

**Tailoring the Curriculum to Fit Students' Needs: Designing and Improving a
Language Course at Dhaka University – Bangladesh**

Tazin Aziz Chaudhury

Assistant Professor
Department of English
University of Dhaka
Dhaka 1000
Bangladesh

Tazinchaudhury@yahoo.com

TAILORING THE CURRICULUM TO FIT STUDENTS' NEEDS: DESIGNING AND IMPROVING A LANGUAGE COURSE AT DHAKA UNIVERSITY – BANGLADESH

ABSTRACT

The assessment of students' language needs is a crucial pre-requisite in EAP (English for Academic purposes) curriculum development. Effective needs analysis leads to the specification of objectives for a course at the same time considering the available resources and existing constraints. This leads to curriculum design and choice of methodology, which is implemented through appropriately selected teaching materials. This paper presents the findings of a research study undertaken at the Business Studies Faculty of Dhaka University. A needs analysis was conducted on ninety students of three departments of the Business Studies Faculty to assess their English language needs. A corresponding needs analysis was conducted on faculty members to find out their perceptions of their students' English language needs. Several procedures, namely questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations, were used to gather information about the objective needs of the students and teaching staff. Analysis of the findings of this needs analysis revealed that some perceptions of the two groups converged to some extent but there was also some incongruency that needed to be addressed. The EAP course that was being used was evaluated in order to negotiate a more effective curriculum that would address the needs of all the stakeholders involved.

The purpose of this research was to:

- Determine the specific English language needs of the teachers and students of Business Studies Faculty at the University of Dhaka (DU)
- To find out if the English language courses at the freshman level adequately prepare students for study at the tertiary level
- Identify areas to improve the courses based on these findings

The main research tool used in the investigation was a questionnaire. The researcher sought the teachers' and students' views of what they need to know in order to function effectively in academic settings. The completed questionnaires were computer coded and analyzed with the help of the SPSS program. The researcher employed a five-point measurement scale to gauge students' responses, to close-ended questions. The respondents were asked to assign the numbers 1 to 5 for the questions.

The findings for the Business Studies Faculty are presented below.

Summary of the Findings and Discussion for the Faculty of Business Studies:

A. Overview of skills needed and difficulties encountered

The researcher wished to find out how often the participants were expected to use the four language skills in their course of study. The findings are presented in Figure (1.1)

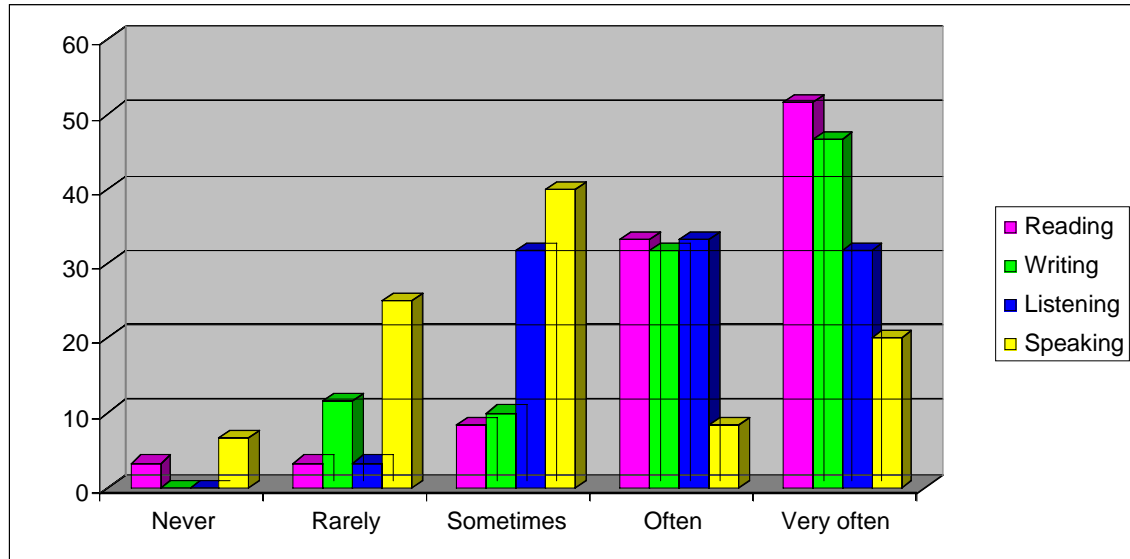


Figure 1.1 The frequency that the participants are expected to use the language skills in their course of study

Figure 1.1 shows that the majority (85%) claimed that they “very often” or “often” used the reading skill. Similarly a majority (77%) indicated they “very often” or “often” used the writing skill. Surprisingly some (40%) respondents stated they “sometimes” spoke whereas only a few (20%) respondents indicated that speaking was “very often” used in their course of study; since English is the medium of instruction in this faculty this is rather unusual. Predictably many (65%) respondents indicated that the listening skill is used “very often” or “often”; but some (31.7%) students stated they “sometimes” used listening.

The findings make it clear that the students are aware of the usage of English language skills in their academic setting. The findings suggest that the students use the receptive skills listening and reading and the productive skill writing quite a lot but the speaking skill appears to be used less. Therefore it is recommended that the needs be further explored and considered while designing future EAP courses.

Next the researcher tried to ascertain the degree of difficulty students encountered while using each of the language skills. Figure (1.2) illustrates the findings:

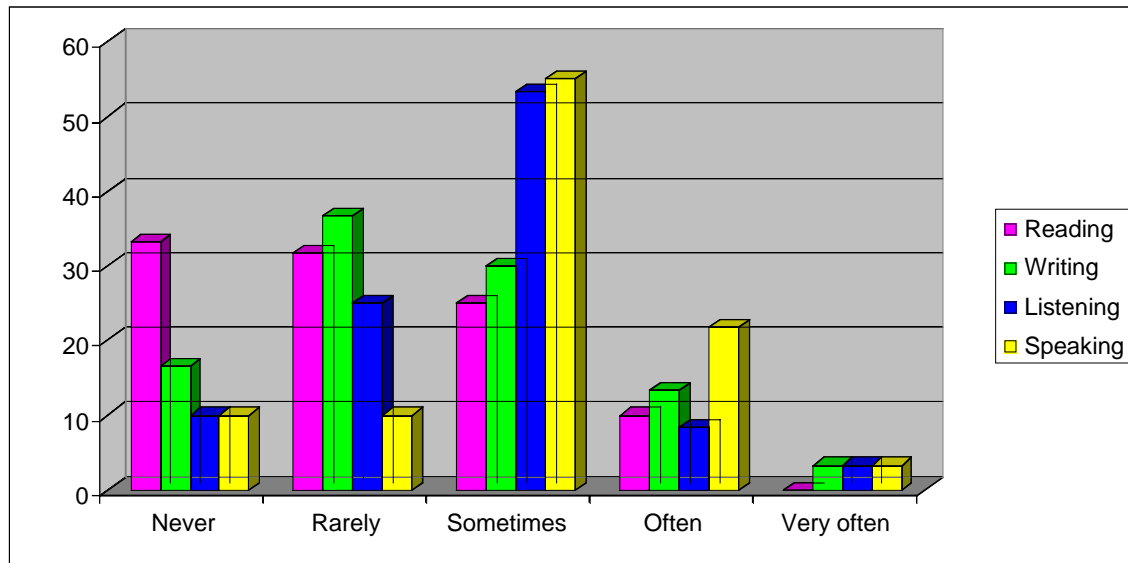


Figure 1.2 The frequency of difficulty faced by students in using the English language skills

According to Figure 1.2 only 6 (10%) participants claimed they “often” had difficulty with reading and a further 15 (25%) participants stated they “sometimes” had difficulties. For the writing skill, 8 (13.3%) participants claimed that they “often” faced difficulty; and 18 (30%) participants stated that they “sometimes” did. In the case of listening, 32 (53.3%) participants stated that they “sometimes” faced difficulty with listening. 13 (21.1%) participants claimed they “often” faced difficulty in speaking; and 33 (55%) participants claimed that they “sometimes” faced difficulty.

Reading and listening do not appear to be difficult but since these skills are not formally evaluated or tested maybe the difficulty cannot be properly perceived. Speaking particularly appears to be most difficult in the students’ perception and writing does not seem to be a problem. Since a large percentage (25-55%) of students indicated that they “sometimes” faced difficulty in all of the four skills, this needs to be investigated more carefully.

The researcher then wanted to find out the students' opinion of how important the English language skills are for their academic success. Figure 3 presents the findings:

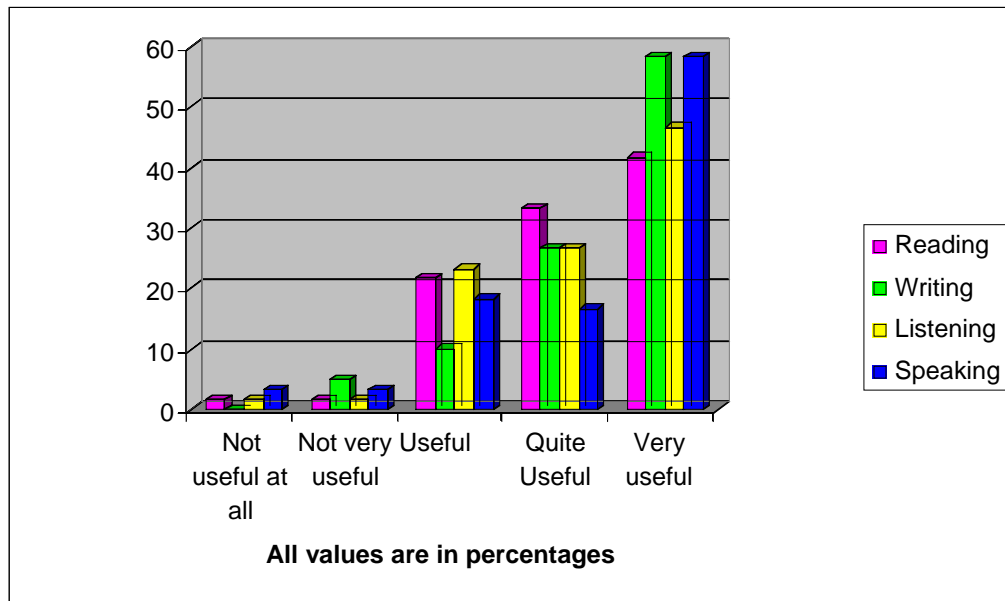


Figure 1.3 Students' perception of the importance of the skills in relation to academic success

Figure 1.3 indicates that the majority of the (>95%) participants felt that reading was “very useful”, “quite useful” or “useful”. For writing, most (>75%) participants stated it was “very useful” or “quite useful”. Regarding listening, most (95%) participants stated it was “very useful”, “quite useful” or “useful” for their academic success. For speaking, (>90%) participants stated it was “very useful”, “quite useful” or “useful”.

The findings show that the students quite clearly attach a lot of importance to all four of the skills in relation to their academic success, particularly since the medium of instruction in this faculty is English. Surprisingly however a small number of students (1.7-5%) indicated the skills were “not at all useful”; maybe the students did not understand the question, since all hand-outs, texts, exams and classes are in English in this particular faculty.

B. Overview of frequency of use of the language sub-skills Next the researcher aimed to find out what types of reading materials the students were normally expected to read and how often they were expected to read these materials. The results are displayed in Table (1):

Table 1
Frequency of the different types of reading materials students are expected to read

	Never.....		Sometimes		Often.....		Very often		Always	
	N	(%)	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Newspapers	2	(3.3)	7	(11.7)	13	(21.7)	13	(21.7)	25	(41.7)
Magazines	3	(5)	15	(25)	21	(35)	16	(26.7)	5	(8.3)
Novels/storybooks	5	(8.3)	25	(41.7)	13	(21.7)	12	(20)	5	(8.3)
Reference books/Journals	3	(5)	17	(28.3)	20	(33.3)	12	(20)	8	(13.3)
Textbooks	1	(1.7)	3	(5)	7	(11.7)	12	(20)	37	(61.7)
Selected chapters of books	2	(3.3)	8	(13.3)	10	(16.7)	10	(16.7)	30	(50)
Photocopied notes	4	(6.7)	10	(16.7)	10	(16.7)	13	(21.7)	23	(38.3)
Reports/proposals	2	(3.3)	16	(26.7)	14	(23.3)	19	(31.7)	9	(15)
Workbook/Lab instructions	15	(25)	18	(30)	16	(26.7)	8	(13.3)	3	(5)
Online/internet materials	1	(1.7)	12	(20)	13	(21.7)	16	(26.7)	18	(30)

The results make it clear that the students have to read a very wide range of reading materials. The majority of the students read newspapers, followed by textbooks and selected chapters of books. A significant number of students read photocopied notes and online or internet materials. Noticeably 25% students do not read lab or workbook instructions perhaps because in their field of study they are not required to do so. These findings are important for future course and materials design.

After this the researcher investigated the types of writing tasks the students were usually expected to write; and also tried to find out how often they had to write these diverse types of tasks. Table (2) presents the findings:

Table 2
Frequency of the different types of writing tasks students are expected to write

	Never.....		Sometimes		Often.....		Very..often		Always....	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Taking lecture notes	1	(1.7)	1	(1.7)	9	(15)	13	(21.7)	36	(60)
Writing tutorial assignments/term papers	-		6	(10)	14	(23.3)	18	(30)	22	(36.7)
Writing exams/in-course essays	-		6	(10)	12	(20)	16	(26.7)	26	(43.3)
Summarizing			13	(21.7)	23	(38.3)	19	(31.7)	5	(8.3)
Paraphrasing	4	(6.7)	18	(30)	16	(26.7)	14	(23.3)	8	(13.3)
Editing/proof-reading/revising	10	(16.7)	13	(21.7)	16	(26.7)	13	(21.7)	8	(13.3)
Translating	7	(11.7)	17	(28.3)	14	(23.3)	16	(26.7)	6	(10)
Writing proposals/project papers	3	(5)	14	(23.3)	19	(31.7)	12	(20)	12	(20)
Writing research papers	16	(27)	14	(23.3)	13	(21.7)	11	(18.3)	6	(10)

Writing reports/lab reports	3 (5)	11 (18.3)	17 (28.3)	20 (33.3)	9 (15)
Preparing flow-charts/tables	2 (3.3)	20 (33.3)	18 (30)	10 (16.7)	10 (16.7)
Writing case studies	4 (6.7)	19 (31.7)	16 (26.7)	16 (26.7)	5 (8.3)
Writing business letters	16 (26.7)	19 (31.7)	14 (23.3)	5 (8.3)	6 (10)
Writing resumes	9 (15)	25 (41.7)	11 (18.3)	9 (15)	6 (10)
Writing references	12 (20)	22 (36.7)	12 (20)	9 (15)	5 (8.3)
Writing introductions	5 (8.3)	21 (35)	10 (16.7)	15 (25)	9 (15)
Writing commentaries	15 (25)	17 (28.3)	17 (28.3)	5 (8.3)	6 (10)
Writing news article/features	19 (31.7)	18 (30)	12 (20)	9 (15)	2 (3.3)
Writing e-mails	7 (11.7)	13 (21.7)	11 (18.3)	18 (30)	11 (18.3)
Creative writing	7 (11.7)	20 (33.3)	15 (25)	8 (13.3)	10 (16.7)
Essay writing	6 (10)	24 (40)	15 (25)	5 (8.3)	10 (16.7)

As far as writing is concerned, it can be seen that the students are expected to write a diverse range of writing tasks. Almost all (>95%) of the students, have to write tutorial assignments or term papers and take lecture notes. A large majority of students (89%) write exams or in-course essays; and a considerable number of students (>66%) write proposals or project papers, reports, summaries and e-mails. About 50% of the students prepare flowcharts or tables, write introductions, write references and paraphrase. These writing tasks should be considered when designing future courses for this faculty.

Then the researcher tried to find out the different types of listening skills that the students were expected to use as well as how often they were usually expected to use these skills. Table (3) illustrates the findings:

Table 3
Frequency of the different types of listening tasks
students are expected to perform

	Never.....		Sometimes		Often.....		Very...often		Always...	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Listen to & understand lectures & notes	1	(1.7)	3	(5)	6	(10)	19	(31.7)	31	(51.7)
Listen to & carry out instructions/directions	5	(8.3)	5	(8.3)	14	(23.3)	27	(45)	14	(23.3)
Listen to & understand class/tutorial discussions	-	-	3	(5)	10	(16.7)	16	(26.7)	31	(51.7)
Listen to & understand questions/points raised during class/tutorials	-	-	4	(6.7)	9	(15)	28	(46.7)	19	(31.7)
Listen to & answer questions in class/tutorials	3	(5)	9	(15)	15	(25)	23	(38.3)	10	(16.7)
Listen to & understand seminars & talks	5	(8.3)	13	(21.7)	19	(31.7)	16	(26.7)	7	(11.7)
Listen to & understand television programs	-	-	6	(10)	18	(30)	22	(36.7)	14	(23.3)
Listen to & understand radio programs	20	(33.3)	17	(28.3)	7	(11.7)	9	(15)	7	(11.7)
Listen to & understand different English accents	3	(5)	19	(31.7)	17	(28.3)	13	(21.7)	8	(13.3)

In the case of listening, it is apparent that the majority of the students (>90%) have to listen to and understand: class or tutorial discussions; questions or points raised during class or tutorials; and carry out instructions or directions. A considerably large number of students (>75%) have to listen to and understand television programs; listen to and answer questions in class/tutorials; and listen to and understand lectures and notes. And 68% have to listen to and understand seminars and talks. These findings are very useful and enlightening for future reference.

Finally the researcher sought to find out what types of speaking tasks the students were expected to perform and how often they had to do them. Table (4) displays the results:

Table 4
Frequency of the different types of speaking tasks
students are expected to perform

	Never.....		Sometimes...		Often.....		Very.often...		Always.....	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Asking questions	4	(6.7)	18	(30)	18	(30)	10	(16.7)	10	(16.7)
Answering questions	4	(6.7)	12	(20)	23	(38.3)	8	(13.3)	13	(21.7)
Expressing opinions /objections	4	(6.7)	17	(28.3)	19	(31.7)	16	(26.7)	4	(6.7)
Delivering oral presentations /reports	-		6	(10)	14	(23.3)	25	(41.7)	15	(25)
Explaining processes /procedures	1	(1.7)	16	(26.7)	27	(45)	12	(20)	4	(6.7)
Brainstorming	1	(1.7)	19	(31.7)	21	(35)	7	(11.7)	7	(11.7)
Taking part in class/tutorial /group discussions	-		17	(28.3)	13	(21.7)	18	(30)	12	(20)
Taking part in social conversations	4	(6.7)	15	(25)	21	(35)	12	(20)	8	(13.3)
Speaking with other fluent speakers of English	3	(5)	25	(41.7)	13	(21.7)	13	(21.7)	6	(10)

These findings clearly prove that the majority (89%) of the students have to deliver oral reports and presentations, this is followed by taking part in class or tutorial or group discussions (71%); and about half (>55%) of the students have to explain processes or procedures ask questions, answer questions, express opinions or objections and take part in social conversations. This is valuable insight into the nature of the speaking tasks that are expected of students.

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C. Perception of English language sub-skills difficulties:

After obtaining data on the different types of sub-skills used by the students, the researcher then sought to find out the students' perception of difficulty in using the various sub-skills. Firstly the researcher investigated the degree of difficulty that the students faced in reading various types of reading materials. The results are given in

Table (5):

Table 5
Students' perception of the reading sub-skills difficulties

	Very difficult		Sometimes difficult		Not so difficult		Quite easy...		Very easy.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Newspapers	1	(1.7)	12	(20)	21	(35)	16	(26.7)	10	(16.7)
Magazines	-	-	13	(21.7)	23	(38.3)	19	(31.7)	5	(8.3)
Novels/storybooks	4	(6.7)	19	(31.7)	20	(33.3)	10	(16.7)	7	(11.7)
Reference books/Journals	2	(3.3)	24	(40)	25	(41.7)	8	(13.3)	1	(1.7)
Textbooks	2	(3.3)	10	(16.7)	18	(30)	20	(33.3)	10	(16.7)
Selected chapters of books	2	(3.3)	12	(20)	19	(31.7)	19	(31.7)	8	(13.3)
Photocopied notes	-	-	5	(8.3)	18	(30)	25	(41.7)	12	(20)
Reports/proposals	3	(5)	15	(25)	24	(40)	14	(23.3)	4	(6.7)
Workbook/Lab instructions	5	(8.3)	23	(38.3)	15	(25)	13	(21.7)	4	(6.7)
Online/internet materials	1	(1.7)	11	(18.3)	17	(28.3)	21	(35)	10	(16.7)

Based on these findings it can be concluded that, the students face the most difficulty in reading reference books or journals (40%); followed by reading workbook or lab instructions (38%); and lastly in reading novels or storybooks (31%). In the case of reading the other types of reading materials it can be inferred that the students appear to be able to handle them without much difficulty; however a small percentage (>20%) of students seem to be facing some difficulty. Perhaps future course design can address these issues.

Next the researcher carefully examined was the difficulty level faced by the students, in writing the various types of writing tasks. Table (6) presents the findings:

Table 6
Students' perception of the writing sub-skills difficulties

	Very difficult		Sometimes difficult		Not so difficult		Quite easy....		Very easy.....	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Taking lecture notes	1	(1.7)	5	(8.3)	18	(30)	19	(31.7)	17	(28.3)
Writing tutorial assignments/term papers	1	(1.7)	11	(18.3)	19	(31.7)	25	(41.7)	4	(6.7)

Writing exams/in-course essays		8 (13.3)	26 (43.3)	23 (38.3)	3 (5)
Summarizing		12 (20)	27 (45)	18 (30)	3 (5)
Paraphrasing	2 (3.3)	15 (25)	25 (41.7)	12 (20)	6 (10)
Editing/proof-reading/revising	3 (5)	15 (25)	20 (33.3)	15 (25)	7 (11.7)
Translating	1 (1.7)	12 (20)	29 (48.3)	10 (16.7)	8 (13.3)
Writing proposals/project papers	1 (1.7)	18 (30)	30 (50)	7 (11.7)	4 (6.7)
Writing research papers	11 (18.3)	23 (38.3)	11 (18.3)	11 (18.3)	4 (6.7)
Writing reports/lab reports		22 (36.7)	21 (35)	12 (20)	5 (8.3)
Preparing flow-charts/tables	2 (3.3)	18 (30)	21 (35)	10 (16.7)	9 (15)
Writing case studies	5 (8.3)	14 (23.3)	21 (35)	18 (30)	2 (3.3)
Writing business letters	2 (3.3)	11 (18.3)	19 (31.7)	22 (36.7)	6 (10)
Writing resumes		17 (28.3)	19 (31.7)	13 (21.7)	11 (18.3)
Writing references	1 (1.7)	10 (16.7)	23 (38.3)	16 (26.7)	10 (16.7)
Writing introductions	1 (1.7)	12 (20)	23 (38.3)	15 (25)	9 (15)
Writing commentaries	5 (8.3)	15 (25)	26 (43.3)	6 (10)	8 (13.3)
Writing news article/features	6 (10)	21 (35)	19 (31.7)	8 (13.3)	6 (10)
Writing e-mails	2 (3.3)	4 (6.7)	11 (18.3)	17 (28.3)	26 (43.3)
Creative writing	6 (10)	16 (26.7)	22 (36.7)	10 (16.7)	6 (10)
Essay writing	1 (1.7)	13 (21.7)	23 (38.3)	13 (21.7)	10 (16.7)

It can be surmised from the findings that students perceive the following writing tasks to be “difficult”:

- writing research papers
- writing news article or features
- writing reports or lab reports
- preparing flow-charts or tables
- writing case studies
- writing commentaries

Perhaps if the English course provided students with adequate practice and guidance in these writing tasks they will find them to be less difficult. Furthermore it is noticeable that approximately 20% students find most of the writing tasks difficult; this issue also needs to be addressed by the English course.

The next issue the researcher sought to investigate was the level of difficulty the students faced in performing the various types of listening tasks. The results are summarized in Table (7):

Table 7
Students’ perception of the listening sub-skills difficulties

	Very difficult...	Sometimes difficult	Not so difficult..	Quite easy.....	Very easy.....
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	difficult...		difficult		difficult..		easy.....		easy.....	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Listen to & understand lectures & notes	3	(5)	5	(8.3)	17	(28.3)	23	(38.3)	12	(20)
Listen to & carry out instructions/directions	2	(3.3)	5	(8.3)	31	(51.7)	14	(23.3)	8	(13.3)
Listen to & understand class/tutorial discussions	2	(3.3)	2	(3.3)	21	(35)	27	(45)	8	(13.3)
Listen to & understand questions/points raised during class /tutorials	2	(3.3)	7	(11.7)	25	(41.7)	17	(28.3)	9	(15)
Listen to & answer questions in class/tutorials	1	(1.7)	18	(30)	19	(31.7)	16	(26.7)	6	(10)
Listen to & understand seminars & talks	2	(3.3)	18	(30)	21	(35)	17	(28.3)	2	(3.3)
Listen to & understand television programs	1	(1.7)	11	(18.3)	22	(36.7)	15	(25)	11	(18.3)
Listen to & understand radio programs	4	(6.7)	9	(15)	18	(30)	20	(33.3)	9	(15)
Listen to & understand different English accents	6	(10)	23	(38.3)	16	(26.7)	8	13.3)	7	(11.7)

On the whole the feedback provides evidence that most of the students can handle a wide range of listening tasks without much difficulty. However it is also apparent that a considerable number of students (30%) find the following tasks difficult:

- listening to and answering questions in class or tutorials,
- listening to and understanding seminars and talks
- listening to and understanding different English accents

Some students (>15%) find these tasks difficult:

- listening to and understanding television programs,
- listening to and understanding radio programs
- listening to and understanding questions or points raised during class or tutorials,

Future course design should consider these issues.

Finally the researcher investigated the level of difficulty faced by students in the different types of speaking tasks. The results are illustrated in Table (8):

Table 8
Students' perception of the speaking sub-skills difficulties

	Very difficult...		Sometimes difficult		Not so difficult		Quite easy.....		Very easy.....	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Asking questions	4	(6.7)	13	(21.7)	22	(36.7)	13	(21.7)	8	(13.3)
Answering questions	3	(5)	15	(25)	19	(31.7)	17	(28.3)	6	(10)
Expressing opinions /objections	1	(1.7)	13	(21.7)	2	(41.7)	17	(28.3)	4	(6.7)
Delivering oral presentations /reports			7	(11.7)	25	(41.7)	22	(36.7)	6	(10)

presentations /reports					
Explaining processes /procedures		13 (21.7)	28 (46.7)	15 (25)	4 (6.7)
Brainstorming	1 (1.7)	18 (30)	27 (45)	12 (20)	2 (3.3)
Taking part in class/tutorial /group discussions		12 (20)	25 (41.7)	15 (25)	8 (13.3)
Taking part in social conversations	1 (1.7)	15 (25)	28 (46.7)	10 (16.7)	6 (10)
Speaking with other fluent speakers of English	2 (3.3)	23 (38.3)	15 (25)	14 (23.3)	6 (10)

As seen from Table (8) quite a few students (>20%) faced difficulty with

- asking questions
- for answering questions
- expressing opinions or objections
- delivering oral presentations or reports
- explaining processes or procedures
- taking part in class or tutorial or group discussions
- taking part in social conversations
-

Quite a few students found speaking with other fluent speakers of English (>45%), and brainstorming (30%) difficult.

In the next section the researcher sought to find out how effective the course was in terms of whether there was any noticeable improvement in terms of the students' use of the four skills before and during the course. Firstly the frequency for reading before and after the course was established. The results are presented in Figure 3.1:

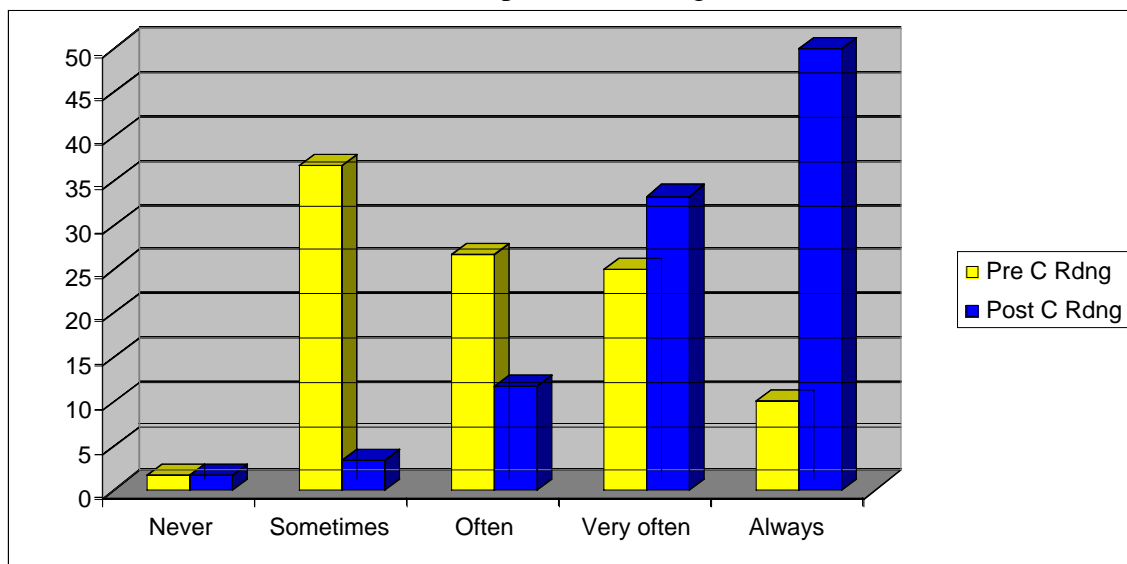


Figure (3.1) Students' reading frequencies before and after doing the course

Figure (3.1) clearly shows a drastic increase in the frequency of students who “always” read from 10% to 50%; and the frequency of students who “often” read slightly increased from 25% to 33.3%. On the other hand the frequency of students who read “sometimes” shows a drastic fall from 36.7% to 3.3% and similarly the frequency for students who “often read shows a decrease from 26.7% to 11.7%. This means that students started to read more frequently after doing the course.

Next the researcher tried to determine the frequency for writing before and after the course. These findings are displayed in Figure 3.2:

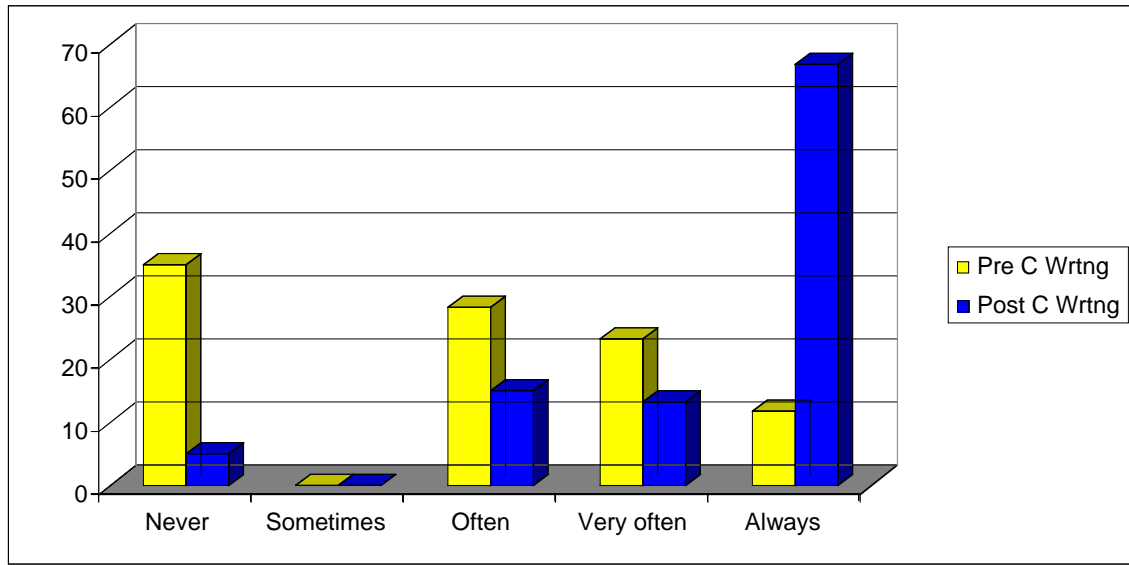


Figure 3.2 Students’ writing frequencies before and after doing the course

Figure (3.2) shows a very steep increase in the frequency of students who “always” wrote from 11.7% to 66.7%. On the other hand the frequency of students who “never” wrote shows a remarkable fall from 35% to 5%. So it appears that students started to write more frequently after having completed the course.

Having examined this, the researcher next looked into the frequency of listening before and after the course. Figure 3.3 illustrates the findings:

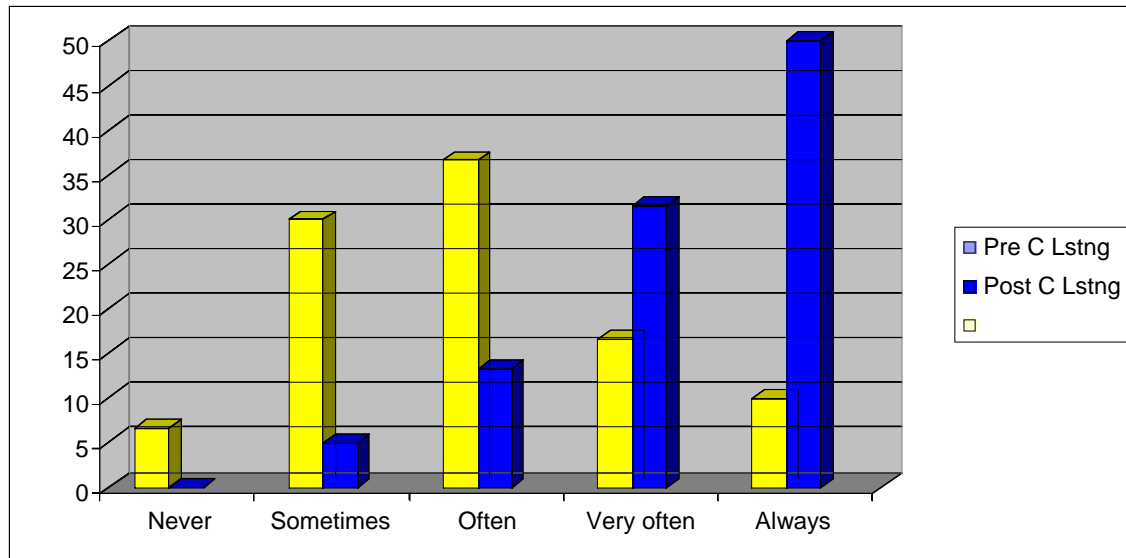


Figure 3.3 Students' listening frequencies before and after doing the course

Figure 3.3 shows that the frequency of students who “always” did listening tasks, dramatically increased from 10% to 50% and the frequency for students who “very often” did listening tasks, almost doubled from 16.6% to 31.6%. On the other hand the frequency of students, who “sometimes” listened, fell from 30% to 5%; and the frequency for students who “often” listened, fell from 36.6% to 13.3%. So the number of students who frequently did listening tasks increased remarkably after the course.

Finally the researcher investigated the frequency of speaking before and after the course. Figure 3.4 presents the findings:

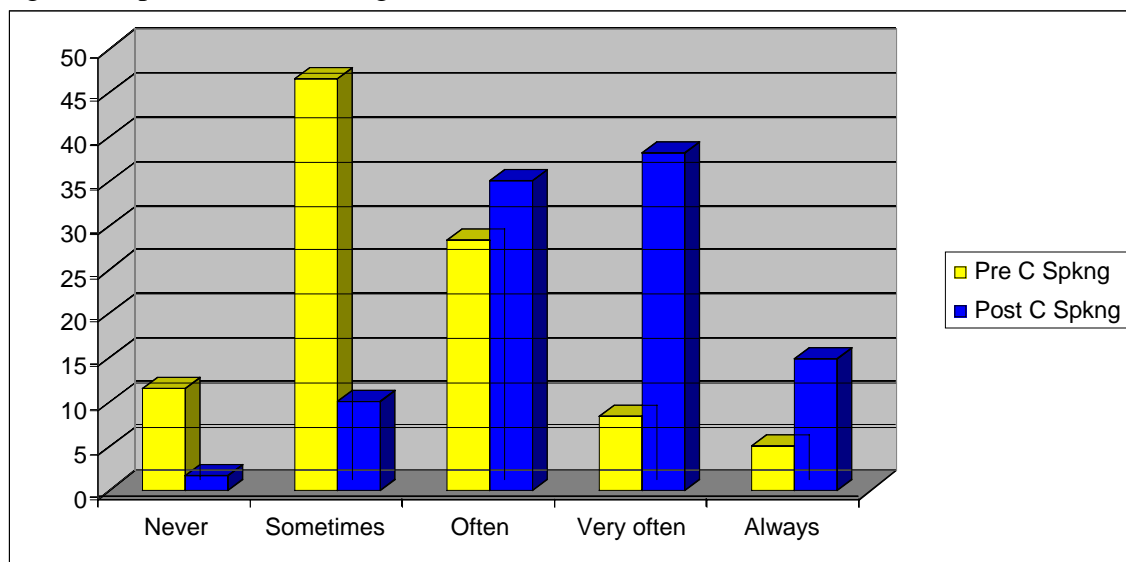


Figure 3.4 Students' speaking frequencies before and after doing the course

Figure (3.4) shows a remarkable increase in the frequency of students who “very often” spoke from 8.3% to 38%; the frequency of students who “always” spoke trebled from 5% to 15%. On the other hand the frequency of students who “sometimes” spoke fell steeply

from 46% to 10%; and the frequency of students who “never” spoke fell sharply from 11.6% to 1.6%. This means that there was a major increase in the number of students who spoke frequently, after completing the course.

These findings can be taken to mean that the course does help quite significantly in improving the students’ abilities in handling the four skills since there appears to be a consistent increase in the number of students who frequently use all four skills after having done the course.

G. Overview of course difficulty

The researcher then analyzed the level of difficulty of the students in following the course in class. Figure 4 presents the findings:

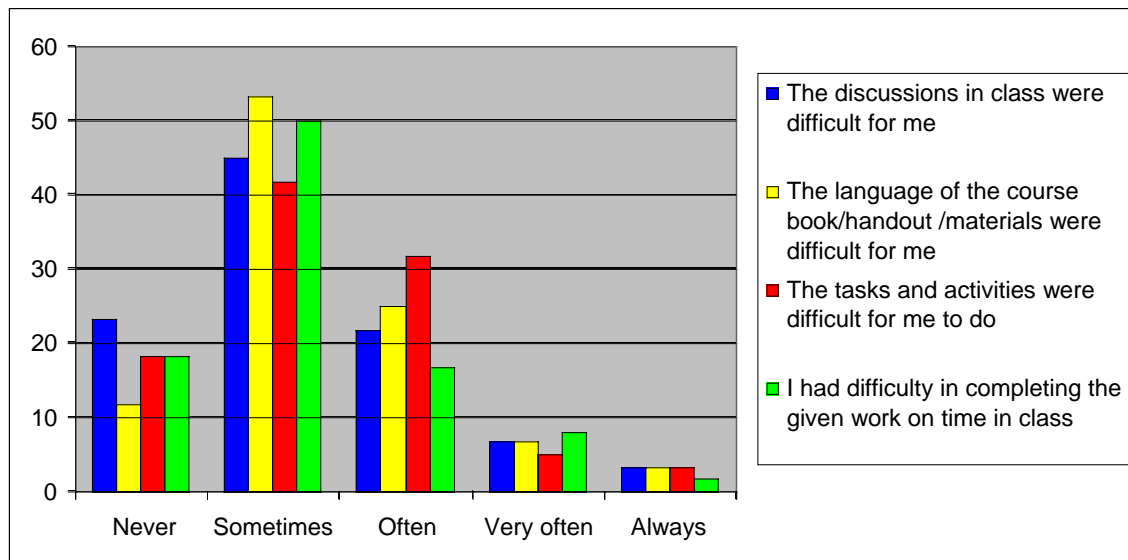


Figure 4 Difficulty faced by students in following the course in class

From Figure 4 it is evident that >40% of the students, “sometimes” find discussions in class difficult; and also find class activities and tasks difficult. Furthermore >50% of the students, “sometimes” find it difficult to timely complete given work in class; and find the course-book or handout or materials difficult. It is noteworthy that the number of students who frequently face difficulty (>30%), in all four of the above mentioned, is also

quite high. It can be concluded that: the discussions in class; the language of the course book or handout or materials; and the tasks and activities of the course are all very difficult. And students frequently find it difficult to complete the given work on time in class. This is something that urgently needs to be amended.

Finally the researcher tried to find out what changes the students would like to implement in their present courses. The findings are summarized in Figure 5:

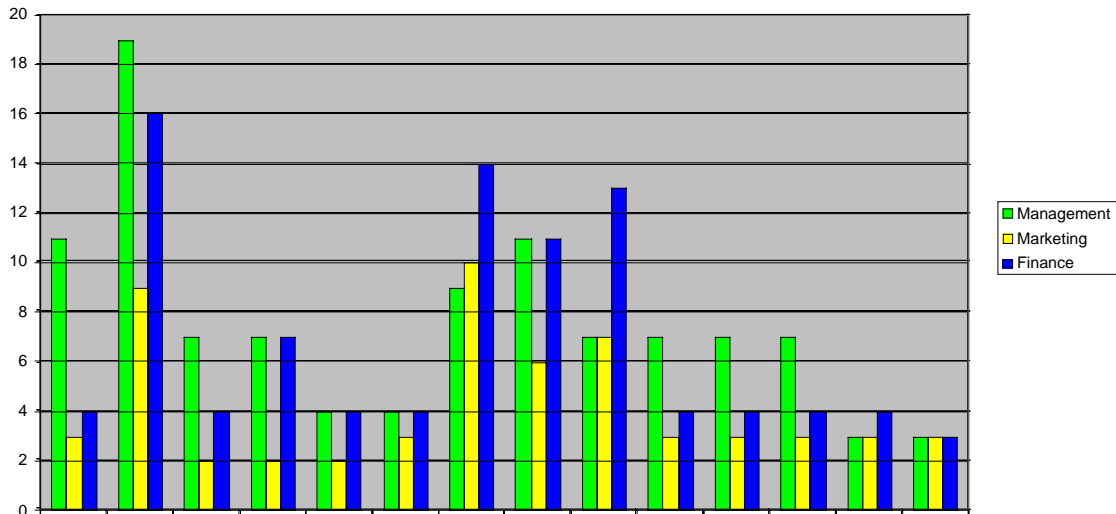


Figure 5 Summary of changes students want to implement

From Figure 5 it is evident that the students of all three departments of the Business Studies Faculty want to incorporate a lot of changes to the present course. A large number of students want additional speaking (N=44) and listening (N=18). Many students (N=33) want the use of more practical or practical world materials. Furthermore quite a few students (N=28) want more presentations and seminars and they want fieldwork to be introduced (N=27).

From the findings it can be concluded that the students have offered many useful suggestions and changes which may be considered in future course design.