

# Police's Voice: A Need Analysis of ESP for Police Trainees in Malaysia

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## Abstract

The research was to investigate the needs of the former police trainees at a local police training centre (PULAPOL) in Kuala Lumpur for the English course under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) in helping their policing tasks on the ground. This was a mixed-method study, employing both needs analysis survey and semi-structured interview as the instruments and were developed based on Hutchinson and Waters (1987)'s Target Needs focusing on *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities*. This study involved 183 former police trainees who used to undergo police training at PULAPOL Kuala Lumpur before; *Cadet Police Inspector* (CP1) series one (1) and series two (2) 2019 who are now serving as the Inspector Officers (IOs) at various Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) departments nationwide. There were three main findings in this study; firstly, the former police trainees' *Necessities* for the English course at PULAPOL were to perform their policing tasks on the ground and to speak with English-speaking clients when solving their problems. Secondly, their *Lacks* of knowledge in police terminology, grammar and speaking confidence limited their performance in the English course. In terms of *Wants*, they wished to learn all the English skills equally, but rejected the grammar teaching per say. The outcome of this study will aid the English coordinators at PULAPOL in revising the existing English course and developing a police-based English syllabus or English for Police Purposes (EPP) in accordance with the target needs of the police trainees.

**Keywords:** needs analysis, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Hutchinson & Water (1987)'s Target Needs, police trainees

## 1. Introduction

To professionalise policing, Royal Malaysia Police (RMP)'s objective has always been to develop the force into an English-speaking organization dedicated to providing world-class policing (Britshi, 2018). As stated in the RMP Integrity Plan 2016-2020, one of the criteria for achieving world-class police is to master the worldwide language of communication; *English* (Polis Diraja Malaysia [PDRM], 2016). This goal, however, might be harmed by the current situation surrounding Malaysian police personnel's poor English proficiency on the ground (Rozana Sani, 2019). Numerous members of the public, both locals and foreign, have expressed dissatisfaction with RMP personnel's ability to communicate in English (Bujang Samad, 2015).

The RMP personnel are trained intensively at a Malaysian police training centre (PULAPOL) encompassing both physical and academic training. Their English communication problem might be initially rooted in the training program they have undergone at PULAPOL, which is the Basic Police Training Program or known as *Program Latihan Asas KePOLISAN* (PLAK) (Norashikin Ahmad et al., 2020). Under this training program, English course is put as an elective course with the allocation of 48 hours or 3.62 % of the total academic hours, meanwhile, 189 hours or equal to 14.25 % is allocated for the law subjects which make the learning of English is discriminated and therefore, inadequate (Norashikin Ahmad et al., 2020). Furthermore, English is also taught for general purposes, not as an *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP) to suit the actual police trainees' needs, which contributes to existing RMP's English poor performance on the ground.

The ESP studies are not new in Malaysia as it was initiated by UMSEP (University of Malaya Spoken English Project) in 1980. Its establishment meant to cater to the students' oral needs in the Economics and Law faculties at University of Malaya (Siti Ruhana Sufef, 2017). That project became the turning point as to where ESP had gained its popularity in various Malaysian contexts since then. Siti Ruhana Sufef (2017) pointed out, during the last thirty-three years there have been a huge number of studies attempted to analyse the learners' vocational or academic needs for ESP in Malaysia encompassing English for Technicians (Ng & Chuah, 2015), Engineering (Damio et al., 2022), Tourism (Salim et al., 2013), Business (Sampath & Zalipour, 2010), and Education (Shameem Ahmed, 2015).

Unfortunately, ESP for police in Malaysia is still in their infancy (Ramakrishnan, 2011). Within these years there were only two studies which were specifically conducted to address the English needs of the uniform body in Malaysia; the study of the English language needs of the Investigating Officers (IOs) by Ramakrishnan (2011) and the study of the needs analysis of the speaking skills of the LPA enforcement officers at a local public agency by Siti Ruhana Sufef (2017). The earlier study by Ramakrishnan (2011) focused on police context but the findings need to be taken with caution due to small number of participants and its methodological defects.

Meanwhile, in the worldwide contexts, there were several needs analysis studies concerning the police context (Alhuqbani, 2008, 2014a;

Khamkaew, 2009; Abo Mosallem, 1984, Qaddomi, 2013; Ulum, 2016; Tipmontree, 2007; Promwatcharanon & Chatreepinyo, 2016; Aldohon, 2014; Alqurashi, 2011). Nevertheless, majority of these studies only focused on the police working ground while the studies on the needs of English on the training ground is still sparse (Alhuqbani, 2014). Even though many needs analyses and curriculum development studies have been reported in the literature, hardly any studies have attempted to identify the English language needs of the police officers on the training ground, which makes this study, is significant.

The present study, thus, intends to determine the needs of the police trainees at PULAPOL for the English course under the PLAK program during their training stint. This study is necessitated as to identify what are the actual police trainees' English needs so that a learner-based curriculum could be developed. As established by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), it is primarily essential to assess the learners' target needs which consists of their *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities* before designing a suitable curriculum in their respective disciplines.

Therefore, the outcome of this study can help the English coordinators at PULAPOL to come up with a police-based syllabus which mirror those of the target work situation on the ground. This needs assessment serves as a basis for the English coordinators at PULAPOL in recognizing the police trainees' specific needs in learning English before the establishment of the course objectives, specific selection of materials, content and appropriate teaching methods that cater to their policing needs. This study will, in fact, allow the possibility to commence on the coordinated teaching between the English trainers for the language-based needs and police English practitioners for the police-based contents for the development of the English for Police Purposes (EPP) syllabus. This is essential as to ensure that English learning for the police trainees during recruitment period is adequate, relevant and could better prepare them for their working ground. Plus, it is critical that the development of the ESP for police should be embarked on the training ground just like in this study. The outcome of this study is thus, decisive in the shaping of a practical EPP syllabus in the basic police training program that is tied to the real needs of the police officers' jobs on the ground. Hence, this study attempts to answer these research questions;

*1.1 What are the former police trainees' Necessities for the English course under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) at PULAPOL?*

*1.2 What are the former police trainees' Wants for the English course under the Basic Police Training program (PLAK) at PULAPOL?*

*1.3 What are the former police trainees' Lacks for the English course under the Basic Police Training program (PLAK) at PULAPOL?*

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 ESP in Cross-cultural Police Context*

Most of the earliest ESP studies concerning the police contexts were most popular in Arabic contexts (Alhuqbani, 2014a). The earliest study in police context was initiated by Abo Mosallem (1984) who investigated 150 Egyptian police officers learning English at different police departments. The result of this study indicated that speaking and listening were the most wanted skills to facilitate the police job performance. Ulum (2016) conducted a needs analysis on 105 Public Order police officers from the Public Order Department of National Police Forces in Antalya, Turkey when using English on the job. As similar to Abo Mosallem (1984)' findings, this study also revealed that speaking and listening were ranked as the most important skills and there were motivational factors which drove the officers to learn English. Also discovering on the motivational attributes in English learning, Alqurashi (2011) had earlier investigated the motivation and attitudes of 24 Saudi police officers towards learning English as a foreign language. The result showed that Saudi police officers' reason to learn English was also driven by both instrumental and integrative motivations. Nevertheless, Alqurashi (2011)'s study needs to be taken with caution due to his small-scale study, and included only five open questions in the survey. Aldohon (2014) investigated the needs, functions and problems of 46 tourist police of different police departments in Jordan. He reported that Jordan tourist police had improper usage of English when it comes to speaking due to lexis shortage and poor grammar.

As mentioned by Alhuqbani (2014a), ESP studies for police in Arab contexts mostly focused on the working ground, as in the above-mentioned studies. Though he himself actively conducted few ESP studies in police contexts on the working ground, he once carried out a needs analysis assessment on the training ground. Alhuqbani (2014a) evaluated the teaching of English to police cadets at King Fahd Security College (KFSC) in Saudi Arabia, whereby it involved three types of stakeholders: six English teachers, sixteen former police cadets and 122 current police cadets. The findings revealed that ESP course and teaching at KFSC is ineffective and inappropriate due to administrative and methodological factors. Besides, Alhuqbani (2014a) also found out that both instrumental and integrative motivation becomes the factor for the cadets to learn English, which indirectly confirmed both Ulum (2016)'s and Alqurashi (2011)'s studies that motivation does play a role in English learning among the police. Even though Alhuqbani (2014a)'s study was conducted on the training ground, his study solely focused on the ESP course evaluation in police context, not the specific need of the trainees for the course, which makes the current study is therefore having a significant area that is worth exploring in depth.

More recent studies of ESP in police contexts can subsequently be found in both Europe and Asian contexts. In Europe, Benaventa & Sánchez-Reyesb (2015) used the Target Situation Analysis (TSA) to identify the target situations in which trainee officers would be required to use English. The policing contexts pertaining to the traffic interventions, suspect interviewing, detentions, citizens' requests, critical incidents, and international borders were identified after the needs assessments were carried out. However, this study neglected the trainees' needs for the development of the new English curriculum at the training centre for the Spanish National Police Corps. Instead of assessing the learners' needs, the contexts were primarily determined and served as the basis for the English curriculum revamp at the

Spanish National Police Training Centre. As similar to Benaventa & Sánchez-Reyesb (2015)'s study, Sendur (2017) also used the TSA to identify how Polish police officers use foreign language in the target situation. As contrary to majority of the ESP studies which found that speaking was the most needed skill for job-related purposes, Sendur (2017) found out that listening was the most needed skill in police context as compared to speaking, and the lowest needed skills went to writing. Besides, it was also discovered that the Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) test was preferred than general English test to measure the police officers' English proficiency for the foreign language certification in the police force. Interestingly, Sendur (2017)' study was a unique one as it was the first study in ESP context which investigated the language testing and evaluation in its respective field.

In Asian context, Promwatcharanon and Chatreepinyo (2016) investigated the problems of communicative English among 100 traffic police officers in eight provinces of the upper northern Thailand. The findings revealed that most of traffic police officers were dissatisfied with their poor English listening and speaking skills, thus thinking that their English language abilities were insufficient and ineffective for their career. Their poor English performance was mainly due to their lack of vocabularies, which happened to be in conjunction with Aldohon (2014)'s study earlier. In a case study, Chung (2015) investigated the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach in designing an English course book for Police Investigators at the People's Police University (VPPU) in Vietnam. He started the pilot teaching of CLIL-based materials conducted in the People's Police Academy in Vietnam (VPPA) - an educational institution of the shared context as the VPPU. His findings found that CLIL approach has been beneficial in developing the specific course books for police students in the VPPU. Even though this study also revolved around the training ground, Chung (2015)'s study focused more on the production of ESP materials rather than taking account the learners' need for the development of an ESP syllabus.

As highlighted previously by Alhuqbani (2014a), majority of the above-mentioned studies only focused on the police working ground, but little studies were conducted on the needs of English language among the trainee police on the training ground, which makes this study significant. Even though there were a few studies conducted on the training ground, but their aims are limited to evaluating the effectiveness of the existing English course as in Alhuqbani (2014a)'s and production of ESP materials as in Chung (2015)'s studies. In his recommendation, Alhuqbani (2014a) even mentioned about the necessities of having more ESP studies which revolves around the needs of the police trainees in learning English at the police training centre.

Moreover, in Malaysia, to the best of author's knowledge, the ESP studies in police context turns out to be almost non-existent. As mentioned previously, the only study in police context in Malaysia was initiated by Ramakrishnan (2011) who performed research to assess the English language requirements of Investigating Officers (IOs) in a Crime Investigation Department (CID) of a district police station in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. Nevertheless, this study also focused on the working ground not on the training ground. In an agreement with Alhuqbani (2014a), Ramakrishnan (2011) also recommended that future studies in Malaysian police context should be set out on the training ground as to find out the real needs of police trainees for the EPP syllabus.

Furthermore, there was not yet ESP studies in police context that assessed the learners' needs using Hutchinson and Water (1987)'s Target Need approach. There was one similar study by Waloyo (2019)'s which also used the Hutchinson and Water (1987) 's Target Need approach when investigating 64 mechanical engineering students of University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM). He identified the students' *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities* for the quality ESP textbook. However, as similar to Chung (2015)'s study, Waloyo (2019)'s study also aimed at developing the ESP materials rather than determining the learners' needs for an ESP syllabus. Therefore, this current study sets out to fill these gaps by determining the needs of the police trainees through Hutchinson and Water's (1987) Target Needs in developing a police-based syllabus or EPP at Malaysian police training centres.

## 2.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework of the Study

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) proposed two important elements which need to be considered for the ESP development; Learning needs and Target needs. Nevertheless, this study will only focus on Target Needs which consists of *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities*. According to Hutchinson & Waters (1987), *Necessities* are needs that are governed by the target scenario demands, in which learners must equip themselves with specific knowledge in order to be a part of the target situation. The second component of *Lacks* relates to the learners' present language competence and the skills they require to improve their proficiency (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The learner's deficiencies are the gap itself. As Nation and Macalister (2010) manifested, *Lacks* as the necessities that the learners do not possess, hence makes up gaps between the target proficiency and the existing proficiency of learners. Meanwhile, the third element *Wants* relates to what the learners need to do in enhancing their existing proficiency level (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

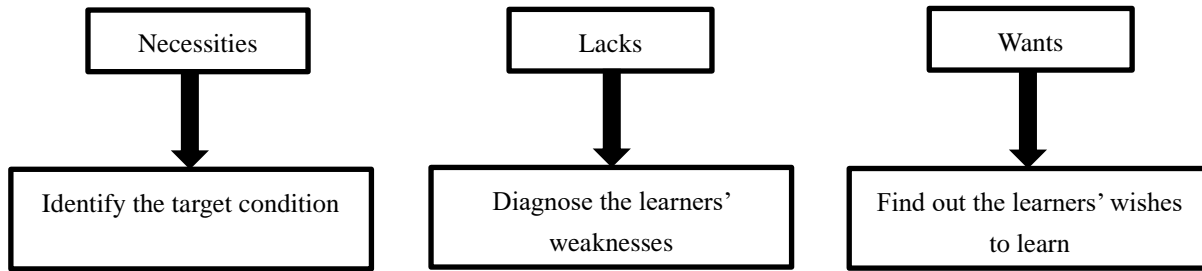


Figure 1. Hutchinson & Waters (1987)'s Target Needs

They are aware of the *Necessities* and the *Lacks*, nevertheless, each learner may have their individual's *Wants* respectively, based on their unique situations (Mohammadi & Mousavi, 2013). As Nation and Macalister advocated, *Wants* are the learners' wishes and views toward what they need to learn.

**3. Methodology**

*3.1 Research Design*

This study applied the mixed-method approach whereby the needs analysis survey was used to collect data quantitatively whereas the semi-structured interview was for the qualitative data collection.

*3.2 Population*

The population of this study involved two squads of the former police trainees at PULAPOL; 162 of *Cadet Police Inspector (CP1) Series 1/2019*, and 178 of *Cadet Police Inspector (CPI) Series 2/2019* which made up 340 of them. They are currently serving at various RMP departments; the Commercial Crime Investigation Department (CCID), Crime Prevention and Community Safety Department (CPCSD), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Integrity and Standards Compliance Department, (ISCD), Internal Security and Public Order Department (ISPOD), Logistics & Technology Department (Log), Management Department and Special Branch (SB) department.

*3.3 Sampling Selection*

Cohen et al. (2000) advocated, the population size is a significant factor in sample size. As suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970)'s Size Determination Table, there were only 183 selected out of 340 of them to become the study participants. As mentioned earlier, the total number of the population was 340 of the former police trainees at PULAPOL which included both CPI Series 1/2019 (162) and CPI Series 2/2019 (178) respectively. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) stated that the calculation of the sample size is based on  $p = .05$  where the probability of committing a type I error is less than 5%, or  $p < .05$ . Thus, by applying this sample size formula, the study will be able to obtain 95% confidence level in order to estimate the degree of accuracy represented by the population (Krejcie & Morgan 1970).

Although this study firstly considered 181 as the study participants, two more respondents were subsequently added to become 183 respondents. This was done as to avoid attrition of the respondents (Chua, 2013). As supported by Cresswell (1994), it was advisable to overestimate the size of the sample required as to allow the loss, failure of return, incomplete or spoiled questionnaire. Fraenkel et al. (2012) also suggested that, there is no issue in making the sample size slightly bigger than it is supposed to be as to increase the reliability of the findings, but at the same time there is no need to keep the sample size very high in terms of accessibility. Thus, the use of 183 respondents of this study was just reasonable and justified.

Additionally, purposive sampling was applied in this study as it only focused on the former police trainees at the main police training centre in Kuala Lumpur (PULAPOL KL) since it is the only training centre which trains the Inspector trainees in Malaysia.

*3.4 Instrumentation*

*3.4.1 Questionnaire*

The questionnaire of this study has 40 items, consist of four parts (Part A till Part D) with close-ended questions. The items in this Needs analysis questionnaire are mainly divided into three elements of the Hutchinson and Waters' (1987)'s Target Needs; *Necessities* (Part B), *Wants* (Part C) and *Lacks* (Part D). This questionnaire consists of Likert-scale questions using a variety of five-point agreement levels starting from Strongly Agree = 5 to Agree = 4 to Undecided = 3 to Disagree = 2 to Strongly Disagree = 1, as to measure different types of Target needs; *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities*.

*3.4.2 Semi-structured Interview*

The semi-structured interview was used to support the quantitative findings of this study. The questions were also designed based on the Hutchinson and Waters (1987)'s Target Needs; *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities*. For *Necessities*, the respondents are asked on what are they using English for on the ground, and for *Wants*, what are the English skills/elements that they think for the police trainees want to learn the most and the least. In terms of *Lacks*, the respondents were asked on what problems they had faced when learning English under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) at PULAPOL. There were four volunteered respondents who had answered the questionnaire earlier to participate in this semi-structured interview session.

### 3.5 Data Collection Procedure

There are 3 stages of data collection in this study;

#### 3.5.1 Pre-data Collection

Permission from both Training Division Bukit Aman and the commandant of PULAPOL Kuala Lumpur was sought two months prior to this study. Next, the instruments were developed based on the review of related research and journals, rigorous discussion with ESP practitioners and senior police officers, the Focused Group Discussion (FGD) which was arranged with 5 Inspector Officers of different RMP departments and the adaptation from the Alharby (2005)'s questionnaire. Subsequently, the first draft was sent to the three experts for validation purposes. Subsequently, the pilot study was executed whereas the interview was conducted to four volunteered respondents for both reliability and validation purposes.

#### 3.5.2 During-data Collection

The online questionnaire in the Google Form was distributed to the respondents via the former squad presidents of the Cadet Police Inspector (CPI) Series 1/2019 and Series 2/2019 respectively where they subsequently distributed the link of the online questionnaire to the rest of the squad members via the squad Wassap Group, together with the consent letter to confirm their participation in the study. After the questionnaire was answered, the semi-structured interview was conducted to four volunteered respondents which took around 30-40 minutes per person due to connectivity issue and coverage. During the session, both voice-recording and note-taking were done to assist the data analysis process with the agreement from the participants. Then, researcher transcribed the recording and sent the written version of the recording back to those four respondents to confirm their statements.

#### 3.5.3 Post-data Collection

Lastly, the data was analyzed using the 26<sup>th</sup> version of the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Meanwhile, the semi-structured interview findings were transcribed and coded based on Colaizzi (1978)'s Seven Steps of Data Analysis.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

The data in this study was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively as follows;

#### 3.6.1 Quantitative Analysis

This study applied a descriptive analysis using the SPSS software version 26.0 to process the raw data collected from the distributed questionnaires. The demographic data from Part A of the questionnaire was analysed by finding its frequency and percentage of the respondents, but it won't be reported in this study as it did not contribute to answering the research questions. Meanwhile, the data from Part B till Part D of this questionnaire was tabulated in terms of mean to identify the Lacks, Wants and Necessities of the former police trainees for the English course under the PLAK program at PULAPOL. Besides, the benchmark-score for this study was adapted from a study by Nur Farahana Zulkernain and Wan Norhasniah Wan Husin (2018) as their study has also applied 5 points Likert scale which is similar to the current study.

Table 1. Score Scale

Indicators	Score (round-up to nearest mean)
Low	1.00 - 2.33
Moderate	2.34 - 3.67
High	3.68 - 5.00

#### 3.6.2 Qualitative Analysis

As to support the quantitative findings of this study, the semi-structured interview was transcribed and coded based on Colaizzi (1978)'s Seven Steps of Data Analysis. The data was re-read to generate the initial codes as in *Lacks*, *Wants* and *Necessities*. While redundant codes were removed, similar codes were grouped. Next, was the identification of the significant statements in which were subsequently converted into formulated meanings. Subsequently, groups of theme clusters were developed which eventually led to the establishment of the final thematic construct.

### 3.7 Validity and Reliability of the study

The first draft of both questionnaire and semi-structured interview were sent to the three panel of experts who consist of both English language lecturers and senior police officers in RMP to ensure the validity and reliability of both instruments used. Plus, the questionnaire was also piloted to 10% of the total study sample earlier as suggested by Chua (2013) to ensure the reliability of its findings. The Cronbach alpha values for the reliability test were 0.88 for Part B (*Necessities*), 0.89 for Part C (*Wants*) and 0.90 for Part D (*Lacks*). The overall Cronbach alpha value for the reliability test was 0.87, thus was reliable. Meanwhile, the findings in the semi-structured interview were also validated using the member checking technique.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Research Question 1. *Necessities*

4.1.1 What are the former police trainees' *Necessities* for the English course under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) at

PULAPOL?

Table 2. Mean and Level of Necessities (N=183)

		Mean	Std. Deviation	level
N1	To communicate with RMP members (superiors/co-workers/subordinates)	2.93	1.08	Moderate
N2	To communicate with clients (suspects/ witnesses/ complainants/English speaking civilians)	3.68	1.20	High
N3	To attend meetings/ briefings/ roll-calls/PDRM social ceremony	2.99	1.27	Moderate
N4	To read law/police-related books/ documents	2.78	1.19	Moderate
N5	To conduct interrogation process	2.84	1.19	Moderate
N6	To initiate small talks	3.13	1.26	Moderate
N7	To be able to explain police terminology/ legal jargons in English	3.31	1.17	Moderate
N8	To give directions to local/foreigners	4.02	1.12	High
N9	To conduct press conference (international cases)	2.84	1.33	Moderate
N10	To solve criminal issues	2.56	1.34	Moderate
N11	To take accurate testimony/ statements	2.48	1.32	Moderate
N12	To get promoted	3.85	1.19	High
N13	To gain more respect	4.06	1.10	High
N14	To attend international courses/ conferences	4.17	0.98	High
<b>Necessities</b>		<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

*Necessities* was primarily sought by asking respondents on what are they using English for on the ground. The items N14 “To attend international courses/conferences” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.17), N13 “To gain more respect” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.06), N8 “To give directions to local/foreigners” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.02), N12 “To get promoted” ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.85) and N2 “To communicate with clients (suspects/ witnesses/ complainants/English speaking civilians)” ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.68) obtained high mean scores each statistically. Meanwhile, the rest of the items N1( $\bar{x}$ = 2.93), N3( $\bar{x}$ =2.99), N4( $\bar{x}$ =2.78), N5( $\bar{x}$ =2.84), N6( $\bar{x}$ =3.13), N7( $\bar{x}$ =3.31), N9( $\bar{x}$ =2.84), N10( $\bar{x}$ =2.56) and N11( $\bar{x}$ =2.48) scored the moderate mean level respectively. Overall, the quantitative findings for *Necessities* gained a moderate level of mean ( $\bar{x}$ =3.25) statistically. This means English is needed moderately by the former police trainees at the workplace.

*Necessities* were sought further in the semi-structured interview with the question of “On the ground, what are you using English for?”. The responses were as follows;

IO1: *We rarely speak English in our departments, non-malay, bosses also speak Malay, we only use English with civilians, suspects or criminals who just speak English only.*

IO2: *We use English to interrogate like English speaking suspects, witnesses, even migrants, to talk to complainants who don't know English, to read law books, to give certain instructions etcetra..normally to those who use English.*

IO3: *As Ios, we have our subordinates, rank and file and what not, if you speak English, people respect you more you know, even civilians also.*

IO4: *If you are fluent in English, the bosses will notice you more, better chance to do this and that, handle high-profile cases, attend overseas courses and finally easy to get promoted la..*

In conjunction with the quantitative findings above, the semi-structured interview also demonstrated similar findings whereby English was used more with English-speaking clients as compared to PDRM members in their respective departments. Besides, the need to learn English was also associated with some added advantages such as getting promoted, gaining respect and attending international courses overseas.

4.2 Research Question 2. Wants

4.2.1 What are the former police trainees' Wants for the English course under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) at PULAPOL?

Table 3. Comparison Mean and Level of Wants (N=183)

Item	Language skills/ elements	Mean	Std. Deviation	level
W1	Speaking	4.27	0.89	High
W2	Listening	4.33	0.83	High
W3	Reading	4.31	0.81	High
W4	Writing	4.26	0.92	High
W5	Grammar	4.13	1.09	High
W6	Vocabulary (Police terminology / Law jargons)	4.17	1.05	High
<b>Wants</b>		<b>4.24</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>High</b>

Surprisingly, all the skills obtained high mean level each with the highest mean for the item goes to item W2 “Listening” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.33)

followed by item W3 “Reading” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.31) and the lowest is item W5 “Grammar” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.13). Nevertheless, there was only a slightly different value between the skill with the highest mean W2 “Listening” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.33) and the skill with the lowest mean, W5 “Grammar” ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.13), which is only at 0.20. Therefore, it indirectly shows that all the English skills and elements, in fact, are equally wanted by the respondents. Moreover, the overall *Wants* is ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.24) and is statistically high. As suggested earlier, it still shows that all those English skills and elements are wanted to be learnt in an equal proportion by the respondents from the English course at PULAPOL.

On the other hand, the respondents showed their clear-cut preferences when asking “What are the English skills/elements you want to learn the most/ least?” in the semi-structured interview. The responses were as follows;

IO1: *I would go for listening and speaking, n worst part was of course grammar.*

IO2: **Grammar sucks**, whatever activities in the English course, speaking is a must.

IO3: Both **speaking and listening**, while grammar and writing not necessary.

IO4: **No grammar please**, more on communicative skills like listening and speaking.

Majority of the respondents rejected the grammar teaching and would prefer to have more speaking and listening skills to be integrated in the English course under PLAK program at PULAPOL.

4.3 Research Question 3. Lacks

4.3.1 What are the former police trainees’ Lacks for the English course under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) at PULAPOL?

Table 4. Lacks

		Mean	Std. Deviation	level
L1	To talk on current criminal/ policing issues	3.25	1.01	Moderate
L2	To use daily English conversation	3.23	1.03	Moderate
L3	To explain on police terminology/ legal jargons in English	3.27	1.03	Moderate
L4	To write a police report	3.30	1.05	Moderate
L5	To read and understand law/police-related books or documents	3.32	1.03	Moderate
L6	To give spontaneous oral feedback in English	3.27	1.03	Moderate
L7	To answer grammar exercises	3.31	1.06	Moderate
L8	To receive instructions in English	3.30	1.05	Moderate
L9	To do presentation in English	3.33	1.02	Moderate
<b>Lacks 2</b>		<b>3.28</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Table 4 for *Lacks* interestingly shows a contrastive finding to *Wants* earlier, whereby, all the items, on the other hand, obtained the moderate mean score each statistically. Item L9 “To do presentations in English” scored the highest moderate mean level ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.33) or it indirectly suggests L9 was the biggest challenge for the former police trainees when learning the English course at PULAPOL.

That is followed by item L5 “To read and understand law/police-related books or documents”, item L7 “To answer grammar exercises”, and both L8 “To receive instructions in English” and L4 “To write a police report”, with the moderate means of ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.32), ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.31) and ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.30) each statistically, and so forth. Meanwhile, the lowest mean goes to L2 “To use daily English conversations” which is ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.30). The overall mean for *Lacks* is ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.28) and is at a moderate level. In other words, it implies that the respondents’ moderate capability in learning English course under PLAK at PULAPOL.

In the semi-structured interview, *Lacks* was examined further by asking “What problems you faced when learning English under the PLAK program at PULAPOL?”. Here were the responses;

The semi-structured interview showed the following results;

IO1: *Personally...I think I don’t want to learn grammar. I hate when lecturers asked us to do grammar exercises even in short quiz, coz I forgot it all the way.*

IO2: *For me, I had problem when I was asked to perform public speaking or presentations in front of the crowd, it makes me feel sick.*

IO3: *Things that I were struggling with was using the police terms n jargons, which I don’t know in English, but surprisingly when asking the lecturers, sometimes they also don’t know the terms.*

IO4: *Me, I had problem with public speaking, speaking for conversation and grammar..long time ago learnt in school, already forgot what. (italicize this)*

Based on those responses, two of the respondents, IO1 and IO4 agreed that Grammar was their biggest challenge in learning the English course. Meanwhile, IO3 pointed out his problem in limited knowledge of police terminology and legal jargons. IO2, on the other hand highlighted his problem in doing presentations in English during the course.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Necessities

The need of for the English course under PLAK program at PULAPOL is mainly to speak more with English-speaking clients as compared to RMP members in the force. Overall, there is a moderate need for English on the ground. This moderate needs for English on the ground might suggest that the English environment is not fully created in the RMP organization as they only use English on necessity-basis, as reported in the semi-structured interview, only when they have to speak with their English-speaking clients.

The semi-structured interview also highlighted that the non-Malay officers also tend to use the national language of “*Bahasa Melayu*”, instead of English at the workplace which serves as the ‘*language of majority*’ since majority of the RMP force consist of Malays (Royal Malaysia Police, n.d). Due to this situation, as ever announced by the former Inspector General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Bador, RMP has been targeting 20-30 percent of recruitments among non-Bumiputera and aboriginal people in this country as to maintain the race balance in the force (“PDRM sasar 20-30 peratus pengambilan bukan Bumiputera Orang Asli”, 2021). This finding is therefore in conjunction with both Ramakrishnan’s (2011) and Siti Ruhana Suref (2017)’s study whereby they also reported that the officers tend to use Malay language at their workplace since Malay is the majority race in law enforcement profession in this country. As described by Bandura (1979)’s Social Learning theory, human’s learning is most influenced by their environment whereby they learn best via observation of their surroundings. Any forms of observation and modelling behaviour processes involve the following; *attention*, *retention*, *reproduction*, and *motivation* (Bandura, 1979).

Hence, it is indeed necessary for RMP force to create an English environment at the workplace whereby there must be stringent enforcement from the top-ranking officers in each and every RMP departments for their daily use at the workplace all over the country. It is essential to note that, RMP is an organization which operates based on “*Command and Control*” approach (PDRM, 2016). Only direct instruction from the superior will be considered official and therefore will be followed by all the RMP subordinates.

Meanwhile, these former police trainees also associated their need to learn English with some privileges such as getting promoted, attending international conferences and getting respects from their subordinates. This shows that they want to learn English due to practical reasons which can give them some benefits in return or it closely deals with what motivate them to acquire this English language in the first place. As Gardner (2006) highlighted, motivation is an essential factor in second language acquisition. Gardner and Lambert (1972)’s theory of motivation describes two types of motivation; integrative and instrumental, whereby the former police trainees in this study are more inclined towards the second which it involves behaviour with the purpose of avoiding punishment or getting particular rewards or reinforcement. Nevertheless, this finding was contradictory to Ulum (2016)’s and Alqurashi (2011)’s studies who reported that both instrumental and integrative motivations were important sources of the Saudi cadets’ motivation toward learning English, instead.

### 5.2 Wants

Surprisingly, results for the *Wants* part revealed that listening is the most wanted skill by the former police trainees, thus, having the similar unique findings as in Sendur (2017)’s study. As such, it was contradictory with the findings from that of similar studies by (Aldohon, 2014; Khamkaew, 2009; Charunsri, 2011; Alharby, 2005; Abo Mosallem, 1984; Alhuqbani, 2008; Khamkaew 2009; Qaddomi, 2013) who collectively found out that, speaking is the most wanted skill by the police officers on the ground.

However, there was only a small mean difference between these two skills; listening and speaking which is 0.06 (see Table 3). As Ramakrishnan (2011) postulated in her study, speaking and listening are both two integrated skills needed by the Investigating Officers (IOs) in her study as both skills are indispensable to a police career. Steward, Zimmer and Clark (1985) also suggested that communication itself by definition itself refers to a two-way process which involves both listening and speaking simultaneously. Additionally, all the English skills and elements are still in a high range of mean which indirectly shows that all the skills are still wanted equally by the former police trainees. This also illustrates the need for a well-balanced ESP syllabus with the equal integration of the English skills and elements in the future.

Meanwhile, the grammar lesson should be taught with caution as the findings showed that grammar is the least wanted skills to be acquired by the respondents. This might be because the respondents are all the adult learners. As Mackay (1985) pointed out, the grammar teaching has the elements of drills and repetition, thus, the learning of grammar is not of adults’ preference to learn. The Critical Period Hypothesis also illustrated that the best time to learn language is at the age of six till puberty, including the mastery of grammar (Brown, 2000). Older than that, language learning becomes more difficult and less successful (Bloom,1974). Besides, it is also suggested that the grammar teaching should just be taught implicitly to the learners. As proposed by Krashen (1982)’s Natural Approach theory, students learnt best through implicit language learning as they will focus more on meaningful and contextualized communication subconsciously rather than on linguistic forms. Thus, the current topic on *Parts of Speech* in the current syllabus in the English course which focuses solely on grammar should be taken out and grammar lesson should only be taught implicitly into the topics learnt, instead.

### 5.3 Lacks

The result for *Lacks* showed strong evidence of problems for the respondents in their speaking-related tasks in the course especially when it comes to doing presentation in English. This might be due to their low level of English proficiency and lack of speaking confidence in English. As highlighted by Siti Ruhana (2017) in her study on LPA officers, the speaking problem among the officers was due to much focus on grammar when it comes to speaking in English. As the Natural Approach theory concerned, focusing solely on grammar will hinder



learners from taking them into the domain of the target language in the most natural manner (Krashen, 1982). Even though the speaking-related tasks are one of the main *Lacks* in this study, ironically, these communicative tasks are still needed and should be maintained in the course as it provides a good platform for these trainees to practice their speaking skills.

Apart from speaking problem, this study is unique as it also highlights the issue on specialized vocabulary. As reported in this study, the former police trainees have difficulties in using and understanding police terminology and legal jargons during the course. This is contradictory with the previous police-related studies whereby majority of the studies only highlighted speaking as the biggest challenge for the police to do their work-related jobs. This study, otherwise, proved that the learning of police or legal terminologies is also a major problem for the police since they are unable to use the right words to explain on their policing-related situations or to understand the contexts when reading legal materials and documents. Lack of technical vocabularies as specific to their policing profession becomes a hindrance for them to be well-versed when it comes to explaining about policing issues and criminal cases. As the IOs, they need to read reports, documents, statements pertaining to acts, previous cases, statutes and various other related reading materials to assist them in a case and to use as evidence in court (Ramakrishnan, 2011). As suggested by Chung & Nation (2003), technical vocabulary appears in a specific domain, subject-related and is part of particular disciplines. Thus, to master certain field or works and disciplines, is to master the appropriate language terminology (Coxhead & Demecheleer, 2018).

Besides, the former police trainees also have problems in answering the grammar quizzes in the course. As mentioned previously, teaching adult grammar per say should be avoided as these police trainees are all adult learners. In this matter, the implicit grammar teaching might be more suitable alternative to be incorporated in this English course meant for police trainees. As suggested by Brown (2000), adult language learning, with the presence of their cognitive ability, could benefit more from deductive presentations of grammar, than inductive ones.

## 6. Conclusion

In sum, it is imperative for an ESP course to be incorporated into the existing English course under the PLAK program at PULAPOL, in accordance with the analysis of learners' needs. The revamped English course should be more police-based and prepare for multiple tasking that these future police officers will be assigned on the ground. The specific English for police or *English for Police Purposes* (EPP) should be developed whereby there will be a balance integration of all the English skills, yet with more speaking emphasis and limitation of the grammar teaching per say. Plus, the knowledge on police terminology and legal jargons should also be integrated as to fulfil their policing disciplines.

Besides, the PLAK coordinators should make English as one of the compulsory subjects which have the same weightage as the other law subjects, to ensure the trainees do not take this subject for granted. Also, the Language and Communication Unit PULAPOL KL must work together with the Training Division Bukit Aman to set up a special committee as to design a comprehensive English language program for RMP personnel as a whole. This can be done via involving senior police officers with some law background and English-studying background who can serve as the subject specialist and guide the English instructors to incorporate the police-based topics into English syllabus. Both language input from the English teachers and the content input from these senior police officers are crucial in revamping the existing English course as the respondents are also in need of learning the police jargons and terminology.

Additionally, the English trainers at PULAPOL should receive a professional training in ESP for developing an EPP course in the future. The Ministry of Home Affairs should allocate some financial budget to send them off for proper training overseas, as the ESP training in Malaysia is sparse. Meanwhile, on the macro level, RMP should work on creating English environment in their organizations to increase the credibility and efficiency of RMP members in serving the public.

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**Appendix A  
Questionnaire**

**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Police’s Voice : A need Analysis of ESP for Police Trainees In Malaysia**

There are **FOUR** parts in this questionnaire as follows;

**PART A**-Background Information

**PART B**-Necessities

**PART C**-Wants

**PART D**-Lacks

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**Part A: Background Information**

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Instruction: Please tick (√) your answer in the relevant box.

- |                            |                 |                          |                                     |               |                          |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Age:                    | 25-30           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Your Current Rank:               | Inspector     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                            | 31-35           | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     | ASP and above | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                            | 36 & above      | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     |               |                          |
| 2. Academic Qualification: | Degree          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Your Current Department:         | _____         |                          |
|                            | Master’s Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     |               |                          |
|                            | PHD             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. State you are currently serving: | _____         |                          |

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**Part B: Necessities**

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In this Part B, please tick (√) your answer in the relevant box. Please rate the following statements using the indicators as follows:

Strongly Disagree  1 Disagree  2 Undecided  3 Agree  4 Strongly Agree  5

**What are you using English for?**

Items	Statements	Rate
1	To communicate with RMP members (superiors/co-workers/subordinates)	1 2 3 4 5
2	To communicate with clients (suspects/ witnesses/ complainants/English speaking civilians)	1 2 3 4 5
3	To attend meetings/ briefings/ roll-calls/PDRM social ceremony	1 2 3 4 5
4	To read law/police-related books/ documents	1 2 3 4 5
5	To conduct interrogation process	1 2 3 4 5
6	To initiate small talks	1 2 3 4 5
7	To be able to explain police terminology/ legal jargons in English	1 2 3 4 5
8	To give directions to local/foreigners	1 2 3 4 5
9	To conduct press conference (international cases)	1 2 3 4 5
10	To solve criminal issues	1 2 3 4 5
11	To take accurate testimony/ statements	1 2 3 4 5
12	To get promoted	1 2 3 4 5
13	To gain more respect	1 2 3 4 5
14	To attend international courses/ conferences	1 2 3 4 5

**Part C: Wants**

The questions in this part C aim to investigate the *Wants* of English for your job. Please rate a degree of the English skills/ elements that enable you perform your job effectively by ticking (✓) in each item provided. The criteria used in scoring are as follows:

Strongly Disagree  1 Disagree  2 Undecided  3 Agree  4 Strongly Agree  5

	Language skills/ elements	Level of <i>Wants</i> that I wish to acquire for each language skill or element				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Speaking					
2.	Listening					
3.	Reading					
4.	Writing					
5.	Grammar					
6.	Vocabulary (Police Terminology/Law jargons)					

How important is it to have a high level of English proficiency when performing the following tasks? Please tick [ / ] language skill (s) or element(s) that you need to use the most in the following contexts.

	Contexts	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	Grammar	Vocabulary (Police terminology/ Law jargons)
7.	<b>Traffic Intervention</b> ●police roadblock ●Fines						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Summons</li> <li>●Crashes</li> <li>●Accidents</li> </ul>						
8.	<b>Suspect Interrogation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Suspect Identification</li> <li>●Investigative interviews</li> <li>●Q &amp; A</li> <li>●Descriptions of suspects/places/vehicles/ crime scenes</li> </ul>						
9.	<b>Detention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Frisk &amp; search</li> <li>●Ambush</li> <li>●Arrest</li> <li>●Statement-takings</li> <li>●Statement-giving</li> <li>●Report writing</li> </ul>						
10.	<b>Citizen's request</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Directions</li> <li>●Complaints</li> <li>●Loss of property</li> <li>●General information</li> </ul>						
11.	<b>Incidents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Emergency calls</li> <li>●Bank robbery</li> <li>●Hostage situations</li> <li>●Negotiations</li> <li>●Assistance to victims</li> <li>●Violent crowds</li> <li>●Riots</li> <li>●Evacuation protocols</li> </ul>						
12.	<b>International Border</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Customs</li> <li>●Airport</li> <li>●Border procedures</li> </ul>						

**Part D: Lacks**

In this Part D, please tick (√) your answer in the relevant box. Please rate the following statements using the indicators as follows:

Strongly Disagree  1      Disagree  2      Undecided  3      Agree  4      Strongly Agree  5

What were the problems you faced when learning the English course under the PLAK syllabus at PULAPOL KL?

Items	Statements	Rate				
1.	To talk on current criminal/ policing issues	1	2	3	4	5
2.	To use daily English conversation	1	2	3	4	5
3.	To explain on police terminology/ legal jargons in English	1	2	3	4	5
4.	To write a police report	1	2	3	4	5
5.	To read and understand law/police-related books or documents	1	2	3	4	5
6.	To give spontaneous oral feedback in English	1	2	3	4	5
7.	To answer grammar exercises	1	2	3	4	5
8.	To receive instructions in English	1	2	3	4	5
9.	To do presentation in English	1	2	3	4	5

**Appendix B**

**Semi-structured Interview**

**Part B : NECESSITIES**

- 1) On the ground, what are you using English for?

**Part A: WANTS**

- 2) What are the English skills/ elements you want to learn the most/least?

**Part C: LACKS**

- 3) What problems you faced when learning English under the Basic Police Training Program (PLAK) at PULAPOL?

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