• Practice scripts prepared by superiors • Mind map on the various customers' expectations • Discussion on how to meet customers' expectations in various styles • Each think of a style and combine everything

Week 13 & 14
EVALUATION WEEK :
1) Individual Tasks   2) Real life situations   3) IDP will attend to customers' needs and will be assessed based on their ability to apply the content they have learned throughout the course   4) IDP will have to think critically before responding to customers' requests and needs.

5.5   Implications of the study

The present needs analysis study investigated the spoken English language needs and problems of IDP. The findings enabled the researcher to justify assumptions and recommendations that were useful for designing a proposed course for the IDP to help them to improve their speaking skills. The findings also could be generalized to the overall needs and problems of the IDP working in shopping malls and provide useful information for similar contexts.

The essential language functions for speaking skills that were useful for these IDP were identified. The suggestions drawn from the analysis of the data were used in the preparation and course designing. Based on the findings, the course design focuses on speaking skills. The content of the course will be relevant to their specific needs which have been identified through the data analysis.

5.6   Limitations of the study

The present study was carried out in only three shopping malls despite the fact that there are many well-known shopping malls in Malaysia due to the difficulty in meeting the managers and getting their permission to participate in this study. The researcher has chosen one particular company to conduct this study and the name of the company can't be revealed due to ethical considerations. Thus, this study cannot be generalized as there are many other shopping malls in Malaysia.

Besides, the data collection period was during high season for tourism in Malaysia, the participants were very busy with tight schedules as they were many customers in the shopping malls. The researcher was not able to spend time interviewing them or talking to them in detail about their needs and problems in speaking English to customers, so

discussion with them was limited to approximately ten minutes with each participants. However, the researcher had some opportunities to ask for clarification of any doubts about the findings of the questionnaire.

Besides, the researcher could not record the interview conducted with the managers of the shopping malls at their request. The researcher could only note down limited information as the researcher was not able to write all the responses given by the managers. It would have been better if the interview could be recorded in order to gather more information.

5.7   Recommendations for Further Research

The present study was carried out in three shopping malls in Malaysia while there are other famous shopping malls in Malaysia. Hence, it is suggested that a parallel study to investigate the needs and problems of using English in speaking of the IDP be conducted in various shopping malls in Malaysia.

Moreover, further studies could be carried out during the training course as well. This is to ensure the IDP have benefited from the English language course. Not only that, further studies after the course has been carried out would be a good way to know whether the course can be used in the future or any amendments need to be made so that IDP can be trained using the English language course designed for them.

A continuous need assessment is necessary to ensure effective outcome of the research as well as the course design that future researchers can look for better improvement and provide the necessary guidance for the IDP who work in the shopping malls.

5.8   Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of this study and proposed a designed course for the IDP working in shopping malls. The content of the proposed course is based on the findings in Chapter 4 and was created for a period of 14 weeks at the request of the IDP and the managers for a short course.

The proposed course was showed to one of the managers of the shopping mall (shopping mall B). The researcher explained the course design to the manager and the manager was asked for the opinion on the possibilities of conducting the course using the course design showed. According to the manager, the course design seems to be useful for the IDP working in shopping mall and the manager mentioned that approval from the board of directors of the shopping mall is needed in order to conduct the training. The manager requested for more time to discuss this matter with the directors and promised to get back to the researcher for further information about the course offered.

The present study was carried out to answer research questions regarding the aspects on spoken skills that need to be given serious attention to for the IDP to fulfil their job tasks. The data was collected by means of questionnaire, interview and observation. Speaking skill was the main focus in the questionnaire as that is the main skill needed for the IDP to be able to communicate effectively with their customers. The findings indicated that the four main areas in speaking that the IDP need to improve on are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. Without having the skills in these areas, it will be tough for the IDP to have smooth interaction with their customers, both local and foreign. The findings were also used to propose a course design as a guideline for them to improve English spoken communication. The researcher believes that this present study would be very beneficial and very significant to the IDP. ESP teachers or

tutors can make some changes based on the current needs of the IDP well as the industry to enhance the effectiveness of the course as a whole.

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APPENDIX A

IDP's Job Description (Based on the Pilot Study)

- **Job Description**Act as a receptionist and greeter for the shopping malls

- A source of information concerning events and locations within the malls

- Important to know the answers to questions or able to find the answer to question asked

1. **Principal Duties**

    - Act as the receptionist or greeter

    - Exhibit excellent customer service skills

    - Answer telephone calls, provide information, assist visitors

    - Maintain a current knowledge of the shopping malls' events

    - Give directions to locations in the malls

    - Contact appropriate building staff to deal with issues and needs

2. **Required knowledge and skills**

    - Ability to be professional, courteous and helpful to anyone requesting information about the malls.

    - Ability to confront visitors

    - Appearance must be presentable to the public

    - Strong customer service and communication skills

    - Being an active listener and have a clear voice with good enunciation

3. **Job Requirements**

    - Minimum Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)

    - 1-2 years of work experience in similar positions of related environment will be an advantage

    - Good command of spoken English

    - Neat and well-groomed appearance

    - Customer and service-oriented

    - Willing to work shifts, weekends and public holidays

Questionnaire for Information Desk Personnel

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
LEMBAH PANTAI
50603 KUALA LUMPUR

QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

**SPOKEN COMMUNICATION NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR INFORMATION
DESK PERSONNEL**

Dear Respondents,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to conduct a needs analysis to gain relevant information about your ability to use English language in communicating with people around you at your work place. An English language course design will be proposed based on the findings to ensure that you will be able to improve your English language communication skills, thus enhancing your job performance.

Please complete the questionnaire as accurately and truthfully as possible. Your valuable opinions will be kept confidential and used strictly for this research only.

Thank you for your full cooperation. Your kind help is greatly appreciated.

<u>**Needs Analysis Questionnaire for Information Desk Personnel in Shopping Malls**</u>

This questionnaire is divided into three parts. Please answer all questions as accurately as you can.

Please put a (√) in the relevant boxes and provide information where it is needed.

Part 1:

I) Demographic Information

1) Age: ☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 55 and above

2) First Language: ☐ Bahasa Malaysia

               ☐ Mandarin

               ☐ Tamil

               Other(Please specify): _____

3) Highest Education Qualification: ☐ SPM

                                       ☐ STPM

                                       ☐ Diploma   _____

                                       ☐ Degree   _____

                                       ☐ Masters   _____

                                       ☐ PhD   _____

4) Highest English Qualification (SPM/STPM) : _____

5) Position in shopping mall: _____

6) How long have you been working as an Information Desk Personnel in shopping mall?

☐ 0-1 year   ☐ 1-3 years   ☐ 3-5 years

☐ 6-10 years ☐ More than 10 years

7) Are you a full-time employee in the shopping mall?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

8) How many hours per week do you work?

☐ 9–12 hours/ week   ☐ 12–15 hours/ week

☐ 15–18 hours/ week   ☐ More than 18 hours/ week

II) Language skills

9) Please rate your language skills according to a scale of 1 to 4 :-

(1: poor level, 4: excellent level)

Language Skills	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Speaking/Pronunciation	1	2	3	4
Listening	1	2	3	4
Grammar	1	2	3	4
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4

III) Language Use

10) Is English important in your present occupation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

11) If you have answered "**Yes**", how often do you use English in your job?

☐ Regularly

☐ Often

☐ Occasionally

☐ Seldom

12) With whom do you usually use English in your job?

(You can choose more than one answer)

☐ Foreign customers

☐ Employer

☐ Colleagues

☐ Other (please specify): _____

13) How often do you use English during your working hours? (Please tick one)

☐ Never

☐ Sometimes

☐ Frequently

☐ All the time

Part 2: Problems in Spoken English Communication

1. Please read the list of job tasks and put a (√) in the appropriate boxes of language difficulties faced by you in shopping malls.

Job Tasks	Language Difficulties
1. Responds to daily requests for information and enquiries by customers.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers ☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking ☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking ☐ Customers speak too fast ☐ Unable to understand foreign accents ☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
2. Respond to general information requests and enquiries by telephone.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly

	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers
	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking
	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure
	☐ Lacking confidence in speaking
	☐ Customers speak too fast
	☐ Unable to understand foreign accents
	☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
3. Inform customers about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage
	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly
	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers
	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking
	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure
	☐ Lacking confidence in speaking
	☐ Customers speak too fast
	☐ Unable to understand foreign accents
	☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.

4. Give directions to find the required places/stores in the shopping mall.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers ☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking ☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking ☐ Customers speak too fast ☐ Unable to understand foreign accents ☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
5. Promote any events or programs organised by the shopping mall.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words used by customers ☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking ☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking ☐ Customers speak too fast ☐ Unable to understand foreign accents ☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____

	_____.
6. Greet visitors to shopping mall.	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
7. Expressing regrets / offering apologies	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.

If there are any other job tasks (besides the ones listed above) that require you, as the information desk personnel in shopping mall to use English language, please specify:-

_____

_____.

Part 3: Course Design

Section A:

Please put a (√) in the relevant boxes and provide information where it is needed.

1) If given the choice, would you be interested to join an English course?

☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No

2) Where would you like the course to be conducted?

☐ At my working place ☐ Outside of my working place

3) How do you prefer to learn English?

☐ Individually

☐ Group work

☐ Out-of-class activity

☐ Pair-work

☐ Whole-class activity

4) What is your preferred learning strategy?

☐ Visual

☐ Audio

☐ Music

☐ Kinaesthetic

5) Learning Preference

Please circle the numbers that best describes your answers.

Learning Preference	Not Enjoyable or Important	Enjoyable and Important	Most Enjoyable and Important
Completing a task through a problem-solving activity	1	2	3
Acting out a role-play exercise	1	2	3
Taking decisions about personal learning activities(learner-centred)	1	2	3

Prefers a teacher-directed lesson with explanations	1	2	3
Completing imaginative and creative activities – project work	1	2	3

Section B:

Read the following questions and please put a (√) in the relevant boxes and provide information where it is needed.

1) How often do you face situations that require you to use English to communicate with foreign customers in a day?

☐ All the time ☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

2) What difficulties do you face while communicating with a foreign customer? Please elaborate.

_____

_____

3) As an Information Desk Personnel, in what aspects (conversation skills, professional vocabulary development, pronunciation skills, etc) do you want to improve through an ESP course?

_____

_____

4. If you are given an opportunity to attend a short ESP course to improve on your communicative skills, which are your preferred days, timing and duration in a week? Please circle the ones which suit your convenience.

Days	Timing	Duration
☐ Weekdays(Monday-Friday) ☐ Weekends (Saturday & Sunday)	☐ Morning ☐ Evening ☐ Night	☐ 1 hour ☐ 1 1/2 hours ☐ 2 hours ☐ 2 ½ hours

Thank You!

APPENDIX C

<u>Interview questions for the Managers of the shopping malls.</u>

1. What do you think about the level of English language proficiency of the information desk personnel in this shopping mall?

2. What is the basic requirements/qualification to become information desk personnel in your shopping mall?

3. What are the job tasks of information desk personnel which require them to use English language?

4. Do you think your staff are qualified and experienced in performing their duties? If [yes/no], why do you think so?

5. What are the main difficulties faced by the information desk personnel in conversing with customers?

6. Which are the vital skills required by the information desk personnel (e.g. listening, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc) in attending to customers' needs?

7. If your staff are given an opportunity to attend an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course, what aspects of English language would you like them to acquire(e.g. conversation skills, professional vocabulary development, pronunciation skills, etc)?

8. Which is the best strategy to acquire English language in an ESP course (e.g. visual, audio, music, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, etc)?

9. How would you like the ESP course to be conducted (e.g. teacher-centred, student-centered or both)?

10. In your opinion, if your staff are given an opportunity to attend a short ESP course, which would be the appropriate days, time and duration that is convenient for them?

11. Do you have any specific recommendations on the topics, types of activities and materials that are beneficial to be included in the course design?

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions with Information Desk Personnel

1. Why do you think role-play exercise is enjoyable?

2. How do you think taking your own decision during the lesson will help you?

3. In your opinion, why do you think a teacher-directed lesson will not be helpful?

Interview questions for the customers in the shopping malls

1) Have you ever approached an IDP?
2) If yes, what was the reason? What kind of problem you had?
3) What language do you prefer them to use while communicating?
4) Were they able to solve your problem?
5) Were they able to communicate using English?
6) Would you like to provide any suggestions on how the IDPs can improve themselves in terms of language skills?

Questionnaire for Customers

Part 1(Background Information)

Please put a (√) in the relevant boxes and provide information where it is needed.

1. I am _____ years old.

    ☐   18-24

    ☐   25-32

    ☐   33-40

    ☐   41-47

    ☐   48-54

    ☐   55-60

2. I am a _____.

    ☐   Male

    ☐   Female

3. My highest level of education is

    ☐   High School Graduate

    ☐   Diploma in _____

    ☐   Degree in _____

    ☐   Masters in _____

    ☐   PHD in _____

4. My preferred language to be used in a shopping mall with Information Desk Personnel is

    ☐   English

    ☐   Bahasa Malaysia

    ☐   Mandarin

    ☐   Other (please specify): _____

5. My employment status is

☐   Employed or self-employed

☐   Homemaker

☐   Retired

☐   Unemployed

Part 2 (The Information Desk Personnel's Language Difficulties)

Please read the list of reasons for customers to approach information desk personnel in shopping mall and then put a (√) in the relevant boxes about the information desk personnel's language difficulties.

Reasons for approaching information desk personnel in shopping mall	Language difficulties faced by information desk personnel in shopping mall
1. To ask for information regarding the shopping mall.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words ☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking ☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking ☐ Unable to understand foreign accents ☐ They speak too fast ☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
2. To enquire about the opening hours and hours of operation during weekends.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly

	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words
	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking
	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure
	☐ Lacking confidence in speaking
	☐ Unable to understand foreign accents
	☐ They speak too fast
	☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
3. To ask for clarification about any specific information.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage
	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly
	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words
	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking
	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure
	☐ Lacking confidence in speaking
	☐ Unable to understand foreign accents
	☐ They speak too fast
	☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
4. To find out about the services and facilities available in the shopping mall.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage
	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly
	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words

	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking
	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure
	☐ Lacking confidence in speaking
	☐ Unable to understand foreign accents
	☐ They speak too fast
	☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
5. To ask for directions in finding specific shops/stores.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage
	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly
	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words
	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking
	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure
	☐ Lacking confidence in speaking
	☐ Unable to understand foreign accents
	☐ They speak too fast
	☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
6. To find out about any events or programs organized by the shopping mall.	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage
	☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly
	☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words
	☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking

	☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking ☐ Unable to understand foreign accents ☐ They speak too fast ☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
7. To ask for assistance in using the facilities available such as:- • Wheel chair/kiddie chair • Stretcher • Umbrella • Parking ticket • Phone charger	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words ☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking ☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure ☐ Lacking confidence in speaking ☐ Unable to understand foreign accents ☐ They speak too fast ☐ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:- _____ _____.
8. To enquire about the services provided by the staff such as:- • Reference • Membership • Request for searching of missing items	☐ Having inadequate vocabulary usage ☐ Unable to pronounce words correctly ☐ Unable to understand the meaning of words ☐ Using inappropriate words in speaking ☐ Lacking knowledge of grammar and structure

	□ Lacking confidence in speaking
	□ Unable to understand foreign accents
	□ They speak too fast
	□ Their voice are too soft to be heard clearly
	If there are any other problems related to language difficulties, please specify:-
	_____
	_____.

If there are any other reasons (besides the ones listed above) for customers to approach the information desk personnel in shopping mall, please specify:-

_____
_____

Thank you for your time!

Observation Checklist

Name of Shopping Mall: _____   Date: _____

1) What is/are the main language(s) used between the IDP and customers in the shopping mall to communicate with each other?

_____

_____

2) Which language skill(s) is/are emphasized?

_____

3) Who are the observed customers in the shopping mall?

☐ Malaysians   ☐ Foreigners   ☐ Both

4) Are the workers polite to the customers?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

5) Are they proficient in spoken English?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

   5.1 If no, what is the problem/s encountered during the conversation?

   _____

   _____

6) Any influence of the L1 on the English they speak?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

   6.1 If yes, what is the influence?

   _____

7) What are the examples of utterances/sentences used while communicating with customers?

_____

Consent Form

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	☐
2.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	☐
3.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project.	☐
4.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalised for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	☐
5.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymization of data, etc.) to me.	☐
6.	If applicable, separate terms of consent for interviews, audio, video or other forms of data collection have been explained and provided to me.	☐
7.	The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.	☐
8.	I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	☐
9.	Select only **one** of the following: • I would like my name used and understand what I have said or written as part of this study will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project can be recognised.	☐
	• I do not want my name used in this project.	☐
10.	I, along with the Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	☐

Participant:

_____   _____ _____
Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Researcher:

_____   _____ _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

APPENDIX I

UM Permission Letter

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

UM.T/606/01(a)
4 Februari 2014

KEPADA SESIAPA YANG BERKENAAN

Tuan/Puan,

PENYELIDIKAN CALON IJAZAH SARJANA BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA KEDUA

Dengan ini saya mengesahkan bahawa Suchatra d/o Singaran, **No. K/P.: 880803-56-5178 dan No. Pendaftaran:TGB110028** adalah calon Ijazah Sarjana Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua, di Fakulti Bahasa dan Linguistik, Universiti Malaya, mulai semester I sesi 2011/2012.

Beliau kini sedang menjalankan penyelidikan untuk penulisan disertasi sebagai memenuhi keperluan program. Oleh yang demikian beliau memohon kebenaran menjalankan soal selidik, pemerhatian serta wawancara di tempat Tuan/Puan untuk mengumpul data berkaitan dengan penyelidikannya. Kami menghormati dan memahami bahawa kebenaran ini adalah tertakluk kepada pertimbangan dan budi bicara pihak Tuan/Puan.

Sekian, terima kasih.

Yang benar,

DR. TAM SHU SIM
Timbalan Dekan (Ijazah Tinggi)
Fakulti Bahasa dan Linguistik

ESA/jm