

A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR ESP PROGRAMS
AT INTERNATIONAL HOTELS IN THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

By

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Bachelor of Arts in Arts and Sciences

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

1983

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
December, 1986

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to those who have been instrumental in helping me complete this work. First, I would like to thank my adviser, Dr. Ravi Sheorey for his inspiring enthusiasm, plentiful resources, and helpful guidance. I would also like to thank Dr. Carol Moder, whose insight into the Chinese culture and whose experience of teaching in China, provided much helpful assistance. I also wish to thank Dr. Bruce Southard for his assistance through the completion of this work.

I want to give special thanks to Mr. Zhou, Deputy Training Manager, for allowing me to conduct this research at his hotel, and to Miss Huang Wei, my translator and good friend, for her enthusiasm and constant assistance in organizing the interviews with the staff and translating for every single one! I will always have fond memories of our time together. I want to especially thank the hotel staff who took part in this research for their cooperation and helpful suggestions.

I wish to thank Mrs. Irene Larson, whose patience I about drained, for typing my thesis and enduring the many changes I made.

I thank my family for their constant encouragement--and pushing--to complete this work! I especially thank my parents, who have fostered in me a love for China and supported me through this research. I also thank Drs. Rolland and Nora Lewis, ESL instructors in southern China, for initiating the idea of this research.

Finally, I give to my husband, Tokunosuke, my deepest appreciation and gratitude for his constant support and encouragement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From February, 1985, to July, 1985, the China Daily reported a 55% increase in the number of tourists and business persons entering China. Over 50% of these persons were English speakers ("Door Opens," 1985). That same summer, I was invited to teach English at a major international hotel in southern China (due to competition among the major hotels in the city, the name of the hotel must be kept confidential). The 900-room hotel, maintaining 90 to 100% occupancy, had been in operation for two years, and approximately 60% of its guests were English speaking Westerners, ranging from tourists to businessmen, to foreign diplomats. The staff, however, had not had any formal English instruction by a native English speaker. With new competition arising in the city from several new hotels under completion and with the increase in English-speaking guests, the hotel training manager selected 25 key staff from all the major departments to participate in an English class. These members of the staff would then go on to attend a special English program being prepared for them by several Chinese at a nearby teacher's college. My task was to prepare the group to master a basic level of English in order to attend the program at the teacher's college. I was given the textbook English for Today, Book II: The World We Live In, and we completed the text in two months.

During the course of teaching, I conducted research for developing

a needs assessment for an English program designed specifically for hotel staff in China. This research is the first needs assessment ever established for this hotel. The purpose of the assessment was to establish a list of needs which would be used in determining the objectives and content of an English program for the staff of international hotels in China. While there are English textbooks specifically intended for the staff of international hotels in general, the staff in China have certain specific needs related to their culture and background experience that require special attention. Furthermore, these needs may not necessarily be realized by the Chinese who are developing or have developed English programs for hotel staff. Because they are within their own culture, they will not fully recognize the cultural aspects of the language necessary for hotel staff to learn and use within the hospitality industry.

In conducting this research, I relied upon different sources of information for developing the needs assessment: interviews with the hotel staff and training managers, on-the-job observation of how English is used and for what purposes it is needed, observation at a nearby hotel of an English program designed by a native speaker who was also a staff trainer, research on the cultural and historical background of the Chinese from 1966 to the present, and job descriptions of the staff in each major department who have direct contact with hotel guests. This thesis presents a description of the population in the study, a description of the methods used for this investigation, and an analysis and interpretation of the data used for assessing the needs.

Statement of the Problem

I lived at the hotel for the two months I taught there. During that time, I had many opportunities to observe the staff on their jobs as well as to investigate their previous English training. I also was able to observe the reactions and attitudes of the hotel guests toward the staff. Several staff-guest confrontations stand out in my mind as typical examples of problems the staff faced in communicating with the hotel guests. For example, in the restaurants guests often asked for special orders or changes of items on the menu, or often wanted to change a previous order. Staff who were not proficient in English, rather than admit their lack of understanding, simply nodded yes and then brought out whatever the menu called for, or brought more than the diner had ordered. The customers were usually very irritated or frustrated at the staff for not being honest in simply stating that they could not understand.

Another confrontation I often observed occurred when guests had complaints or requests for the housekeeping staff. Many of the room cleaners could not speak English; oftentimes, they left to find a supervisor who could translate, but failed to explain to the guest where they were going or that they would be back soon. Moreover, if it took a while before an English-speaking staff member was available, the guest was left wondering what happened, unattended and quite angry.

In the shopping arcade, customers many times had questions about items in the shop, but the attendants did not know enough English to fully answer their questions. Moreover, they did not seem to understand how to attend to the guests in order to help sell more items.

One of the more frustrating situations hotel guests experienced was when paying their bills at the front desk. Many of the staff were not completely familiar with using computers, and totaling up the bills and preparing a statement often took a long time. Many times, too, guests had questions or complaints about some of the charges. Many hotel accountants were not proficient enough in English to handle the complaints or to explain why it took so long to prepare the bill. On other occasions, they simply misunderstood the guests' requests. For example, one time a business man living at the hotel spent three hours at the front desk trying to get a copy of his statement for his room. The accountant kept trying to give him bills that belonged to the man's company, not to his particular room.

In the hotel clinic, a more serious problem occurred. Even though the clinic handled only minor problems, the guests were still dependent upon it for emergencies. None of the doctors and nurses, however, spoke English. Any English-speaking guest who came had to wait until a translator could assist him.

In all of the situations given above, while the staff tried their best to accomplish their jobs, their lack of English proficiency created many frustrations for their guests. Furthermore, they did not know the importance of perceiving their guests' needs in order to offer helpful information, even when it was not asked for. A typical characteristic of the staff was to give only information which was specifically asked of them. For the most part, while the staff might have known some English, they did not know enough to function appropriately as hospitality staff workers. This led to the second problem I observed.

Besides lacking linguistic skills, the staff also experienced

problems in using the language appropriately or in knowing the proper etiquette in using the language. Extralinguistic factors such as eye contact, posture, listening strategies, and proxemics often created communication barriers which affected the attitudes of the guests toward the staff. For example, sometimes the staff were too shy to look at a guest when speaking with him or greeting him, often appearing to be disinterested or unconcerned. Also, when speaking to a guest, sometimes a staff person would stand too close. Furthermore, some of the staff were unfamiliar with the importance of using certain polite phrases such as "Excuse me," "Please wait a moment," and so on. Those who knew some of these, however, would sometimes confuse the usage. For example, in one of the more exquisite French restaurants, a waiter offered bread to a diner. When he said, "No," the waiter replied, "Thank you." Other problems occurred when staff members made requests of the guests. The staff often knew only the basic command forms rather than the polite forms with "would" or "could". Thus, they appeared as superiors to their guests, rather than as subordinates willing to serve their guests.

Another cultural problem the staff faced was due to their concept of privacy. What the Chinese consider private and public behavior is quite different from the Western concept. While they display their best, polite behavior in the company of people they know, when in public with total strangers, they see no reason to keep formalities. For example, to stand by and stare at a group of foreigners, to pick pimples in front of a hall mirror, to spit on a public floor, or to leave trash lying on the public floors does not violate their concept of "proper" behavior. Furthermore, because the hotel rooms are public, the staff see nothing wrong with interrupting a guest's "privacy" by failing to

ask permission before entering to clean his room. Murray (1983) explains that in less personal settings, the Chinese often appear (to Westerners) to be very indifferent. This indifference was also noted in their attitudes toward work.

Many of the staff members had not chosen their particular jobs, nor did they see much hope for advancement. Moreover, their job was guaranteed for life. If they felt no loyalty toward the hotel, they seemed to view their job as something impersonal and "public." Thus, any work that was outside their list of duties was not their concern. As a result, guests frequently complained about the lack of service, or the slow, inefficient service. As Murray (1983) points out, hospitality, to the Chinese it seems, is only a practice they show toward "friends," not toward total strangers.

I mention these examples in order to explain why a needs assessment is necessary, in particular for Chinese hotel staff in China. While the staff need to learn English, they need to learn it to perform specific functions related to their work. Moreover, they need to learn the appropriate usage and extralinguistic factors which are vital to successful communication in the hospitality industry. While the goal is not to change the culture of the Chinese staff, it must be to equip them with sufficient English language and communication skills to meet the standards of a five star hotel.

Justification for the Needs Assessment

I examined the Hotel English book which was distributed to all the staff prior to their employment at the hotel. Some staff members had even attended classes in which the book was used. The book was

developed by a group of Chinese from a government hotel in the city. (A few samples of the text are presented in Appendix A). Hotel English is hardly a language text; it consists merely of lists of words and short dialogues pertaining to different jobs and situations in the hotel. The language in the dialogues is at best abrupt and impolite, implying an air of superiority of the staff over their foreign guests. Moreover, the language is limited, and no explanations are provided as to appropriate usage and important cultural factors associated with the language. Without the benefit of a needs assessment, Chinese EFL teachers would not have enough background to teach these aspects of the language, let alone recognize them as significant.

In the summer of 1985, the textbook I was given to teach from, English for Today, had absolutely no relation to English for the hospitality industry. Instead of focusing on listening and speaking skills, and on communication with Western hotel guests, the book emphasized reading, and the topics covered everything from the fiords of Norway to tales about the Rhine River in Germany. The language was not for conversational purposes, nor did it help to develop language skills which the staff could use on their jobs. The training manager and the Chinese preparing the English program at the teacher's college felt that the staff, by studying English in general, and then attending a program outside the hotel, would be prepared to use English on their jobs. However, because a needs assessment had not been established, they could not foresee a more effective and efficient means of training the staff.

While a basic English course may improve the English level of the staff, and while lists of vocabulary words related to their job are helpful, these most likely will not prepare the staff sufficiently for

the communication skills needed for hotel work. Hutchinson and Waters (1984) advocate that an ESP course should include not only the language requirements for the learners, but also the communication requirements of their target situation. Thus, the goal of the English course should be to equip the learners with the language skills necessary for effectively carrying out their task. In the hospitality industry, that task primarily involves communication skills that promote a courteous, friendly, and professional service to both guests and customers of the hotel. Each of the different departments in the hotel, however, require different skills for their staff. To determine the specific objectives, topics, and skills that the staff need to learn, a needs assessment must be conducted.

There are several ways of assessing the needs for an ESP program. For example, the instructor can interview the learners, observe the target situation, examine the job descriptions, or interview the vocational trainers (or administrators) to assess the needs of the learners. These are described in more detail in Chapter III. This research relied upon several different sources of information for the assessment, but the primary ones were job-site observations, interviews with the hotel staff and managers, and interviews with the vocational trainers for hotel staff. Based upon these observations, then, conclusions were drawn about the general needs of the staff, as well as recommendations for a curriculum in the hotel English program.

CHAPTER II

TARGET POPULATION

Selected Hotel

I conducted the needs assessment for an ESP course for hotel staff of international hotels in China at a major joint-venture hotel in southern China. The hotel is located in a city famous for its trade and tourism. The city lies along one of the many famous rivers of China, making it a major center for business and trade. Since the initiation of China's open door policy in 1978, this busy city of three million people has become known in the West as one of the "South doors" to China.

A joint venture with a branch in Hong Kong, the 900-room hotel accommodates only foreign guests (like all other international, joint venture hotels in China). The hotel is guaranteed a minimum 90% occupancy. Approximately 60% of the guests are English-speakers, and most of the other guests also speak English. The hotel has become a major stopping place for thousands of tourists, business persons, and foreign diplomats, and it has become a home for many long-term business persons, and serves as office space for several companies. Like all other international hotels in China, it is a major social center for the foreign community of the city.

The hotel contains five large Western restaurants (including a bar,

disco, and night club), three large Chinese restaurants, a Japanese restaurant, a large banquet hall, and several function rooms of different sizes. The hotel's recreational center includes an outdoor pool, a health spa and massage parlor, a golf driving range, and several tennis and volleyball courts. The shopping arcade contains sixteen shops, a bakery, a clinic, and a laundry service center.

Subjects

Approximately 10% of the hotel staff were selected for the present investigation, and participation was limited to those staff members who had regular contact with hotel guests. The Chinese training manager was responsible for selecting the departments, and the departmental managers were then responsible for selecting staff, as I was not allowed to know any details concerning statistics or management policies of the hotel.

Within each department, there are four levels of job positions: managers (including assistant managers), supervisors, captains, and staff. They are listed in order of rank, and their duties are described later in this chapter. The department managers selected approximately 10% of their staff from each level for this study. The following departments were involved in the investigation:

Front Desk	Food and Beverage (Chinese and
Housekeeping	Western Restaurants)
Shopping Arcade	Security
Sales and Marketing	Clinic
Laundry	Public Relations
	Recreation

The kitchen staff, gardeners, janitors, and maintenance staff were not included. Also not included were the drivers and tour guides, bank and post office personnel, and staff in the Japanese restaurant, because

they were not considered part of the hotel.

The following departments did not have all four levels of positions within them: clinic, sales and marketing, and public relations. These smaller departments consisted of only a manager, assistant manager, and officers (or doctors), and thus only two levels participated in the study. In addition, four departments did not supply the subjects from all four levels: the Chinese and Western restaurant managers were not available at all, and the captains from the front desk, laundry, and recreation departments participated only in the second part of the investigation by filling out a chart in which they tabulated their use of English on the job. The beauty salon and health spa were closed for renovation, and thus these staff could participate only in the first part of the investigation, an interview.

Description of Jobs

Front Desk

The front desk department includes both the desk staff and the door staff. The managers and supervisors oversee the office work and the quality of the service behind the front desks. The assistant managers work a twenty-four-hour shift, and part of their work is as translators in the hotel. Thus, any time a staff member has difficulty communicating with a guest, he may call the assistant manager for help. The desk staff handle everything from giving information to writing messages, to making reservations, and handling bills. The door staff includes only the greeters and bell captains.

Housekeeping

The housekeeping staff consists of room cleaners, floor receptionists, and janitors. A floor receptionist stands by the elevators on each floor to greet guests and keep an account of who is on the floor at all times. They maintain security as well as handle any problems and complaints from guests on the floor. Both captains and supervisors are called upon to handle problems or complaints. Because the janitors rarely have any contact with guests, they did not participate in this study.

Shopping Arcade

The shopping arcade has a variety of Chinese and Western shops, sixteen in total. The manager and supervisors are responsible for stocking the shops and keeping them inventoried, and the captains are responsible for overseeing the work of the shop attendants, as well as assisting them in the shops.

Sales and Marketing

The assistant manager and officers work closely together both in recruiting clients (companies and long-term guests) and overseeing the marketing for the hotel. The sales and marketing officers are responsible for making business agreements with Chinese and Western companies.

Laundry

The laundry department offers laundry and dry cleaning services. The only staff selected for this study were the manager, supervisors,

and persons assigned to collect and return the laundry to guests. The supervisors are primarily expected to handle any complaints from guests.

Food and Beverage--Western Restaurants

The hotel has five large Western restaurants: a coffee shop, a buffet room, a lobby bar and lounge, a disco (which serves a luncheon buffet), and an elegant French grill room. The managers of these restaurants, all English speakers, are from Hong Kong and were not included in this study. The staff consists of supervisors, captains, hostesses, waiters, and waitresses. If ever a problem occurs in communicating with a guest or handling a complaint, the staff call on a supervisor or captain to handle the matter. The captains, however, are also in charge of reading the guest comment cards and reporting any important suggestions to the supervisor.

Food and Beverage--Chinese Restaurants

There are two main Chinese restaurants and a large Chinese banquet hall. The managers for these restaurants do not speak any English, and did not participate in this study. The other staff are the same as for the Western restaurants, and their job descriptions are the same.

Security

Security officers work at hotel entrances, in public areas, and on the presidential floor. They maintain security, enforce rules of the hotel, and serve when foreign diplomats and heads of state visit.

Clinic

The hotel clinic consists of a manager, who is also a doctor, and a staff of two nurses and two doctors. They offer health care for hotel staff and guests, but handle only minor illnesses and wounds. They use both Western medicine (in which the instructions are often in English only) and Chinese medicine.

Public Relations

The public relations department is responsible for promoting the hotel and for entertaining VIPs who visit. The department consists of a manager and several staff members who promote the image of the hotel, and review and select any publicity that circulates about the hotel.

Recreation

In this department, the managers are in charge of the operation of all areas and the supervisors are assigned to specific areas. There are no captains, as each section is quite small. The staff are trained personnel for their area--beauticians, barbers, pool attendants and cleaners, tennis instructor, and the like.

Limitations of the Study

This investigation is limited in several ways. First, the purpose of the study is limited to developing a needs assessment for an English program for hotel staff of international hotels in China that cater primarily to Western guests, as opposed to those that cater primarily to overseas Chinese or Japanese guests. The primary focus of the study is

the needs assessment, although suggestions for a curriculum based on the assessment are provided in Chapter V.

Second, the investigation is limited to a population of 10% of the hotel staff of one international hotel in southern China. Moreover, the selected staff were from only the departments which have contact with the hotel guests (employees from the kitchen, gardens, and laundry room were excluded, as well as maintenance staff and janitors). Ten percent of the staff from each level within eleven departments participated in the study. The study was conducted during an off-season for tourists-- June through August--but this was not a limitation, as the hotel is guaranteed 90% occupancy any time of the year.

Third, there were several limitations on the manner in which the data were gathered. First, I had to depend on the managers of each department to provide the correct number of subjects from among their staff as I was not permitted to obtain information about the "inside details" of the hotel. Because I was a guest in a Communist country, I did not have the freedom to conduct my own investigation as I might have had otherwise. Furthermore, because of the stiff competition from other major hotels in the area, the training manager was quite cautious to limit the amount of information I gathered. Thus, I was not permitted to know or ask about any details concerning the number of staff and percentages of staff in the different positions, the selection processes for new employees, or the management's training of staff. I was also not allowed to talk freely with the staff without the translator being there. (Although they never told me not to, it was understood by both the staff and me.)

In conducting the investigation, time was another big limitation.

Because the subjects were on duty at the hotel, I could meet with them only in groups during their breaks. I was able to interview them individually, but I had to depend upon their honesty in front of the rest of their group as they answered questions, as well as on the accuracy of my translator. Because of the limited time, I was unable to test the subjects to determine their present level of English. Instead, I gave them charts to fill out over a three-week period, trusting them to tabulate their use of English on the job for two days each week. I depended on their reliability in filling this out, but again, this was a limitation. I conducted all interviews through a translator. This too became a limitation in that they were giving their answers to one of their peers, rather than directly to me. Only about one-fourth of the staff could competently communicate with me; thus, a translator was essential.

Lastly, the needs assessment is for the purpose of establishing an English program that incorporates both language and cultural skills essential for the new and growing hospitality industry in China. However, because the staff are living within their own culture, they are most likely not to notice their own behavior and how it affects their communication with foreigners (Heaton, 1978). Culture plays such an important role in communication, especially within the hospitality industry. Thus, I was limited again to my own observations, the observations of other guests, and an interview with the training manager (an American) hired by the Hong Kong owner of the joint venture to assess those needs involving cultural skills. The data gathered from the interviews with the staff contributed only partially to the assessment.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

According to current literature on needs assessments for ESP courses, the goal of the assessment should be to determine the needs of the learners. Most often, ESP coursebooks focus on the language and vocabulary of the specific area, rather than on the functions and uses of the language. This is especially true for ESP coursebooks compiled in China, where ESP means either learning a collection of specialized vocabulary, or learning characteristic ways of organizing thought and language for a given purpose (Malay, 1983). An example is the sample from Hotel English in Appendix A. An ESP course, however, should center on the various functions, uses, and situations for which the learners will be required to use the language (Hutchinson and Waters, 1984). The needs assessment, then, should provide the necessary information for developing an ESP curriculum that adapts the language to the learner's particular situations and needs (Van Ek and Alexander, 1975; Shutz and Derwing, 1981; Brumfit and Finocchiaro, 1983; and West, 1984).

There are many different approaches to developing a needs assessment. One approach is to investigate the learners' perceptions of what they need to learn (Shutz and Derwing, 1981). The data-gathering instruments used in such an approach are the questionnaire and the interview. Another approach is to investigate the specific situations that the learner will be expected to function in: the social roles,

psychological roles, settings, and topics (Van Ek and Alexander, 1975; Brumfit and Finocchiaro, 1983). A method for investigating these areas is for the instructor (or researcher) to foresee and analyze these situations by answering a set of questions he provides. A third approach--one this investigation is mainly based on--is an approach advocated by West (1984) in which the ESP instructor investigates the target situation through several different means: job site observation, job descriptions, investigation of the vocation's educational material, interviews with the managers or employers, as well as with the learners, and interviews with other vocational instructors (of the same vocation). This approach for gathering data to assess the needs of the learners is more comprehensive and objective than previous approaches. If only the students' perceived needs are investigated and considered, the program will be lacking, as oftentimes an ESL learner cannot fully recognize all of his needs. This is especially true for learners in ESP programs outside the target language environment, and even more so for learners at lower levels, for they lack understanding of both the linguistic and extralinguistic factors of the language necessary for effective communication in their particular work place. On the other hand, if the instructor, upon answering a set of questions, analyzes the learners' situations and needs based upon his own perceptions, he will most likely develop a curriculum that is lacking in the students' perceived needs and the required needs of the job, thus creating a teacher-centered ESP course rather than a learner-centered one.

For the present investigation, because the target situation was outside the English language environment, I relied upon several different sources of information for developing the needs assessment:

1. job-site observation
2. job descriptions
3. interviews with the hotel staff
4. interview with the hotel managers and supervisors (all of whom were Chinese).
5. interview with the vocational trainer (only one American).
6. interview with and observation of the English instructor to hotel staff at a similar hotel.
7. research concerning the history, culture, and educational background of the Chinese people from 1966 to 1985.

Because language and culture are very closely related in the hospitality industry, the Chinese staff, not acquainted with Western culture, were not able to fully recognize how their own culture or behavior affected the communication with their Western guests. According to Heaton (1978), one isolated in his own cultural environment will not recognize how his body language, gestures, tone of voice, proxemics, and even his responses within specific situations, affect communication with a foreigner. For this reason, I also conducted interviews with the American training manager, a Western English instructor at a similar hotel, and I conducted my own observations of the target situations on site.

Data-Gathering Instruments

After living in the hotel for three weeks and observing the different departmental jobs, I developed two questionnaires, administered to the staff as personal interviews, and a chart in which each interviewee recorded his actual use of English on the job. The purpose of

the two questionnaires was threefold: (1) to gather data concerning the job descriptions, the age of the staff, and the previous English training of each subject; (2) to gather data concerning the perceived needs of the subjects for using English on the job; and (3) to gather data concerning the perceived needs of the managers and supervisors for Western culture and English language training for their staff. The purpose of the chart was to gather data concerning the actual use of English on the job.

Questionnaire A

Questionnaire A (Appendix B) was administered to all subjects in the investigation. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information concerning the job titles and descriptions (specific duties) of the subjects, their ages, the number of years they have worked at the hotel, their previous training in English, and their perceived needs for English on the job. The list of different institutions and of different uses of English in the workplace was strictly for administrative purposes. These lists were not shown to the subjects in the interviews, as I filled out all the questionnaires.

Rationale: The first part of the questionnaire was designed to gather data concerning the background of the subjects, as well as a list of job descriptions. After knowing where and how long they had studied English, I could determine the type of training they received as well as their motivation for learning English. Their ages helped to determine the political and educational policies they experienced in the past. By understanding their background, I could determine the type of English

training they would need for developing communication skills effective in the hospitality industry. The past educational and political policies greatly affected their contact with Westerners and their English training programs, as well as their knowledge of Western culture. In addition, their job descriptions helped determine the type of contact they have with hotel guests (as well as how much contact); thus, a needs assessment could be developed which would meet the needs of each department and job.

The second part of the questionnaire was intended to gather information concerning the perceived needs of the staff for English. They listed the functions they used English for on the job as well as the percentage of hotel guests they spoke English with. The perceived needs of each subject are compared with the other subjects in their department as well as with their actual use of English as tabulated on the charts. They are then analyzed and compiled into a list of needs. The list of needs, in turn, helped me determine how to organize the ESP classes--both in content and structure--when combined with the other data gathered through other instruments.

Questionnaire B

Questionnaire B (Appendix C) was administered as an additional questionnaire to all managers and supervisors in the study for determining their perceived needs for training their staff in both the English language and the Western cultural skills required of their profession. It also determined their perception of which employees needed to use English most on their jobs, as well as how they perceived their staff to be learning about Western culture.

Rationale: The administrators were asked if their employees needed to learn English and why. They also listed which employees were required to use English the most in their jobs. Upon explaining why their staff needed to learn English, they invariably answered the next question--the importance of learning about Western culture. These perceived needs were compared with the actual training of the staff, as well as with job-site observations to determine the extralinguistic factors that need to be incorporated into an English program. Another purpose for this questionnaire was to see how perceptive the Chinese administrators were in realizing the extralinguistic aspects in which their staff needed training. It is hoped, too, that if the administrators see a need in this area, they will take action to provide the proper training.

The Chart

The chart (Appendix D) was administered to all subjects to determine their actual use of English on their job. Across the top is a list of possible topics, functions, and situations of English related to their work. These cover all four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. On the left side, they were to record after each hour of their shift the number of times they spoke or used English, and then check the purposes or topics they used. Chinese translations were provided to avoid any misunderstandings.

The chart was given to the subjects the first week of July. They filled them out two days a week for a three-week period, and returned them at the end of July.

Rationale: The purpose of the chart was mainly to determine the

situations and functions the subjects use English for on the job, as well as how often they use English. It is also helpful in comparing the subjects' perceived needs for English with their actual use of English, and to determine the areas in which they lack ability. The chart also helped to determine which departments and/or job levels use English the most, and which must call for a translator the most. Lastly, the chart helped to determine how the classes for an ESP program could be organized and what content would be appropriate in the curriculum.

Case Study with Hotel Staff

I conducted a series of discussions with twenty-five members of the staff from all different departments and job levels. They were assigned to bring a list of questions they had concerning problems or misunderstandings they were having in communicating with the Western guests. A number of the major questions we discussed are listed in Chapter IV.

Interview with the Vocational Trainer

All hotel managers are Chinese, except for an American hired as a training manager to work with the Chinese training manager. The American manager was in charge of the training of all staff, except for those who conduct business or never have direct contact with hotel guests. He trained the staff the first year of its opening, and now only visits periodically. The interview with him was informal and brief, as he was very busy. The purpose of the interview was to determine his perceived needs for an English training program at the hotel, as well as to determine his opinion of combining both the language teaching and professional training into one curriculum.

Observation of ESP Instructor at a Similar Hotel

I observed another ESP program developed by an instructor after several years of experience in teaching hotel staff in China. The instructor is qualified as both a vocational trainer and language instructor for hotel staff of international hotels. The purpose of the observation was to gain insight into how a curriculum can include both language training, job training, and and cultural skills, as well as to gain information about the instructor's perception of what the Chinese hotel staff need training in.

Research on the Background of the Subjects

I researched the past educational policies (including the EFL policies), cultural movements, and political movements of the Chinese from 1966 to the present. The purpose of the research was to gather information concerning the past exposure the hotel staff have had with foreigners, as well as the type of English training they experienced previous to entering the hotel. Furthermore, in determining the communication skills and language functions necessary for staff in the hospitality industry, it is essential to understand their background, both cultural and political, as well as their expectations of their roles in a hotel which caters to Westerners. Due to past political movements, the Chinese have had very little contact (if any) with Western people and Western literature. Thus, hotel staff are quite unfamiliar with Western expectations of hotel service and with knowing how to communicate effectively with foreigners. By understanding the cultural background of the Chinese and their past experiences with EFL

programs, I could understand more fully the areas they need to be trained in to successfully accommodate and communicate with their Western guests.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Introduction

In assessing the needs of the hotel staff, I considered both the linguistic and extralinguistic factors of the language. The linguistic factors include the grammatical aspects as well as such varieties of the language as formal, polite, casual, or informal language, or indirect language to avoid embarrassing confrontation or disagreements. Extralinguistic factors, according to Brumfit and Finocchiaro (1983), include the social roles, functions (communication purpose), situations, and topics of the communication acts. In fact, the extralinguistic factors will most often determine the linguistic factors for a curriculum. They advocate that

the social roles and the psychological attitudes of the participants toward each other in a conversation (employer-employee, teacher-pupil, doctor-patient . . .), the place and time of the communication act, and the activity or topic being discussed will determine to a large extent the form, tone, and appropriateness of any oral or written message (p. 22).

For effective communication, then, knowledge of the cultural values of the target language is essential (Widdowson, 1979). In order for the

EFL speaker to understand the extralinguistic aspects of the language, he must know the cultural values of the target language. Widdowson (1979) further states that he must not only understand correct grammar, but also correct usage of the language. This is especially true for staff members of the hospitality industry, where communication between the staff and hotel guests is a vital part of the business and reputation of the hotel. Thus, the Chinese staff must understand their own roles, as well as the expectations of the guests and their cultural background, to understand appropriateness of language use.

Language in the hospitality industry is primarily based on polite and formal forms of the language in oral communication. Most of the social roles in which the staff use English are conversations between staff and hotel guests: a room cleaner with a guest, a waiter with a customer, a shop attendant with a customer, a front desk staff with a guest, a doorman with a visitor and so forth. Thus, the primary functions or purposes of the communication are to assist and serve the hotel guests, as well as to promote a friendly, helpful atmosphere. Some of the staff in the sales and marketing, public relations, and front desk departments use English primarily for conducting business with foreign businessmen. They use both oral and written modes, but their purposes are primarily to promote business with foreign companies and customers. While their social roles may differ from the other staff who primarily serve the hotel guests, all employees must use polite and courteous language appropriate for a successful hospitality industry.

To analyze these needs for the hotel staff, more than a job-site investigation is needed. It is essential to understand the cultural background of the Chinese staff, to know their expectations concerning

their working roles, and to understand their attitudes toward their Western guests. As all the staff are Chinese and immersed in their own culture, they do not fully realize the extralinguistic factors that are essential for effective communication with their guests.

Moreover, because they had been isolated from Western influence for thirty years, they lacked understanding of Western habits and customs. This chapter analyzes the data gathered from the research and jobsite investigations. The linguistic and extralinguistic needs of the staff are assessed, based on an understanding of the Chinese staff as well as on the requirements of a good hospitality industry. The assessment provides a basis for an English curriculum that incorporates language, culture, and job training into the curriculum.

Historical Background of the Hotel Staff

The Cultural Revolution, often known as China's darkest period, had devastating effects on the Chinese people. The revolution was begun in 1966 with Mao Zedong and ended in 1976, shortly after his death. The political events that occurred during that time affected the culture, the technology, the education, and the attitudes of the Chinese people toward Westerners. It was a revolution that set the country back fifty years, a time, the Chinese say, when everything was upside down. Although the revolution ended nine years ago, the restoration period has been a long and slow process. It is particularly important to know what the hotel staff faced during this period because it greatly affected their attitudes and language in their work today.

The Cultural Revolution

The major goal of the Cultural Revolution was to create a strong socialist laborer class in which all people worked to improve the country, not their own individual status. Mao Zedong gave directives to eleven million youth, called the Red Guards, to carry out new educational and political reforms that would do away with the bourgeois intellectual class and reeducate the people for developing a society of laborers (Scovel, 1982). All tertiary level institutions, and vocational and technical institutions were closed, while enrollment in all other schools came to a standstill. Work programs took top priority, while formal education was practically done away with. Furthermore, because all people were to be as equals, few could select their own jobs. Instead, they were assigned to work units or communes. As a result, many were placed in jobs they did not necessarily like, and to make matters worse, their job assignment was for life. To ensure effective changes, the wealthy and intellectual class were sent out of the cities to work with the peasants and undergo reeducation in the country (a process which meant hard labor and self-criticism). In addition, most books were confiscated and burned, especially any Western textbooks or literature. The Red Guards, who were authorized to make these changes, monitored teachers as well, to make sure that every lesson contained political content. They organized teams of peasants, soldiers, and workers to rewrite textbooks for the schools, all of which were to focus on political education and practical teaching--not theoretical teaching (Scovel, 1982). As a result, most books and literature followed Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong doctrines, and classes spent

much of their time memorizing Mao Zedong's writings. In the work units and communes, workers attended weekly political study classes. The people were taught to believe that all Western Imperialist countries were decadent, and that their capitalistic ways only oppressed the working class people. They were to believe, also, that all intellectuals were impractical bourgeois people, and it was thus prohibited to seek intellectualism. Instead of studying, then, students and workers were to spend their time working as laborers. As a result, most students at this time were illiterate or only semi-literate.

English, surprisingly, was still in the curriculum during the Cultural Revolution. Classes, however, had to follow strict guidelines. Every sentence had to contain political meaning; students and teachers alike were not allowed to study or read English outside of class; and no one was allowed to have any contact with Westerners or listen to any English broadcasts (Scovel, 1982). Bonavia (1980) states that the English learned at that time consisted of political terminology and slogans so much that the Chinese found it totally useless when they tried communicating with Westerners after the Revolution.

In 1968, when the Red Guards had grown too violent and uncontrollable, the People's Liberation Army was sent to disperse them into remote country areas. Thus, a mass migration of both youth and intellectuals went out of the cities. In 1973, another resurgence of Red Guards gained even greater momentum than the first and not until the end of 1976 was order restored (Scovel, 1982).

Post-Cultural Revolution

After Mao Zedong's death, and the fall of the "Gang of Four,"

efforts were quickly made to restore order in the society. But progress was slow and gradual. By 1978, most schools at all levels were reopened and teachers and intellectuals brought back to a level of respect. In 1978, a flood of teachers and students returned from the countryside to try to piece their lives back together again. While the schools made reforms to lengthen the school hours, establish an examination system, and encourage students to study more by drastically cutting their work programs to one week out of the year, the teachers were terribly unqualified, materials were inadequate and books were scarce (China Handbook Editorial Committee [CHEC], 1983). Teachers had no problem finding jobs, but returning students had difficulties, many often resorting to manual labor similar to what they had performed in the country. Some students were too old to return to school, while others were unqualified, because they were illiterate. To compensate for the unemployment and lack of educational facilities, in 1980 the government established a number of vocational and specialized middle schools (CHEC, 1983). The Guangzhou Tourism Middle School was set up at this time. The school also stands as an example of the great change in attitude that began to take place. Tourism!

After relations were normalized with the U.S. in 1978, China's new open door policy brought in numerous businesses, educational exchange programs, and tourists from Western countries. China was desperate to raise her scientific, technological, and cultural level, to enter back into competition with the world powers.

Accommodating the flood of foreigners to the country has not been easy, however. Though the government welcomes the business and technology, they do not welcome the Western ideology and cultural

influence. The first Westerners--mostly business people and English teachers--who came after 1978 had to be hosted by the Chinese, carefully watched, and accommodated in separate quarters from the Chinese. Chinese were neither allowed to enter their quarters nor to fraternize with them outside. Even English teachers were restricted from much contact with their students outside of class.

For a time, the tension loosened and the Chinese felt freer to talk with Westerners outside of the English class or business meetings, and to read more Western literature as it came in. However, between 1980 and 1981, many who were disillusioned with the Party began to speak out more boldly against the authorities, often adopting ideas of freedom of expression. The authorities immediately cracked down again and began monitoring contacts between Chinese and Westerners, as well as forbidding the Chinese to dress like Westerners or listen to Western music. As the flood of Westerners continued, however, it became more difficult to keep a close watch on all of them. Moreover, all major cities are building large international hotels, another indication of a loosening of tension between the foreigners and Chinese. In 1985, yet another barrier was crossed, and where institutions before were not allowed to purchase Western literature or textbooks without government approval (a process which involved so much bureaucratic red tape that it was often not worth the trouble), today they are allowed to purchase their own materials ("Protests Lead to Reforms," 1985).

Depending upon the political atmosphere of the particular Chinese city, relations between the Chinese and Westerners can be strained or relaxed. One never quite knows which turn relations will take. As a result, many Chinese continue to be cautious as they communicate with

Westerners. The hotel staff experience particular difficulty as they are told to create a friendly, helpful atmosphere, to dress Western, to wear makeup (a taboo during the Cultural Revolution!), and to learn to communicate effectively with their Western guests. Yet, if they are seen too much with Westerners, they may be criticized and warned by their leaders not to fraternize too much.

Demographic Background of Subjects

Three years ago, when the American training manager agreed to train staff for this hotel, he insisted that only young people be hired, as they are much easier to train. As a result, most of the hotel employees, except the managers, are between the ages 19 to 28. The ages of the subjects in this study were the following: staff and captains, 19 to 23; supervisors, 23 to 26; managers, 30 and older. Approximately 70% of the subjects had worked three years at the hotel (since its opening) and were hired from the Guangzhou Tourism Middle School (GTMS). They studied at the senior middle school for one to two years, and English was part of their training. Eighty-five percent of the subjects are currently continuing their English studies at night schools.

English Training Background

Approximately 90% of the subjects had studied English for two to five years in middle school (70% at the GTMS) and 85% are now continuing at night schools. Most of the managers had not studied English, nor do they see any reason to, as they have little contact with the guests.

Only four subjects--the sales and marketing, public relations, housekeeping, and security deputy managers--had studied English at the

university level. The rest studied only at middle school and night school and had not had native English speaking EFL teachers. Moreover, all the best Chinese English teachers were sent to the tertiary level institutes. Thus, unless students studied English at a university, they most likely had EFL teachers who could not speak English and who could only teach from a book containing Chinese translation.

According to the American training manager, the hotel managers were planning for a certain percentage of their staff to learn English, a certain percentage to learn French, and a certain percentage to learn Japanese, as these were the major languages of the guests. The American training manager, however, insisted that all staff learn English because it is the language used most widely in international hotels. As a result, all staff received the Hotel English book upon beginning work, and many of them participated in a six-month class at the hotel taught by Chinese EFL teachers in which they used The Sadrina Project, published by the BBC. (I did not have access to this textbook so I could not comment on its content or effectiveness.) In addition, the training manager himself taught English lessons his first year at the hotel. He stated, however, that the attendance was too irregular, due to the busy schedules of the staff, and thus very little was accomplished.

The previous English programs were taught primarily to develop the vocabulary of the students and little attention was given to communicative competence. Furthermore, any etiquette and courtesies they were to learn in their job-training sessions or through experience on the job. A few staff members were selected to be in the English class with me for two months. I was their first English teacher. The book selected was a grammar book and had nothing to do with English for hotel staff.

Furthermore, these students were to move to a nearby teacher's college to attend an intensive English program, currently being developed by Chinese EFL teachers who had no experience in hotel work. While I was able to meet the teachers, I was not able to observe the program they were developing. While these teachers were quite able linguistically, they lacked skills in the extralinguistic aspects of the language for this particular profession.

Communication Barriers Between Hotel Staff and Western Guests

Given the past political and educational movements in China, the hotel staff would certainly face major communication problems with their Western guests. First of all, the hospitality standards and accommodations of a five star hotel are totally foreign to the young staff members who spent much of their earlier years in communes. As the Communist government worked to establish a socialist laborer society, all people were to be treated as equals and work together as equals. No one was to receive special treatment.

Thus, Chinese hotels were run like dormitories in that everyone had to share the rooms and bathroom, and bring his own towel and bedding. Having been taught that Western culture is decadent, and that the Chinese were to avoid any influence from Westerners, the staff now find themselves in jobs which contradict everything they were taught. Furthermore, when the first foreigners entered after 1978, the local Chinese people were restricted from any contact with them. Ironically, the job of the staff now is to serve, entertain, and wait on the flood of rich Westerners entering the country. Moreover, accommodations are

exquisite, luxurious hotels--a far cry from the local Chinese dormitories, units, and communes.

Understandably, the Chinese staff seem to be confused as to the importance of their role in the hotel. A major problem they face in communicating with the guests is learning to offer helpful information and friendly service. Under the Communist system, due to the lack of freedom of expression, workers are not really free to take their own initiative in the work place. As Seligman (1985) explains, the Chinese view the individual only as a part of a larger whole; in the larger whole, the individual is not to try to change the group, but rather submit willingly and unquestioningly to authority. Moreover, because many did not choose their particular job and their salaries are fixed, they have little incentive to go out of their way to serve the guests.

Murray (1983) also explains that hospitality is something the Chinese show toward "friends," not toward total strangers. Even though new incentive programs are slowly being introduced into the workplace, many workers do not touch work that is outside their list of duties, nor are they likely to show a hospitable face toward a stranger. For the hotel staff, added to this is a negative attitude toward the rich foreigners, once thought to be decadent, whom they now must serve. Oftentimes in communicating with foreigners, then, the staff lack skills in listening to their guests carefully and taking the initiative to help them or offer helpful information that may not be directly asked for. The American training manager stated that his primary problem in training the staff at first was not so much the language barriers they faced, but the fact that they never smiled at the guests and greeted them. Again, they did not see the importance of taking initiative on the job

to communicate--whether it be a simple greeting, a smile, or helpful information. Especially if a guest required help outside the staff member's set of duties, the staff often avoided helping him. As a result, guests often complained about the slow, inefficient service, or lack of it. John Bank, a consultant lecturing in Beijing, noted that many times he had to argue with the hotel staff over small matters concerning the service. He stated that the problem was clearly not just a language barrier (Yuan, 1985).

While the low English proficiency was not the only barrier to communication, it was a major problem. Many staff members who were conscientious workers oftentimes were too embarrassed to speak to guests because they were afraid of saying something wrong. Furthermore, English classes taught by Chinese EFL teachers did not develop communicative skills.

English classes in the past centered only around the Chinese environment, politics, and culture, and focused on the Chinese "textbook English" rather than communication. Bonavia (1980) points out that most of the language learned during the Cultural Revolution was totally useless when learners tried communicating with foreigners. All of the subjects in this study had had at least some English training before entering the hotel. Yet, they were not trained for the varied communication situations at the hotel: giving information, answering and handling complaints or requests, answering telephone messages, answering business letters and telexes, apologizing, greeting guests, and so forth.

A third major communication problem the staff faced was due primarily to their lack of knowledge about Western customs and etiquette.

Thus, extralinguistic factors of the language such as proxemics, gestures, tone, appropriate usage, psychological attitudes, and private versus public concepts and behavior oftentimes created barriers between the staff and guests. These types of communication problems resulted more in negative attitudes or offended feelings. The following case study reveals how the staff were very sensitive toward the guests' feelings and attitudes, but were not certain what caused the ill-feelings or what they could do to improve the situation.

Case Study

I requested a group of twenty-five staff members, all from different departments, to write a list of questions they had concerning communication problems they were facing with the Western hotel guests. The results showed that the majority of their problems were a result of not knowing how to approach their Western guests or take initiative in communicating with them. Furthermore, results showed a lack of communicative competence and knowledge concerning appropriate responses for specific situations. The following is a list of some of the major questions they asked:

Waitress: "What do I say when a customer asks for something which is not on the menu, or requests his food to be cooked a special way, and I can't understand what he wants?"

"What do I say to a customer who is angry about the way his food was cooked or served?"

"How can I recommend the right kind of Chinese dishes to Western guests in the Chinese restaurant, without their thinking that I am only recommending the more expensive dishes? Also, of the things that I do

recommend, they don't seem to eat very much. How can I politely find out what they like and dislike so that I can recommend the right dishes for them?"

"How can I explain how the Chinese dishes are cooked and what they taste like? Guests oftentimes ask me such questions."

Attendant: "How can I improve my English so that I can explain the stories and the meaning of the Chinese paintings in my shop?"

Housekeeper: "How do I comfort an angry guest?"

"How do I politely ask guests to be quiet when others are complaining that they are too noisy?"

"How do I politely ask a guest who is a regular visitor to vacate his room at the set time on the day he is to leave. Oftentimes, the room is reserved for after 12:00 p.m., but the visitor does not vacate the room until 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. Yet, I do not want to offend him."

Security Officer: "How do I train my staff to enforce rules without offending the guests? Oftentimes, Western guests are offended at the manner in which a security officer tells them they are violating a hotel rule."

"How do I handle a Western guest when he deliberately violates a small rule, thinking that the rule is foolish and should not apply to him."

Housekeeper: "Oftentimes I am asked to show Western guests our presidential suites. But I don't know how to properly show and explain the rooms and equipment to them. How can I learn to show the rooms properly?"

Operator: "What shall I tell a guest when he is angry for having to wait so long for a long distance line? How can I keep him from being

angry when I cannot tell him how long he will have to wait?"

Cashier: "How can I explain to guests the reason why they cannot change the local money back into foreign currency? Oftentimes they get angry because no one has told them (when they first exchanged their money) to keep their bank receipts or that local money cannot be changed back."

Laundry: "How do I politely handle angry complaints about the laundry?"

Doorman: "How can I improve my English so that I can explain to tourists what the best sights and local restaurants are when they ask me? Also, how can I find out from them what their interests are so I that I recommend the right places?"

Front desk: "How do I give helpful directions to guests who want to know their way around the hotel?"

Female staff: "How do I politely refuse a date from a guest who continually asks me out?"

Clinic: "How do I ask personal questions of patients for medical purposes?"

It is important to note that these subjects had all signed ten-year contracts with the hotel, and thus were all eager to work hard to improve their job positions. Other staff members may not be so conscientious about how they communicate with the foreign guests and would not notice communication problems they were having (other than linguistic incompetence).

According to Newlands (1984) a typical cultural difference between Westerners and some Orientals is that Orientals will most often give information that is asked for, and nothing more, while Westerners often

expect a lengthier answer than simply "yes" or "no". Murray (1983) explains that the Chinese merely have a different style, one which places little value on volunteering information not specifically required, even if it would help the situation at hand. Problems often arise because guests are uninformed, and yet they usually do not know what to ask about until it is too late (just like the angry guest who found out, too late, that he could not exchange his local money back to foreign currency).

During my observations in the hotel, I noticed that the staff had basically three ways of responding to a situation they did not know how to handle. Either the staff member would go look for a supervisor or assistant manager, making the guest wait and often not telling him where he was going or when he would be back; or he would nod yes to a guest without fully comprehending what the guest was saying to him; or he would provide an excuse (what Westerners often consider as a "white lie") in order to avoid any further confrontation. These reactions frustrated guests, and many became quite angry. When a guest showed his anger, the staff had an even more difficult time knowing how to respond, as Chinese rarely will express emotions to foreigners. Many of the questions they asked were about how to "comfort" a guest or how to "properly" explain something to a guest. These questions were a result of misunderstandings they have had with guests, and oftentimes they could not understand why the guest was angry or upset. Their solution to the problem, then, was to avoid any confrontation in order to save face. However, over time they realized that such a response only leads to further trouble, sometimes even jeopardizing their jobs.

Perceived Needs of Managers and Supervisors
for Training Hotel Staff

All but one of the subjects for Questionnaire B (see Appendix C) said that it was important for their staff members to learn English. Various reasons were given, but the major reasons were so that the staff could serve the guests better and understand their complaints and concerns. Some departments gave more specific reasons. The shopping center's manager and supervisors stated that the shop attendants needed to learn to sell items to English-speaking guests. Many tourists want to know what an item is, or what it is made of, or what the Chinese writing on it says before they buy it. In the restaurants, the supervisors stated that the waitresses and waiters needed to learn to recommend dishes to guests, to take orders properly, and be able to understand their complaints or special requests. In the Chinese restaurants, especially, Western guests are often reluctant to order too many dishes because they do not know what they are like or how they are cooked. The sales and marketing and the public relations departments felt the need to communicate more effectively with Western business customers and with VIPs the hotel entertains.

Six departments stated that there were certain employees who needed to learn English more than the others, while five departments stated that all their employees needed to learn English. The six departments listed the following jobs which required the staff to know more English than the others:

Laundry--employees who answer the telephone, and collect and return the laundry to guests

Food and Beverage--hostesses, captains, and supervisors

Security--officers assigned to main lobby and hotel entrances

Housekeeping--supervisors and floor receptionists

Shopping Center--shop attendants

Besides the needs mentioned, there is one more for which English is definitely required. In the Food and Beverage department, I feel that the waiters and waitresses need to learn more English than the hostesses or the captains, as they are the ones who have the most contact with guests.

All of the subjects, except those from the laundry department and Chinese Restaurant, indicated a definite need for their staff to learn about Western culture. However, when asked to explain why, they could only give vague answers: to better serve the guests, to communicate with them better, to know their likes and dislikes, to know how not to offend them. They all explained that by understanding the Western culture the staff could provide a more courteous, friendly service. Yet, they could not specify exactly what areas of culture the staff needed to know in order to improve their communication with the hotel guests.

All of the subjects stated that the staff learn about Western culture through on-the-job experience and Chinese magazines about foreign countries. They did not mention whether the staff learn about Western culture as they are trained for the job, but they all stated that no special courses are held for the subject.

Perceived Needs of Hotel Staff Compared
with Their Actual Use of English

All but a few of the subjects indicated in Questionnaire A that English was important for their jobs. The only subjects who stated no need to learn English were the managers of the Chinese restaurants, shopping center, front desk, and laundry departments as they have no contact with Western guests. For the younger staff, knowing English in China today, however, most often means a job promotion or higher salary (British Council, 1982); thus, even subjects who do not use English responded that it was important. One supervisor, however, commented that sometimes it is better for the staff under her not to know much English because they often get better job offers and quit the hotel work! She often has to train new staff to fill their places. I first realized how great a problem this is when my students had to sign a ten-year contract before they were allowed to take my class. I had only twenty-five students--a small fraction of the staff at the hotel.

When the subjects were asked what they used English for on their jobs, they had no trouble listing the areas. However, when they tabulated their use of English on the job, they found that they do not use much English in the areas for which they indicated the most need. It became evident that they were very aware of specific needs but were incompetent in those areas as well. Furthermore, very few (except the supervisors) mentioned any need to learn about Western culture or extralinguistic aspects of the language. They seemed more concerned with learning enough English to use on their job rather than developing effective communication skills that would also promote the business at

the hotel. The following discussion is a detailed analysis of the results of the interviews. Appendix E contains the charts illustrating the results from each department.

Shopping Center

The subjects in the shopping center stated that their greatest need for learning English was to be able to explain the items in their shops, as well as the prices, and thus be successful in selling more (see Figure 1). This is especially true for those in the Chinese porcelain, arts and crafts, antique, art gallery, and dress shops, as well as in the bookstore. Most Westerners want to know what the Chinese writing on an item says, or what its background is before they buy it. The other three major areas were listed as follows: speaking with customers, taking requests, and handling complaints. The shop keepers explained that they wanted to converse with customers as the customers looked around the shop, and also be able to understand and respond to requests. The last area--handling complaints--is usually handled by the shop attendants if it is a minor complaint. Major complaints are always turned over to the supervisor to handle.

The shop attendants and captains listed needs requiring oral communication skills: listening and speaking. The supervisors listed these skills, and in addition listed a need to be able to read and write business letters and reports. Now that trade with Western countries has increased, they want to purchase goods from abroad. Furthermore, because they handle most of the complaints, as well as supervise the work of the shop attendants, they need to understand Western culture,

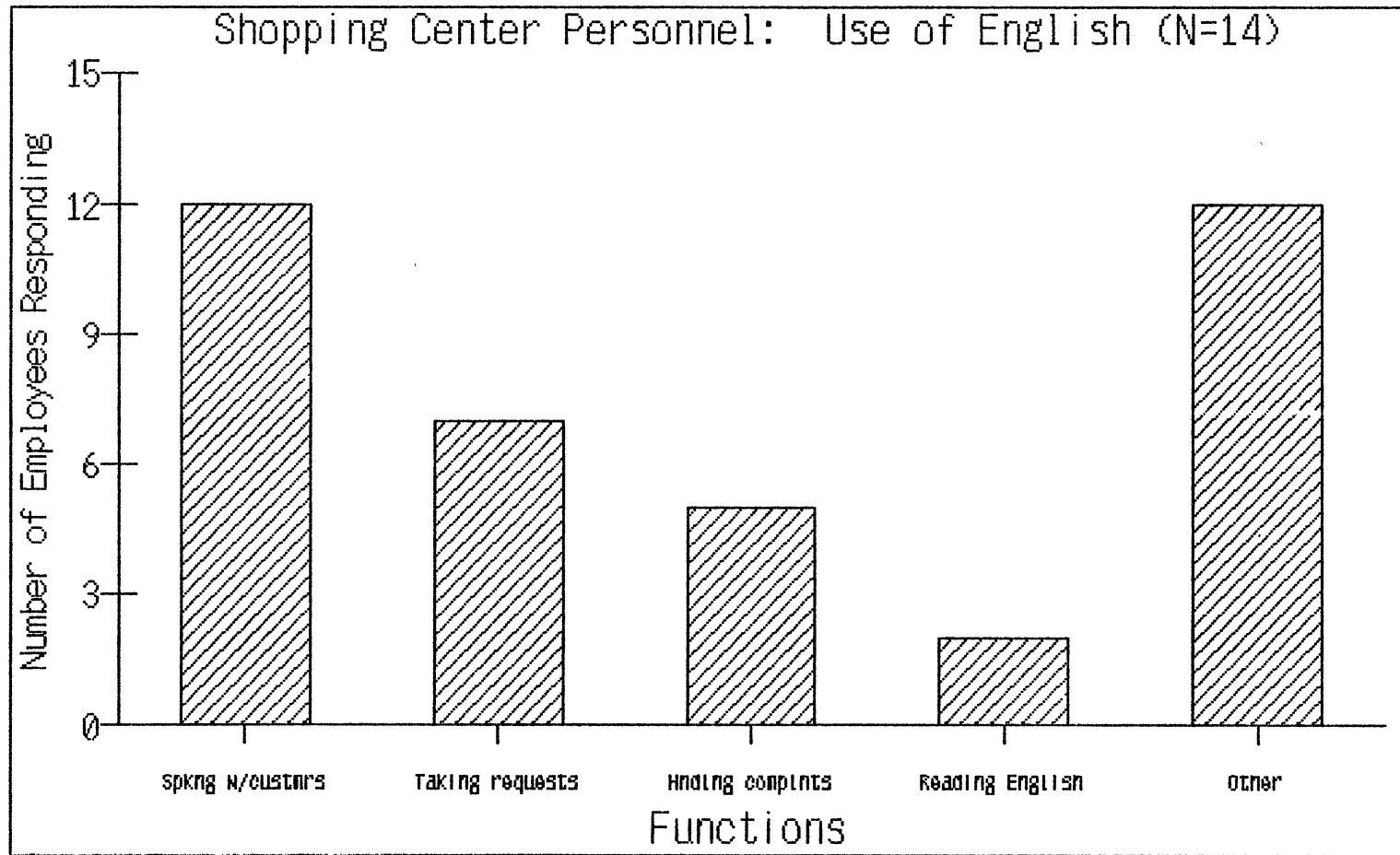


Figure 1

especially courteous behavior, in order to maintain a good reputation and please the customers, most of whom are Westerners. The average percentage of customers who speak English is between 60% and 70%. All but two subjects responded that their job would be limited if they did not know English.

When I examined the charts from the shop attendants and captains, I found that the most common uses of English were for greetings, answering requests, saying standard phrases, and conversing with guests. None mentioned having to explain items or sell items to guests. Most used little English on the job, aside from greetings and standard phrases. Only the supervisors recorded having to read and write English. The manager did not use any English.

Front Desk

The front desk subjects stated needs that required all four language skills--reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The most important needs they listed are the following: writing messages, sending telexes, reading reports, writing letters, showing and explaining the rooms and equipment to customers, giving information and directions, speaking on the telephone, and taking messages, booking reservations, and reading computer output (see Figure 2). Of course, not all front desk staff will need these skills. The doormen and bell captains need only oral communication skills, while those who work behind the desk need speaking and reading skills, as well as basic writing skills for taking messages. Only those who work in the front desk office need higher level writing skills and computer skills in addition to speaking and reading English. They conduct business with Western customers and

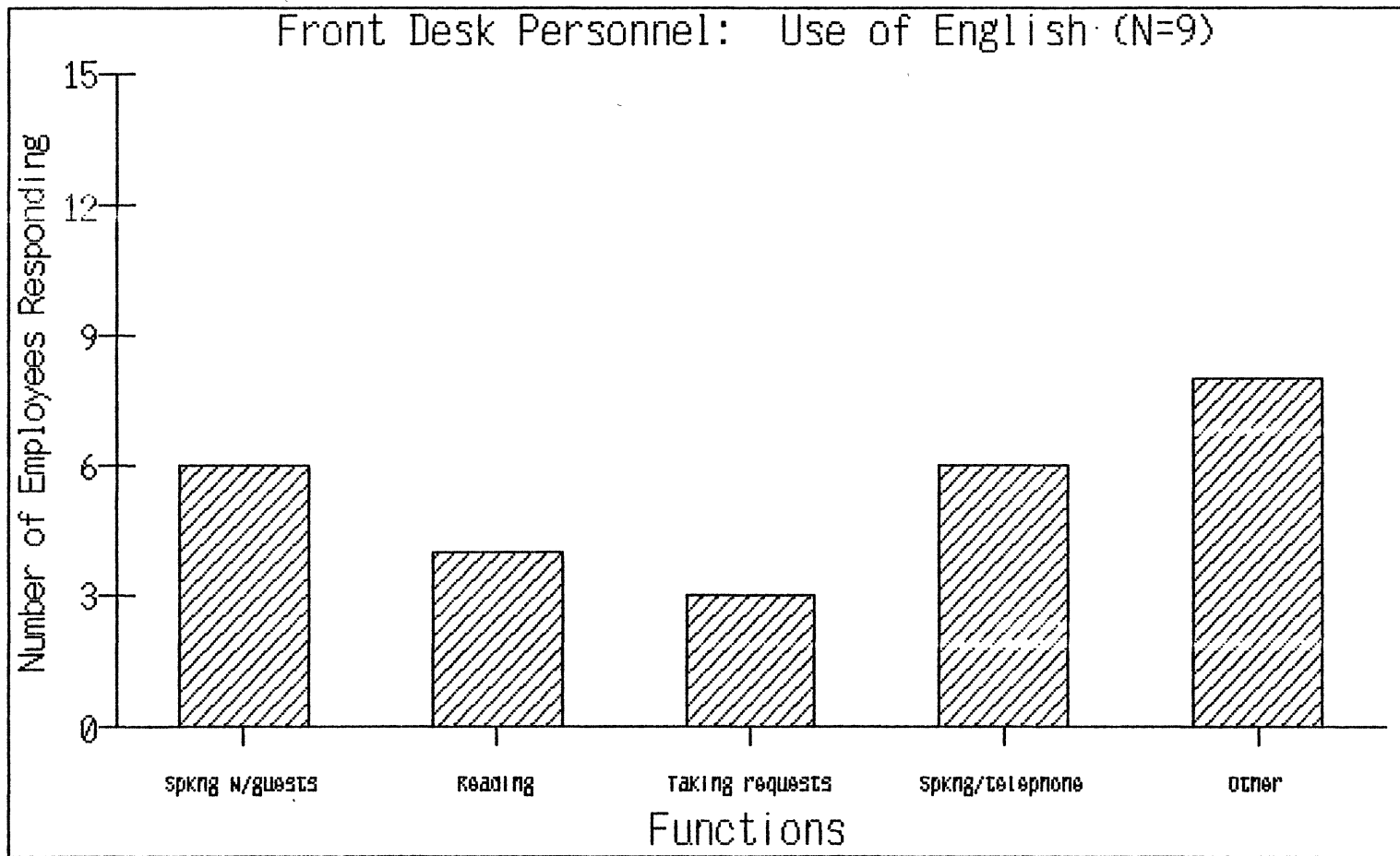


Figure 2

communicate mainly through letters, telexes, and telephone conversations.

The other three areas listed are very similar to the needs listed above: speaking with guests, taking telephone messages, and taking requests. The front desk staff are the first to meet any guests entering the hotel. From the doormen to the receptionists, all see a need to be able to assist the guests. To effectively help the guests, they need to understand as well as respond to the various needs of the guests. All of the subjects in this department stated that their job would be limited if they did not know English, for the average number of English-speaking guests they encounter is 50%. None of the subjects, however, mentioned any need to understand Western culture or the extralinguistic aspects of the language--appropriate language, behavior, or courtesies.

On the charts, the most common uses of English were for greeting guests and answering requests. Those who worked behind the desk and in the offices also marked reading reports, telexes, or letters, and speaking on the telephone. Only the office subjects, however, recorded having to write letters and only one desk staff tabulated having to write a message. Furthermore, only one subject mentioned having to handle complaints. I found these responses quite surprising, as complaints are often made at the front desk and messages are often given over the telephone. Another use that was only recorded once was asking for assistance in translating. Again, I found this surprising as front desk staff were often having to ask for help from those staff who spoke better English. As for the manager, he did not speak English nor did he see any need for it.

Public Relations

The public relations department responded that they needed to use English mainly to promote the hotel as well as build good relationships with Western customers and VIPs. They stated that they needed to learn how to advertise for Westerner audiences, entertain Western VIPs, introduce the hotel to customers, and communicate well with Western guests, including invited journalists.

The other major needs listed were reading special material, speaking with guests and customers, conducting business, and speaking on the telephone. All of these areas, for their job purposes, require a special knowledge of Western culture and of the extralinguistic aspects of the language. The subjects stated this as an overriding need in learning to communicate with Westerners. The manager and staff responded that their jobs would be limited if they did not know English. About 50% of their guests and customers speak English.

On their charts, they recorded a variety of uses of English which covered all four skills areas. The main uses of English were writing letters, reading special material, greeting guests, and answering requests or giving information. They also recorded having to call for a translator a few times. None of them mentioned having to entertain guests, write advertisements, or introduce the hotel to visitors; this was so, probably because the investigation was conducted during a slow month for this department.

Sales and Marketing

Similar to the public relations department, the sales and marketing

department stated that their primary need for English was for business purposes. They listed four areas of major importance: reading special material; speaking with customers; speaking on the telephone and taking messages; and writing business letters and telexes, reading contracts, and reading computer output. Within the third category, being able to read and understand contracts was a major need. Like the public relations department, they also stated the need to understand Western culture. Above all, however, they saw a need for understanding the Western economy and politics as well as the way Westerners conduct business. The fourth area they listed as a need for knowing English is to conduct business.

The sales and marketing staff stated that their job would most definitely be limited if they did not know English. Approximately 60% of their customers speak English.

I received only one chart, as most of them were very busy. The chart indicated a variety of English uses, all of which were mentioned in their interviews. This particular subject, however, had to call for a translator several times.

Clinic

The doctors and nurses spoke little or no English, but they realized a great need to learn it. They mentioned five major areas, all of which were of equal importance to them: speaking with patients, reading instructions (on some Western medicines), speaking on the telephone, reading medical material, and knowing how to politely ask personal questions as well as politely care for their Western patients. They also stated a need for knowing about Western culture--in the areas that would help them

communicate effectively with their patients.

They all stated that not knowing English placed restrictions on their jobs. Approximately 40% of their patients are Westerners.

I received only half of the charts back, as the other subjects could not speak English. The uses of English were the same--they could greet guests and answer simple requests, but every time a Western patient came, they called for an assistant to translate.

Food and Beverage--Western Restaurants

The staff in the Western restaurants responded that their greatest need for learning English was for taking orders and speaking with the guests. The other areas that were listed most were reading menus, recommending dishes, and handling complaints (see Figure 3). The areas they listed involve reading, listening and speaking skills, and none required skills for writing in English. The supervisors and captains required more reading skills than the other staff, as they had to read the guest comment cards and work reports. All of them, however, stated the need for reading the menus and knowing the correct pronunciation of the items, as the menus change from time to time. All subjects, too, expressed the need to be able to communicate better with the guests. Although a supervisor or captain is usually called upon to handle the complaints or special requests, the staff could save much time and present a better image if each could handle his own customers.

All of the subjects stated that their job would be limited if they did not know English. Approximately 70% of their customers are Westerners. However, none of the waiters, waitresses, or hostesses expressed a need to learn about Western etiquette or customs related to the

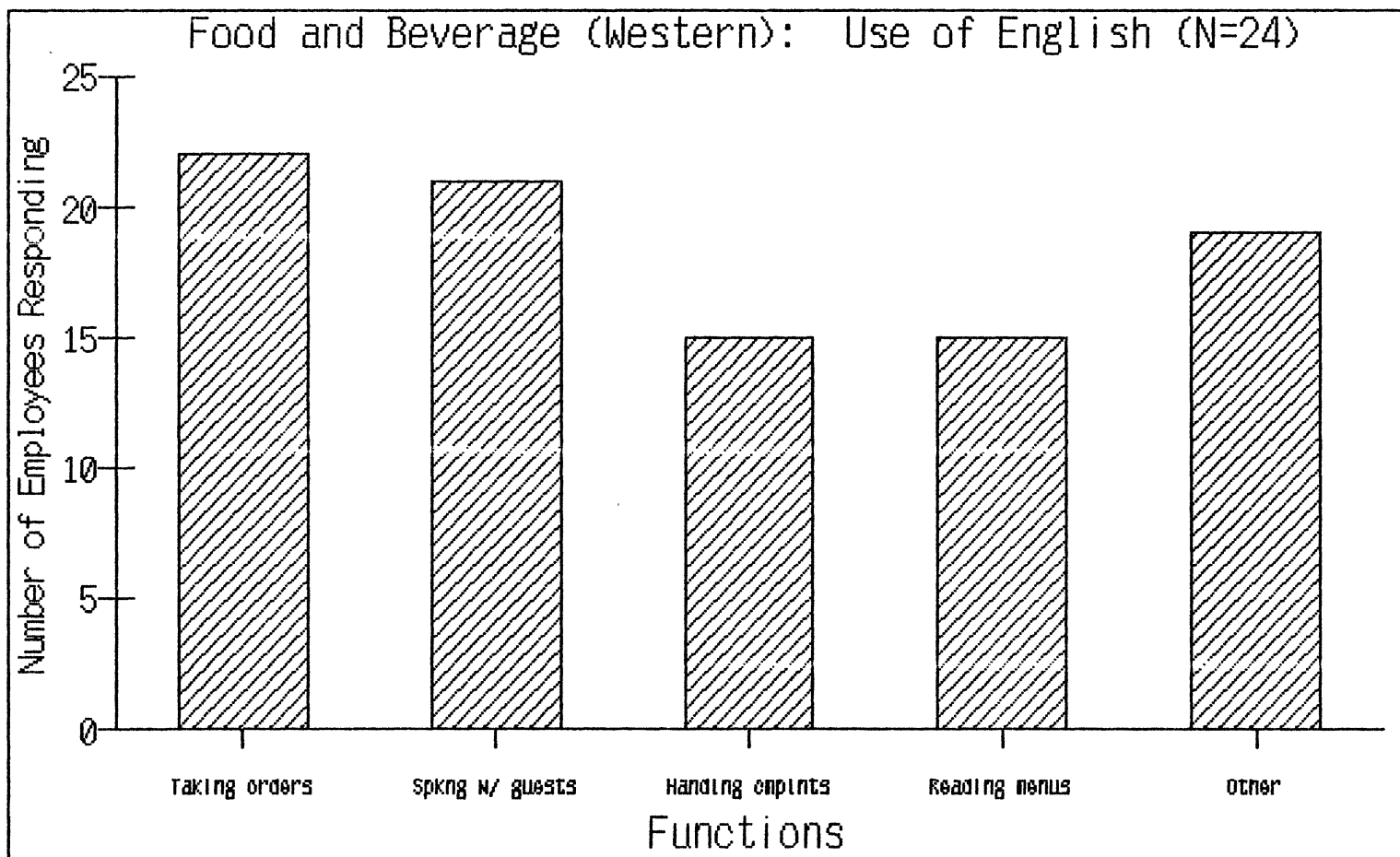


Figure 3

restaurant service. Only the supervisors understood the need for such training.

In examining the charts, the areas listed as major uses of English were for greetings and saying standard phrases, answering requests, and conversing with diners. The other major uses, which received half as much value, were handling complaints, taking orders, and giving information. Only two to three subjects recorded having to read English. Yet, during the investigation, the coffee shop received a new menu, and I noticed many staff struggling over understanding what the new items were and how they were pronounced. Furthermore, very few recorded having to handle complaints or seek out a translator. From my observation, I know that many customers did have complaints, but oftentimes the staff ignored them or did not really understand them. Instead, they avoided having to confront the customer by letting another staff complete the service. Thus, while they perceived needs in these areas, they were not equipped to handle the problems or situations.

Food and Beverage--Chinese Restaurants

The staff in the Chinese restaurants listed three major needs for learning English: taking orders, speaking with guests, and recommending or explaining dishes. The next major area was that of handling complaints (see Figure 4). Most of the staff, however, felt that they only needed to know a minimum of English, for the menus have Chinese and English, and only 45% of the guests are American. Some of the staff members, however, responded that they needed to know how to read the English on the menus because not all the Chinese items were translated. Furthermore, they could not understand or answer customers' requests or

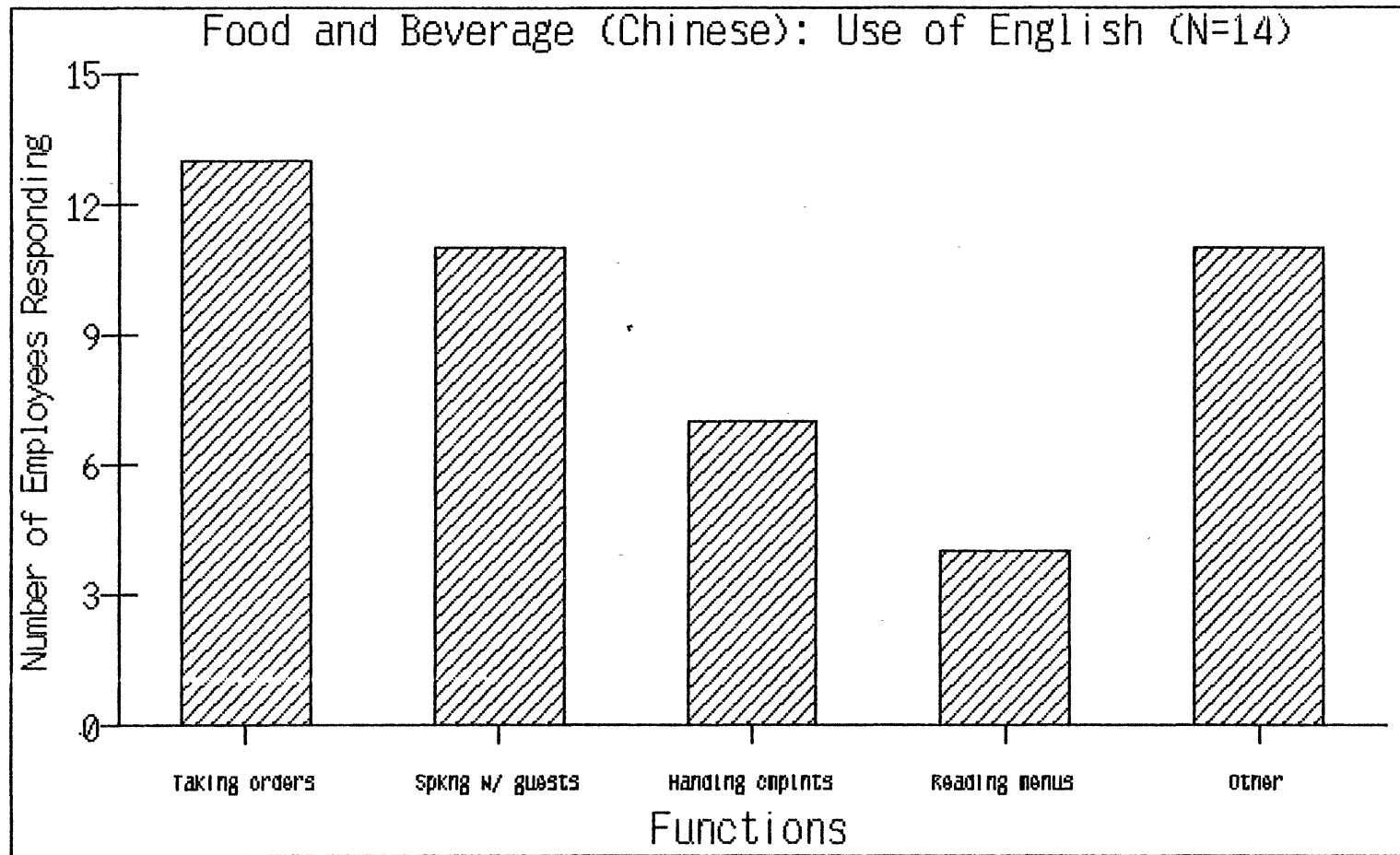


Figure 4

questions if they did not know how to pronounce the items. The hostesses listed separate needs from the waiters and waitresses. They often had to speak on the telephone to take reservations. As for the captains, they had to be able to read the guest comment cards. The supervisors were the ones who indicated the strongest need to learn English, as the other staff depended upon them for any communication problems with Westerners.

I had a very difficult time getting the staff to cooperate in filling out the charts. The managers of this department did not speak English and they saw little need for their staff to learn it. Many of the staff either did not know English or saw little need for English and, therefore, did not bother with the charts. Only four charts were filled out. The major uses of English were for greeting guests and saying standard phrases, answering requests, conversing with guests, and taking orders. The hostesses and captain also recorded having to read messages or guest comment cards, handle complaints, and give information. The hostesses also recorded using the telephone and writing messages. None of the staff except the supervisors stated any need for learning about Western etiquette or customs concerning the restaurant service.

The needs for English include listening, speaking, and reading skills. Only the hostesses and supervisors indicated a need for basic writing skills. While the staff perceived a need for learning basic English for their job, they did not use much English and showed less interest when it came to actually using English. From my observations, however, many Western guests needed assistance in ordering Chinese dishes, or would like to try out new dishes but were unsure what to

try. Sometimes they also wanted to know how the dishes were cooked. During busy hours, it was too inconvenient for a waiter to try to find a supervisor to answer a diner's questions. Sometimes he just avoided answering them.

Housekeeping

The majority of the housekeeping staff spoke very limited English. Yet, most of them stated a need for learning English. The only staff who saw little need for English were those working on floors designated for overseas Chinese or Japanese guests. The areas listed as major needs for learning English were for greeting guests, taking or answering requests, speaking with hotel guests, speaking on the telephone and taking messages, and speaking with hotel guests (see Figure 5). The captains and supervisors listed needs for reading the complaint cards and messages from guests, and handling complaints. Only three subjects recorded needing to converse with guests.

The floor they worked on determined the amount of contact the staff had with Westerners. Some staff deal only with Westerners, while others have only 30% to 50% contact with Western guests. While none of the room cleaners perceived a need to know anything about Western customs and etiquette, the floor receptionists and supervisors saw a definite need for it. They perceived that many of their communication problems related to a difference in cultural customs, but they could not specify what the differences were.

In examining the charts, it was clear that the floor receptionists use English the most. The receptionists work a 24-hour schedule, so they are always available for the guests. They recorded using English

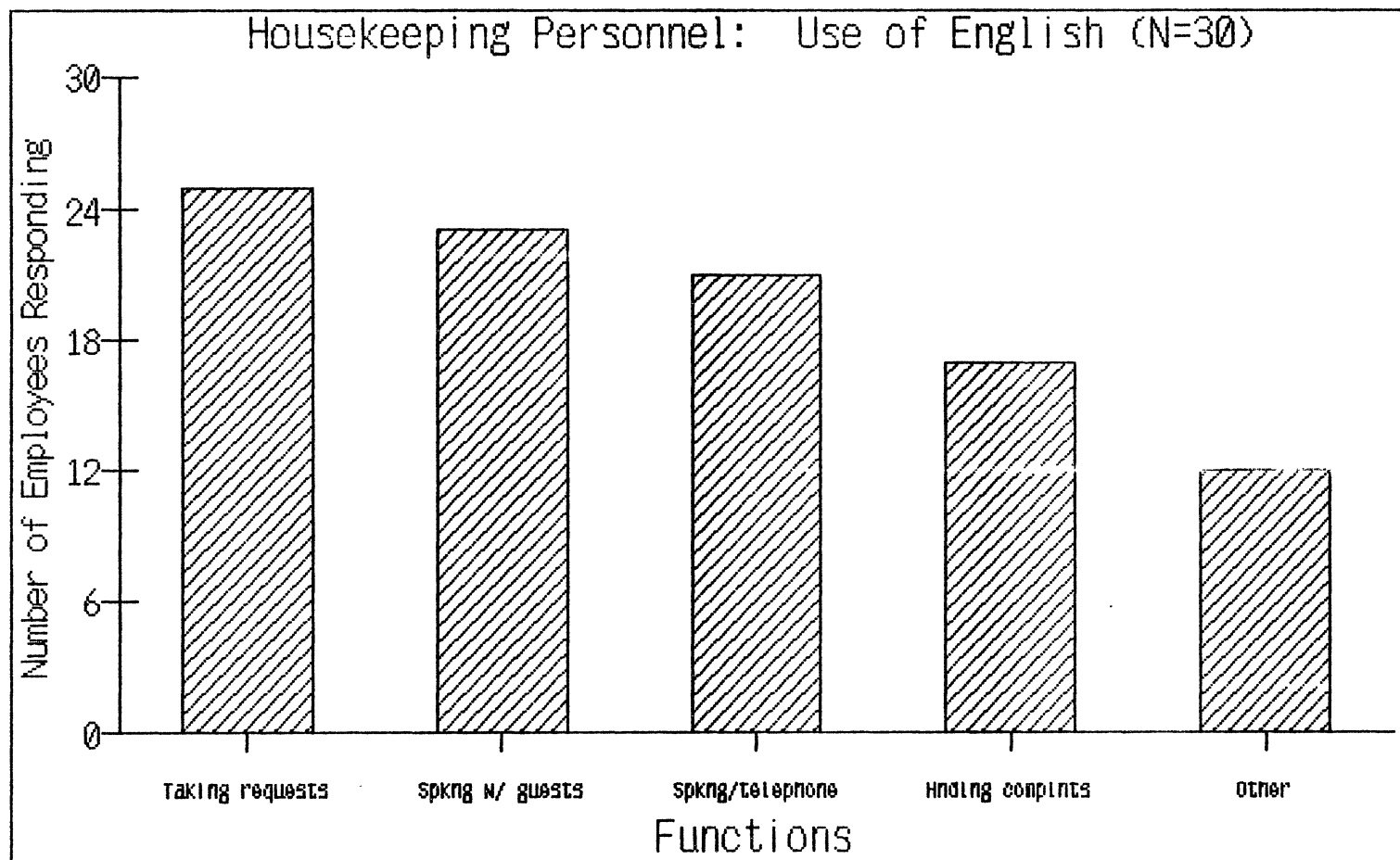


Figure 5

mostly for greeting guests, saying standard phrases, answering requests and giving information, speaking on the telephone and taking messages, and conversing with guests. The supervisors had little contact with the guests, but they needed English for handling complaints and reading work reports and messages. The room cleaners recorded using English for greeting guests, saying standard phrases, answering requests, and conversing with or giving information to guests. Only two recorded having to handle complaints. While very few room cleaners used English or knew enough to speak English, they knew they could always depend on the receptionist. From my observations, it seems the receptionists require English, and if they are proficient enough, they can manage any communication problems. They keep a close record of when the guests come and leave, so they usually direct the room cleaners to those rooms which are empty. The guests know to seek a receptionist if they need anything. Those receptionists not proficient enough have to go find a supervisor. As each supervisor is in charge of several floors, it is more difficult to find them, and oftentimes the guests become impatient. These incidents, however, were not tabulated on the charts.

Laundry

The laundry personnel stated that their major need for knowing English was for speaking to hotel guests and taking requests. The other two areas listed were for handling complaints and speaking on the telephone. Usually, the supervisors were called upon to handle any complaints or telephone calls. The staff who collected and returned the laundry spoke very little English, but all of them perceived a need for English. They stated that approximately 70% of their guests were

guests were Westerners. None of them--except for the supervisors--saw a need for learning about Western etiquette.

I received only two charts from this department. Many of the subjects saw a need for English but did not know enough to use on the job. Those who returned the charts recorded using English for greeting guests, saying the standard phrases, and handling complaints. The supervisor used English for reading special instructions on the forms the guests filled out, for speaking on the telephone, conversing with and giving information to guests, and answering requests. From my observation, many of the guests living at the hotel had constant complaints about the laundry. They became all the more frustrated when the staff member returning the laundry could not speak English and would make the guest wait until he could find an available supervisor to take care of the matter. The staff could have saved time and hard feelings from the guests if they knew enough English to handle the special requests or complaints. While none of the staff expressed a need to know about Western etiquette and customs, these would greatly benefit them. They did not know how to courteously handle the complaints, nor could they understand what things would upset the guests.

Security

The security officers all stated a need for learning English. The major areas they need English are for enforcing the hotel rules, giving information and directions, and for speaking with hotel guests (see Figure 6). The supervisors also responded a need for handling complaints and speaking on the telephone.

Approximately 40% of the guests they have contact with are

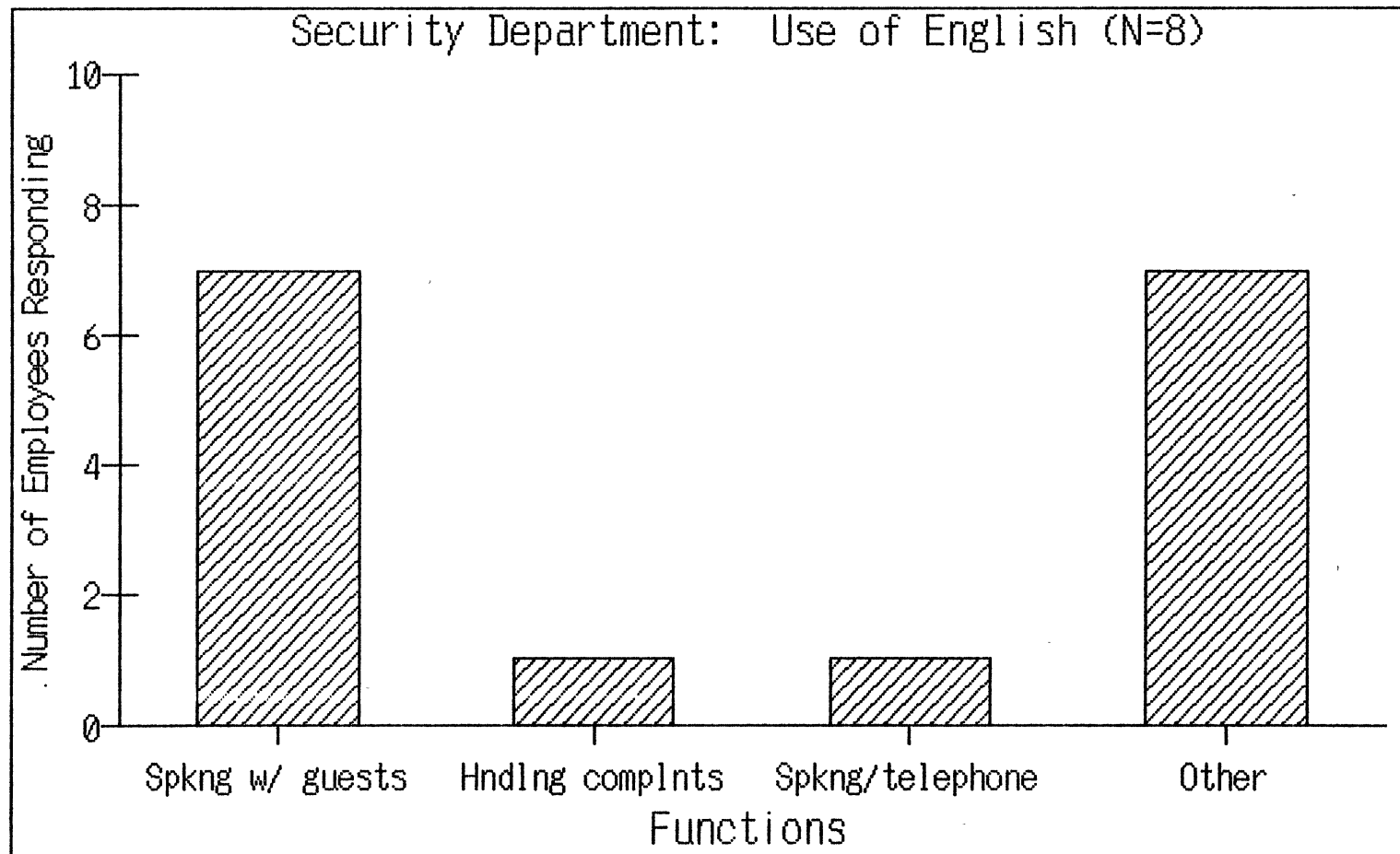


Figure 6

Westerners. The supervisor recognized a definite need for the officers to learn about Western etiquette and courtesies. He noticed that oftentimes officers offended the guests, unnecessarily, by their manner of enforcing minor rules. Other times, they had difficulty knowing how to properly handle guests who were belligerent about breaking rules they thought were foolish. From my observations, many of the officers appeared unfriendly and discourteous, by Western standards. While it was essential for them to maintain security and enforce rules, the supervisor felt that they could portray a more pleasant image, but he was unsure as to how they could do this.

In examining the charts, I noticed that the major areas they used English for were in greeting guests, answering requests, saying standard phrases and conversing with guests. Several times, too, they recorded having to call upon a translator for help and having to give information to guests. Only the supervisor reported having to read reports and speak on the telephone. He also reported that he was teaching English to his staff, but his English was quite limited and thus he could only teach from the text book, English for Today (which had nothing to do with their need for English).

Recreation

The staff in the recreation department responded that their major needs for English were for speaking with guests, handling complaints, taking requests, and speaking on the telephone (see Figure 7). These were the major needs for all the sections. Those in the beauty shop, barber shop, and health spa, however, responded that they needed to be able to read English, as many of the products they used were in English.

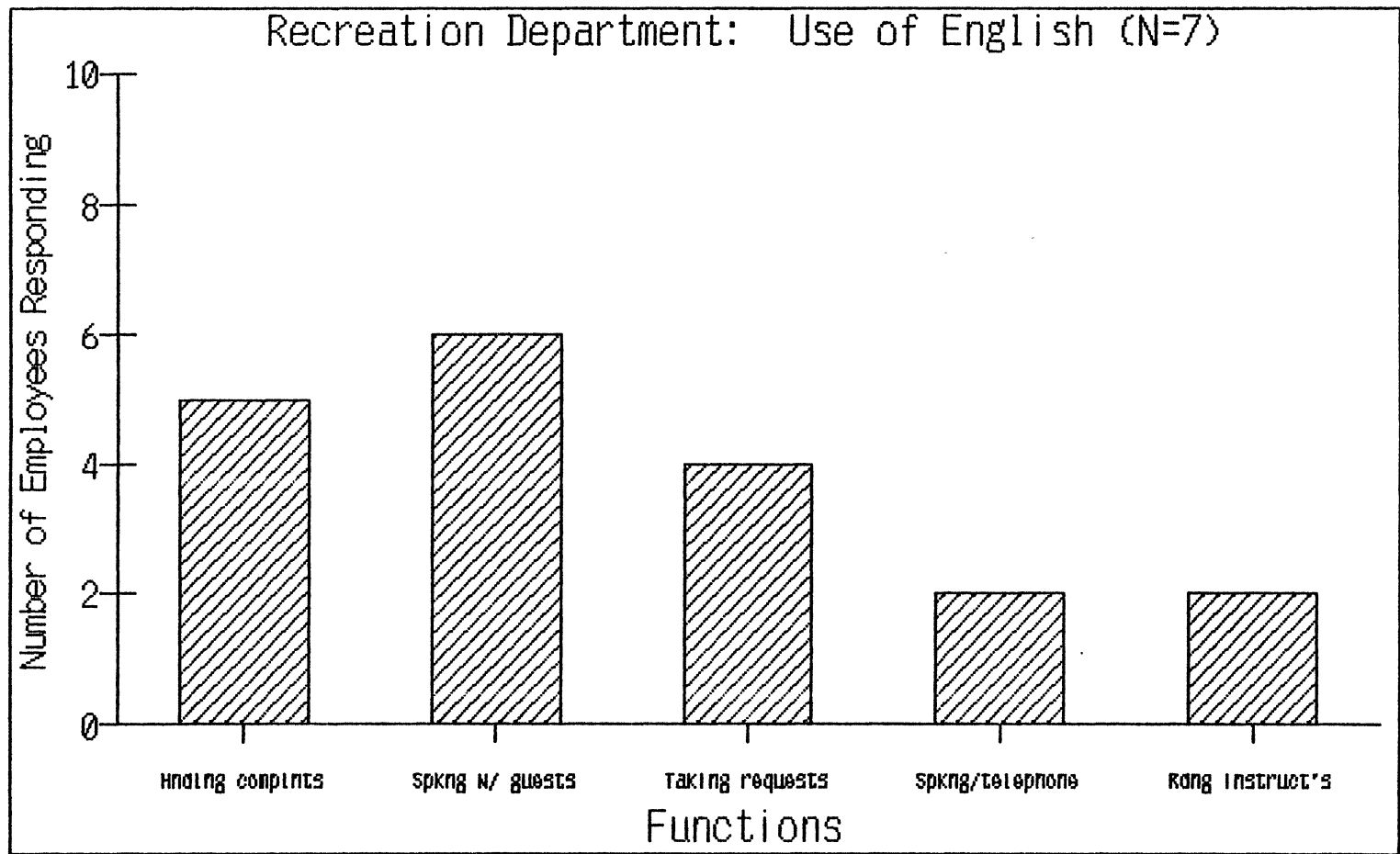


Figure 7

The only subjects who indicated a need for knowing about Western etiquette and customs were those in the beauty shop, barber shop, and health spa. The pool attendants and those in charge of the tennis courts saw little need for English beyond basic greetings and standard phrases. The subjects all responded that approximately 50% of their contact with guests is with Westerners.

I received only one chart from a pool attendant. The beauty shop, barber shop, and health spa were closed for remodeling, and the golf driving range was still under construction. The pool attendant recorded using English for greeting guests, answering requests, saying standard phrases, and speaking on the telephone.

Summary

In brief, the data from the observations at the hotel and interviews with the staff and training managers provided significant information for the needs analysis. While the hotel staff perceived a need to learn English, they were not fully aware of all the aspects of the language essential for functioning successfully on their jobs. They listed major areas for which English is needed, but few subjects demonstrated the ability to use the language on their job for the purposes they listed. The job-site observations, the interview with the American training manager, and information concerning the cultural background as well as the English training background of the staff provided the essential data for completing the assessment. While the job descriptions and staff members listed major linguistic skills, situations, and functions for which they needed English, the other data provided needs concerning the extralinguistic aspects of the language--appropriate usage--needed

for functioning successfully in the hospitality industry. Furthermore, as the staff were limited by their environment and culture, the other observations provided the information they could not perceive.

Chapter V gives suggestions for a curriculum for the hotel staff based upon the needs assessment. The assessment provides a basis for which both job training and language skills can be incorporated into the program.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended Needs for the ESP Program

Based upon the observations and interviews at the hotel, I strongly recommend that an English program for hotel staff be conducted at the hotel and include job training along with the language training. As the purpose of the course is to equip the staff with language skills that will help them function appropriately and successfully in their jobs, combining job skills with language training would prepare the staff more efficiently and effectively for hotel work.

There are two major advantages to conducting the course at the hotel. First, being at the job-site helps to reinforce the language skills being taught because the learners are in the environment in which they will be using the language. Thus, the classroom environment can easily become part of the work environment. Secondly, the instructor can observe the staff outside the classroom situation, and, from his observation, know which linguistic and extralinguistic aspects he needs to reinforce in the classroom. He can also determine know what cultural etiquette and behavior the staff need to learn. In teaching job skills, not all skills, of course, would be included in the program. Only those skills involving communication, both linguistic and extralinguistic, whether oral or written, should be part of the curriculum. In the

hospitality industry, communication plays a vital role in determining the effectiveness of service in a hotel. Thus, both language and intercultural skills--those related to hospitality--must be taught together in the curriculum.

Observation of a Similar Program

I observed an English program at a nearby hotel in which the ESP instructor was also the vocational trainer for the staff. While the staff in the program attended English classes dealing with basic communication, some departments met separately with the vocational trainer to learn communication skills related to their jobs. In these classes, the staff learned language specifically related to their job, and then they spent time role playing and practicing using the language for carrying out specific tasks. Each lesson focused on three things: key situation, key language, and key behavior. The instructor thus taught correct, appropriate usage of the language, as well as cultural skills and etiquette. One of the classes I observed was conducted in a restaurant during its closed hours. The restaurant staff took turns role playing as guests and servers. The instructor watched the staff members as they served the tables, correcting their pronunciation, appropriate language usage, manner of serving, posture and proxemics, gestures, and so forth. She also spent time explaining how they could handle specific problems that could arise from certain situations. Both language skills and etiquette were so interrelated in the communicative situation they were role-playing that neither could be left out. Both had to be taught and reinforced for the staff members to perform their jobs successfully.

Included in the syllabi of this program were lists of "courteous" behavior and language and "not courteous" behavior and language. The staff would often hear guests using certain phrases and slang expressions, and they would try to use these expressions, or casual remarks, not realizing that these were improper in their role as hotel staff. For example, I spoke with a guest who was quite confused at a question he was asked by a shop attendant. The shop attendant asked him, "Do you like girls?" While this could have been a very innocent question to strike up a conversation, at a hotel it carried a much different connotation. Yet, in China, prostitution is illegal, and any offenders are immediately arrested without question. The guest knew he should not answer "Yes," but on the other hand, he was not certain what would happen if he responded "no." The question created a very awkward situation that I am certain the shop attendant had no idea of. (He was one of my students whom I knew quite well.) The Chinese staff could not recognize that these aspects of the language were important factors in communication. The vocational trainer had to explain that while guests could use casual remarks and behavior, the hotel staff could not, and they needed to understand what was appropriate and courteous, and what was inappropriate while on the job.

A Suggested Curriculum

The major disadvantage to training the staff at the hotel and establishing a curriculum that fits their specific needs is that classes would have to be conducted separately according to basic job descriptions, and a separate syllabus would have to be developed for each group. One way of avoiding such an "impractical" method is to establish

a core curriculum containing basic skills required of all the staff. Then, specialized syllabi could be developed for groups requiring different skills. For example, according to the data from this study, all staff members need to learn communication skills for greetings, giving directions, giving basic information, using polite expressions, apologizing, interrupting, offering service, and handling small complaints or simple requests. Some staff members, in fact, need only these skills (i.e., room cleaners, housekeeping captains, doormen, and some of the recreation staff members). Included with these skills, the staff also need to learn the language, posture, gestures, and behavior for communicating as hotel staff to guests. According to the data, there are many other skills that only certain staff members need to learn for their particular jobs. For example, only certain staff members need to learn writing and reading skills, telephone skills, and business communication skills, while others need skills for taking orders and recommending dishes, or enforcing regulations, or selling store items, or understanding requests such as in the beauty shop. Other staff members need to learn how to use computers and read the output. While these specialized skills cannot be ignored, they cannot possibly be taught in classes for all staff members. To teach the staff more efficiently and effectively, separate classes need to be set up to teach the specific skills for the different groups who need them.

Following is a list of suggested topics and skills for the core curriculum, and a more general list of topics and skills for the different, specialized courses.

Suggested Core Curriculum

<u>Linguistic Skills/Topics</u>	<u>Extralinguistic Skills/Topics</u>
Basic vocabulary of hotel environment	Eye contact
Pronunciation of vocabulary	Posture
Greetings	Gestures
Standard polite expressions	Appropriate usage
Apologies	Appropriate proxemics
Interrupting	Intonation patterns
Offering service/information	Tone of voice
Giving directions	Basic etiquette
Question forms--abrupt vs. polite forms	Taking initiative
Knowledge of appropriate and inappropriate expressions/comments	
Listening strategies	

Suggested Skills and Topics for Specialized Curricula

<u>Business-related Skills/Topics</u>	<u>Service-related Skills/Topics</u>
Business communications	Waiting on tables/recommending dishes
Reading/writing instructions	Selling/explaining about items
Reading/writing messages	Handling complaints
Reading/writing contracts	Answering requests
Advertising	Telephone skills/etiquette
Entertaining guests	Listening strategies
Conversing with customers	Conversing with guests
Listening strategies	Knowledge of appropriate and inappropriate topics
Handling complaints	
Telephone skills/etiquette	

Suggested Divisions for Specialized Classes

In examining the data from this study, I developed a list suggesting how the staff could be divided into separate groups for specialized training. I developed two major divisions, service-related functions and business-related functions, and then established groups of staff with similar job descriptions for the separate classes and training.

I. Classes which focus on service-related functions requiring primarily oral communication skills.

- A. Restaurant staff
- B. Shop attendants

- C. Front desk personnel (except doormen), public relations personnel, sales and marketing personnel
- D. Housekeeping receptionists and supervisors, laundry personnel
- E. Security officers working in the lobbies and hotel entrances, doormen (from Front Desk department)
- F. Recreation staff (except beauticians and barbers), room cleaners (from Housekeeping), housekeeping captains
- G. Beauticians, barbers, massagers
- H. Clinic doctors and nurses

In teaching service-related communication skills, two aspects that must be stressed and reinforced in the classroom are the skill of offering service and information even when it is not directly requested, and presenting a friendly, polite attitude toward guests. For example, I heard a guest complaining about the first time he entered the hotel. He carried his suitcases into the hotel, and several bell boys just stood by and watched him without offering to help him. In a five star hotel this should never happen. Many instances similar to this occurred, and oftentimes the hotel staff seemed as though they did not know how to offer service without offending a guest. They appeared to be unfriendly and rude, when in fact they were afraid of insulting a guest if he actually did not want help. Thus, these were cultural skills and tactics that they needed to learn in communicating with guests.

- II. Classes which focus on business-related functions requiring primarily reading and writing skills.

- A. Sales and marketing personnel, public relations personnel, and shopping center supervisors
- B. Front desk staff
- C. Doctors and nurses (reading only)
- D. Supervisors from housekeeping, laundry, and Western restaurants

Business related communication skills are similar to service related skills, but they also require reading and writing skills, and important conventions for communication through business letters and phone calls. These groups also require skills for handling complaints, either verbally or through letters.

Three other types of skills also need to be considered in the curriculum for specialized classes, but only some of these groups will need these skills. They are telephone etiquette, listening strategies and responses, and basic skills for handling complaints (and dealing with the issue of losing face).

Suggested Activities

The program should focus on developing the communicative competence of the staff, and thus the activities should be ones which encourage communication. Role play activities in which students are assigned different roles and given a specific situation to act out are very useful. While many ESL teachers in China complain that their students are too shy and quiet to communicate, I have found (and observed) that if the students are given realistic situations that they can relate to, and if they have props and objects to use in the role play, the instructor can draw them out of their shells, so to speak, and into the act.

Furthermore, the objects and props, as well as the activities, help to reinforce the vocabulary and language skills they need when working and communicating with hotel guests.

Another essential activity is for the instructor to observe the staff on their jobs and note down particular problems he sees. The instructor can then develop situations in which he presents the problem to the class (never mentioning names, of course) and asks the staff for their opinion as to how they would solve the problem. He can then discuss the issues with the class and give helpful advice. While the staff members may be too embarrassed to discuss particular problems they may be having, this method brings out the problems without causing ill feelings. These discussions, however, may require the aid of a translator, depending upon the English level of the staff.

A third activity which I feel is absolutely essential is to conduct discussions over Western culture and etiquette that are related to the hospitality industry. The staff members need to understand why they are expected to behave a certain way, and why their Western guests behave the way they do. I have often observed staff members being corrected for their behavior, and told to "smile" more or "offer help" more, or "not to stare," or to say "Excuse me" at times, and so forth. Yet, the staff can often be offended and feel that the vocational trainers are trying to change their culture and their ways. Furthermore, they sometimes are utterly confused by the way Westerners react in certain situations and at what things upset their guests. While the vocational trainers can continue to correct the staff and "scold" them, the staff will most likely fail to develop those skills if they do not understand why such skills are important in communicating with the guests. The

staff need to understand that language and culture are interrelated, and that when they speak English in the hotel as a staff member to a guest, certain behavior and etiquette is also a part of that communicative act. These discussions will also help them understand their Western guests more. A translator may be needed to assist in these sessions. I held a series of discussions concerning cultural issues with my students and they proved to be quite helpful.

Conclusion

It seems that many ESP courses in P.R.C. require students to merely learn lists of vocabulary and phrases related to their specific work or field of study. The students are then expected to transfer the language learned in the classroom to the workplace. The communication skills are often left for the student to develop on his own. In the hospitality industry, however, language and cultural skills cannot be divorced, and both must be taught for communicative purposes. Thus, an ESP course for international hotels in China should involve cultural training and job training along with the language training. All three are involved in the communicative interactions at a hotel, and depending upon the effectiveness of all three will also depend the effectiveness of the business. I knew many Westerners in other international hotels who were totally frustrated with service and communication problems at their particular hotel. As new hotels continue to open in China, competition will stiffen, and visitors will become more choosy about where they stay. A good ESP curriculum for the Chinese hospitality industry will go a long way in helping the Chinese establish good relations with their Western guests.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE LESSONS FROM HOTEL ENGLISH

Lesson Four 第四课

Inquiries (I) 询问(一)

The Hotel Restaurant

G: Where is the restaurant?

A: On the ground floor.

G: What are the service hours?

A: Breakfast: 6:30 to 9:00 a.m. Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Dinner: 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.

The Coffee Shop

G: The restaurant is not open yet. Where can I have some coffee?

A: The coffee shop. You can get some pastry there, too.

G: Is it open now?

A: Yes. The service hours are: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight. And we also have a café called "Chun Hui" ("Spring Splendor").

宾馆餐厅

客: 餐厅在哪里?

员: 在一楼(楼下)。

客: 服务时间是怎样的?

员: 早餐: 上午6:30至9:00。
午餐: 中午11:30至下午2:00。晚餐: 下午5:30至晚上9:00。

咖啡厅

客: 餐厅现在还未开门, 请问在哪里能喝到咖啡?

员: 在咖啡厅, 那里还有点心供应。

客: 现在开门吗?

员: 开的, 它的服务时间是上午九时至半夜十二时。我们还有一个“春晖”餐室, 营业时间从早上六时一直到第二天

It opens from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. the next morning. Snacks are available there.

The Store and Shopping Center

G: Where can I buy cigarettes, matches and sweets (candy)?

A: At the store on the ground floor.

G: Chinese handicrafts are famous all over the world. I want to buy some as souvenirs of my present trip to China. Where can I buy some?

A: There's a shopping center at the right-hand side of the lobby and handicraft is on sale at one of the counters. You can go and have a look.

The Toilet

G: Where is the toilet?

A: Straight down the corri-

凌晨三点。那里专门供应小吃。

小卖部、商场

客: 在哪里买香烟、火柴和糖果?

员: 在一楼小卖部。

客: 中国的工艺品在世界上是有名的, 我想买点回去作为我这次访华的纪念品, 不知能在什么地方买到呢?

员: 在宾馆大厅右侧有一个商场, 那里有出售工艺品的专柜, 你可以到那里去看看。

厕所

客: 厕所在哪里?

员: 请沿走廊一直走下去,

dor, and then turn right
(left).

然后转向右边(左边)。

Word List 生词表

four [fɔ:] *num.* 四
 inquiry [in'kwairi] *n.* 询问
 restaurant ['restərɔ:n] *n.* 餐厅
 ground [graund] *n.* 地面
 floor [flɔ:] *n.* 楼、一层
 hour ['aʊə] *n.* 小时、钟头
 breakfast ['brekfəst] *n.* 早餐
 lunch [lʌntʃ] *n.* 午餐
 dinner ['dinə] *n.* 晚餐
 six [siks] *num.* 六
 nine [nain] *num.* 九
 eleven [i'levn] *num.* 十一
 a. m. (A. M.) ['ei 'em] 上午(拉丁语)
 p. m. (P. M.) ['pi: 'em] 下午(拉丁语)
 twelve [twelv] *num.* 十二
 midnight ['midnait] *n.* 午夜
 splendor ['splendə] *n.* 光辉
 available [ə'veiləbl] *a. n.* 可用的、供应

snack [snæk] *n.* 小吃、快餐
 coffee ['kɒfi] *n.* 咖啡
 shop [ʃɒp] *n.* 商店
 pastry ['peistri] *n.* 点心
 store [stɔ:] *n.* 小卖部
 center ['sentə] *n.* 中心
 buy [bai] *v.* 买
 cigarette [,sigə'ret] *n.* 香烟、烟纸
 match [mætʃ] *n.* 火柴
 sweet [swi:t] *n.* 糖果
 candy ['kændi] *n.* 糖果
 handicraft ['hændikra:ft] *n.* 工艺品
 famous ['feiməs] *a.* 著名的
 over ['ouvə] *prep.* 越过、多过、在……面上
 world [wɜ:ld] *n.* 世界
 as [æz, əz] *prep.* 作为、当作
 souvenir ['su:vəniə] *n.* 纪念品
 present ['preznt] *a.* 目前的

lobby ['lɒbi] *n.* 前厅
 sale [seil] *n.* 出售
 toilet ['tɔilit] *n.* 厕所
 straight [streit] *adv.* 直接、一直
 down [daun] *prep., adv.* 下

corridor ['kɒridɔ:] *n.* 走廊
 then [ðen] *conj.* 然后
 right [rait] *n., a.* 右面、对的
 left [left] *n., a.* 左面、左边的

Exercises

A. Complete the following sentences:

bring you ...?
give you ...?
take you ...?

1. Shall I
2. Would you like ...?
Would you like ...?
Would you like ...?

B. E to C

1. What are the rates?
2. What price is it?
3. What's the charge?
4. What's the fare?
5. What does it cost?
6. How much is it?

C. C to E

1. 请给我买些点心好吗?
2. 每天七元。

Lesson Six 第六课

(I'm) In a Hurry 我有急事

- G: Taxi! 客: “的士”!
- D: Where are you going? 司: 你要上那儿去?
- G: I am going to the airport. 客: 上机场。
- D: All right. Get in, please. 司: 好吧, 请上车。
- G: How far is it from here to the airport? 客: 从这儿到机场有多远?
- D: It is quite a distance. And it's at least a ten-minute drive. 司: 有一定的距离, 驾车起码也得十分钟才到。
- G: I am in a hurry to catch the plane. Can you drive faster? 客: 我急着赶飞机, 你可以快一点吗?
- D: I am sorry. I can't. The maximum speed, according to the traffic rule, is forty kilometres an hour. What time do you have to be at the airport? 司: 对不起, 不行。交通规则规定最高速度是40公里。你得几点赶到机场呢?
- G: I have to get there before half past eight. 客: 我八点半以前必须赶到。
- D: It's just ten minutes past eight. Take it easy. I am 司: 现在才八点十分。别着急, 保证你不会迟到。

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sure you won't be late.

...

G: What has happened to the car?

D: The engine must be in trouble.

G: Can you repair it?

D: Let me try. ...

Oh, the gas tube is leaking! I don't think I can make the engine work again.

G: What shall we do? I am in a hurry. You have to do something about it.

D: Don't worry about it. I'll ask the taxi station to send you another car. Wait a few minutes, please.

G: Hurry up, please.

.....

客: 车子出什么问题啦?

司: 肯定是发动机出毛病了。

客: 可以修吗?

司: 试试看吧。.....

啊, 油管破了! 不能修了!

客: 怎么办? 我是有急事的, 你得想个办法呀。

司: 不必着急, 我叫“的士”站给你另派一辆车来, 请你等一会吧。

客: 请快点。

Word List 生词表

hurry ['hʌri] n.	急	quite [kwaɪt] ad.	相当
far [fɑ:] ad.	远	distance ['dɪstəns] n.	距离
from [frɒm] prep.	从		

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least [li:st] *a. ad.*
 最小、最少
 ten [ten] *num.* 十
 minute ['minit] *n.* 分、片刻
 drive [draiv] *v.* 驾驶、开车
 can [kæn, kən] *v. aux.*
 能、会
 fast [fɑ:st] *a.* 迅速的
 can't [kɑ:nt] = cannot. 不行
 maximum ['mæksiməm]
 n. 最高
 speed [spi:d] *n.* 速度
 according [ə'kɔ:diŋ] *ad.*
 依、据
 traffic ['træfik] *n.* 交通
 rule [ru:l] *n.* 规则、章程
 forty ['fɔ:ti] *num.* 四十
 kilometre ['kiloumi:tə] *n.*
 公里
 hour ['aʊə] *n.* 小时
 have [hæv, həv] *v.* 有
 before [bi'fɔ:] *prep.*
 在...以前
 half [hɑ:f] *n.* 半、一半
 just [dʒʌst] *ad.* 正好、恰好
 easy ['i:zi] *a.* 安心的

won't [wəʊnt] = will not
 late [leit] *a.* 迟到
 has [hæz, həz] *have* 的第三
 人称单数(现在式)
 happen ['hæpən] *v.*
 (偶然)发生
 engine ['endʒin] *n.*
 引擎、发动机
 must [mʌst, məst] *aux. v.*
 必须、要
 repair [ri'peə] *v.* 修理
 try [traɪ] *v.* 试
 gas [gæs] *n.* (美俗)汽油
 tube [tju:b] *n.* 筒、管
 leak [li:k] *n. v.* 漏洞、漏水
 make [meɪk] *v.* 造、制造
 work [wɜ:k] *n. v.*
 操作、劳动、工作
 again [ə'geɪn] *ad.* 又、再
 something ['sʌmθɪŋ] *n.*
 某事、某物
 send [send] *v.* 派遣
 another [ə'nʌðə] *a.* 另外的
 wait [weit] *v.* 等、等待
 few [fju:] *a.* 少数的、不多的
 up [ʌp] *ad.* 向上、在上

Lesson Twenty-three 第二十三课

Checking Baggage 寄存行李

G: I'm leaving for Beijing tomorrow, and will be back in a few days. I don't want to take so much baggage. Can I leave my box here in your safekeeping?
 客: 我明天去北京, 过几天就回来, 不想带那么多东西了, 我的箱子可以寄存在这里吗?
 A: Certainly.
 员: 当然可以。
 G: How much do you charge?
 客: 你们收多少保管费?
 A: One yuan per day.
 员: 每天一元。
 G: All right. Do I have to go through any formality?
 客: 行啊, 我需要办些什么手续呢?
 A: Would you mind letting me check the contents?
 员: 请让我检查一下里面的东西好吗?
 G: Not at all. There's nothing special.
 客: 看吧, 没有什么特别的東西。
 A: May I ask what's in this small bottle?
 员: 请问这个小瓶里装的是什么?
 G: Alcohol.
 客: 酒精。
 A: Alcohol is combustible. Please take it out, for
 员: 酒精是易燃品, 为了安全起见请把它拿出来。

safety's sake.

G: I'm sorry. Anything else I should take out?

A: Please take out the tinned (canned) goods as well.

G: Why?

A: According to regulations, we don't accept food for safekeeping.

G: I see.

A: Here are the checks for the baggage.

客：对不起，还有什么东西应该拿出来的吗？

员：请把罐头食品也拿出来。

客：为什么？

员：根据章程规定，我们不保管食物。

客：我明白了。

员：这是行李牌（卡）。

Word List 生词表

check [tʃek] *n., v.*

寄存行李的牌子、寄存、检查

safekeeping [ˈseɪfˈki:piŋ]

n. 保管

formality [fɔ:ˈmæli:ti]

n. 手续

content [ˈkɒntent] *n.*

内容、内容物

alcohol [ˈælkəhɒl] *n.*

酒精

combustible [kəmˈbʌstəbl]

易燃的

safety [ˈseɪfti] *n.* 安全

sake [seɪk] *n.* 起见

accept [əkˈsept] *v.* 接受

according to [əˈkɔ:diŋ tu:]

根据

regulation [regjuˈleɪʃən] *n.*

章程、条例

tinned [tɪnd] *a.* 罐装的

canned [kænd] *a.* 罐装的

food [fu:d] *n.* 食品

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE A

NAME _____ M F AGE _____

JOB TITLE _____

SPECIFIC DUTIES _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED HERE? _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU STUDIED ENGLISH? _____

WHERE?	NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING TEACHER?
middle school _____	_____
university _____	_____
special institute _____	_____
night school _____	_____
radio program _____	_____
self study _____	_____
hotel _____	_____

IS A KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH IMPORTANT TO YOUR JOB? _____

On the job:

speaking to hotel guests _____ speaking to customers _____

reading special material _____ reading menus _____

conducting research _____ taking orders _____

conducting business _____ taking requests _____

entertaining hotel guests _____ reading instructions _____

handling complaints _____ telephone message _____

other _____

Conversing with hotel guests _____

For promotion or higher status _____

To build public relations _____

Other _____

WOULD YOUR JOB BE LIMITED IF YOU DID NOT KNOW ENGLISH? _____

OF THE HOTEL GUESTS YOU MEET, WITH WHAT PERCENTAGE MUST YOU SPEAK IN

ENGLISH? 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE B

FOR ADMINISTRATORS ONLY

DO YOU FEEL THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE EMPLOYEES UNDER YOU TO

LEARN ENGLISH? _____ WHY? _____

WHICH EMPLOYEES UNDER YOU MUST USE ENGLISH THE MOST IN THEIR JOBS?

IS IT IMPORTANT FOR YOUR STAFF MEMBERS TO LEARN ABOUT WESTERN CULTURE?

_____ WHY _____

HOW DO THEY LEARN ABOUT WESTERN CULTURE?

The hotel training program _____

On-the-job experience _____

In an English language class _____

Other _____

APPENDIX D

THE CHART

2

VITA

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