

A Reality Check of English at the Tertiary Level and Entry-Level Language Skills Bangladeshi Employers Seek

Tazin Aziz Chaudhury*

Abstract

The purpose of this two-prong needs analysis process was to determine the needs of the Bangladeshi employment sector and establish the Language proficiency of Public university graduates. The skills most frequently used in various jobs and the specific English language skills which may be considered important in meeting workplace needs were summarized; based on which an attempt was made to identify the graduates' shortcomings and thus find out what students need, and use this to inform curriculum planning.

Introduction

Because of globalization effected by expertise in *global literacy skills* (Harvey, 1990) English, the de facto *lingua franca* of international communication (Phillipson, 2003) has become a much sought after commodity which most developing countries are trying to equip themselves with (Crystal, 2003; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1999). In most former colonies there has been “*an explosion*” of foreign investments and job opportunities where English competency is the prerequisite for employment (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007).

Today English is a deciding factor in employment in diverse nations like:

- China where a test of English proficiency determines employment and promotion and facilities (Yong & Campbell, 1995)
- Brazil where most organizations and companies and all multinational ones use or take into account the ‘Test of English for international communication’ (TOEIC) scores when reviewing job applications and promotions (Friedrich, 2000)
- Saudi Arabia where most Saudi graduates believe English can enhance their nations’ economical development (Al-Haq & Smadi, 1996:313)
- Pakistan where all communication is in English and promotions and employment are
- governed by English proficiency (Mansoor, 2007)

* Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

- Malaysia where primary employment requirements are the ability to communicate in English and high academic achievement and good technical knowledge (Sirat, Pandan, Muniandy, Sultan, Haroon, Azman, Kabilan & Razak, 2008)

Bangladesh a country fraught by economic and political instability, poverty, illiteracy and recurring natural disasters is keen to participate in the global economy. English is the language of the educated elite in Bangladesh and is not commonly used in daily interaction yet the labor market today, particularly the corporate world, needs a work force that is competent in English.

“Within the country, employment in any organization looks for proficiency in English. Entry into government jobs requires being selected through a competitive examination where English is a subject, while any non-government office that has dealings outside the national border looks particularly for people with English proficiency. Since the pay structure of such NGO’s is better than other jobs, people are interested to be employed there, and want to learn English.” (Qader, 1999:187)

In the past decade, Bangladeshi Industry has been concerned with the poor English communication skills of public university graduates (Banu & Sussex, 2001). Graduates who are trained abroad and graduates from local private universities with English as a medium of instruction have been found to be more proficient and more confident in communicating in English compared to graduates from local public or government universities (Rahman, 2007). English is considered to be a basic survival skill, which all graduates are expected to be equipped with hence, the need for local, public university graduates to be proficient in English. This issue has been discussed in local political arenas, local universities and is constantly being reported by the local media (Banu & Sussex, 2001; Rahman, 2007). Universities are not only responsible for imparting knowledge but must also equip their graduates with marketable skills or else they will not be employable (Sarudin, Zubairi, Nordin & Omar, 2008). In view of the recurring issue of the low English proficiency of local graduates informed and planned action should be taken to resolve this issue.

The Study

This study firstly examined the English Language requirements of Bangladeshi employers and determined the employers’ perceptions about the English proficiency of employees and graduates. Secondly the problems faced by public university undergraduates in the language skills were investigated to substantiate the employers’ comments and establish the graduates’ level of proficiency. The information thus gleaned is considered necessary to update and fine tune the EAP (English for

Academic Purposes) curriculum as course developers generally tend to estimate their students' possible needs without such investigations.

Literature Review

Sarudin, Zubairi, Nordin & Omar (2008) investigated the language proficiency of Malaysian graduates and found that “graduates failed to impress” interviewers’ panels in “job interviews,” as they lacked English conversation and communication skills. Employees in the banking and legal sectors, faced problems entertaining clients, participating in meetings and discussions and presenting papers to English speaking audiences, and could not express their views and opinions effectively. Because of their “limited ability to write and speak in English” government staff could go for overseas training. Employers expressed concerns about the lack of reading and perceived most employees as “limited users of English” in the productive skills and “modest users of English” in the receptive skills. Employers stressed it was “essential for employees to perform well in writing” “in order to function effectively” in industry working environments.

Sirat, Pandan, Muniandy, Sultan, Haroon, Azman, Kabilan & Razak (2008) in exploring the causes for Malaysian graduate unemployment identified “the ability to communicate in English” and “high academic achievement and good technical knowledge” as primary employment requirements and that both written and oral English skills are job requirements. They stressed that the industrial sector prioritized English skills and established that most unemployed graduates had failed to take advantage of available job opportunities because of weakness in English.

So-mui & Mead (2000) in appraising the workplace communication of textile and clothing merchandisers in Hong Kong, found that written English was used more than spoken English; fax, e-mail, telephone and face-to-face communication were the most common and preferred modes of communication; and that their subjects communicated with over 46 countries.

Menon (2000) researched the English language needs of hospital staff and found that service sector workers do not require equal proficiency in all the skills, and that despite flaws communication was possible. She established that the main emphasis was on listening, speaking and grammar; basic reading was required; but writing was minimally used.

Thompson’s (2001) in surveying the important entry-level employability skills that Chippewa Valley employers seek in job applicants found that ‘new employees entering the work force – do not possess the ‘critical skills’ that today’s employers deem necessary’; and “two out of every five job applicants who were tested for basic skills– defined as functional workplace literacy-- the ability to read instructions, write reports– at an

adequate level– were categorized as deficient” (Thompson, 2001:2). Employers opined that ‘barely half of the new employees entering the work force possess the critical skills of listening and speaking’ (Thompson, 2001:9).

Mansoor’s (2007) exploration of employers’ perceptions of language needs in Pakistan indicated that English is a prerequisite for employment and promotions; particularly in senior management posts. The current trend showed a rise of the use of English in the workplace as most written work and documentation was in English; most employees was perceived as below the required language proficiency levels so most institutions conducted in-house English courses.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty employers representing major employment sectors in Bangladeshi Industry employing fresh graduates (See Appendix I). SPSS coded questionnaires were administered to 60 fourth year students of the Commerce Faculty from the departments of Marketing, Management and Finance (See Appendix II). Frequency counts and percentages are used to describe the findings and the data is presented in table form for easy reference.

Sampling: the following sectors were chosen:

Public bank	Food industry
Private bank	Agro industry
English News Daily	Shipping industry
Bangla News Daily	Garments industry
Private Television channel	Tea industry
Private Telecom company	Ceramics industry
Private University	Leather industry
Private Hospital	Tobacco industry
Private School	Electronics industry
Insurance company	Pharmaceutical industry
Security services company	Housing industry
Buying house	Vehicle assembly industry
Advertising agency	Five star Hotel
Travel agency	National Airlines
Non Government Organization (NGO)	
Bangladesh Civil Services Commission (BCS)	

Research Findings and Discussion:

Employers’ Findings

The findings have been discussed following the order of the Interview questions (See Appendix 1).

Employers’ Opinions on Impact of the Lack of English on Career Prospects

Employers were asked whether the lack of English language skills hindered employment chances.

Table 1: Employers’ opinions on whether the lack of English affects career prospects

Opinion	N
Yes	28(93.2)
No	2(6.6)

N=30; figures in brackets are in percentages

An overwhelming majority of the employers (93.2%) stated that a lack of English language skills seriously affected job prospects. Remarkably two employers, the BCS and Garments employer, opined that they would employ a professionally competent graduate lacking English proficiency (refer to Table 1). Interestingly several employers: Electronics, Tea, Automobile, Banking, Leather, Shipping, Tobacco, Private University, Private Telecom, NGO and Ceramics sector employers divulged that they “*head hunted*” for people “*good in English*” as “*the corporate world is competitive and globalized*” and “*company image*” is important, so companies want “*smart and English speaking*” employees. This stresses the importance of English proficiency in the Bangladeshi corporate scenario.

Nature of Assessments Taken in Job Interviews

Employers were asked about the form of entry level assessment used in job selections.

Table 2: The type of assessment taken in job interviews

Assessment Taken	N
Spoken	29(96.5)
Written	28(93.2)

N=30; figures in brackets are in percentages

Notably the overwhelming majority of the employers formally assessed job applicants’ speaking skills (96.5%) and writing skills (93.2%) (Refer to Table 2). The Private bank, Tea, Housing, Pharmaceutical, Ceramics, Private Telecom, Tobacco, Leather and Shipping sector employers categorically stressed, that irrespective of academic excellence, job applicants were not given the chance to prove their professional competence unless they successfully qualified in the initial written assessment; thus highlighting the importance of English proficiency particularly writing and speaking skills for employment.

Employers’ Perceptions About the Language Skills

Employers were questioned regarding various aspects of the language skills in their respective organizations.

Table 3: Employers' perceptions about various aspects of language skills

Skills	Listening			Speaking			Reading			Writing		
	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR
Skills needed by fresh graduates	21	-	9	28	-	2	22	-	8	28		2
Are the skills of graduates satisfactory?	9	15	6	5	24	1	14	11	5	10	20	-
Skills are used in communication	18			27			23			29		
Crucial skills for the job	20			20			15			23		
Employee's proficiency in skills?	14	10		11	18		16	8		11	18	
Skills needing improvement	16			27			12			22		

NR- Not Required; N=30

The majority of the employers expected proficiency in the productive skills {speaking (28) and writing (28)} as well as the receptive skills {reading (22) and listening (21)} (refer to Table 3). Additionally the Automobile, Banking, Real estate, Shipping, Electronics, Leather and Ceramics sector employers observed that “*depending on the context*” any of the skills could be required so proficiency in all the skills is necessary.

Employers' Perceptions about the Proficiency of Entry-Level Job Applicants

Notably the majority of the employers perceived entry-level job applicants as incompetent in the productive skills: speaking (24) and writing (20). A considerable number of employers perceived them as incompetent in the receptive skills: listening (15) and reading (11) (refer to Table 3). Thus except for reading, job applicants were not perceived as competent in any of the skills by employers. The Agro, Tea, Tobacco, Ceramics, Electronics, Buying House, BCS, Private Bank and University employers observed that the English proficiency of public university graduates is “*very poor*” and “*not up to the mark*”; furthermore the Media employers (TV, Newspapers and Advertising) noted that “*there has been an apparent increase in literacy but these graduates are good for nothing*” and that “*they are a liability not an asset as they are totally incompetent*”.

Skills Most Frequently Used in Workplace Communications

The majority of the employers expected the use of all the skills in workplace communications: written communications (29); spoken communications (27); reading (23) and listening (18) (refer to Table 3). Thus it can be surmised that employers expect proficiency in and the use

of all four skills in workplace communications. The Building sector employer commented that even local Bangladeshi clients “*expect spoken and written English communications*”; similarly the Buying house, Advertising, Ceramics, Shipping, Automobile, Electronics, Tea employers noted that “*all communications nowadays are in English*” and “*it is a growing need in the market today*”.

Crucial Job Skills from the Employers’ Perspective

The majority of the employers 23 employers perceived writing (23), listening (20) and speaking (20) as crucial skills besides many employers (15) perceived reading as crucial (refer to Table 3). This corroborates the previous findings that proficiency in all four skills is crucial.

Employees’ Proficiency from the Employers’ Perspective

Some employers perceived their employees as proficient in listening (14), speaking (11) and writing (11); however the majority of the employers did not perceive employees as proficient in listening, speaking and writing. Notably the only skill that employees were perceived as marginally proficient in was reading (16) (refer to Table 3). The BCS employer commented that “*they can write, but only wrong English, with no sentence structure, grammar or anything*”. Likewise the NGO, Buying house, Advertising, Tea, Television and Building, Leather, Ceramics employers stated that “*everything that they write has to be completely rewritten, not corrected*”. The Advertising and Television employers commented that “*they have a lot of potential but cannot do anything because they are unable to communicate*”. The Buying House employer talked about an academically highly qualified ex-employee who was fired because he had incurred the company huge loss by misunderstanding a client’s email instructions and delivering a wrong supply order. Similarly the NGO employer recounted an incident where an employee disappeared for a week when asked to read and report on a thin booklet.

Skills in Need of Improvement from the Employers’ Perspective

An overwhelming majority of the employers perceived the need for improvement in speaking (27) and writing (22); likewise a number of employers felt that listening (16) and reading (12) also needed improvement (refer to Table 3). Thus improvement was deemed necessary in all the skills, particularly writing as most employers had to “*regularly edit and double-check*” all written communications. The Electronics sector employer, declared that “*they cannot write anything, not even a hundred words write-up*” since they “*do not have the language, grammar or anything*”. The Travel, Leather and Ceramics sector employers remarked that “*English is not being given enough*”.

emphasis in education”; additionally the Media, Leather, Tea, Ceramics, Building, Buying house sector employers noted that “*the education system is faulty*” as students “*can pass exams without studying, just by memorizing a few answers*”; besides they commented that “*the teachers themselves are poor and not proficient in English and are unable to teach their students as they themselves are products of this same faulty system*”. Many employers opined that “*a complete change in education policy and methodology is needed.*”

Employers were asked whether their organizations conducted any on the job language development courses.

Table 4: Organizations with in-house English training

Training	No	Yes	
		In-House	British Council
	6	14	10

N=30

14 organizations had compulsory in-house language development courses and ten organizations availed of British Council’s executive courses (refer to Table 4). This reinforces the indispensability of English proficiency in the employment sector and highlights the employees’ lack of proficiency.

Workplace Communications in English

Employers were questioned regarding the amount of English workplace communications taking place in their organizations.

Table 5: Amount of workplace usage of English

	Rate of use of English at workplace	Number of organizations
High use of English	100%	7
	90%	2
	80%	2
	70%	2
	60%	2
	50%	7
Sub Total		22
Low use of English	40%	1
	30%	-
	20%	4
	10%	3
Sub Total		8

N=30

It was found that most organizations extensively used English (refer to Table 5).

The employers were also questioned regarding who they communicated with.

Table 6: Nature of English Communication

Communication	N
International	27
Local	28

N=30

It was found that almost all communication is in English even in a monolingual, predominantly Bangla speaking nation like Bangladesh (refer to Table 6).

Approximation of the Gap Between the Actual and the Required Levels of English Proficiency Required by Bangladeshi Industry

On an ascending scale of 1 to 10, employers were asked to rate their perception of their employees' proficiency and the proficiency level that they expected in order for their organization to be run at an optimum level of efficiency.

Table 7: Gap between expected and actual levels of employees' skills proficiency

Employment Sector	Listening Level		Speaking Level		Reading Level		Writing Level	
	Exp.	Act.	Exp.	Act.	Exp.	Act.	Exp.	Act.
Services								
BCS	9	3.5	9	4.5	6	3	6	3
Hospital	7.5	2.5	8.5	1.5	6.5	3.5	8.5	3.5
Telecom	8.5	7	10	6	10	9	10	10
Public bank	6.5	4	7	3.5	5	5	6	4.5
Private bank	6	4.5	8.5	5	7.5	5	8.5	6
NGO	8	4.5	7	4.5	10	4.5	9	4.5
Trade								
Security	9	5	10	8	10	10	10.5	8
Insurance	4	3.5	6	6	NR	NR	5	5
Buying house	10	8.5	8	5	9.5	7.5	10	8
Education								
University	10	5	8	5	8	5	8	4.5
School	6	5	8	4.5	6	5	7	4.5
Media								
TV channel	8	2.5	8	2.5	7	4	6	2

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Employment Sector	Listening Level		Speaking Level		Reading Level		Writing Level	
	Exp.	Act.	Exp.	Act.	Exp.	Act.	Exp.	Act.
Bangla daily	10	6.5	7.5	2.5	10	4.5	8.5	0
English daily	5	4	6	5	NR	NR	8	4.5
Advertising	9	5	8.5	5	8	5	8	4
Travel								
Airlines	9	9	8	8	7	7	6	6
Travel agency	6	2.5	10	3.5	NR	NR	10	4.5
Hotel	8	4	9	6	8.5	4	8.5	4
Industry								
Electronics	8.5	8	10	9.5	7	5.5	8	5.5
Tea	6	5.5	5	5	7	6.5	5	4.5
Garments	NR	NR	NR	NR	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Tobacco	10	9.5	10	9.5	10	9.5	10	9.5
Leather	7	5.5	9.5	6.5	8.5	6.5	8.5	5
Ceramics	5	4	6	3	5	5	8	6
Agro	8.5	4	10	5.5	8.5	5.5	8.5	5.5
Food	8	5.5	8	6	7	5	10	5.5
Vehicle	7	4	9	5	6	6	5	5
Shipping	9	7	10	6	10	6	10	6
Housing	5	3	10	4.5	3	3	8	3.5
Medicine	5	3	6	2.5	7	5	5	2.5

**** E – Expected; A – Actual; NR – Not Required**

It was discovered that irrespective of how high or low the employers' expected levels of proficiency were, the employees' actual proficiency levels always found to be considerably lower, even in organizations which had stringent recruitment procedures (refer to Table 7). Thus the existence of a considerable gap between the expected and actual levels of proficiency was identified in all the industry sectors and in all the skills; which was indicative of the employers' dissatisfaction with prevalent levels of English proficiency. Unusually reading was not required by the Insurance Company, Travel Agency and English Daily; likewise listening and speaking were not needed in the Garments sector.

Findings of Graduating Students:

Perceived Speaking Proficiency

The respondents were asked how frequently they faced problems when speaking in English. The findings are presented in Table 8:

Table 8: Problems when Speaking in English

Tasks	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Introductions	3 (5)	7 (11.6)	31 (51.6)	19 (31.6)
Ask questions	5 (8.3)	14 (23.3)	28 (46.6)	13 (21.6)
Interact with others	10 (16.6)	10 (16.6)	31 (51.6)	9 (15)
Make others understand	12 (20)	12 (20)	29 (48.3)	8 (13.3)
Describe processes	2 (3.3)	21 (35)	28 (46.6)	9 (15)
Explain concepts	7 (11.6)	22 (36.6)	26 (43.3)	5 (8.3)
Pronouncing correctly	3 (5)	15 (25)	38 (63.3)	4 (6.6)
Pausing to think of what to say	8 (13.3)	16 (26.6)	31 (51.6)	5 (8.3)

N=60; figures in brackets are in percentages

A considerable number of respondents claimed to “always-often” face difficulty with: explaining concepts (48.2%); making others understand (40%); pausing to think what to say (40%); describing processes (38.3%); interacting with others (33.2%); asking questions (31.6%) and correct pronunciation (30%). This indicates that graduating students are “weak” at the speaking sub-skills which substantiates the employers’ perceptions.

Perceived Listening Proficiency

Respondents were asked how frequently they faced problems with the Listening skills. The findings are presented in Table 9:

Table 9: Problems when listening to others speak in English

Tasks	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Difficulty because of fast pace of speaking	2 (3.3)	19 (31.6)	37 (61.6)	2 (3.3)
Difficulty understanding word meanings	3 (5)	15 (25)	38 (63.3)	4 (6.6)
Difficulty because of confusing words	4 (6.6)	18 (30)	32 (53.3)	6 (10)
Difficulty understanding Sentence structures	15 (25)	19 (31.6)	24 (40)	2 (3.3)

N=60; figures in brackets are in percentages

Many respondents admitted to “always-often” facing difficulty at: understanding sentence structures (56.6%); confusing words (36.6%); understanding word meanings (30%) and fast pace of speaking (35%). This implies that graduating students are “weak” at the listening sub-skills, confirming the employers’ perceptions.

Perceived Reading Proficiency

Respondents were asked how frequently they faced problems when Reading in English. The findings are presented in Table 10:

Table 10: Problems when Reading English

Tasks	V. Weak-Weak	Average	Good-V. Good
Reading a text quickly to get a general idea of its content	7 (11.7)	31 (51.7)	22 (36.7)
Looking through a text quickly to find specific information	12 (20)	26 (43.3)	22 (36.7)
Guessing the meanings of unknown words from their context	12 (20)	38 (63.3)	10 (16.7)
Understanding the main points of a text	10 (16.7)	23 (38.3)	27 (45)
Understand & interpret charts, graphs, tables	14 (23.3)	25 (41.7)	21 (35)
General comprehension	8 (13.3)	31 (51.7)	21 (35)

N=60; figures in brackets are in percentages

A considerable number of respondents claimed to be “very weak-weak” at: looking through a text quickly to find specific information (20%); guessing the meanings of unknown words from their context (20%) and understanding and interpreting charts, graphs, tables (23.4%). This is indicative that many graduating students are “weak” at the reading sub-skills, which validates the employers’ perceptions.

Perceived Writing Proficiency

Respondents were asked how frequently they faced problems when writing in English. The findings are presented in Table 11:

Table 11: Problems when Writing in English

Tasks	V. Weak-Weak	Average	Good-V. Good
Using correct punctuation & spelling	7 (11.6)	38 (63.3%)	15 (25)
Structuring sentences	13 (21.7)	32 (53.3%)	15 (25)
Using appropriate vocabulary	19 (31.7)	29 (48.3%)	12 (20)
Expressing what you want to say clearly	12 (20)	28 (46.7%)	20 (33.3)
Following instructions & directions	19 (31.7)	23 (38.3%)	18 (30)
Overall writing ability	11 (18.3)	27 (45%)	22 (36.7)

N=60; figures in brackets are in percentages

Many respondents conceded to be “very weak-weak” at using appropriate vocabulary (31.7%); structuring sentences (21.7%); expressing what they want to say clearly (20%); and following instructions & directions (31.7%). This signifies that many graduating students are “weak” at the writing sub-skills, corroborate the employers’ perceptions

Implications and Concluding Thoughts

The research findings:

- reinforced the importance of and widespread prevalence of English in the Bangladeshi employment scenario
- confirm that the English proficiency of job applicants and employees graduating from local public universities fails to meet the employers’ desired levels of English competence
- elucidated that 12 years of compulsory English at the pre-university level and
- clarified that EAP courses at the tertiary level in local public universities fail to equip Bangladeshi public university graduates with the English proficiency necessary for employment. In view of the findings it may be recommended that:
 - the present educational curricula should be reviewed and evaluated in order to identify problem areas and shortcomings as well as areas in need of change
 - data should be collected from and constructive feedback and input should be taken from all the major stakeholders involved i.e. the employers, employees, job-applicants, students and educational policymakers
 - based on these comprehensive feedback changes and modifications should be implemented incorporating the needs of and input from the various stakeholders involved
 - writing samples from students and the employment sectors should be examined in order to identify the sub-skills that should be focused on
 - areas of teaching methodology that need to be addressed should be clarified by analysis of and observation of workplace communication and classrooms
 - comprehensive, effective policies and measures should be implemented to rectify the situation

English is the language of the latest business management in the world and is also the means of scientific discourse (Manivannan, 2006). English is used for international communication where the interlocutors do not have a common first language (Kennedy, 2001). As most new

technologies were developed in the West - the associated terminology is in English - thus it is necessary for Developing nations to use English to access and use these technologies when developing or modernizing their services, industries and infrastructures (Kachru, 1994). Moreover English is best suited to social development because it facilitates modernization and facilitates leisure and career opportunities and choice (Moritoshi, 2001).

Bangladesh is faced with the grim reality of lagging behind neighboring countries which are forging ahead in terms of access to the world market. English is perceived as “enriching and inevitable, even necessary” as well as “imperialistic and damaging” (Canagarajah, 1993:624). Fearing marginalization the present attitude towards English is one of “*pragmatic liberalism*” (Rahman, 2007), English is accepted as a modern-day asset, which is of key importance to national development. Only a small percentage of the Bangladeshi population can afford private English education but this elite group gains an advantage over the rest who receive inadequate or no English language teaching in the state educational system. English opens doors to wealth, prestige and success and acts as “a gate keeping mechanism”, providing access to information and high-tech communication to the limited few who have access to English education. English which is not within easy reach of the multitude is seen today as the most potent instrument of social and economic advancement a fact attested to by the mushrooming of English coaching centers throughout the country (Rahman, 2007). Thus English is now perceived as a means to maximize opportunities (Bisong, 1995) and has become a principal asset in getting global leadership. As long as English remains the language of international discourse there is no alternative to familiarizing ourselves with it (Hashimoto, 2007).

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Appendix – I

Semi-structured Interview Questions for Bangladeshi Employers

1. What EL skills must a fresh graduate have when seeking employment?
1. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
2. Are you satisfied with the EL skills of graduates during interviews?
3. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
4. How many of your employees actually need to communicate in English? (in %)
5. Do you have to communicate internationally and/or locally if so how?
6. What sort of communication skills do your employees use in workplace communications?
7. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
8. 6. Does a lack of EL skills hinder people from getting jobs?
9. 7. What EL skills do you consider to be important for your organization?
10. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
11. 8. What EL skills are crucial for your line of work?
12. 9. Are your employees sufficiently proficient?
13. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
14. 10. Which areas do you feel need improvement?
15. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
16. 11. Do your employees have to undergo any English language training? If so is it in-house or
17. otherwise?
18. 12. Please rate the importance of the following skills on a scale of 1-10 (1-least important and 10-
19. most important)
20. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
21. 13. What level of proficiency in the skills do you need from your employees for the optimum functioning of your organization on a scale of 1-10? (1-least important and 10-most important)
22. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
23. 14. What is your perception of the present level of proficiency of your employees on a scale of 1-10? (1-least important and 10-most important)
24. Listening Speaking Reading Writing
25. 15. Final comments?

Appendix - IT

1. How often do you face difficulty in the following speaking skills? (circle the suitable answer)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
	1	2	3	4
Introductions	1	2	3	4
Ask questions	1	2	3	4
Interact with others	1	2	3	4
Make others understand	1	2	3	4
Describe processes	1	2	3	4
Explain concepts	1	2	3	4
Pronouncing correctly	1	2	3	4
Pausing to think of what to say	1	2	3	4

2. How often do you face difficulty in the following listening skills? (circle the suitable answer)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
	1	2		3
	4			
Difficulty because of fast pace of speaking	1	2	3	4
Difficulty understanding word meanings	1	2	3	4
Difficulty because of confusing words	1	2	3	4
Difficulty understanding sentence structures	1	2	3	4

3. How would you rate your ability in the following reading skills? (circle the suitable answer)

	Very weak	Weak	Average	Good	Very good
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Reading a text quickly to get a general idea of its content (skimming)	1	2	3	4	5
b. Looking through a text quickly to find specific information (scanning)	1	2	3	4	5
c. Guessing the meanings of unknown words from their context	1	2	3	4	5
d. Understanding the main points of a text	1	2	3	4	5
e. Understand and interpret charts, graphs, tables, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
f. General comprehension	1	2	3	4	5

4. How would you rate your ability in the following writing skills? (circle the suitable answer)

	Very weak	Weak	Average	Good	Very good
	1	2	3	4	5
a.Using correct punctuation and spelling	1	2	3	4	5
b.Structuring sentences	1	2	3	4	5
c.Using appropriate vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
d.Expressing what you want to say clearly	1	2	3	4	5
e.Following instructions and directions	1	2	3	4	5
f.Overall writing ability	1	2	3	4	5