

ASSESSING THE ACADEMIC ENGLISH NEEDS OF KING FAHD SECURITY COLLEGE OFFICERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EAP PROGRAM

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Abstract. *Abundant research has been devoted to the study of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in various academic settings, and yet no studies have been conducted to investigate the academic English use in military settings, thus making the undertaking of this study significant. This paper investigated the English academic needs of 42 officers working at King Fahd Security College in Saudi Arabia. The participants' military ranks ranged from 1st lieutenants to lieutenant colonel. A questionnaire was used to collect data about the officers' academic English needs. Overall, the results showed that the officers did not receive training on how to use EAP, and the language materials in the English courses they had completed were not consistent with their perceived academic needs. The officers showed awareness of the graduate requirements that await them; that is, they rated some academic skills such as writing proposals and theses, communicating with academic advisers as the most important skills. Based on these findings, the study suggested general guidelines for the development and implementation of an EAP program at KFSC.*

Key words: *ESP, EAP, needs assessment, course design, Saudi officers, King Fahd Security College*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) has become an expanding discipline in higher education. According to Ypsilandis and Kantaridou (2007, 69) “EAP refers mainly to the academic English needs of students and of future professionals who would seek a career in the academic environment”. EAP emerged from the common branch in English language teaching, namely English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (Hyland and Hamp-Lyons 2002). ESP is “an approach to language teaching, course design and materials development in which all decisions as to content and method are based on learners' reasons for learning” (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, 19). ESP represents a departure from the mainstream General English Teaching (GET). In ESP, the learners are usually adults who already have some familiarity with English and are aware of their needs to communicate a set of professional language skills and perform certain jobs or academic related tasks (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

Needs analysis (hereafter NA) is the vehicle by which ESP/EAP researchers and educators identify their target learners' needs. ESP literature abounds with various definitions of NA. For example, Richards (1985, 5) defined NA as “. . . a mechanism for collecting a wider range of input into the content, design and implementation of a language program through involving such people as learners, teachers, administration and

employees in the planning process". NA therefore plays a significant role in the process of designing and implementing ESP/EAP courses, and its importance has been highlighted by language educators (e.g., Bindley 1989; Cowling 2007; Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998; Hutchinson and Waters 1987; Munby 1978; Richards 2001; Richterich and Chancerel 1987; Robinson 1991). The importance of NA can be seen in the fact that it is the first step in language course design and that it provides the base for all subsequent course design activities (Johns 1991; Nunan 1988; Richards 2001). For example, meeting the learners' needs is a prerequisite for the writing of learning objectives and the selection of the course content (Al-Dossari 1999; Mackay and Mountford 1978; Munby 1978).

There are two main approaches in NA: Target-Situation Analysis (TSA) and Present-Situation Analysis (PSA) (Chambers 1980; Jordan 1997; Songhori 2008). Through TSA language educators identify the learners' language requirements to prepare them to successfully join their academic programs and future careers (West 1994). Munby's (1978) Communicative Needs Processor (CNP) represented the first and best known framework of TSA. Munby's CNP included a set of elements from which information on the students' target situation can be specified. In contrast, PSA determines the students' strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of their English course (Robinson 1991). Richterich and Chancerel (1980) set forth a range of means for establishing the PSA. They suggested three main sources of data: the target learners, the language-teaching establishment, and the institution implementing the PSA outcomes. In this study, both approaches are employed to collect data about KFSC officers' academic English needs.

2. PREVIOUS STUDIES ON NEEDS ANALYSIS IN EAP

A large number of studies have been conducted to assess learners' needs for EAP across various academic disciplines and settings. Within the medical contexts, several studies (e.g., Hwang & Lin 2010; Naruenatwatana & Vijchulata 2001) were conducted to identify the academic English needs of medical students. For example, Naruenatwatana and Vijchulata (2001) investigated the academic English needs of 297 medical students. In addition, seven English instructors and 10 subject teachers were included in the sample. The participants viewed the four English language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as important. However, they all rated reading skills as the most important ones. The three groups of participants agreed that the current English courses provided for the medical students are not relevant to their academic English needs of the students. Therefore, the researchers called for more English courses geared to the academic English needs of medical students.

In another study within the medical context, Hwang and Lin (2010) investigated the academic English needs of 378 medical students and 24 faculty members in Taiwan. They distributed a questionnaire to both groups. The participants from both groups ranked reading skill as the most important skill, followed by listening, speaking and writing. They also emphasized that the language materials should be related to the medical field, and should be in particular relevant to medical reading.

Within the field of sciences and technology, several studies were carried out to identify the academic English needs of graduate studies. Rahman et al. (2008) assessed the academic English needs of 252 foreign postgraduates at the National University of Malaysia. Following Dudley-Evans and St John's (1998) needs analysis model, the researchers used

a questionnaire and semi structured interviews to collect data. The interviews included 10 foreign postgraduate students and 5 professors in the fields of science and technology. The findings emphasized the importance of some speaking tasks and skills, which led Rahman and his colleagues to propose an ESP speaking course for foreign postgraduates studying at the National University of Malaysia.

In another study within the field of sciences, Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2010) identified the academic English needs of 81 petroleum engineering students at Hadhramout University of Science and Technology in Yemen. They used a questionnaire to collect their data. The participants perceived listening, reading, and writing sub-skills to be the most frequently used skills, but considered almost all the language skills to be important to acquire. The findings also showed that the current English course was not based on the students' academic English needs, making them perform poorly in English.

Adzmi et al. (2009) analyzed the academic English language needs of 54 Industrial Design students at the Technology University in Malaysia. They used a questionnaire and interview to collect data. The results showed that the participants lacked the language skills required by their faculty due to a weakness in the language courses they had. Thus, Adzmi et al. stressed the need to fulfill the students' academic English needs to help them meet the requirements of their future careers.

Sattar et al. (2011) assessed the academic English needs of undergraduate students of Garment Manufacturing and Yarn Manufacturing at National Textile University, Pakistan. A questionnaire was used to determine students' academic needs. The teachers were also asked about the students' needs. The results showed that students want to learn English language for academic and business purposes. They preferred to learn English through focusing on communication strategies rather than grammar or translation methods and want to improve their listening and speaking skills.

Zhghoul and Hussein (1985) identified the academic English needs in higher education as perceived by 1147 students and 90 faculty members from various departments at Yarmouk University. The data was collected through two questionnaires. The findings showed that knowledge of English is an important factor for success at the university because the majority of courses are taught in English. Students as well as faculty members ranked the listening skill as the most important for success at the university but differed with regard to the importance of the other skills. The two researchers concluded that English course requirements in higher education should prepare students for their field of study (e.g., medicine, engineering) from the beginning of their study at the university preparatory year. That is, the English course requirements should address learners' needs instead of waiting until they join their departments.

Within three different academic settings, Al-Jarf (1994) identified the academic and vocational English needs of 137 master and doctoral students in three different colleges at King Saud University: Arts, Agriculture and Administrative Sciences. She used a questionnaire to collect her data. She found that graduate students need learning English to read specialized English references and translate texts related to their area of study. Al-Jarf called for the development of an English course that meets the students' academic English needs such as reading, translation and study skills, with a focus on texts related to the students' subjects matter.

Similarly, Khajavi and Gordani (2010) investigated 260 Iranian MA students' perceptions of their academic English needs in six colleges of Isfahan University. The researchers employed an academic skills questionnaire and interviews to collect their data. The

results showed that the participants rated speaking skill as the most important skill. The participants also stressed their need for instructions on how to write abstracts and give presentations in seminars. Khajavi and Gordani concluded their study by emphasizing that the current EAP program used in the six colleges was not consistent with the participants' perceived academic English needs.

Rajabi and Azarpour (2011) investigated the academic English needs of 45 male senior students majoring in Business Administration at Malayer Islamic Azad University in Iran. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The findings showed that the participants related reading and writing skills to classroom practice, and speaking to success in their future jobs.

In a study that addressed the academic English needs of Saudi students in an English-speaking country, Alqahtani (2011) investigated the academic needs of 62 Saudi students pursuing their graduate studies in Britain, and the influence of culture on their achievement. He distributed a questionnaire to the students, and interviewed three groups: graduate students; students enrolled in the EAP program at Southampton University; and teachers in the EAP program. He also observed some EAP classes. Alqahtani found that Saudi students had a low level of English and were unaware of the education system in Britain. As for EAP teachers, they lacked knowledge of the Saudi culture and students' needs for the right teaching methods. Furthermore, the results showed that students had limited vocabulary, poor writing and reading skills. Alqahtani called for preparation courses for Saudi students in Saudi Arabia that focus on EAP and cultural issues that they may encounter in Britain.

In summary, from the studies reviewed above, it is obvious that many studies have been devoted to the field of EAP, and yet no studies have been conducted to investigate the academic English use in military settings, thus making the undertaking of the current study significant.

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Constructivism KFSC officers have the task of preparing and qualifying would-be-officers in various security sciences (e.g., Criminology, Traffic, Civil Defense, Information Security) and security-related disciplines (e.g., Law, Computer Sciences). Thus, KFSC annually sends some of its officers to local and international universities to pursue their graduate studies in these disciplines. Recently, KFSC has signed a memorandum of understanding with some colleges and universities in the USA to exchange security knowledge and train its officers in various security sciences. It is not however clear how this will happen properly without developing KFSC officers' ability to use EAP. KFSC officers need to be trained on how to use the appropriate academic English skills associated with their disciplines. KFSC annually sends some of its officers to ESL programs either inside or outside Saudi Arabia to receive English training. These programs do not focus on the officers' academic English needs because they are not designed to teach EAP, but rather English for general purposes and the officers' proficiency in English is weak. According to Alqahtani (2011), Saudi students pursuing their graduate studies abroad face difficulty in their academic studies because they have low English proficiency and no EAP course preparations in their country. To date, there has been no investigation of the academic English needs of KFSC officers. Hence, this study attempted to contribute empirical data to the EAP context in Saudi Arabia through assessing the academic English needs of KFSC officers.

4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study was mainly conducted to identify the academic English needs of KFSC officers. This investigation (a) explored KFSC officers' experience with EAP; (b) evaluated KFSC officers ability to use EAP; (c) assessed the extent to which KFSC officers need training on using EAP; (d) determined which English skills for academic purposes were more important for KFSC officers; (e) determined the frequency of KFSC officers' use of EAP; and (f) suggested general guidelines for the development of an EAP program, based on the findings, for KFSC officers.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

ESP/EAP researchers (e.g., Dudley-Evans and St. John 1998; Macky and Mountford 1978; Munby 1978; Robinson 1991; Water and Hutchinson 1987) have emphasized the importance of identifying and incorporating the target learners' language needs in ESP/EAP courses. The identification of the academic English needs of KFSC officers would provide important information for teachers, administrators, and language material developers. This would help them to make the right decisions with regard to teaching EAP to this group of learners. To the best of my knowledge, this study is the first of its type to investigate the academic English needs of KFSC officers, a population that has not been included in the previous research. The inclusion of such a population would provide an in-depth descriptive data on what types of academic English needs are required more by security officers and under what conditions.

6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given the necessity and importance of assessing the academic English needs of KFSC officers, the researcher addressed the following six research questions:

1. How often do KFSC officers use English inside and outside KFSC?
2. How do KFSC officers perceive their ability in using English skills and sub-skills?
3. How do KFSC officers self-rate their ability in using EAP?
4. What are the most important academic English needs for KFSC officers?
5. To what extent do KFSC officers need training in EAP?
6. How frequently do KFSC officers use EAP?

7. METHOD

7.1. Participants

A total of 42 Saudi male officers working at KFSC participated in the study. The participants' military ranks were 19 1st lieutenants, 14 Captains, 6 Majors and 2 lieutenant colonels. Twenty-eight officers held masters and 14 held bachelors in various disciplines. The officers represented different departments in KFSC.

7.2. Instrument

A questionnaire was developed, piloted and used as the only method of inquiry. The questionnaire included six sections. They are as follows:

Background information: in this section, the officers were asked to provide information about their names (optional), their age (optional), date of graduation from KFSC, military rank, university specialty, department of work at KFSC, university/college degree, and current higher degree sought.

Officers' experience with English: this section included 15 questions. Questions 1-3 were about the administration of English courses by KFSC. Questions 4-5 asked the officers whether they had completed a course in English and its duration, and whether they benefited from it using a four-point scale: very beneficial, beneficial, a little benefit, not beneficial. Questions 6-7 inquired whether the officers were involved in an English course at the time of answering the questionnaire, and whether they are/were trained on using EAP in this course and other previous English courses. Questions 8-9 were about the frequency of using English inside and outside KFSC. The officers' responses were coded on a four-point scale: always, usually, rarely, never. Question 10 was about the causes that prevent the officers from using English at KFSC. They were given three responses to choose from: I do not have the ability to use English, my job does not require me to use English, I do not have the opportunity to use English. Question 11 asked the officers about their opinion whether it is important for KFSC officers to master English to fully carry out their academic tasks and why. Question 12 asked the officers about the type of English courses they would like to have. They were given four different choices: English for Academic Purposes, English for Vocational Purposes, English for General Purposes, Other program (Specify). Question 13 asked the officers whether they were candidates or planning to pursue their graduate studies inside or outside the Kingdom. Question 14 asked the officers whether they had the ability to use EAP associated with their graduate studies. Finally, question 15 asked the officers to evaluate their ability to use the English language four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and sub-skills (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation).

Officers' self-rating of their ability to use EAP: on a five-point scale: very good, good, average, very weak, weak, the officers were asked to evaluate their ability to use EAP.

Officers' need for training on using EAP: this section assessed the officers' need for training on using EAP. A five-point scale was employed: strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain.

Importance of English Skills for academic purposes: on a five-point scale: most important, very important, important, less important, not important, the officers were asked to describe the importance of a list of English skills for academic purposes.

Frequency of Using EAP by Officers: this section measured the officers' frequent use of EAP. A four-point scale was used: always, usually, rarely, never.

There were a total of 28 items in each section of the sections 3-6: reading - 8 items, writing - 7 items, listening - 5 items, speaking - 6 items, and others - 2 items. Some of these items were adapted from Al-Tamimi and Shuib (1999) questionnaire. However, addition of some items and modifications in terms of wordings were made to suit the purpose of the study which was to identify the academic English needs of Saudi officers working at KFSC.

7.3. Data collection and analysis procedure

The data collection process took place at KFSC. The researcher sent the questionnaire out to KFSC officers in their offices. They were requested to complete the questionnaire within two weeks. The researcher's assistants collected the questionnaires. Out of the 60 questionnaires distributed, only 42 officers answered the questionnaire. For the analysis of the data, the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used. The officers' responses to the questionnaire items in Section Three were coded as follows: very good - 5, good - 4, average - 3, very weak - 2, weak - 1. The officers' responses to the questionnaire items in Section Four were coded as follows: strongly agree - 5, agree - 4, strongly disagree - 3, disagree - 2, uncertain - 1. The officers' responses to the questionnaire items in Section Five were coded as follows: most important - 5, very important - 4, important - 3, less important - 2, not important - 1. The officers' responses to the questionnaire items in Section Six were coded as follows: always - 4, usually - 3, rarely - 2, never - 1. The results of the study were computed in terms of frequency and percentages. Tables and figures were used to statistically present the results.

8. RESULTS

8.1. KFSC Officers' Experience with English

Table 1 below displays KFSC officers' responses to the questionnaire items in section two, which included questions about the officers' experience with English.

Table 1 KFSC Officers' experience with English

Item No.	Yes	%	No	%
1. KFSC administration of English courses directed to its officers.	31	74	11	26
2. Enrollment of KFSC officers in English courses inside Saudi Arabia.	33	79	9	21
3. Enrollment of KFSC officers in English courses outside Saudi Arabia.	6	14	36	86
4. Completion of English courses.	22	52	20	48
5. Enrollment in English course at the time of conducting this study.	10	24	32	76
6. Training of KFSC officers in these courses on how to use EAP.	5	12	35	88
7. KFSC officers' opinion of the importance of English to their jobs.	35	86	6	14
8. KFSC officers' candidacy to pursue their graduate studies.	29	71	12	29
9. KFSC officers' ability to use EAP.	14	34	27	66

There was no consensus among KFSC officers with regard to whether KFSC administers English courses particularly directed to its officers. Thirty-one officers (74%) said there are English courses administered by KFSC and directed to its officers. Contrary to this, eleven officers (26%) said there are no such courses. But, the analysis of the results shows that KFSC requires its officers to enroll in English courses administered at ESL centers inside Saudi Arabia, as 33 officers (79%) said so. Only 9 officers (21%) said no. This is not the case with English courses held abroad. The majority of KFSC officers (86%) said that KFSC does not require them to enroll in English courses abroad. Only 6 officers (14%) said it does. Twenty-two officers (52%) said that they completed an English course. Twenty officers (48%) said they did not complete any English course. Thirty-two of the participant

officers (76%) indicated that they are not currently enrolled in an English course at the time of conducting this study. Only 10 officers (24%) said they are enrolled in an English course. A few officers (12%) said they were trained on how to use EAP in the English courses they attended. The majority of the officers (88%) said they were not trained on using EAP. With regard to KFSC officers' personal opinion about the importance of English to their jobs, the majority (86%) emphasized that KFSC officers need to master English to carry out their academic tasks successfully. Only six officers (14%) said that English is not important to their jobs. Despite EAP importance, only 14 officers (34%) said they are capable of using EAP. Twenty-seven of the officers (66%) said they are unable to use EAP. This is alarming since 71% of the participant officers said they are candidate for scholarships to pursue their graduate studies.

With regard to KFSC officers' benefit from the English courses they attended, only 8 out of 32 of the officers (25%) described these courses as 'very beneficial'. Sixteen of the officers (50%) described these courses as 'beneficial'. Six officers (19%) said that these courses were of little benefit. Only 2 officers (6%) said that these courses were of no benefit at all. Table 2 below summarizes the officers' benefit from these courses.

Table 2 Percentages of KFSC officers benefit from the English courses

	n*	%
Very beneficial	8	25
Little beneficiary	6	19
Beneficial	16	50
Not beneficial at all	2	6

*Total number: 32 officers

On a four-scale point (always, usually, rarely, never), KFSC officers were asked to describe the extent to which they use English inside and outside KFSC site. With regard to using English inside KFSC site, the majority of the officers selected the category 'rarely' (31%) and 'do not use it at all' (38%). Only 4 officers selected the category 'always' (10%), and 9 officers selected the category 'usually' (21%). In contrast, KFSC officers seem to use English more frequently outside KFSC site. Nine officers selected the category 'always' (21), and 15 officers selected the category 'usually' (36%). Seventeen officers said they 'rarely' use English outside KFSC site. Only one officer said he does not use English outside KFSC. Table 3 below shows the percentage and overall mean of KFSC officers' responses to the use of English inside and outside KFSC site.

Table 3 Percentages of KFSC officers' use of English inside and outside KFSC site

	Using English inside KFSC		Using English outside KFSC	
	Yes	%	No	%
Always	4	10	9	21
Usually	9	21	15	36
Rarely	13	31	17	40
Do not use it at all	16	38	1	2

*Total number: 42 officers

When asked to give reasons for not using English in their jobs at KFSC, eleven officers (29%) said they 'cannot use it'. Sixteen officers (42%) said their jobs at KFSC do not require the use of English, and therefore they do not use it. Eleven officers (29%) said they did not have the opportunity to use English on the job site. Table 4 below summarizes the officers' reasons for not using English in their jobs at KFSC.

Table 4 KFSC officers reasons for not using English in their jobs at KFSC

Reason	n*	%
Cannot use it	11	29
My job does not require it	6	42
Did not have the opportunity to use it	11	29

*Total number: 37 officers

Table 5 below shows the types of English programs that KFSC officers want to have. The majority of the participant officers (78%) indicated that they prefer to have an EAP program which can prepare them to cope with the requirements of their graduate studies. Some of the officers (44%), who also selected EAP, chose English for General Purposes. A few officers (19%) selected English for Occupational Purposes. Only 3 officers (7%) selected programs other than English.

Table 5 Types of English programs desired by KFSC officers

Type	n*	%
1. English for Academic Purposes	32	78
2. English for Occupational Purposes	8	19
3. English for General Purposes	18	44
4. Other (Specify)	3	7

*Total number: 32 officers

On a five-point scale (very good, good, average, very weak, weak), the participant officers were asked to self-rate their ability in the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and sub-skills (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation). Table 6 below displays the frequency and percentages of the officers' responses.

Table 6 Percentages of KFSC officers' perception of their ability in using English skills/sub-skills

Level	Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing		Grammar		Vocabulary		Pronunciation	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very Good	10	24	6	15	12	29	9	22	4	10	2	5	7	17
Good	10	24	13	32	12	29	15	37	12	29	14	34	13	32
Average	13	32	15	37	13	32	8	20	14	34	18	44	15	37
Very Weak	8	19	6	15	4	10	6	15	10	24	5	12	5	12
Weak			1	2		2		5	1	2	2	10	2	2

Compared to the other skills, 29% of KFSC officers perceived their ability in reading to be 'very good' followed by listening (24%), writing (22%) and speaking (15%). However,

the majority of the officers tend to assign higher scores to the categories 'good' and 'average'. A higher number of the participants (37%) perceived their ability in writing to be 'good' followed by speaking (32%), reading (29%) and listening (24%). Except for writing (20%), more officers described their ability as 'average' with speaking receiving the highest percentage (37%) followed by reading (32%) and listening (32%) respectively. In terms of the two categories 'very weak' and 'weak', 20% officers perceived writing to be a problem, followed by listening (19%) and speaking (17%). Reading was seen to be the least difficult skill (10%). With regard to the English sub-skills, the officers again assigned higher scores to the two categories 'good' and 'average' in an attempt to avoid either overestimating or underestimating their general ability in these skills. They perceived their ability to be 'good' in vocabulary (34%), pronunciation (32) and grammar (29%). Other officers perceived their ability as 'average', with vocabulary receiving the highest scores (44%) followed by pronunciation (37%) and grammar (34%). Combining the officers' scores in the two categories 'very weak' and 'weak', the results showed that 27% of the participant officers perceived their ability in grammar as 'the weakest'.

8.2. Importance of EAP Skills to KFSC officers

Figure 1 below summarizes the percentages of KFSC officers' responses to the importance of EAP skills. Most of the officers' responses were distributed across the three categories: most important, very important, and important, which in overall indicate that those officers generally agree on the importance of EAP skills but differ to some extent about the degree of importance. The number of the officers who described the EAP skills as 'most important' ranged from 15 to 26 officers with percentages of EAP skills ranging from 38% to 67%. Those officers perceived the skill 'translating necessary information in English references to use in my academic studies' as the most important skills among all EAP skills (67%) followed by 'reading scientific references' and 'writing master/doctoral thesis' with a percentage of 64% respectively.

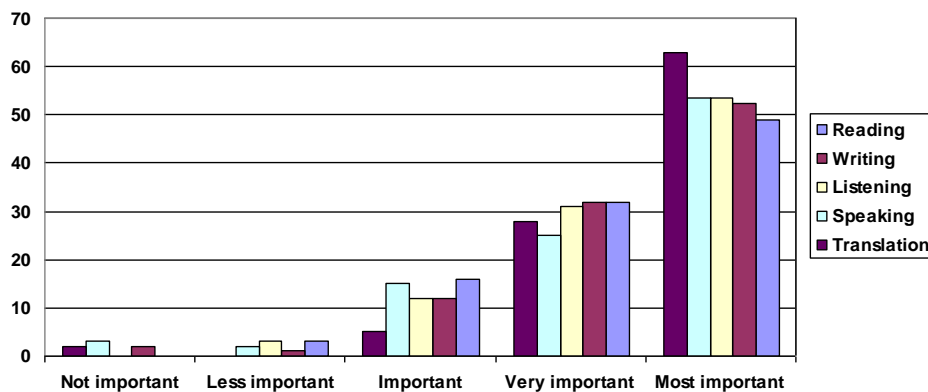


Fig. 1 KFSC officers' response to the important of EAP skills

With regard to the category of 'very important', the number of officers who selected this category ranged from 8 to 17 officers, with percentages of EAP skills ranging from

20% to 44%. The highest percentage (44%) was assigned to 'reading lectures' and 'writing lectures' respectively, followed by 'writing E-mail messages to the thesis supervisor' (38%) and 'understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings' (37%).

Only from two to nine officers selected the category 'important' to describe the EAP skills. The highest percentage in this scale was assigned to 'reading hand-outs related to course content' and 'writing examination answers' (23%) respectively, followed by 'reading research and articles on the internet' (19%).

A handful of officers described some of the EAP skills as either 'less important' or 'not important'. The assigned percentages ranged from 2% to 5%. The participant officers did not perceive reading, listening and the first two writing (assignments/research and reports) skills as 'not important'.

Taking into account the total percentages, translation skills was found to be the most important EAP skills that KFSC officers need (63%) followed by speaking (53%), listening skills (54%), writing skills (52%) and reading skills (49%).

8.3. Frequency of Using EAP

Figure 2 below shows the percentages of the officers' responses to the questionnaire items related to the frequency of using EAP skills. The participant officers distributed most of their responses to the three categories 'always', 'usually', and 'rarely'.

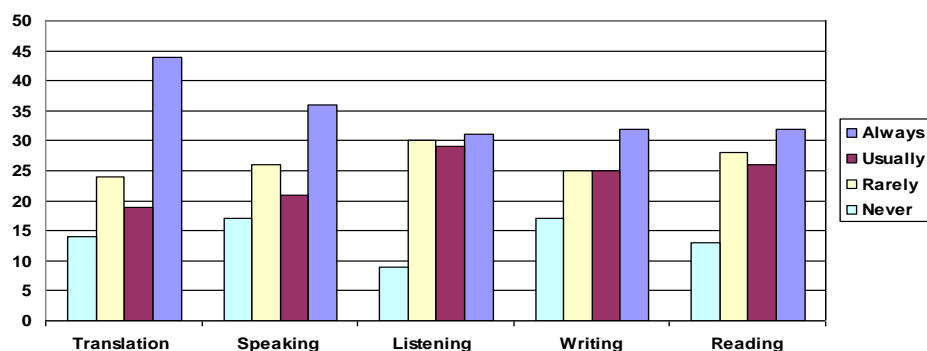


Fig. 2 KFSC officers' response to the frequency of using EAP skills

The participant officers said they 'always' use translations skills (44%), followed by speaking skills (36%), writing skills (32%), reading skills (32%) and listening skills (31%). Among all sub-skills, it was found that 'translating necessary information in English references to use in my academic studies' (47%) was perceived by the participants to be 'always' used, followed by 'oral participation in classroom discussion' (45%), 'translating necessary information in English references to use in my master/doctoral thesis' (40%), and 'communicating with the thesis supervisor' (37%).

With regard to the category 'usually', the participant officers selected listening skills to be 'usually' used more than the other skills (29%), followed by reading skills (26%), writing skills (25%), speaking skills (21%) and translations skills (19%). Understanding assignment instructions (37%), writing master/doctoral thesis (35%) and reading hand-outs related to course content (34%) were found to be more usually used.

In the category 'rarely', listening skills were found to be rarely used by the participant officers (30%), followed by reading skills (29%), speaking skills (26%), writing skills (25%) and translation skills (24%). Presenting a paper or a report in conferences and symposiums (37%), reading textbooks and scientific articles in specialized journals (37%), and understanding and following lectures in classroom (35%) were found to be rarely used.

In the category 'never', 17% of the participant officers said they never used writing skills, followed by speaking skills (17%), translation skills (14%) reading skills (13%) and listening skills (9%). EAP skills such as 'presenting a paper or a report in conferences and symposiums', 'writing lecture notes', and 'writing examination answers' received the highest percentages (22%).

8.4. KFSC officers' self-rating of their ability to use EAP

Figure 3 below illustrates the number and percentages of KFSC officers' self-rating of their ability to use EAP.

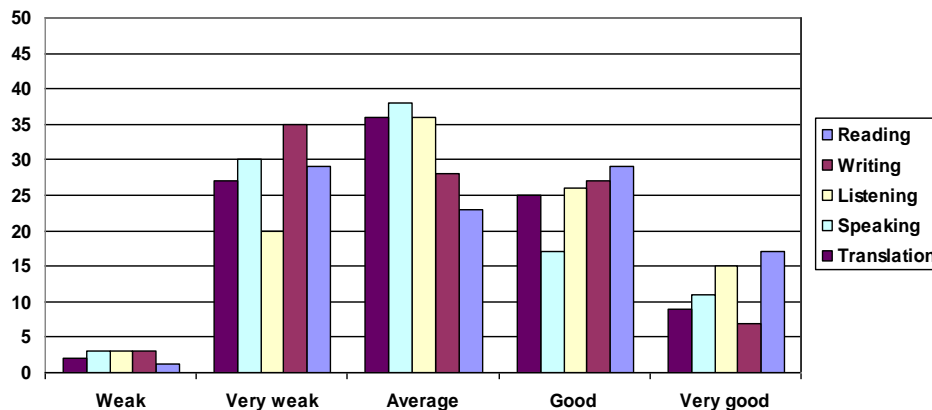


Fig. 3 KFSC officers' self-rating of their ability to use EAP skills

The officers' ability in using EAP skills greatly vary from 'very good' to 'weak'. The number of officers who perceived their ability in using EAP skills is 'very good' ranged from 1 to 13, with percentages ranging from 2% to 31%. Overall, 17% of the participant officers perceived their ability in reading skills for EAP as 'very good', followed by listening skills for EAP (15%). Reading textbooks received the highest percentage (31%) followed by 'reading e-mail message sent by the thesis supervisor' (19%).

A large number of the participants avoided overestimating their EAP ability by describing this ability as 'good' or 'average' or 'very weak'. The number of officers who rated their ability in using EAP skills as 'good' ranged from 6 to 17, with reading skills for EAP receiving the highest score (29%), followed by writing skills for EAP (27%). Writing assignments received the highest percentage (40%) followed by 'reading hand-outs related to course content' (36%) and 'reading research and articles on the Internet' (34%). Other officers described their ability in using EAP skills as an 'average', with speaking skills receiving the highest scores (38%), followed by listening skills (36%),

and translation skills (36%). Asking questions in classrooms (48%) and understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings (45%) received the highest scores. With regard to the category 'very weak', writing skills for EAP was perceived by the participants to be the 'weakest skill' (35%) followed by speaking skills for EAP (30%). Discussing topics with non-Arabic speaking specialists (54%) and writing master/doctoral thesis (40%) were described as 'very weak'.

8.5. KFSC officers' need for training in EAP

Given the officers' self-rating of their ability in using EAP, we now present the amount of training they would like to receive to improve their EAP skills.

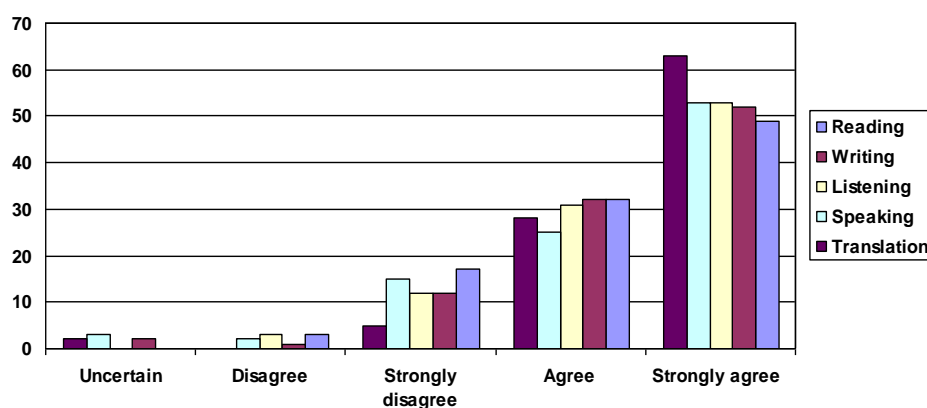


Fig. 4 KFSC officers' need for EAP training

As shown in Figure 4 above, the number of the participant officers who 'strongly agree' that they need training in EAP skills ranged from 21 to 30, with percentages ranging from 51% to 73%. Reading 'scientific articles in specialized journals' received the highest percentage (73%) followed by 'understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings' (71%). The number of officers who 'agree' to receive EAP training ranged from 5 to 14, with percentages ranging from 12% to 34%. The highest percentage was given to 'writing assignments' (34%) followed by 'reading textbooks' and 'writing research and reports' (32%) respectively. In contrast, a small number of officers 'strongly disagree' with the need for training in these EAP skills. The number of those officers ranged from 1 to 7, with percentages ranging from 2% to 17%. Similarly, a handful of officers disagreed or were uncertain about their need for EAP training. Their number ranged from 1 to 2, with percentages ranging from 2% to 5%.

Adding the percentages in the category 'strongly agree' and 'agree' together, the participant officers selected translation skills for EAP as the most skills which they need to get training (91%), followed by reading skills (88%), writing skills (87%), speaking skills (86%) and listening skills (86%),

9. DISCUSSION

This current study investigated the academic English needs of KFSC officers through administering a needs analysis. The overall results of the study are consistent with previous studies (e.g., Alqhatani, 2011; Sattar et al., 2011) which emphasized the importance of identifying and incorporating the students' academic English needs in an EAP course to help them cope with the requirements of their graduate studies. Generally speaking, the results of this study are indicative of the fact that the English courses which the officers completed were not based on their EAP needs and requirements. As indicated in the research problem and supported by the research findings, KFSC annually sends some of its officers to local ESL centers to receive instruction in general English to improve their English proficiency in the four major skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). This is explicable since the officers' proficiency level in English is overall weak and they need to improve it before they are introduced to EAP, which requires advanced level in general English. The officers in this study selected English for general purposes as the second program after EAP they would like to have, which further shows their awareness of the importance of attaining a reasonable command of English for general purposes before they could have an EAP course.

The analysis of the results has shown that KFSC officers vary in the amount of English instruction they received. Almost half of the participants have not received English instruction and that the majority of those participants were not engaged in English courses at the time of conducting this study. In addition, most of the officers' scores regarding their perception of their ability in using the English major skills and sub-skills fell in the category 'average' suggesting that they selected this category to avoid either underestimating or overestimating their ability in using English skills and sub-skills. This finding is very alarming because the majority of the participant officers have said they are candidates for scholarships to pursue their graduate studies. It is not clear how those officers would be able to cope with the requirements of their academic studies without having a good command of English. Officers who have conditional admissions are given a three-year scholarship to meet the English language requirement and complete their master or doctoral programs. This finding confirms Alqahtani's (2011) findings that Saudi students pursuing their graduate studies in Britain have low English proficiency causing them to perform poorly in their academic studies. KFSC officers have low English proficiency and rely on the first year of their scholarship to meet the English requirement as specified in their conditional admissions. This implies that they are not prepared to use EAP, creating a possible difficulty for them to acquire the necessary academic English skills associated with their graduate studies.

Like ESP, EAP is goal-oriented in that learners study English to meet certain requirements related to their academic study or work, which has implications for the type of the activities and materials that should be included in the EAP course. As a result of the officers' awareness of the importance of EAP to their academic studies and the available opportunities to pursue their graduate studies, they perceived all the academic skills listed in the questionnaire as most important, very important or important. The officers' selection of translation skills for academic purposes as the most important skill is consistent with Al-Jarf's (1994) finding that graduate students at KSU described translation of information related to their academic study or master/doctoral thesis as the most important skill they need to acquire. The officers' selection of translation as the

most important skills may point to their low proficiency in English or lack of critical thinking in English, which they try to compensate by translating necessary information that are relevant to their academic study and theses. This conclusion is further supported by their selection of 'reading scientific references' and 'writing master/doctoral thesis' as the most important skills following translation. These two academic skills require the officers to get access to academic information associated with their disciplines which may be only available in English. This conclusion may explain why the officers selected training in translation skills as the most needed.

10. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated the academic English needs of KFSC officers. Overall, the results showed that KFSC officers did not receive training on how to use EAP, and the materials in the English courses they had completed were not consistent with their perceived academic English needs. The participants showed awareness of the graduate requirements that await them; that is, they rated academic skills such as translating information from scientific references, writing master/doctoral proposals and theses, communicating with thesis supervisor as the most important skills. The findings of the study indicate that KFSC officers' needs for EAP should be taken into account in the English courses they join. They rated themselves mostly weak in many EAP skills. Curriculum developers should pay a special attention to the writing and communicational needs of the officers as they are going to publish papers in journals or present them in conferences.

It is hoped that the findings of this study, will help administrators, program planners, textbook writers, and others involved in language teaching and learning to understand better the academic English needs of KFSC officers. An understanding of these academic needs can go a long way towards creating more effective language training programs and more friendly learning environments in general. As shown in this study, the main point that was emphasized by all of the officers is that they had no EAP training and that the English courses they had were general and did not meet their academic requirements. As pointed out by Hutchison and Waters (1987), academic needs should be viewed as the instructional logistics that can be used by the students in order to reach the target needs. These target needs should be regarded as the skills that empower the learners for their future careers. That is to say, the academic English needs of the officers in this study should not be viewed as separate from their occupational needs (i.e. college instructors and administrators) since they are both related.

The following general guidelines can be used to develop an EAP program at KFSC and similar police academies where English is not the native language.

The goal of the proposed EAP program: based on the results of the academic needs analysis given to KFSC officers, the goal of the suggested EAP program is to prepare officers to read, write, speak and listen to English well enough to succeed in university and college graduate courses.

Length of the suggested program: specialized English programs such ESP and EAP are usually administered in a short period of time since the learners are adults who have received a reasonable amount of instructions in general English, and who come to the class with specific goals to achieve. Hence, the suggested time for this course is 12 weeks, with 20 hours per week.

Prospective officers and their role in the program: this suggested program is tailored to meet the academic English needs of KFSC officers who are candidates for scholarship to pursue their graduate studies. Since KFSC requires that officers must hold the military rank of captain when applying for a scholarship, the prospective officers therefore should be first lieutenants waiting for their deserved promotion of captain. Priority of admission in the program should be given to those officers planning to study in English-speaking countries and/or in local university programs in which English is the medium of instructions. Since ESP/EAP programs are particularly developed to meet the academic and vocational needs of the target students, the prospective officers should have positive roles in the programs through taking part in the selection and evaluation of the language materials and doing homework.

Selection of EAP instructors: in order for the suggested EAP program to achieve its objectives, the selection of the instructors must be based on high standards. That is, instructors must have masters' degrees in English, with teaching experience in teaching English for Academic purposes and/or academic skills. They must have the adaptability and flexibility to adapt the curriculum plan depending on the academic English needs of the officers.

Selection of the EAP course content: the content should include materials related to discussing and listening to recorded lectures, listening and note-taking, academic writing, academic vocabulary, reading academic texts, critical thinking, answering different types of university examinations, and improving library and research skills.

Assessment of the officers' performance: testing is a very important element in any language program. It has two important goals. First, testing tells whether the suggested program has achieved its objectives. Second, it tells whether the learners are doing their part and keeping up with the program assigned timetable. Therefore, periodical evaluations of the officers' performance in certain areas of the program should be conducted on weekly and monthly basis. For instance, the officers' ability to understand and use academic vocabulary or note-taking skills should be evaluated periodically during the program to make sure they are making progress in the program.

Finally, in terms of further research, a qualitative needs analysis study focusing on the academic English needs of the same target group with follow-up interviews would be useful for supporting the findings of the current study. Interviews could have provided more specific and detailed data about the officers' academic English needs. Moreover, this study may serve as a base for conducting a larger needs analysis throughout all the military colleges in Saudi Arabia through which the officers' academic English needs in these colleges are identified and incorporated in EAP courses

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Part 2: Your experience with English

Please answer the following questions.

1. Does KFSC administer English learning courses on campus for its officers?

Yes No ,

If yes, How long?

1 month 3 months 6 months 1 year and up

2. Does KFSC require you to enroll in English learning courses abroad?

Yes No ,

If yes, How long?

1 month 3 months 6 months 1 year and up

3. Have completed an English learning course?

Yes No ,

If yes, How long?

1 month 3 months 6 months 1 year and up

4. To what extent did you benefit from this English course which you completed?

Very beneficial Beneficial Little benefit No benefit at all

5. Are you now enrolled in an English learning course?

Yes No ,

If yes, where?

How long? 1 month 3 months 6 months 1 year and up

6. In these English courses, have you been trained on using EAP (e.g., reading texts related to your academic

area, writing short and long essays about topics related to your academic area)?

Yes No

7. To what extent do you use English in your work at KFSC (e.g., giving lectures, speaking in workshops before English-speaking experts and asking questions)?

Always Usually Rarely Do not use it at all

8. To what extent do you use English outside your work at KFSC (e.g., watching TV, surfing the internet, reading general topics in different fields of life)?

Always Usually Rarely Do not use it at all

9. If you do not use English in your work at KFSC, can you reasons?

- I'm unable to use it
- My job does not require me to use it
- I did not the opportunity to use it

10. In your personal opinion, do you it is necessary for KFSC to master English in order to carry out their academic tasks properly?

- Yes No

Why?.....

11. What type of English program would you like to have? (You may choose more than one)

- English for Academic Purposes
- English for Occupational Purposes
- English for General Purposes
- Other (Please, specify)

12. Are you a candidate for a scholarship to pursue your graduate studies? do you plan study inside Saudi Arabia or abroad?

- Yes No Inside Saudi Arabia Abroad

13. Do you think you are capable of using EAP which serves your graduate studies (e.g., reading scientific journals and books in English, writing reports and research in English, etc.)?

- Yes No

14. How would you rate your ability in the English language skills and subskills?

	Very Good	Good	Average	Weak	Very Weak
Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 3: Importance of EAP skills. Please read each statement and mark the one which describes your feeling best with (✓).

Academic English Skills	Most important	Very important	Important	Less important	Not important
A. Reading skills					
1. Reading assigned textbooks					
2. Reading scientific references					
3. Reading scientific articles in specialized journals					
4. Reading hand-outs related to course content					
5. Reading research and articles on the internet					
6. Reading instructions related to assignments and projects					
7. Reading lecture notes					
8. Reading E-mail messages sent by thesis supervisor					
B. Writing skills					
1. Writing assignments					
2. Writing research and reports					
3. Writing master/doctoral thesis proposal					
4. Writing master/doctoral thesis					
5. Writing lecture notes					
6. Writing examination answers					
7. Writing E-mail messages to the thesis Supervisor					
C. Listening skills					
1. Understanding and following lectures in classroom lectures					
2. Understanding and following seminars in classroom					
3. Understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings					
4. Understanding instructions and explanations					
5. Understanding assignment instructions					
D. Speaking skills					
1. Oral participation in classroom discussion					
2. Asking questions in classroom					
3. Presenting paper or a report in front of my classmates					
4. Presenting a paper or a report in conferences and Symposiums					
5. Discussing topics with non-Arabic speaking specialists					
6. Communicating with the thesis supervisor					
E. Translation skills					
1. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my master/doctoral thesis					
2. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my academic studies					

Part 4: Frequency of using EAP skills BY KFSC officers. Please read each statement and mark the one which describes your feeling best with (✓).

Academic English Skills	Always	usually	rarely	Never
A. Reading skills.				
1. Reading assigned textbooks				
2. Reading scientific references				
3. Reading scientific articles in specialized journals				
4. Reading hand-outs related to course content				
5. Reading research and articles on the internet				
6. Reading instructions related to assignments and projects				
7. Reading lecture notes				
8. Reading E-mail messages sent by thesis supervisor				
B. Writing skills				
1. Writing assignments				
2. Writing research and reports				
3. Writing master/doctoral thesis proposal				
4. Writing master/doctoral thesis				
5. Writing lecture notes				
6. Writing examination answers				
7. Writing E-mail messages to the thesis Supervisor				
C. Listening skills.				
1. Understanding and following lectures in classroom				
2. Understanding and following seminars in classroom				
3. Understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings.				
4. Understanding instructions and explanations				
5. Understanding assignment instructions				
D. Speaking skills				
1. Oral participation in classroom discussion				
2. Asking questions in classroom				
3. Presenting paper or a report in front of my classmates				
4. Presenting a paper or a report in conferences and symposiums				
5. Discussing topics with non-Arabic speaking specialists				
6. Communicating with the thesis supervisor				
E. Translation skills.				
1. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my master/doctoral thesis				
2. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my academic studies.				

Part 5: KFSC officers' self rating of their ability to use EAP skills. Please read each statement and mark the one which describes your feeling best with (✓).

Academic English Skills	Very good	Good	Moderate	Weak	Very weak
A. Reading skills.					
1. Reading assigned textbooks					
2. Reading scientific references					
3. Reading scientific articles in specialized journals					
4. Reading hand-outs related to course content					
5. Reading research and articles on the internet					
6. Reading instructions related to assignments and projects					
7. Reading lecture notes					
8. Reading E-mail messages sent by thesis supervisor					
B. Writing skills.					
1. Writing assignments					
2. Writing research and reports					
3. Writing master/doctoral thesis proposal					
4. Writing master/doctoral thesis					
5. Writing lecture notes					
6. Writing examination answers					
7. Writing E-mail messages to the thesis Supervisor					
C. Listening skills.					
1. Understanding and following lectures in classroom					
2. Understanding and following seminars in classroom					
3. Understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings.					
4. Understanding instructions and explanations					
5. Understanding assignment instructions.					
D. Speaking skills.					
1. Oral participation in classroom discussion					
2. Asking questions in classroom					
3. Presenting paper or a report in front of my classmates					
4. Presenting a paper or a report in conferences and symposiums					
5. Discussing topics with non-Arabic speaking specialists					
6. Communicating with the thesis supervisor					
E. Translation skills.					
1. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my master/doctoral thesis					
2. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my academic studies					

Part 6: KFSC officers' need for EAP training. Please read each statement and mark the one which describes your feeling best with (✓).

Academic English skills	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain
A. Reading skills.					
1. Reading assigned textbooks					
2. Reading scientific references					
3. Reading scientific articles in specialized journals					
4. Reading hand-outs related to course content					
5. Reading research and articles on the internet					
6. Reading instructions related to assignments and projects					
7. Reading lecture notes					
8. Reading E-mail messages sent by thesis supervisor					
B. Writing skills.					
1. Writing assignments					
2. Writing research and reports					
3. Writing master/doctoral thesis proposal					
4. Writing master/doctoral thesis					
5. Writing lecture notes					
6. Writing examination answers					
7. Writing E-mail messages to the thesis Supervisor					
C. Listening skills.					
1. Understanding and following lectures in classroom lectures					
2. Understanding and following seminars in classroom					
3. Understanding lectures in conferences, symposiums and scientific meetings.					
4. Understanding instructions and explanations					
5. Understanding assignment instructions.					
D. Speaking skills.					
1. Oral participation in classroom discussion					
2. Asking questions in classroom					
3. Presenting paper or a report in front of my classmates					
4. Presenting a paper or a report in conferences and Symposiums					
5. Discussing topics with non-Arabic speaking specialists					
6. Communicate with the thesis supervisor					
E. Translation skills. I need translation skills to:					
1. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my master/doctoral thesis					
2. Translating necessary information in English references to use in my academic studies.					