

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

To meet the needs of their guests, hotel businesses require their staff to use English communication skills daily, especially when interacting with guests. In this chapter, the research pertaining to this study has been listed in order. The background knowledge and information of this study is related to English proficiency of Chiang Mai's hotel front desk staff in communication between guests and employees.

1. Communication by Definition
2. Understanding Communication Strategies
3. English as an International Language (EIL)
4. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
5. English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)
6. Analysis of Individual Needs
7. Functions of English Language Characteristics
8. Related Research

#### **Communication by Definition**

Because human beings are social animals, they require companionship, love and understanding. Therefore, they as a species need to be able to communicate with one another in order to give, receive and share ideas. Communication occurs when two people interact, by verbal or non-verbal means.

What is the definition of communication? "Communication" stems from the Latin word "communicate" meaning to give or to share information and ideas.

Bird (1976:12) revealed communication as an exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions by two or more persons.

Wilbur and Park (1977:18) defined communication as the action of people when they share or impart something to others. The sharing of two people means that they make use of an agreed system of signs. The signs could be gestures, numbers, lines in drawings, or words.

However, people can communicate with each other for any number of purposes, including but not limited to explanations, discussions, attraction, cooperation, or persuasion (Fisher, 1978:10).

Davis (1985:28) stated that these ideas were rather narrow and related to only a specific professional field. For a more thorough understanding of the term communication, we must expand beyond any individual industry, profession or job. So, when we speak about communication, we must imagine a 'set of processes' where information is transmitted among individuals or organizations in order to understand the response results.

Barker (1987:24) pointed out that communication is a chameleon of words. When we talk about communication we need to keep in mind that the meaning changes for each speaker and for each listener. For example, a computer engineer might talk about communication as a system of links, circuits and cables. For an electrical engineer, communication may refer to telegrams and telephone lines. While even further, a sociologist might think of newspapers or broadcasting as communication devices.

People should study communication as "a process" in order to grasp a deeper understanding of communication in both interaction and meaning. Steifatte (1987:28) said that we can look at communication as a process in much the same way as we study biological systems within our own bodies, since communication is a system that involves an interrelated, interdependent group of elements working together as a whole to achieve a desired outcome or a goal.

To get a better understanding of the communication process as a whole, Berlo (1980:24) suggested that we need to study the individual elements of a communication process, which consist of four parts: a sender, a message, a channel, and a receiver. The communication process can be represented as in the model below.

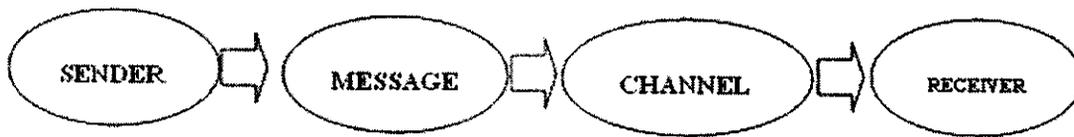


Illustration 1 Model of the Communication Process

From illustration 1, we can see that the communication process starts with a “sender” who makes the conscious choice to communicate. When the sender wants to communicate, he or she must develop or create a message through his or her experiences, actions, perceptions, body language, signals or thoughts. There are a multitude of reasons for sending messages, from information sharing to persuasion, to entertainment, signals of love, signals of approval and everything in-between.

Secondly, the element of the communication process is a “message”. Message refers to what is being transmitted through communication. After making a choice to start communication, the sender chooses what message content will be sent to the receiver. The message can be verbal, non-verbal or electronic.

The style in which a message is transmitted from sender to receiver is termed the “channel.” There are unlimited channels for sending and communicating messages, so it is essential for the sender to choose the most appropriate and applicable channel for communicating in a given situation.

The last and final element of this process is a “receiver” who receives and accepts messages from the sender. A receiver deciphers and then interprets this message based upon his or her combined past thoughts and feelings, experiences or perceptions.

Communication skills refer to an individual’s ability with regard to listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is essential to having effective communication in his or her personal life and personal career.

Smith (1978) states that in the work world, people continually need to deal with incoming and outgoing communication. Regardless of your occupation, whether it be an accountant, banker, flight attendant, businessman, nurse, office worker, hotel staff or waiter, you will have to interact with co-workers, supervisors, subordinates, customers, suppliers, and machines. All of these activities require people who are proficient in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Vagish (1981:32) asserts that effective communication is needed for people to make contact with one another. When we send a message to someone, we want to be sure that the receiver received it and understood as it was intended. People who have good communication skills may be more successful in their careers, relationships and partnerships.

Approximately one-third of a person's working hours are spent listening — whether in school, in social relationships, or on the job (Crowley, 1995:36). To excel at communications, individuals need to understand the basic importance of communication skills.

Youngs and Gibson (1986:22) said that listening is also extremely important in all levels of employment; new employees must listen to instructions and directions from their supervisors and co-workers. For example, telephone service operators must listen carefully in order to handle callers' requests and complaints. People who work in service industries especially need to understand a guest's question or order. Communication breakdowns occur when people fail to listen correctly, and these misunderstandings cause loss of productivity, money and reputation among clients, business associates and guests.

### **Understanding Communication Strategies**

We need communication strategies to enable different kinds of responses in a variety of situations, so that everyone can deal with difficulties and complications involved in communicating thoughts and ideas effectively. Looking deeper into this subject, we will view the integral factors involved in spoken communication strategies.

Wiley and Wrigley (1995:1-94) tried to tie a set of communication skills to certain developments of business and business professionals. According to Wiley and Wrigley, one specific strategy for making communication decisions between one another effectively is to look for the individual key factors involved in sending and receiving a message. These factors help to develop strategies to determine what to say, whom to say it to and when to say it, but most importantly how to say it. Listed below are the tips for improving an individual's ability to communicate effectively.

Communication Factor 1: Determining the Main Purpose of a Statement or the Usage of a Function in Language.

This circumstance involves understanding the intent of the interaction. We must first realize that all communication takes place for a purpose or reason. Most work-related language functions can be divided into five basic categories:

1. Expression of Opinions, Attitudes and Feelings
2. Making Requests
3. Exchanging Information
4. Persuasion
5. Evaluation

Each of these five language functions uses more than one factor to express a particular purpose. This may create some misinterpretation at times as a speaker must choose a "contextual" form that is suitable for the situation in the context that best expresses the given intention. For example, if we want to borrow someone's umbrella, we can use an array of expressions to make the request.

1. Would you mind lending me your umbrella?
2. Can I borrow your umbrella for a minute?
3. Would it be ok if I borrowed your umbrella for a minute?
4. Let me have your umbrella for a moment.

Using the last form is considered rude if someone is in a higher social position such as our boss, supervisor, king, president, etc. because these instances require formal expressions rather than informal expressions. One can conclude that the circumstance and context determine which formal or informal expressions we would choose to communicate our purpose with others. If we are not able to differentiate these social circumstances, we will be labeled with an unfavorable opinion by people we communicate with.

### Communication Factor 2: Determining the Proper Domain.

The proper domains are the rights and social responsibility we have in regards to work and communication. If we choose to ask a Canadian during a polite conversation of small talk if he or she has any children or how much money they make per year, this is too personal of a question and is considered out of bounds. In this regard, domain is related to what is considered personal information which differs from what is thought of as non-personal information. The idea of what is personal or non-personal is determined by each individual society and culture. For example, in some Eastern cultures, it is perfectly acceptable to ask someone how much he or she earns as a yearly salary or how much they paid for their jewelry. In European and some North American cultures, if you are not personal friends or intimate with that person it is considered inappropriate and rude to ask these personal questions. So the ability to judge and adjust to the proper domain of conduct can dramatically enhance the skill of effective communication.

### Communication Factor 3: Determining the Appropriate Register.

This communication factor refers to whom we are speaking with or talking to. Sometimes non-native English speakers are not sure if such phrases such as "Give me, I don't want, Take it easy, etc." are appropriate to use with people they are speaking with. This circumstance occurs mainly because non-native English speakers are not exactly sure where they fit in or their social status related to others. An additional problem is not being able to instantly modify their spoken language style and adjusting strategies by surveying these communication circumstances. Sometimes they are unable to decide what level of social language to use or who to use it with. These rules of social conduct based on social strata give us a better understanding of internal business structures and vertical information flow in an organization and should give some idea of how to adjust to the desired target language for the most effective and appropriate use.

1. Subordinate to Superior: This type of conduct encompasses language rules, voice tone, and nonverbal behavior. As an example, command forms of speech, such as, "I am taking tomorrow off", is inappropriate to use toward a superior but to soften a command form, the question or order should include the statement "please". For a superior to consider it a request, it must be stated in a more polite form, such as: "Could I please have off Tuesday of next week? My wife's family is coming to town and I need to pick them up at the airport". As for the tone of voice, subordinates need to be careful of dually sounding polite and rude at the same time. The statement "I'm sorry" has a dual meaning of asking for acceptance for some small infraction or in the second context that passes along a meaning that a superior is somehow at fault for the problem at hand and demands a rebuttal. Some examples of this instance would be a subordinate's reaction to a superior's request, denial or reprimand for poor performance. "You disagree on every idea I present." "I'm sorry, I don't have the qualifications from Oxford University like you". Considering this situation we can clearly understand that the subordinate's speech is not an "apology", but it is its contextual tone that gives away the true intent to convey dissatisfaction and conceit. Non-verbal behavior is 50% of language and subordinates need to be aware and use caution with respect to politeness as they would verbally. Some examples would be rising from a chair when they are introduced and offer to shake hands. Impolite, sarcastic tones of voice, disrespectful body language, and rude behaviors should never be used in professional or formal interactions.

2. Peer to Peer: The unspoken rules of language, tone, and behavior are not limited only to interactions with superiors, but also should be practiced with others who share the same social level or status. Addressing co-workers or subordinates by saying "sir" or "ma'am" is not respectful. Referring to everyone as "dude" or "man" is regarded as cliché and not appreciated. Sometimes it is rude and co-workers may wonder why that person cannot remember anyone's name. Language rules and behavior affect inter-peer and inter-work relationships as well.

3. Superior to Subordinate: Superior to subordinate relationship rules may not be blatantly obvious because a superior often uses a managerial request form similar to “I would like it if you...” “Would you...”, “Could you...” and “Can you...”. Superiors that continually choose to speak with command forms cause resentment and dis-harmony in the workplace. Oppositely, if a superior treats his or her subordinates politely and respectfully, they often receive more cooperation from their staff. A superior’s non-verbal behavior may commonly include touching a subordinate’s back or arm to gain attention, but generally, a subordinate is discouraged from doing so.

#### Communication Factor 4: Determine the Proper Degree of Urgency

The main factor is to weigh the importance of a set of circumstances and messages to determine if it is a true emergency or situation that can be dealt with easily. One example, a company worker is in the middle of a meeting and is informed that their home is on fire and the fire department is there putting out the fire. They are in a meeting with the boss and several clients and it is assumed that the set of events is more important than the meeting. The information still needs to be presented and considered before the choice is made to leave or continue with the meeting. Respectability by both superior and subordinate should be flexible to determine priorities in this instance. This flexibility and determination skill is very important for the success of one’s communication and career. Do we have the ability to make adjustments in unusual communication instances? These skills are essential to developing the critical thinking and analytical skills in communication. These adaptability skills effect how other people we are dealing with perceive us.

#### Communication Factor 5: Develop a Friendly Style.

This last key communication factor shows how one comes across to another. Studies show time and time again that getting along with others socially is extremely important for success in their professional and personal lives. One of the main reasons that people are promoted to higher positions within an organization is that they perform well with others. On occasion, co-workers have trouble adapting to nuances of another workmate’s style and attitude. “How do I deal with a loudmouth hot headed boss that shouts and screams at everyone? What

course of action do you take with a co-worker who continually complains about everything, or a Pollyanna/Optimist that never sees a problem?" Being able to deal with these situations, Wiley and Wrigley (1995) suggested that we should critique our own style against others' styles. Different types of style allow people to have different attitudes. These behaviors are discussed below.

1. The Superfriendliers: Their attitude is: "Peace at any cost." They are pleased to give up their wants and surrender to the desires of the others in order to devote themselves for the acceptance and harmony in group and to maintain peace. These people love getting along with everyone and being friendly and kind at every turn even if they are treated badly or scoffed at.

2. The Tough guys: Their attitude is: "Winning isn't the only thing. It's everything." They struggle for the power and work for the goal of a winner and do not care about others' feelings; whether other people like or agree with their tactics, yelling and shouting are often done when things do not go right as they want. Tough guys, include both men and women who love fighting and arguing about problems and issues so that they can accomplish a particular achievement.

3. The Experts: Their attitude is: "Ask me anything. I'll give you the answer." They enjoy giving answers and advice on any problem and also love sharing their vast knowledge with others. Experts think of themselves as scholars on any of technical, social, or political matter.

4. The Logical Problem Solvers: Their attitude is: "There seems to be no logical basis for emotional conflict." Logical problem solvers give their complete attention to tasks instead of to people. Emotional problems and feelings are disconnected and seen as unreal and therefore should not affect the business environment.

5. The Pessimists: Their attitude is: "It won't work." They have no hope for the future and often purposely dampen spirits when people start to have a new, challenging or positive ideas or when other people's energy and enthusiasm are high. Pessimists always think the worst things are going to happen.

6. The Pollyannas: Their attitude is: "It'll all work out. No problem." Pollyannas are sometimes called optimists and view the world as a desirable place. They always hope that everything will turn out well even when something is in complete contrast to that of the truth.

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7. The Complainers: Their attitude is: "This place stinks." Complainers enjoy expressing dissatisfaction.

8. The Indecisive: Their attitude is: "You can't be too careful." For indecisive people it is hard for them to make up their minds. They often delay or put off making any decision until the last possible moment, holding a fear that things may go wrong.

9. The Middle of the readers: Their attitude is: "Neither side wins any thing nor both may lose." This group usually looks for a fairly middle ground in any conflict. They continually search for a compromise in every set of conditions, that is, no matter how serious the situation is.

These styles are general stereotypes that help us to categorize an individual's behavior pattern. In the real world of work and social interaction, understanding these behavioral patterns are essential for advancement and achievement in personal, social, professional and business matters. Within social achievement, we understand that general stereotypes rarely, if ever, truly fit any one person's behavior pattern. We need to understand the basic needs of a human being. Nobody wants to be blamed, yelled at, humiliated or accused, but they need love, praise, companionship, acceptance and understanding from others. To achieve this basic goal in social communication, remember the basic nature of human existence, look deeply into the hearts of man. Feel what they are so as not to offend them, alienate them or hurt their feelings. For achievement in business communication, its purpose is wholly 180 degrees opposite from expected social achievement results. We use an understanding of another person's communication style and attitude for the salary and benefit that we earn weekly, monthly or yearly. Regardless of the purpose or what the situations are, we must balance and take an introspective look to make sure we are not the problem in that communication circumstance. Communication then benefits others and does no harm.

Wiley and Wrigley (1995) stated in their five key communication factors that a complicated process within spoken communication are considered as a package for communication strategy that covers a range of essential factors during communication. Success in speaking, whether in personal, professional or public arenas depends on speakers reaching their objective using these key communication factors; if not, the speaker will often fail by showing a lack of understanding, sensitivity and awareness of each of these factors as described so far throughout this work.

### **English as an International Language (EIL)**

Harrison (1989:2) pointed out that the importance of English in today's modern world cannot be underestimated. English has become the standard language for people of different nations and nationalities that need to interact in governmental, academic, industrial, business, religious, cultural, social, and athletic circumstances. This dramatic rise of English language use has caused the improvement of a functional concept of English as an International Language (EIL).

Currently a majority of the world's population accept English as a common communication language among different nationalities. When one non-native English speaker communicates with another non-native speaker, they are using English as an International Language [EIL]. EIL's focus is on international cross-linguistic interactions or cross-cultural exchanges. EIL is thought of as a medium for communication between non-native speakers.

Conklin (1988:36) said that each individual has its own ways of speaking, mannerisms, rules for taking turns speaking, conversation topics, methods of thanking, apologizing, interrupting, giving advice and permission, and repetitive types. When speakers of more than one country or culture interact, more than one set of social and cultural assumptions will be in operation.

English has been quickly developing as an essential international communication device worldwide. International express package services and common post most commonly use English for communication. International conferences sponsored by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund use English as the primary language of international commerce. Every air-traffic controller at every international airport uses English to communicate. Developing nations must use English to seek international aid or negotiate funding.

Fishman (1987:36) stated that the geographical spread of English indicates its rising importance. It has been stated that the importance of English is because it was the language of the Industrial Revolution and still remains the language of science and technology.

Smith (1987:14) theorized that one important reason for the increased usage of English internationally is "non-native speakers are using it more frequently and more often with other non-native speakers in international settings (i.e. international work situations where people of two or more nationalities meet and use English as a medium of communication)." For example,

many people from China working in Malaysia or Saudi Arabia must use English to communicate with their employers and locally born co-workers. Within these sets of circumstances, non-native English speakers use English to communicate with other non-native English speakers.

Huseman, Logue and Freshley (1979:15) stated a point concerning the present employment situation of Asian workers: "Communication skills are rarely recognized as an essential component of a job at the entry level or line worker position although any promotion depends heavily on their ability to communicate effectively in English. In reality, English language training is a must".

There is evidence that suggests that English as an International Language [EIL] is the choice of language used between non-native English speakers. Conklin (1938:13) said that there is no need for non-native English speakers to reflect the exact behavioral patterns of native English speakers. For example, an Indian businessman does not need to live a similar lifestyle as a Canadian in order to use English in business negotiations with a Brazilian businessman. A Thai businessman does not need to speak exactly like an Englishman to converse in English with an Indonesian at an Asian Business Summit.

Lanham and Zimmer (1986:13) Non-native English speakers realize that each country and society has its own pattern of speaking, accent, patterns, styles of thanking, apologizing, interrupting and giving suggestions and asking for permission.

When using English as an International Language, it is essential for non-native English speakers to concern themselves with communicating in a style that is appropriate for the audience and phonetically recognizable. This current realization that English is essential for international commerce and industry, science, and tourism makes English as an International Language a necessary part of life when dealing with people from other continents and countries.

### **English for Specific Purposes (ESP)**

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is known as English for Special Purposes.

Mohan (1986:15) stated that it is the area of English language teaching which mainly focuses on preparing English as a Second Language (ESL) learners for chosen communicative environments.

Hutchinson and Waters (1989:6) wrote that the seedlings of ESP were planted at the end of World War Two in 1945 in an era of exponential growth never before imagined with expansion in scientific, technical and economic fronts on a global scale in a global arena. The expansion created a more solidified world by advances in technology and global commerce where endless progress soon facilitated a global demand for a universal international language that crossed borders and nationalism. This created new industries for people to learn English and it was soon realized that English was the key into international commerce and technology. This shifted the method of teaching and usage of language to communication which was used globally.

Stevens (1980:108) zeroed in on the new stylized ESP phenomenon, learning for a specific need in an occupation or activity coupled with a specific detailed analysis of a particular occupation or activity. This specific response ESP could be tailored to an individual or organization's needs or particular career for specific students.

Some examples of ESP worldwide for industry include: chemists, computer programmers, medical doctors, engineers, flight attendants, administrative assistants, meteorologists, businessmen, diplomats, nurses, and students of science related subjects, hotel employees or restaurant, and service based employees.

ESP has evolved into a purpose based tailor made course based on students needs and performance of a specific occupational or educational role. It is based on a learner's needs.

Stevens also (cited in Promrat, 1997:17) described the ESP course contents as somewhat limited. By observation, he noted the bandwidth of specific themes and topics of ESP courses to meet the learner's particular needs was too narrow related to specific occupations and restricted the everyday conversation language skills.

A learner's primary needs should be foremost when choosing a purpose built ESP course. Mackay and Mountford (1978) labeled three types of learner purposes:

1. Vocational Training Programs: for hotel, food and beverage staff, flight attendants, mechanics, etc.
2. Occupational Requirements: for diplomats, air traffic controllers, airline pilots, etc.
3. Academic or Professional Studies: for engineering, medicine, geology, etc.

It becomes apparent as more and more people from around the world speak English together it becomes an extraordinarily important language. English has also expanded in the fields of science, technology, and commerce because it continues to become a vehicle to exchange information and knowledge in a well known format. Given this idea as fact, a syllabus tailored design for those learners who have a specific purpose using English in their occupations or professions is of great importance.

Widdowson (1994:1) indicated that English for Specific Purposes is to design language teaching programs preparing students in advance to take on leadership roles in a peer community which has its own set of ideals, vocabulary and standards. The purpose of ESP is to respond to the learners' occupational requirements.

English for hotel employment is included by definition as English for Specific Purposes, due to the specific needs in the service industry. Robinson (1980:14) mentioned that these learners should take ESP courses in advance after choosing their career or educational preferences. Commonly a combination is more suitable for English in their occupation to help them perform better on the job.

Hotel staff are generally expected to perform diligently when using English in social or work conditions. This study will seek to investigate the hotel staff's level of competence in English usage in order to help them to improve their English language skills in the area that specifically needs the most improvement.

### **English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)**

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), the main demographic of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), becomes the English language which the participants need to perform part or all of their occupational duties. Robinson (1980:9) stated that English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) is for people who are currently employed or about to engage in employment, for example, tourist police, air traffic controllers, international bankers, civil engineers, health care workers and hotel employees.

Stevens (1977 cited in Narunartsenie, 1988:17) stated that EOP is taught in situations where learners use English on a daily basis in their industry or profession.

In the past ten years, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has exploded in popularity, both in general and vocational courses. There are currently a multitude of courses that offer English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) as a response to the specific needs of learners preparing to work in a future career or a particular industry. EOP courses are designed specifically to help learners acquire skills to make them a better candidate for employment by means of vocational training, or specific task training.

Crandall (1984 cited in Narunartsenie, 1988:18) distinguished two main types of EOP:

1. First, general employment or pre-employment courses offered to learners interested in entering the job market or areas of retraining skills.
2. Second, occupation-specific EOP courses, such as auto repair, hotel industry, food and beverage service industry, or building construction jobs. The main objective of each English language course becomes the employability or trainability of the students.

This study is aimed at improving the overall English language abilities of Chiang Mai hotel staff, so they become more effective in English communication and will be able to work more effectively in their careers and increase their prospects for job advancement.

### **Analysis of Individual Needs**

Wilkins (1979:55) said that to define objectives is the primary step in construction of any particular language syllabus or course, wherever possible basing analysis on the needs of the learners.

Ostler (1980:222-223) suggested that needs analysis starts with questions regarding what the learner wants, needs and thinks they will be able to do. It involves asking what performance function a person needs. Investigating further what elements of language will be required to fulfill those functions is also part of the process.

Hutchinson and Waters (1984 cited in Intratat, 1985:17) supported ideas that ESP's main goal is to provide learners with the confidence and ability to cope with communication in a variety of situations as well as specific ones.

Sinha and Sadorra (1991:20) stated that needs analysis is the centerpiece of an ESP program. It involves the gathering of information about the personal, academic or professional, cultural, and language backgrounds of learners in order to give order and direction to tailor-made ESP programs.

These needs conversely would be expressed by particular types of communication that the learner would be using.

Additionally, Hutchinson and Waters (1989:59-60) stated that before designing a syllabus responding to the learners' needs, it is necessary to survey the target learner's needs by asking questions about the participant's expectations and attitudes toward that learning process.

These questions are:

1. Who the learners will use the language with?
2. What the content areas will be?
3. When the language will be used?
4. Why the language is needed?
5. How the language will be used?
6. Where the language will be used?

Harvey (1984 cited in Intratat, 1985:20) proposed in order to completely emphasize a learners' communicative needs, it is necessary to study in detail each of the situations in which the participants will need to use English. Moreover, he expressed that the students' purposes should first be clarified by analyzing the activities and roles they will be performing in English and then determine the level of performance expectations.

In this study, the researcher will survey and analyze Chiang Mai hotel staff needs pertaining to their daily use of English in their occupations. In addition, the researcher will also ascertain ways to improve the teaching methods English for hotel staff and to develop their English proficiency in order to become more effective communicators. The survey will look at the needs of hotel staff's requirements related to usage of language and its vital importance.

### **Functions of English Language Characteristics**

Most language learners do not study English only to chat or speak with foreign tourists, but they also want to use English skills to communicate effectively among themselves and different nationalities within the work place. It goes without saying that employees need to communicate, understand and exchange information, opinions, and experiences between one another and guests. It is a necessity that those in a service related industry such as hotel staff members should understand the functions of English in order to communicate efficiently.

Wilkins (1976) offered six alternative types of communicative functions:

1. Based on assessment judgment and evaluation (approving and forgiving)
2. Behavioral affects of others in a persuasion circumstance (suggesting and inviting)
3. Relationship to information exchange and argument point of view (requesting, and disputing)
4. Rational organization of thought and speech patterns is categorized as rational enquiry and exposition (inferring and proving)
5. Emotional reactions by the speaker to events and people around them is titled personal emotion (contentment and sorrow)
5. Relationships among the persons spoken to (greetings and gratefulness).

Dobson (1979:7-8) agreed on these classifications of language functions:

1. Making judgments (apologizing and complimenting)

2. Modifying people's behavior (persuading and proposing)
3. Requesting and giving information (describing and informing)
4. Expressing opinions (convincing and accepting)
5. Expressing personal feelings (empathy and satisfaction)
6. Expressing thought processes (understanding and confirming)
7. Interacting socially (greeting and politeness)

Van Ek (1980:25) stated six basic functions:

1. Socialization
2. Emotional attitudes
3. Moral attitudes
4. Persuasion
5. Factual information
6. Intellectual

Each function shows some aspect of a particular mode of social contact.

Blundell, Higgens, and Middlemiss (1982:v) defined language functions as the purpose for which people speak or write. They agreed that:

1. People only speak or write with a purpose in mind
2. To help someone to see a particular point of view
3. To reach an agreement
4. To ask for advice

Every language on earth has such functions but would be expressed in different ways depending on the society or nationality.

Jones (1983:v) detailed English language functions in an identical fashion. The fifteen functions included:

1. Giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing and discussing
2. Getting people to do things
3. Talking about events that have happened in the past
4. Talking about similarities, differences and stating preferences
5. Describing people, places and events
6. Dealing with moods and feelings within yourself or others

7. Asking for information
8. Talking about the future
9. Talking about yourself, starting conversations
10. Conversation Techniques
11. Making suggestions, persuading, giving advice and expressing enthusiasm
12. Complaining, apologizing and forgiving, expressing disappointment
13. Describing things, delivering instructions, checking if others understand spoken directions
14. Asking for permission, giving reasons, offering to help with something
15. Story Telling

Many linguists have stated these various English language functions in the same way. One can draw the conclusion that the purpose of language is to communicate and communication can change with the situation depending on the interaction between speakers. This interaction between speakers is commonly referred to as communicative functions of language. Any given function can change within any given situation.

### **Related Research**

Numerous studies in the topic of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) surveyed English language needs in the world.

Sonsa-archit (1990) surveyed the needs of English in government departments and state enterprises. The 300 directors of departments and 45 directors of state enterprises in four ministries were selected by using questionnaires and interview questionnaires. The conclusions suggested that English was only used moderately in the government departments and state enterprises. Reading was the skill used most while translation was used least. Additionally, the officials in the study had insufficient language training at school to perform their functions effectively.

Ostler (1980) from the University of Southern California (USC), reported that questionnaires distributed at San Diego State University were used to determine which skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) were most needed by graduates and undergraduates. The results revealed that reading academic journals, and giving class presentations and academic reports were needed most by graduates. Taking multiple choice exams, writing reports, reading, and creating graphs, charts, and visual aids were needed most by the undergraduates.

Kanchanasatitya (1980) researched the needs of English in business enterprises. The questionnaires and structured interview forms were used with 190 private company managers in Bangkok. The research revealed that reading skills were used most while translation skills were least used.

Johns (1981) studied to determine which skills: reading, listening, writing, or speaking were most essential to non-native speaker success in university classes. The academic skills questionnaire was distributed at San Diego State University to 200 randomly selected faculties from all departments. Receptive skills of reading and listening were ranked first by faculty teaching in both upper and lower graduate classes.

Gage and Prince (1982) studied Vocational English: students preparing for their first job. The 20 adult Indochinese refugees were to be the subjects of this research. First, employers/supervisors were selected by using survey. Second, specific work tasks and functional language requirements for entry positions were surveyed by an observation form. The research indicated that workers with low English proficiency performed their present jobs efficiently although advancement opportunities were limited.

Jupp and Hodlin (1975 cited in Gage and Prince, 1982:350) surveyed the language needs of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) workers. They improved new training courses for workers in British factories to use English in different situations. They determined the classification of language functions and work situations into four categories:

- 1) Work language needed for immediate job situations
- 2) Language for unusual work situations
- 3) Language for simple social contact, and
- 4) Communication about individual rights and privileges

Intratat (1985) conducted a survey of the practical use of English for occupational purposes of Chiang Mai University dentistry graduates. The 344 Chiang Mai University dentistry graduates from the 1971-1984 academic years were selected by using questionnaires. The findings revealed that reading was the language skill used most and the majority of dentists considered English reading studies useful.

Jungsatitkul (1988) surveyed the English language needs of taxi drivers in Bangkok Metropolis. The 285 taxi drivers were chosen to answer the questionnaires and interviews. The results showed that taxi drivers in Bangkok Metropolis highly needed English language. Speaking and listening were needed most in their jobs. Tourist site suggestions were the function most needed. The study showed that they could not communicate accurately with their foreign guests.

Narunartsenie (1989) studied the practical use of English for occupational purposes of the police officers under the Immigration Division. The 150 Immigration police officers who graduated from the Police Cadet Academy, and now working at the Immigration Head Office and the airport were selected by using questionnaires. The researcher found that English was widely used in their occupational lives. Listening and speaking were considered to be their greatest shortcomings.

Dibakanaka (1989) analyzed English language use of employees in first-class hotels throughout Bangkok. Ninety-six employees in the front office and food and beverage departments of seven hotels answered forty-nine questions pertaining to use of English questionnaires according to the language functions and situations. The study implied that the neutral level of language was used the most, and then informal language, while formal language was used the least.

Mosalem (1984 cited in Narunartsenie, 1989:23) investigated the English needs of the national police force in Egypt. The 150 officers in 10 departments answered questions by using English. The study showed that listening and speaking, reading and writing should be emphasized, and offered a syllabus for a common course that should be designed intergrating vocabulary, grammatical items and text, and discourse.

Fachthongphan (1990) researched English in the hotel business. The managers and hotel staff members in different departments in the Regent Hotel of Bangkok were chosen here by using interviews. It showed that hotel staff members in the Regent Hotel frequently needed English to communicate. The speaking and listening skills were used most in the different situations, such as greetings, introducing yourself, responding to a request to offer services, describing the definition and details of service, duties in hotel jobs, and the instructions of some facilities in the rooms, identifying the position of the things in the room, stating the directions of some places or tourist attractions, and speaking about climate and country situations. Furthermore, both speaker and listener had limited language skills. The training course should be started to improve English language skills urgently.

Boonjaipet (1992) surveyed the needs for English of the officers at the counters of the post office in the Bangkok Metropolis. The 226 subjects gave data by questionnaires and interviews. The results showed that speaking and listening were needed most. The language function most needed was 'giving service information'. The officers met most problems which were customers' accent, fast speech, and their own incompetence in English speaking.

Akkakoson (1994) investigated the role and importance of English in Thai business communication. The 17 human resource management representatives from 15 sampled companies were chosen in this study by using interviews. The results expressed that English was a significant medium for business communication, and four language skills were very valuable for most of the employees and were necessarily required most of the time at the managerial positions.

It stated that English was very important in these careers, also influencing their occupations and their daily lives. In addition, participants need of all language skills to succeed in their occupation.

Jiranapakul (1996) surveyed the language needs for communication by Thai engineers. The 211 operational engineers and 21 managerial engineers of 21 sampled companies selected from the directory of 1,000 top companies were interviewed by the researcher. The results stated that English was a significant instrument for communication from the operational and managerial engineers' attitudes, and all four English skills were very practical for them to get a good job and career advancement. The operational engineers needed listening and speaking courses the most, but the managerial engineers needed writing skills the most.

Ketkaew (1997) did a survey of cabin attendants' needs of English, important English functions, their problems in English usage, and their needs to improve English skills. The 317 Thai Airways International cabin attendants (278 air stewards and air stewardesses and 39 air pursers and in-flight managers) answered questionnaires. The study showed that English was highly significant to both groups, listening and speaking were needed most, and indicated that air stewards and air stewardesses needed to develop their listening and speaking skills most, and air pursers and in-flight managers needed to improve all four skills at a moderate to high level.

Chaiya (1998) studied the correlation between the awareness of social communication factors and the ability of spoken English communication among Thai hotel front office staff. From 20 selected hotels in Bangkok, 170 hotel front office staff were chosen by simple random sampling. The purpose in this research was to examine whether the awareness of social communication factors can affect the ability of communication, to examine whether the awareness of social communication factors lead to the ability of appropriate communication, and to examine what social communication factor is urgently needed to improve the ability of Thai hotel workers' English communication.

Chimroylarp (1998) observed the needs of English language of the Buddhist Missionary Monks for daily use for living abroad and performing religious tasks. The 77 Buddhist missionary monks working in the Thai temples under the supervision of the Council of the Thai Bhikkhus in USA were selected to answer questionnaires. The majority of the Buddhist missionary monks who graduated from universities and finished first grade of Dhamma Studies perceived themselves as moderate to low in using English. Listening and speaking skills were needed most. The most crucial situation of English language use was to express themselves at immigration and custom service of countries.

Promrat (1998) did a research of English vocabulary competency and problems of the tourist police in the lower central region of Thailand. The 39 tourist police of the Tourist Police Division 3 Section 4 whose responsibility covered the 8 areas were chosen to be subjects in this research by vocabulary test from 14 vocabulary categories and open ended questionnaires. The findings revealed that the tourist police of the Tourist Police Division 3 Section 4 had the greatest vocabulary competency at vocabulary category. Listening and speaking were the biggest problems when they communicate with foreign tourists; also, they needed to exercise their conversation skills as in real situations they faced.

Suwaropom (1998) analyzed the basis for determining needs and problems of English language usage for nurses. The 291 nurses at King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital were given questionnaires. The findings showed that all nursing staff needed English language courses to improve their abilities. They expressed strong reading skills, especially for texts, journals, and documents related to medical and nursing care planning. They also noticed a serious problem in speaking aptitude. The needs to read texts, journals, and any documents related to medical and nursing areas in order to help planning nursing care, in writing laboratory investigation reports in individual nursing care plans, and writing reports about patients' physical examinations in general, were seen as common needs. Nurses wanted English courses to be able to use English to perform their duties concerning the nursing occupation.

Saejing (1999) focused on the spoken English of salespeople in the airlines industry. The subjects for this study were 10 male and 10 female Thai salespeople based in Bangkok who worked for different international airlines. An interview guide procedure was used to collect data using 15 open-ended questions. Half of the subjects perceived their English speaking ability as meeting their job needs, while the others reported a fair command of spoken English. In competition for market shares, sales staff needed to be able to use persuasive language in negotiating the sale of airline tickets, intangible products which are becoming more and more complex.

It was recommended that airlines offer specific English language training on an ongoing basis so as to give all their staff language skills commensurate with the needs of the job. To sustain career progression to managerial levels, training also needs to be given in English writing skills.

Namamuti (1999) focused on the problems of English usage in communication between hotel front desk staff and their ASEAN guests and also aimed to identify the English language training needs of the hotel's front desk staff. There were 281 subjects sampled from 2 groups: 162 hotel front desk staff and 119 ASEAN guests. Two questionnaires were used to collect the data: one in Thai addressed to the front desk staff and the other in English for the ASEAN guests. The researcher found that both the hotel front desk staff themselves and the ASEAN guests strongly agreed that English language training in all four skills should be given to the hotel front desk staff.

Sidakul (1999) investigated the need for English of the executive officials of the Government Savings Bank (GSB) with regard to English. The purposes were as follows: (1) To study the needs and objectives for English of GSB executives; (2) To study the capability in English usage of GSB executives; (3) To suggest an appropriate way to develop GSB executive officials' ability to communicate in English; and (4) To suggest an appropriate English Communication Course for GSB executive officials. Questionnaires were designed as an instrument for collecting the data for this research and were given to the available subjects, namely fifty GSB executive officials, at the head office. The result was that reading skill was used the most by GSB executive officials at work, but the skill that they needed to improve the most was speaking and an old English language communication course could be adapted to meet the needs of such banking executives so that they gain the most benefit from it.

Chantiwimon (1999) researched people's needs and attitudes in various professions about the significance of English in their occupations and daily lives. The five groups (83 doctors, 127 engineers, 131 lecturers, 104 bank officers, and 129 hotel staff, totaling 574 participants) in this research were selected by using questionnaires concentrating on English usage in their professions and daily lives, and about the attitudes of English language use. In all of these occupations as well as their daily lives, it was shown that reading was the skill most used followed by listening, translation, writing, and speaking, respectively. Overall reading was the skill used most for their occupation, and then listening, writing, and translation, while speaking was used the least. It was noticed that English was a significant tool within government departments, state enterprises, and educational institutes. People needed to use English reading skills in their real situations. Moreover, in professional and social lives they also wanted to take English language courses to develop their language skills.

Tothabthim (1999) investigated the perceived ability of bank staff in speaking English with foreigners, and the motivation they have for learning English. The research also sought to identify the factors that affect motivation for learning to speak English and how bank staff improve their English speaking ability. The subjects for this study were one hundred and six staff of Bangkok Bank Public Co., Ltd. The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire consisting of demographic, closed, and open-ended questions.

The results showed that although the majority of bank staff have rather low English speaking ability, they obviously have high motivation to learn to improve their spoken English. They need to be able to communicate with foreigners confidently and higher chances for promotion or getting a better job are the factors that raise their motivation.

Kosalwat (1999) focused on the communication problems arising between people with different mother tongues and coming from different cultural backgrounds. The purposes were to explore the major obstacles that could affect successful cross-cultural communication between public relations personnel who were the airport staff, and foreign passengers at Bangkok International Airport, to find ways to minimize such problems, and to make suggestions for future training and evaluation of airport staff. Twenty questionnaires were distributed to ten public relations personnel and ten foreign passengers. Analysis of the data revealed that language competence, especially in English, cultural differences, educational background, and attitudes and values were crucial barriers to the successful communication between these groups of people.

Suranutkarin (1999) assessed the use of English skills in medical study and practice among residents, examined the levels of residents' competency in applying English skills to medical study and practice, and identified the means residents used to gain English skills in both educational and everyday life contexts.

The subjects consisted of 287 residents of Ramathibodi Hospital, Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. 260 questionnaires were returned. Reading was the most highly used skill and activity, while writing, listening and speaking were used moderately. Reading, again, was considered at high competence followed by writing, listening and speaking at moderate competence. The appropriate strategies to acquire English knowledge and skills were self-practice with English during medical study and work, and exposure to English in everyday life activities which used English as a medium.

Inpin (2000) examined the Phitsanulok hotel staff's level of proficiency in communicating with their guests in English and surveyed the English language skill they needed the most in their career and work life. The subjects included 82 hotel staff for the questionnaires and 21 for the interview questionnaires. They have the positions of managers, receptionists, cashiers, operators, and waiters. On the basis of this study, it is highly recommended that an English language training program should be designed for all of the hotel staff in order to ensure quality in the performance of their duties.

Komkrichwarakul (2000) examined communication system of Thailand which some of the underlying assumptions and practices of the discipline of business communication in a particular Thai context, and analyzed the actual language used by Thai people in a business context over a long period of time how Thais understand their own communication behavior and structures. The researcher conducted a survey using structured interviews, an electronic mail questionnaire and a mailed questionnaire. As this thesis was a ground clearing for a Thai theory of communication, there was no concrete conclusion reached. This thesis was a beginning of constructing a reflective Thai communication theory.

Khangkhun (2000) surveyed the need for English in the Telephone Organization of Thailand regarding (1) the category of officials who need English to communicate at work, (2) the level of English needed in the organization, (3) the necessity for, and objectives of English skills for listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating, (4) the competency of the officials in using English and the levels of competency needed at the workplace. The subjects consisted of 298 officials. The data were collected by questionnaires. Listening and speaking were the most needed skills. The problems involved in using the five skills were moderate for all groups. Engineers need to improve their listening and speaking skills the most; while operation groups needed to improve all five skills from moderate to a high level.

It is suggested that the English curriculum and the teaching methods should be improved to be practical. Learners with the right attitude towards English language learning might well be essential.

Kholthanasri (2001) did a study of customer expectations and perceptions of service quality delivery by first class hotels in the Bangkok metropolitan area. This study focused on five dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, and considered demographic characteristic factors, which consisted of income levels, occupation, education levels, age categories, and purpose of visit that may influence expected and perceived service quality of hotel customers. Three hundred and fifty hotel customers were collected by convenience sampling method from five first class hotels in Bangkok. The results showed that there was a significant difference between customer expectation and perception of service quality. Moreover, respondents having different income levels, occupation and educational levels differed in their perceptions of service quality of first class hotels in Bangkok.

Petchkij (2001) focused on the English speaking and listening problems of ward nurses while providing care as part of the nursing process to foreign patients and also on identifying the ways used to solve the problem in actual conversation. The instrument of this study was a questionnaire. A total of 321 questionnaires were distributed to ward nurses in 12 private hospitals in Bangkok and 235 of the questionnaires were returned.

Most of the nurses agreed that English was very important in providing care to foreign patients and nurses needed to have abilities in both speaking and listening skills in order to increase the effectiveness of their work, self confidence and respectability, and to help patients in emergency situations.

Wipoosattaya (2001) investigated tourists' perceptions of hotel frontline employees' questionable job-related behavior. It achieved five objectives: (1) to assess tourists' perceptions of hotel frontline employees' questionable job-related behaviors in Thailand; (2) to find out factors that govern the tourists' perceptions of these questionable job-related behaviors; (3) to investigate any correlation between the identified factors with the attitudinal statements about general ethics concerning people and customer satisfaction; (4) to examine tourists' characteristics as possible explanatory variables; and (5) to suggest work rules that hoteliers might implement as to staff behavior which will enhance tourist satisfaction.

There were two independent variables to be tested with a dependent variable, which is the tourists' perception of hotel employees' questionable behavior. The survey method which was self-administered was applied. A convenient sampling method was used to collect primary data from 300 tourists who had actual experience of hotel accommodation in Bangkok, at the departure hall of the Bangkok International Airport.

Kunakakumjorn (2003) did a study of impact of role ambiguity and role conflict on the decision of male and female non-managerial hotel employees to quit their jobs in Bangkok. The researcher surveyed factors affecting performance, satisfaction and the intents to quit one's job of non-managerial frontline service providing employees and also comparative affect of role conflict and role ambiguity on male and female employees leading to quitting intents. The questionnaires were used to collect the primary data from 385 employees in three-star, four-star and five-star hotels in the Bangkok area. The statistical analysis showed that there were relationships between role conflict and job performance, work/nonwork conflict, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and

quitting. For the role ambiguity the results showed that there was a relationship between role ambiguity and job performance, work/nonwork conflict, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and the intent to quit. It also showed that there was no significant difference between role conflict and role ambiguity when determined by gender.

Laothienchai (2004) explored the characteristics of English employed by Thai street vendors in Patpong area, to identify what their communicative strategies are and which strategies they frequently use. Thirty-one Thai street vendors who sold goods at Patpong were the population of this study. They were selected by accidental or convenience means because of the need to depend on their willingness to participate. The data were obtained by questionnaires together with the qualitative data obtained by tape recording of conversations between Thai vendors and foreign customers.

The study revealed that the English of the most Thai street vendors use had many characteristics different from those of normal English employed by average native speakers and the verbal or nonverbal strategies were employed by Thai vendors when communicating with foreign customers.

Subovornsilpha (2004) concentrated on examining the internal factors that affect employees' job performance, in order to help client company to find the way to improve employees' performance hence to achieve organization improvement. The purpose of this research was to study the factors that affect employees' job performance in the Landmark Bangkok Hotel. The results of the research computed from the data of 150 completed questionnaires. The findings presented that the employees' job performance was not only the consequence of people's attitudes, but also the product of organization structure and system.

Narawichet (2004) assessed guests' perceptions of selected attributes, and their overall satisfaction with service attributes of Jomtien Thani hotel in Pattaya. The researcher investigated the difference in selected service attributes, overall statement that best describes the hotel and repeat visitation when classified by age, gender, nationality, occupation, monthly income, length of stay and purpose of trip. The respondents of the study were 400 international and domestic guests who had stayed at least overnight in the hotel.

Hlaing (2004) did a comparative analysis of dialogues in spoken and written texts: a small investigation conducted at Assumption University. The researcher attempted to describe three aspects of spoken discourse which were turn-taking, discourse markers, and Grice's cooperative maxims. The thesis was designed as an investigation of the similarities and differences in spoken discourse that took place in face-to-face informal conversations, Internet public chat room conversations, and dialogues in written texts (plays) with respect to those three aspects of spoken discourse. The data consisted of tape recordings of dialogues among people talking in an informal way, extracts of conversations from Internet public chat rooms, and extracts of dialogues from modern plays.

Jearpaitoon (2004) implemented to improve the existing hotel reservation system for the Twin Towers hotel. In the present day, the hotel would catch up with the new information technology by setting up the hotel website in order to make reservations and confirmations by credit card number guaranteed. It was easy to use because the customers have no need to go anywhere; the website could reduce the cost of paper and solve the problem of the manual system. The website could serve more customers 24 hours every day. Thus, this report provided a better solution to the problem by efficiently applying some more practical computerized techniques.

Ngo (2004) studied the relationship of service recovery efforts (complete, partial, unresolved resolution) with hotel patronage at non-budget (three-star) hotels in Bangkok. The research examined how these resolution levels affected repeat patronage and provided practical information that could lead to a better understanding of service recovery efforts and be used to guide the formation of improved service strategies provided by non-budget (three-star) hotels. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect information on two hundred hotel customers. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that managers should also find the results informative in developing complete resolution for service recovery efforts and use it as a guideline for non-budget hotel service operation, and provided guidance to managers about how organization could effectively recover from the negative emotions caused by service failures.

Hu (2005) used a convenience sampling of structured questionnaires from 384 employees who are working in Chinese hotels currently in the Shanghai region in order to identify their perceptions of *guanxi* that affect their career advancement development. The Chinese hotel industry is facing many challenges in various aspects including human resources, marketing, and operations. It has been recognized that doing business in China particularly relies on employees and the relative importance of interpersonal connections. The study suggested that hotel management should establish fair managerial practices to build a long term relationship with employees. Hotel management needs to train the managers and supervisors to behave ethically in order to benefit the hotel's operation in the long run.

For previous communication and industry studies, it has been shown that regardless of a speaker's job title or occupation, listening and speaking are the two most important of the four skills in communication. Encounters with foreign backpackers, package tourists or professional business people relied mainly on speaking and listening to have a beneficial exchange of information. Taxi drivers, hotel staff, restaurant staff, flight attendants, airport staff all communicate with various people from around the world using English. Employees and business owners who use a common language like English are better qualified to advance in their professions or job related industries.

It seems English has become "The" world language, and those who have problems with speaking and listening skills tend to frustrate customers or delay transactions. The saying goes "Time is money" and slow response times by speakers, either finding another person to translate for them or asking the customer to repeat what they said several times, takes additional time and possibly lowers potential income levels and the reputation of a business. As a result, those who have advanced English communication skills are sought after by businesses or promoted from within. This study is undertaken to evaluate English proficiency and identify specific needs of English speakers to reduce interaction and transaction times among hotel front desk staff in Chiang Mai. The gathered information should provide some clues as to where and what communication skills can be improved in each speaker or a particular hotel's staff to allow smoother and more confident communication.