

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RELEVANCE OF THE  
BUSINESS ENGLISH COURSE AT ADDIS ABABA  
COMMERCIAL COLLEGE TO THE NEEDS OF  
EMPLOYING ORGANIZATIONS**

BY  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONTENTS	i
LIST OF TABLE	iii
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of the problem .....	1
1.2 The purpose of the study .....	3
1.3 The Significance of the Study .....	3
1.4 The scope and Limitations of the study .....	4
1.5 Definitions of Terms and Abbreviations .....	6
1.6 Organization of the Thesis .....	6
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
2.1 Introduction.....	8
2.2 English for Academic Purposes .....	8
2.2.1 English for Business Purposes .....	10
2.2.2 Register Analysis .....	11

	Page
2.3 Discourse Communities and Genre .....	11
2.4 Key Communicative Events .....	12
2.5 Functions, Grammar and Lexis .....	13
2.6 Analysis of Needs in Terms of Communicative Competence	16
 CHAPTER THREE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN	
3.1 Subjects of the Study .....	21
3.2 Design of the Study .....	21
3.3 Procedures of Data Collection .....	22
3.3.1 Construction and administration of questionnaires..	22
3.3.2 Semi structured Interviews .....	22
3.3.3 Document Study .....	23
 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	
4.1 Introduction .....	25
4.2 A Survey of Business English Course .....	26
4.2.1 The Methodology Used in the Survey .....	26
4.2.2 Current Status of Business English courses .....	26
4.3 The English for Commerce Textbook .....	29
4.3.1 Framework of Textbook Description .....	29
4.3.2 The Design of English for Commerce .....	30
4.3.2.1 Description of Language Content .....	32
4.3.2.2 Organization of the Textbook .....	33
4.3.2.3 Internal description of the Textbook .....	34
4.3.2.4 Short Coming of The Textbook	38
4.4 Students' Evaluation and Grades .....	39
4.4.1 Final Examinations of the academic years 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 .....	39
4.4.2 Business English Course Grades and Cumulative Grade Point Averages of the Academic Years 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 .....	42

	Page
4.5 Findings and Discussion .....	43
4.5.1 Findings from Questionnaires and Semi-structured interviews .....	41
4.5.1.1 Issues to be addressed about graduate and employer respondents .....	43
4.5.1.2 Frequency of specific communicative skills .....	45
4.5.1.3 Findings from employers semi-structured interviews	51
CHAPTER FIVE: Summary of The Major Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations .....	57
5.1 Summary of Major Findings .....	57
5.2 Conclusions .....	59
5.3 Recommendations	
5.3.1 The Design of the Business English course .....	59
5.3.2 The Textbook English for Commerce .....	60
5.3.3 The continuation of the course .....	60
5.3.4 The method of instruction .....	60
5.3.5 Further research .....	60
 BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	 61
 Appendix-A Questionnaires for graduates of the AY 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 .....	 63
Appendix-B Semi-structured interviews for employers .....	67
Appendix-C Survey questionnaires for five Business Colleges .....	72
Appendix-D Business English LBC 201 course outline .....	74
Appendix-E Final examination of LBC 201 January 1999 ...	79
Appendix-F Final examination of LBC 201 January, 2000 ....	84
Appendix-G Employers' Responses to semi-structured interviews...	89
Appendix-H Statistical Results presented in tables and cross tabs...	91

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGES
1. The Employment Record of Commercial College Graduates of the AY 1997/1998,1998/1999 and 1999/2000 .....	4
2. Design of the Study .....	22
3. Business English Offered by Five Business Colleges in Addis Ababa .....	25
4. Content description of the textbook English For commerce .....	36
5. Content Analysis of LBC 201 Final Examination of the AY 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 .....	41
6. Semester grades for LBC 201 and average of CGPAs of the five Department students of the AY 1999/2000 .....	41
7. Target Branches and Foreign Exchange offices of the Commercial Bank .....	42
8. Field of Study of Graduates employed by the Commercial Bank in the year 1999 and 2000 .....	44
9. Position of Employment .....	44
10. The Assessment of the Degree of the Degree of Frequency of Specific Communicative Skills .....	45
11. Mean Score of specific Communicative skills as ranked by employees .....	47
12. Percentage distribution of employees by year of experience and rating of Explaining facts .....	48
13. Percentage distribution of employees by year of experience and rating of Giving Information .....	48
14. Percentage distribution of employees by location and rating of the using fax machines .....	48
15. Percentage distribution of employees by location and rating of the skill of Interacting with customers .....	50

Table	Page
16. Employers' assessment of the Importance and Frequency of specific communicative skills .....	52
17. Mean score of the ranking of the specific skills from the semi-interview .....	53
18. Employers' responses; whether graduates meet the required communicative skill level .....	53
19. Percentage distribution of the sources of information and rating of how far the course prepares graduates .....	54
20. Percentage distribution of the sources of information and the rating on the need for the offering of a continuation of the course .....	55
21. Percentage distribution of sources of Information and the rating of the need for a revision of the course .....	55

**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research was to study the relevance of the Business English course at Commercial College to the needs of employing organizations. Prior to the actual study on the Business English (LBC 201 ), a general survey study was conducted on equivalent Business English courses offered by five private colleges in Addis Ababa to see the importance given to such a course . Before selecting the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) for the main study a similar pilot study was also conducted on three other employing organizations: two banks and one soft drink factory,

The course objective, syllabus, textbook contents, test samples, as well as the grades and grade point averages (GPAs) were analyzed first in order to describe and assess the Business English course for present situation analysis. The target needs of the employed graduates were then specified in terms of the most frequent specific communicative and professional skills and the most common language activities under the major macro-skills.

Data were then gathered on these variables using questionnaires for graduate employees, and semi-structured interviews for branch managers, supervisors and section heads of the CBE.

The findings from the analyzed data reveal that there is a gap between target situation (required language skills) and present situation (actual skill level of graduates). The findings gave importance to verbal communicative skills, letters and report writing skills, the ability to use word processor and other office modems.

Viewed vis-à-vis these and other several findings that are presented in chapter four and five, the Business English course (LBC 201) largely fails to meet the stakeholders' needs.

A Business English course, integrating different professional and communicative skills that best suit the target situation, is therefore recommended. A skills-based approach with varying emphasis on the currently required communicative skills is believed to bridge the gap and create a match between the target situation and the skill level of the graduates.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Statement of the problem

In the past five years our country has witnessed a dramatic increase in the openings of diverse international and private-owned giant enterprises and trade organizations. Banks, insurance companies, international standard hotels, airways, and import /export business groups have flourished to change the previous centralized socio-economic trend to a free-market and world-scale commercial scenario.

This shift to the free-market and the considerable growth in the private sector have brought about a wider and selective demand for the recruitment of employees from amongst the graduates of the various higher education institutions with special criteria of competence and skills in focus. Craft (1993:95) underlines this fact as follows:

In a socio-economic scenario dominated by competitive goals, where the demand for qualified manpower and competence of all kinds is growing everyday, the universities will certainly be called upon to play an essential role. Those responsible for training in professional fields and disciplines will want to insure that the programs they offer and the degree they grant meet high standards of relevance and quality.

English being an international language and by virtue of the interdependent nature of modern trade, almost all of the newly flourishing large-scale business ventures are compelled to require a high level of English language skills from the graduates being employed in their organizations in one field of work or another.

This reality is reflected in the different forms of advertisements, vacancy notices that calls for English for Specific Purpose practitioners deployed to the public. The point in focus here is the fact that these demands place complex challenges on institutions like the Commercial College, particularly in the area of introducing new courses and innovating the existing English courses to meet the high standard of relevance and quality expected by the pressing market and stakeholders. Presenting the view of the International Network of

Higher Education conference on present trend and issues on producing skilled graduates, Jacques and Peace (1993:24) report that:

Any program in a higher education is said to be relevant if it achieves its mission and meets the expectation of its stockholders : it should stress the quality of the 'educative product' as measured by the acquired knowledge of the graduates, their effectiveness at work or social performance.

Since the level of communicative language performance and skills of graduates will have a more direct bearing on the day-to-day interactions of governmental and large-scale private sectors, the question of relevance and quality of English courses at colleges and universities need to be addressed regularly. In addition, the effects of the free-market economy and the process of globalization have their effect. They raise the issue to a level where the full attention of all parties concerned like policy makers, course designers, stakeholders, instructors and students will be required with urgency.

For example, research done on the present communicative competence and skills of students ( Getnet 1993, Yonas 1996 ) indicates that students at the undergraduate level do not have the English language proficiency level that the current competition-dominated occupation sphere demands from them. Hailemichael (1993:1) emphasizes a mismatch between expectation and outcomes in the design of communicative courses and voices the problem: 'The view is widely expressed among the university staff that many students have serious English language problem in their studies and the standards have declined'.

Such decline of language proficiency at the undergraduate level is likely to have a reflection on the professional context where the demand for competence and skills will be of greater proportion and consequence.

In this regard one cannot doubt the importance of regularly conducting impact assessment and target situation analysis for such courses in order to revise courses and produce graduates that go abreast with the demand and pace of the occupational sphere.

## 1.2 The purpose of the study

The objective of this study is to investigate the relevance of the Business English course at Commercial College from the perspective of employing organizations. Based on the investigation the study attempts to see to what extent the course prepares the graduates to meet the expectations of their employers.

In so doing it sets out to obtain :

- 1.2.1 Professional communication information about graduates, that is, the tasks and activities that graduates from the Commercial College are/ will be using English for after graduation.
- 1.2.2 The gap between the learners' current knowledge and skills in business English language and what the target situation ( their career) demands from them.

## 1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is hoped to be significant because of its direct relevance to the immediate and long run needs of all the departments in the college. It tries to takes into account the actual effectiveness and appropriacy of the Business English language course, which is vital to all the graduates of the college. In so doing, it is hoped that

- A. the Department of Language and Business English Communication may have current information on:
  - the relevance or irrelevance of the course Business English LBC (201)
  - focus areas for revision of the textbook 'English for Commerce' and other possible aspects for a renovation of the course,
- B. the Graduate Employment Office may identify new needs of employing companies, and
- C. the competence and quality of future graduates can be improved as target needs may be identified and addressed in the future.

#### 1.4 The Scope and limitation of the study

The study is limited to one employing company out of the five major companies that have a maximum intake of graduates annually. According to the report from the Graduate Record Office of the College, the Abyssinia Bank, the National Bank, the Dashen Bank, the Commercial Bank, and the Awash Bank are the major companies that employed most of the graduates from the Commercial College for the last five years. Of these, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia is selected for main study since it has the maximum intake of graduates and has wider areas of bank services. Table 1 below shows the employment record of the Commercial College of Addis Ababa(CCAA) graduates of the past two years.

TABLE 1 :The Employment Record of Commercial College Graduates of the academic years 1998/1999, and 1999/2000.

Organization	AY	Dept.	#Of employment	Total intake
Commercial Bank	1998/99	Acc.	58	146
		Ban & Fin.	33	
Pur.&Sup.				
Mgt.		12		
Per. Mgt.		11		
		Sec.Sc	9	
	1999/2000	Acc.	23	

Abyssinia Bank	1998/99	Acc	9	63
		Sec.Sc.	5	
		Ban. & Fin	13	
	1999/2000	Acc.	10	
		Sec.Sc	20	
		Ban. &Fin	6	
Awash Bank	1998/99	Sec.Sc.	15	51
		Ban. &Fin	20	
	1999/2000	Sec.Sc.	7	
		Ban & Fin	9	
Dashen Bank	1998/99	Acc	9	44
		Sec.Sc	7	
		Ban. &Fin	8	
	1999/2000	Acc	15	
Sec.Sc		1		
		Ban. &Fin	4	
Self- employed	1998/99	Acc	4	31
		Sec.Sc.	5	
		Mark.Mgt	8	
		Pur &Sup		
		Mgt	3	
		Per.Mgt	1	
	1999/2000	Acc.	2	
Sec.Sc		1		
Marketing		1		
Purchasing		5		
Per.Mgt.		1		

Ref: Acc-Accounting

Mark.Mgt- Marketing Management

Ban.& Fin- Banking and Finance

Sec.Sc- Secretarial Science

Per.Mgt- Personnel Management

Pur&Sup- Purchasing and Supplies

As can be seen from the employment record the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia(CBE) has employed 146 graduates of the Commercial College which makes it the major employing company in the two years.

## **1.5 Definitions of Terms and Abbreviations**

The terms and abbreviations used in this study are defined as follows:

### **1.5.1 Business English**

In this research Business English is defined as a condensed version of the language focused on grammar, vocabulary and skills needed to conduct business in English. Charles (1996)

### **1.5.2 Communicative Skills**

In this research communicative skills refer to communicative capabilities and activities in which subjects actively engage to solve problems, make meanings, and achieve goals through purposive communicative processes. Limaye and Victor (1991)

1.5.3 CCAA: Commercial College of Addis Ababa

1.5.4 CBE: Commercial Bank of Ethiopia

1.5.5 CNP: Communicative Needs Processor.

1.5.6 GPA: Grade Point Average

1.5.7 PSA: Present Situation analysis.

1.5.8 TSA: Target Situation analysis.

1.5.9 ESAP: English for Specific Academic Purposes.

1.5.10 ESP: English for Specific Purposes.

## **1.6 Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis has six parts. The first part states the problems, objectives, significance, and scope of the research. In this part the general statement and basic terms as used in this work have been defined for the sake of convenience and clarity of the study. The second part deals with literature review pertinent to the research.

The third part of the thesis discusses the research design: the subjects, instruments and procedures of collecting data for the study. The fourth part focuses on the analysis of the data gathered in the light of previous research findings dealt with in the review part, ideas generated from consultation, piloting and the overall data collected during the research.

The fifth part discusses the findings, draws conclusions, presents recommendations. The final part presents bibliography and appendixes used as sources, supplements and tools for the research.

## CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1 Introduction

Business English, according to ELT Guide, is essentially a condensed version of the language focused on grammar, vocabulary and skills needed to conduct business in English. Charles (1996)

As noted by Robinson (1991:63), though the amount of research in Business English is growing, much less research has been published in the area. To explore the key issues of Business English for this study, we shall briefly look at some of the research findings into language and communication skills in Business English under four categories, moving from the macro-level of discourse communities and genre to key communicative events and the micro-level of grammar and lexis. Before doing that, however, it is worth mentioning some points regarding the relationship between Business English and other parts of English for specific purpose.

### 2.2 English for specific Academic Purposes

The study of language for specific purposes has had a long history going back, as some claim, as far as the Roman and Greek Empires. But most writers agree that since the 1960s, English for specific purposes has become a vital and innovated activity within the Teaching of English as a Foreign or Second Language movement

To begin with the different definitions of 'English for Specific Purposes' given in the literature Hutchinson and Waters (1987) see it as an approach, rather than a product, by which they mean that ESP does not involve a particular kind of language, teaching material or methodology. They suggest that the foundation of ESP is the simple question: What does this learner need to learn a foreign language?

Strevens' (1988) definition of ESP, for instance, makes a distinction between four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics. The absolute characteristics are that ESP consists of English language teaching

- designed to meet specified needs of the learner
- Related to content to particular disciplines, occupations and activities
- Entered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and so on, and analysis of the discourse;
- In contrast with 'General English'

The variable characteristics are that ESP

- May be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned
- May not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Robinson (1991) also accepts the primacy of needs analysis in defining ESP. Her definition is based on two key defining criteria that ESP is 'normally goal directed', and that ESP courses develop from needs analysis, which 'aims to specify as closely as possible what exactly it is that students have to do with the medium of English' (1991:3).

Considering the validity of each of these definitions we can arrive at a working definition by using absolute and variable characteristics

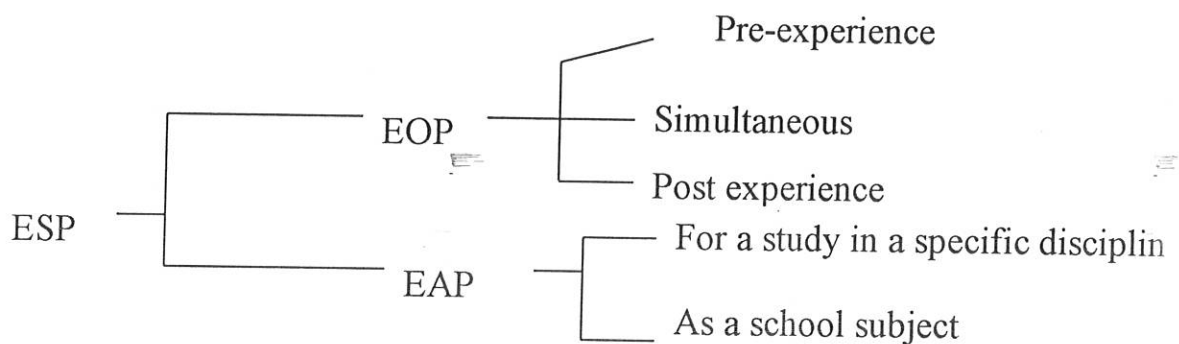
a. Absolute characteristics

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

b. Variable characteristics

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is most likely to be designed either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation.
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.

ESP has traditionally been divided into two main areas: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purpose (EOP). The classification is generally presented in a tree diagram as in the figure below. (Robinson, 1991:3-4)



d.1

As Evans and St John explain it, for much of its early life ESP was dominated by the teaching of EAP; most of the materials produced, the course descriptions written and the research carried out were in the area of EAP. EOP played an important but nevertheless smaller role. “In recent years, however, the massive expansion of international business has led to a huge growth in the area of English for Business Purpose (EBP). Within ESP, the largest sector for published materials is now that of business English, and there is burgeoning interest from teachers, publishers and companies in this area.” Evans and St John (1998:2)

### 2..2.1 English for Business Purposes

English for Business Purposes (EBP) can be logically placed as a category within English for Occupational Purposes since business purpose is an occupational purpose. However, EBP is in other cases seen as separate from EOP as it involves a lot of General English as well as specific purpose English, and also because it is such a large and important category. (Robinson, 1991)

On the other hand, EBP can be classified under EAP. According to Evans and St. John (1998:7) English for medical purposes (EMP) and English for legal purposes (ELP) have always had their place in EAP. Recently, the academic study of business, finance, banking, economics and accounting has become increasingly important, especially on masters in business administration (MBA) courses, but, as yet, no specific acronym has been established for such courses.

The changing nature of the various types of ESP and the degree of overlap between their parts creates a problem of classification. As a distinction should be

made between common-core English for general academic purposes (EGAP) and English for specific academic purposes (ESAP), the same distinction can be made between English for General Business purposes (EGBP) and English for specific business purposes (ESBP).

English for specific business purposes (ESBP) courses are tailored for job-experienced learners who bring business knowledge and skills to the language-learning situation (Hollette, 1991). In contrast, English for General Business purposes (EGBP) courses are usually for pre-experience learners. They are similar to general EFL courses with the materials set in business context. According to Quirkworth (1995) most units of EGBP course books contain work on traditional four skills plus specific grammar and vocabulary development. However, since EBP takes its qualities from both categories, its organization has been subject to various types of analysis over a long period of time starting with register analysis, followed by discourse analysis and, more recently, genre analysis. (Jordan 1997)

### **2.2.2 Register Analysis**

The name of Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens (1964) are usually associated with the concept of register analysis where statistical analysis were conducted in order to provide grammar registers and lexicons for different groups.

Discourse analysis is concerned with describing the language and its structure that is used in speech or text that is longer than the sentence. According to Widdowson (1979) this analysis involves recurring patterns and text organization to develop a framework for obtained data.

The other fruitful area of current research is genre analysis which studies how language is used within a particular setting. As elaborated by Swales(1983) genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. The purposes constitute the rationale that influences the choice of content and style.

## **2.3 Discourse Communities and Genre**

One concern of Business English course designers is to discover how the language and discourse used in business communication relate to the context or the business relationship in which it takes place. Charles (1996:117) shows that a key factor in the analysis of negotiation discourse is whether the business relationship is

made between common-core English for general academic purposes (EGAP) and English for specific academic purposes (ESAP), the same distinction can be made between English for General Business purposes (EGBP) and English for specific business purposes (ESBP).

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a new one (new relationship negotiation, NRN) or an old, established one (old relationship negotiation, ORN).

Here the established business pattern such as the various politeness strategies, who needs the service, cultural values and attitudes, all deserve due consideration for a given study. This helps to avoid the wrong assumption that it is possible to talk about the business community as one and single international discourse community. Research (Limaye and Victor, 1991) suggests that the shared philosophy of one business community resting on the Western market system is a false position. The western models of communication do not represent the complexity of cross-cultural communication.

It is also important that analysis of Business English is carried out on texts - both written and spoken - to determine which genres exist, that is to understand significant differences and specific communicative purposes. For example, there may be certain discourse features common to all business letters, for example the opening and the closing steps, but they do not share one communicative purpose, and may even serve several purposes. Letter writing in business and commercial English courses for this reason used to be taught through the product modeling approach. Given the changes to international business communication, the validity of categories of business letter such as the 'request letter', 'response letter', the 'confirmation letter' the 'complaint letter' needs verifying to establish whether they really are separate genres. For instance, Bhatia (1993) analysed sales-promotion letters and job application letters and found the pattern of writing so similar that they can be categorized together as a promotional genre.

## 2.4 Key Communicative Events

As we come to key communicative events of business, there is more of a consensus. Some of the results of needs analysis (Holden, 1993; Yin and Wong, 1990;) identify seven core events. The five events requiring primarily oral language are referred to as: telephoning, socializing, making presentations, taking part in meetings and negotiating; those that require the written form are: corresponding and reporting.

Socializing here is probably a misleading term: it suggests that the focus of interaction is social when, in fact, it remains business. The social aspect of interactions is primarily aimed at establishing a good relationship in order to enhance the conduct of business.

Modern technology is changing the format of written correspondence and this category according to Khoo (1994), can be broken down in a number of ways such as: individualized letters, faxed memo letters, e-mail, standard order forms and invoices.

## 2.5 Functions, Grammar and Lexis

As noted by Robinson (1991) and Evan and St John (1996), much less research has been published in the area of Business English. The amount of research is growing and will undoubtedly increase dramatically in the next ten years or so. Nevertheless there is not as yet an established 'Common-core' of business language in the way that there is in other areas.

We can, however, draw up a list of grammar areas that business grammar reference books single out. All place emphasis on the verb form, especially tense and voice; then on modals and verbs of saying, reporting and the difference between 'make' and 'do', 'have', 'have got' and 'got'. Wilberg and Lewis (1990:104-107) select 24 'business verbs' and practice their forms: "accept, advise, agree, confirm, consider, explain, invite, object, offer, order, point out, propose, query, recommend, refuse, reject, remind, reply, respond, say, speak, talk, tell and wonder".

Krieger and Sweeney (1994) also list some key functions of Business English and give a number of grammatical realizations for each one. The list contains a number of familiar functions such as "ability and inability, agreeing and disagreeing; assertion and down toning and checking and confirming".

The importance of the teaching of vocabulary in a Business English course is also widely accepted at present (Swales, 1983). In most situations, learners starting a new academic course or professional training programs will need help with technical vocabulary that is completely new for them. One way to prepare learners for such a situation is for the language teacher and the subject expert to prepare a glossary of new terms with straightforward explanations of the terms.

As we come to communicative skills, the customary division of language skills into listening, speaking, reading, and writing (the four skills, as they are often described), and their treatment as macro-concepts will not be

sufficient here because a particular skill has to be distinguished from an activity where the skill is an enabling factor to the realization of the resultant activity.

Munby (1978:123-133) classifies 'language skills' into taxonomy of 260 micro-skills (in 54 groups) for the selection of appropriate skills for inclusion in syllabuses.

Though Munby's list of language skills or enabling skills is not exhaustive and requires further scrutiny, it will be of some interest in the context of this study because it has managed to include those skills required, as he claims, for the realization of performance in a communicative event:

It is hoped that this organization (the taxonomy 260 micro-skills) will facilitate the process of selecting skills appropriate to specified activities. The list is not exhaustive although it is hoped that no significant category has been omitted. The selection of such skills is affected by and weighted according to the values assigned in the target level guide (of the profile of needs) for the required size complexity of utterance of text, delicacy and range of skills, and speed and flexibility of communication, such values being constrained by the tolerance factor values for accuracy, repetition, etc. Munby (1978:117-118)

Munby saw the specification of the target communicative need processor and by trying to show how to change the data collected through it into syllabus content. Communicative Needs Processor (CNP) has a number of variables which affect communication. They were organized in the form of parameters. The parameters were of two kinds: 'Those that process non-linguistic data and those that provide the data in the first place' Munby (1978:32). Parameters under the first one were purposive domain, setting, interaction, and instrumentality. In the second one, we find dialect, target level, communicative event or communicative key. All the variables in the model were further explained as in the taxonomy 260 micro-skills he proposed.

In spite of its attempt to construct a highly detailed needs analysis procedures, Munby's model was criticized. To Hutchinson and Waters (1987), The model showed 'in effect, not how much could be learnt from a scientific needs analysis, but rather how little'. Tarone and Yule (1989:33) saw it as an extremely detailed model. Even though they appreciated the treatments of needs analysis in a great many books at a program level, they called Munby's model 'perhaps the most ambitious these treatment'. They classified it under the 'system-level' needs analysis. By 'system-level' analysis they meant that he analysis does not fully describe the three components of native speaker communicative ability:

grammatical competence, socio-linguistic competence, and strategic competence. Tarone and Yule (1989:35) quoted the following remark from Hutchinson and Waters: 'The application of elaborate analysis models (e.g. Munby 1978) demands a curriculum expert, a creature apart from the teachers and learners ... the inevitable paper reality takes its place static, stereotyped and compartmentalized''.

Criticisms on Munby's model may be summarized as follows : first, it seems to view needs analysis as a once and-for-all affair. Second, it focuses on target needs only. Third, it seems to be used for the individual participants where as teaching is considered to take place normally to groups( Hailemichael 1993). Fourth , it is a purist and idealized one ( Abiy 1990, Abraham 1993). Fifth, it does not specify any instrument or tool for gathering data.

The development of these skills in Business English courses calls for effective design such as clear specification of content, identification of key communicative events, integration of skills and sound teaching approaches. Taking Allen's (1980) interpretation of the three fold communicative skill components, namely, structure, function and experience, and by modifying it into fourfold we can arrive at a working definition of Business English course, for this study, as: a communicative business language course that approaches language skills and their developments objectively and analytically through the study and practice of structural, functional and socio-cultural aspects by offering exposure and opportunities for direct language use in the target situation.

Today, the definitions of needs and needs analysis have broadened with experience and research. Brindley (1986:65) defined needs, in a much more general term, as ' the gap between what is and what should be'. Tarone and Yule (1989:31),on their part, defined needs analysis as 'the collection and evaluation of information to answer the question: what aspects of the language does some particular group of learners need to know?'

To be precise, however, the very concept of language needs has never been clearly defined and, at best, remains ambiguous. For instance, according to the following writers it is described as follows: Richterich (1983:2) needs are objective and subjective, needs are perceived and felt(Brindley, 1989:64), (Berwick, 1989:55) needs are target situation/ goal oriented and process-oriented and product-oriented. Since each of these terms represents a different philosophy or educational value they merit further treatment at this stage of this study.

Briefly, objective and perceived needs are seen as derived by outsiders or other people from facts, from what is known and can be verified, while subjective and felt needs are derived from insiders and correspond to cognitive and affective factors. Thus, 'to be able to take down minutes for a business meeting' is objective /perceived need while 'to feel confident' is a subjective/ felt need. Similarly, product-oriented needs such as 'the need to write a memo or prepare a monthly report' derive from the goal or target situation while process-oriented needs derive from the learning situation.

Pilbeam (1979) suggests that needs analysis should be concerned with establishing both the target profile of language skills, which set down the actual activities with which the participants' proficiency (present situation analysis), is evaluated and the analysis of the actual situation.

These pairs can be seen as corresponding to a target situation analysis (TSA) and a learning situation analysis (LSA); a third piece is what was earlier mentioned as a present situation analysis (PSA), from which we can deduce lacks or deficiencies. Thus, a TSA includes objective, perceived and product-oriented needs; an LSA includes subjective, felt and process-oriented needs; a PSA estimates strength and weakness in language, skills and learning experiences.

Currently, we see the concept of needs analysis as including aspects of all these approaches and encompassing:

- A. Professional information about the learners: the tasks and activities learners' are/will be using English for (target situation analysis and objective needs).
- B. Personal information about the learners: factors which may affect the way they learn such as previous experience, attitude to English (subjective needs).
- C. English language information about the learners: what their current skills and language use are (present situation analysis)- this allows us to assess the next stage which is ;
- D. The learners' lack: the gap between present situation analysis and target situation analysis.
- E. Language learning information: effective ways of learning the skills and language which is learning needs.
- F. Professional communication information about target situation: knowledge of language and skills that are used in the target situation-linguistic analysis, discourse analysis, genre analysis.
- G. What is wanted from the course?

H. Information about the environment in which the course will be ran- (means analysis).

The way in which needs analysis is actually approached and conducted will differ according to various factors and purposes. An initial pre-course needs analysis and a final end or post-course evaluation have different aims and perspectives. On the other hand, ongoing needs analysis within a course and formative evaluation have much in common. Robinson (1991:16) comments that 'repeated needs analysis can be built into the formative evaluation' process. In the same line, Brown (1989:223) states that 'the difference between needs analysis and programs evaluation may be more one of focus than of the actual activities involved. Evaluation overlaps with, and can be equivalent to, on-going needs analysis as both can involve outsiders and insiders and the outcomes are usually used to modify the existing situation, some to provide information for the next version while others could be support for longer-term changes.

As can be gathered form Robinson (1991) and Brown (1989), both on-going needs analysis and evaluation are, in fact, very stimulating instead of threatening. If effectively , they emphasize the success of a course or a program and discuss less successful aspects. They address the crucial 'how' and 'why' issues in order to repeat success and avoid the less successful parts of the program.

## 2.6 Analysis in Terms of Communicative Competence

Canale and Swain's (1980) description of communicative competence describes communicative behavior in terms of at least three interrelated dimensions:

Grammatical competence	Ability to produce and understand correct syntactic, lexical, and phonological forms in a language.
Socio-linguistic competence	Ability to effectively to use a language appropriately in socio-cultural contexts
Strategic competence	Ability to effectively transmit information to a listener, including the ability to use communication strategies to problems, which arise in this process

### Analysis of needs at four levels of generality

For Tarone and Yule (1989), needs analysis may be carried out whether by a specialist or by a teacher at any of four different levels: (1) the global; (2) the rhetorical; (3) the grammatical-theoretical, and (4) the grammatical level. Such analyses may, of course, focus upon either written spoken language at all four levels.

Level	Area specified	Example
Global	The situation in which learners will need to use language and language related activities which typically occur in those Situations	In university classes: lecturing taking notes, asking questions, reading blackboard notes
Rhetorical	The typical way information is Organized in any language Related activity	In university lectures: an initial transition from yesterday's lecture, overview of standard procedures used in solving a problem
Grammatical-rhetorical	Those language forms used to realize the information structure of the language activity	( In the section of a lecture which reviews standard procedures)- use of the passive aspect as opposed to the active
Grammatical	The frequency with which Language forms are used in different communication situations	( in engineering lectures)- the relative percentage of active and passive verb forms

The global level specifies the situations in which learners will need to use the language and the language-related activities required in those situations. At the global level, the basic question is 'what do students need the language for?' The aim, then, is to describe using the language: where do the learners intend to use their second language, and what sorts of activities take place in those situations? Will the learners be waiting on tables, taking notes in engineering lecture, reading journal articles on veterinary medicine, reading journal articles on veterinary medicine,

reading technical manuals on the repair of engine parts, and participating in class discussions? Or will they simply need to know enough of the language to pass a standardized test at the end of the term? Will they be required to transfer information from one mode to another, for example, from written prose to visual diagrams, or vice versa?

Once the essential facts about the global level are known, one may then investigate the rhetorical level. The rhetorical level relates to the organization of information in the discourse, which occurs within any given situation. Here one may ask 'How is information organized in the written texts encountered by the learner in the situations identified at the global level?' Another sort of approach, which has recently been taken at the rhetorical level, requires an analysis of the organization of an interaction in terms of functions. The subject of functions studied most is that of illocutionary function, or 'speech act'. Here, a research may be asked 'What language functions are required to expressed understood within communication situation x? In waiting on tables, for example do participants typically have to express an opinion, disagree, interrupt, summarize? Which of threes speech acts occurs most frequently? Tarone and Yule (1989) are asking about the communicative behavior of users of the target language –that is, we are asking what fluent speakers of the target language do within each of these situations in our attempt to establish what it is that learners of that language need to be able to do.

At the grammatical -rhetorical level, the goal of analysis is to determine what linguistic forms are used to realize the information structure established at the rhetorical level; For example, if one determines that journal articles in a particular field have a typical rhetorical organization, one may then ask, 'What language forms are used to signal that organization?' perhaps it is verb tense or verb aspect that are used to signal the way information is typically organizes and presented within such article. If we are using speech-act approach, once we have determined that fluent speakers frequently employ the function of 'expressing opinion' in academic discussions, we may go on to determine what linguistic forms are used by native speakers of the target language to realize that function.

Finally, the grammatical level relates to the frequency with which grammatical forms are used in specific communicative situations. At this level, we encounter a purely quantitative (as opposed to qualitative ) form of analysis. Here, the question is : 'What is the frequency of the grammatical forms used by fluent speakers of the

target language in the set of communicative situations identified in the analysis at the global level? Tarone Yule (1989:37-38).

Therefore, a Business English course such as the LBC 201 offered at the Commercial College of Addis Ababa is an EAP focusing on grammar, lexis register, specific professional skills, discourse, and genre appropriate to current business communications and socio-cultural context. It has to take key communicative events into consideration and aim at developing the most frequently used required specific communicative skills.

Focus has to be also made on grammatical competence, socio-linguistic competence and strategic competence based on a needs analysis carried out at the global, rhetorical and the grammatical-theoretical levels.

The guiding principle in the designing and implementing such course is insuring that the course encompasses the objective, perceived and product-oriented needs and the felt and process-oriented needs of the students attending the course. What is wanted from the course, knowledge of language and skills that are used in the target situation-linguistic analysis, discourse analysis, genre analysis has to be defined and be compared with what the current skills and language use of the students are. This should be seen as a continuous process whereby the quality and relevance of the course can be steadily insured.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 3.1 Subjects of the Study

The subjects that have been involved in this study are the following:

1. 100 employees of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia who graduated from the Commercial College of Addis Ababa in the academic years 1998/1999 and 1999/2000;
2. 17 branch managers of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia;
3. 10 section heads and supervisors of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia;
4. 12 Commercial College graduates working at the foreign exchange offices that have been selected from among 100 employees of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia;

#### 3.2 Design of the study

Basically this research is a qualitative study using a case approach to reach its objectives. Commercial College of Addis Ababa is selected as special reference. As Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis (1977:142) stated it 'Case study is an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus an inquiry round an instance.' This study, therefore, draws on the techniques of qualitative studies, and aims to give a descriptive picture of a specific situation in such a way as to illuminate some general principles.

The design of the study is summarized in the following table.

Table 2 :Design of the study

	Purpose	Instrument	No. of Subjects
1	Survey Business English courses offered in different colleges in Addis Ababa	-Questionnaire Multiple choice type Open ended type	5

2	To investigate the post learning effectiveness of the Business English course for graduates	-Questionnaire Multiple choice Open ended	82
3	To describe the contents and objectives of the course	-Document study of the English for Commerce text book	
4	To obtain English language information about graduates	-Document study -Semester exams -English grades -Cumulative grade points	
5	To investigate the relevance of the course from stakeholders' view	-Semi structured interviews	17

### 3.3 Procedures of Data Collection

In order to assess the relevance of the English for Commerce course to the graduates and employing companies, questionnaires were developed for graduates of the Commercial College employed at the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia and semi-structured interviews were designed for branch managers and supervisors.

#### 3.3.1 Construction and Administration of questionnaires

In the specification of the contents of the questionnaires the work of Hutchinson and Waters (19987) and Abraham (1993) were used. As to the formats of questionnaires, a reference was made to Burns (1999).

The employees' questionnaires had two sections. These were information on the respondents' and target situation assessment. Section one consisted of the respondents' nationality, sex, area of specialization, year of graduation, position of employment, and length of work experience.

In the second section, target situation was assessed. In the assessment of target situation, the employees' target needs and requirements of specific communicative skills are considered besides other things. The findings from the employees' questionnaires are given in chapter five.

#### 3.3.2 Semi structured interviews

As the success and/or failure of the whole Business English program rests on the production of graduates capable or incapable of conducting business in English and

meeting the requirements of the modern business world, the stakeholders and graduate employees in major organizations of our country will then be the key informants for the analysis.

Data is therefore collected from branch managers, supervisors and personnel officers through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interview is chosen as an instrument because of the fact that the respondents are very few in number but the data they provide needs to be vast but also guided. As Bell, Bush and Goulding (1984:184) put it: "A semi-structured interview schedule tends to be the one most favored by educational researchers as it allows respondents to express themselves at some length, but offers enough shape to prevent aimless rambling." Based on the response to the semi-structured interview attempts are made to map out the market demand or the target need which was one main component needed to conduct the analysis.

These semi-structured interviews were also used to verify what employees filled out in their questionnaires regarding the target needs and throw more light on the situation. There were similarities between the contents of the semi structured interviews and the questionnaires. Similar interviews were also conducted with few employees for corroboration and triangulation purposes. As Bell, Bush and Goulding (1984: 74) suggest 'A basic principle in case study work is cross-checking findings from one interview with those of another, or checking interviews against documents and vice versa...'

Interviewees answered questions satisfactorily because they were given enough time and confirmed in advance that the research is supported by their head office to supply feedbacks on the effect of the course. The findings are summarized in chapter five.

### 3.3.3 Document Study

The data collected using the two instruments will therefore be analyzed and interpreted to provide information on the target situation .On the other hand, a different instrument, namely, examining documents, will be used to conduct present situation analysis . According to Burns (1999), the range of documents pertinent to a research focus can include students' portfolio of written work, student records and profiles, lesson plans, textbooks and classroom materials, letters, class memos and newsletters, and previous tests and examination papers. Besides complementing other observations by building a richer profile of the institutional context for the research Burns(1999: 140):

They can also give insights into how theoretical and practical values connect and the degree of 'fit' between organizational curricular concerns. The 'raw data' from the primary sources of the documents available in the research context allow the researcher to create a 'secondary' level of interpretation of what these documents mean.

The document to be examined in this study will, therefore, include conducting content analysis of the textbook 'English For Commerce' and study of relevant test sampling used for language courses together with test scores and cumulative GPAs. These instruments are hoped to provide a clear representation of the English language information about the learners, particularly what their current skills and language proficiencies are.

To assess the present situation and actual communicative skill level of the graduates the textbook English for Commerce is described parallel to semester exams and corresponding achievements and grades of the graduates. The description of the documents study is summarized in Chapter four.

The findings from the three instruments are used to conduct a qualitative impact assessment on the relevance of the communicative language skill package from the stakeholders' perspective. Simon (1978), addressing the British Educational Research Association, expressed the view: '... the focus of educational research must be education, and that its overall function is to assist teachers, administrators, indeed all concerned in the field, to improve the quality of the educational process – and in so doing, enhance the quality of life'.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research data analysis as well as its findings. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with a comparative view of the Business English courses offered by other Business colleges in Addis Ababa. This is done in order to justify the very idea of conducting a research on Business English courses and to decide on a particular course and the offering college. The second section describes the textbook 'English for Commerce', the material for the course Business English (LBC 201) used at the Commercial College of Addis Ababa.

The third section treats the graduates' response to the questionnaires concerning the target need at their jobs. In this part the frequency of the various communicative acts and the importance of specific skills with their actual implementations are presented with general comments on the relevance of the Business English course.

The fourth section deals with the response of stakeholders to the semi-structured interviews with an assessment of the communicative skills of employees in the target situation and general comments on the effectiveness of the Business English course for the performance of the graduates.

## 4.2 A Survey of Business English Courses

### 4.2.1 The Methodology Used in the Survey

A preliminary survey about Business English courses offered by other business colleges in Addis Ababa was made. This preliminary survey was hoped to enlighten readers on the matter since no such research is available to date.

Informal interview or dialogues and questionnaires were used in the survey. The findings from the questionnaires and informal interviews are summarized below.

### 4.2.2 Current Status of Business English Programs

The Commercial College of Addis Ababa was the only Business college offering 'English For Commerce' course until the emergences of private colleges. Today, Unity, Africa Beza, and Micro Link colleges are already accredited institutions training thousands of students in various business related disciplines and therefore offering Business English courses for regular and extension programs. Table 3 below shows the year of establishment, number of departments and student population taking Business courses of the five business colleges that are accredited or at least recognized by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education to date.

Table 3: Business English Courses Offered by Five Business Colleges in Addis Ababa.

Name Of College	Year of establishment	No. of dept. offering BE	Course and Credit hour	No. students attending
Unity	1998	6	Business Communication 3	3480
Africa Beza	1998	5	Business English 3	1700
Micro Link	1998	5	Business English 3	900
Zegha	1998	4	Business English 3	575
Adams	1998	3	Business English 3	585
St. Mary	1998	2	Business English 3	540

Most of the private colleges were opened with the hope of providing higher education to the population at large, which cannot be achieved by government colleges alone and share the similar mission statement of promoting education for national growth. Though 7780 students take Business English courses in these colleges, all of them are very young institutions struggling to cop with the high demand for higher education.

Unlike the new private colleges, the Commercial Collage of Addis Ababa (CCAA) was established in 1943 as The Commercial School having a fundamental single desire to reconstruct and modernize the nations' economy.

For the first fifteen years of its existence, however, the school was nomadic and continuously in search of students. Recruitment in the early years was hampered by both a limited supply of qualified students and a general skepticism about this new area of training.

The very first training programs offered by the School were from six months to one year in duration; they where also varied and practical in content. The earliest trainees where recruited from the few schools opened during those years immediately preceding the inauguration of the school (1941-43), and from candidates sponsored by potential employers and similar organizations. Those trained were selected on the bases of maturity and English language ability.

Over time, courses evolved to span a duration of four years. This laid the basis for the 8+4 program. Thus, up until that time, the school was a commercial high school, training manpower in the fields of accountancy and secretarial studies.

In 1966, a 10+3 program was introduced, followed a few years later by an 11+3 program introduced in 1972. By this time, students were trained in three fields: Secretarial studies, Accounting, and Banking and Finance.

Despite numerous administrative delays and other postponements, which even included a two-year suspension of training, the school phased out its lower-level programs over time in its quest to attain "Junior College" position. The college was brought under the Commission for Higher Education in 1979, at that time becoming one of the few third-level educational institutions in Ethiopia. In 1982, the new field of specialization of Purchasing and Supplies was added to the curriculum, followed by the inclusion of Personnel Management and Marketing Management in 1988-89.

At present, CCAA is offering a two year diploma program both in the regular and three-year continuing education in Secretarial Science and Office Management, Accounting, Banking and Finance. Purchasing and Supplies Management, Marketing Management, and Personnel Management.

For more than 56years the college has been engaged in developing and delivering timely training programs by anticipating the changing needs of

trainees, employers and the community at large. Now, as it has done before, the college has evaluated its curriculum for its quality and relevance in the context of the changes taking place in the country.

According to the mission statement stated in the college book the mission of the college is to:

- Employ the ethical intellectual, inter-personal, communication skills and values necessary to work successfully in domestic and international organization.

-Engage in preparing trainees for careers as assistance lenders, managers and business professionals and achieve personal fulfillment in their lives and to make responsible contribution to society at large.

The major objectives of the collage are to:

1. Train middle level manpower to perform effectively and efficiently the administrative service of the country using model skills and recent technologies.
2. Prepare top-level managers with generalized business and administrative skills including an understanding of business organizations, their functions with in the economy at domestic and international level.
3. Provide training, which combines classroom instruction with practical training.
4. Emphasize at all levels concepts of ethics, professionalism and social responsibility in business practices as well as in life.
5. Stimulate students' intellectual curiosity, develop their abilities to reason logically, and sharpen their communication skills.
6. Provide short-term employee treating, consultancy services and other relevant services for both the public and private sector.
7. Engage in Research activities in the areas of business and related activities.

The college, in its handbook states that curriculum development is a dynamic process and underlines the need for continuous assessment and upgrading of courses for the following vital reasons:

1. To ensure the quality and relevancy of the curriculum in relation to the current objective condition of the country (policies, development strategies, plans)
2. To specify the learning needs and ensure that the curriculum is compatible to the learner's required skill or job requirements. The key to effective needs assessments is the identification of the gap between what learner knows and

- needs to know. Curriculum should be developed to fill the gap for developing learning outcomes (behavior and performance objective)
3. To specify the determined skills, knowledge and/or attitude that the learner should be able to demonstrate following the education experience.

These are partial presentation of the objectives and strategies taken from the prospectus 2000 of the Commercial College of Addis Ababa.

### **4.3 The English for Commerce Textbook**

Creating effective materials that enable students learn the target language is vital for both academic and professional purposes. The main reason for this is the central role that materials play in bridging the gap between the syllabus and the practical teaching/ learning process that takes place in the classroom.

Materials are generally intended to foster motivation, help in organizing the teaching /learning process, upgrade teaching skills and provide models of correct and appropriate language use. For the realization of this, courses and their materials need to be continuously evaluated to ensure that they effectively serve the intended purpose in language teaching.

Results of material evaluation in most cases demonstrate the fact that textbooks do not fulfill the desired purpose to the idealized degree. As Allwright (1982; 96) observes “The whole business of the management of language learning is far too complex to be satisfactorily catered for by a pre-package set of decisions embodied in teaching materials”. So the fact that no single textbook can effectively work in all situations, or fulfill the entire desired objective subjects all textbooks to frequent revisions and assessments.

In the light of this fact, this paper attempts to make a close evaluation of the collage textbook entitled ‘English for Commerce’ and discuss matters related to language content, selection and grading of linguistic items, developing language skills and tries to present the strong and weak points of the textbook as objectively and effectively as possible.

#### **4.3.1 Framework of Textbook Description**

Before directly going into the description of the material it will be appropriate to pave the way by reflecting on fundamental issues of material design and harness the

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various expert views and principles to this modest endeavors. Extensive work in material design and evaluation conducted in many countries guide to first ascertaining the usefulness of materials in relation to points that can roughly be stated in the following enquires:

1. What the aims and content of the material are,
2. What it requires language teachers to do,
3. What it requires learners to do, and
4. What function it has as a classroom resource.

To go into deeper investigation in this direction Bates (1979 :172) has advised to follow the under mentioned points as references all the way of the venture unit by unit:

1. The learnability of the unit,
2. The workability of the unit and how long it takes to teach,
3. The popularity of the unit with students, and
4. Evidence of understanding on the part of the students.

Moreover, Breen and Candlin have provided us with an interactive step-by-step guide and proposed a wide range of evaluative questions, which we will employ to examine matters as the aim, and content of the teaching material.

In Dougill's opinion, the reviewer must ask questions directed at the characteristics of the target groups at which the textbook is aimed, as well as the framework through which the linguistic content is communicated.

For Cunningsworth textbooks and materials need to be evaluated with linguistic theory, mostly in the area of pragmatics. He argues that students are not in many cases helped on the appropriacy of different utterances in specific circumstances and discuss that turn taking, for example, is intended to help teachers decide how verbally realistic asset of textbooks might be.

The fact is that we have to be guided by such clear rationale as we embark on the job of reviewing textbook as the job is meant to involve the responsibility to inform teachers and textbook writers on the pros and cons of the material at hand.

#### 4.3.2 The Design of English for Commerce

Over the last thirty years the combination of various approaches has resulted a great shift in the view of language and the design of language teaching materials. Thus, today published materials follow a multi-strand design since planners are likely to design a utilitarian oriented syllabus, one which encourages the

development of communicative type of teaching materials” Dubin and Olshtain (1986:24)

The textbook ‘English for Commerce’ focuses upon structure, lexis, function, skills and communicative competence shifting from one to other. Thus, this multi-strand design enables the textbook to embody most of the benefits of currently produced materials to which Ur (1996) testifies as “Increasingly, modern syllabuses are combining different aspects in order to be maximally comprehensive and helpful to teachers and learners, in these you may find specification of topics, tasks functions and notions, study skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary”.

Let us then look at the textbook at hand from the three main criteria of design, namely, relevance, accessibility and cohesion. The brief and uncluttered headings of the textbook and the units like ‘Supply and Demand’, ‘Business Transactions’ and ‘Bookkeeping’ attract interest and summarize what is to be expected next.

Similarly, the five-art work at opening of the five units has direct and humorous relevance to the themes. Like the picture of different people all climbing one huge tree each struggling at different heights and designated as Personnel, Secretary, and at the top Managing director on the first page of the unit on ‘Departmental organization’ really save large area of text to say a lot and tell the reader why they should read on.

In addition, the importance given to the audience in the shift from tables to graphs, from charts to appropriate cartoons, and from account ledger to site map combined with measured density of text per portion altogether ensure the relevance of textbook at its intended level. The poor and at times blurry typography, the small font of the letters used throughout and the absence of a single eye-catching mechanism to highlight at least the most vital information reduces the layout to personal note and attest to the amateurish editing and very much cheap printing process. Fortunately the well-defined reading path like from text to tables or graphs to be filled keeps the flow of information going. Thus, the accessibility to both teachers and students is still very good.

The lack of uniformity of page allocation to units is unmistakable as unit 7 has a double size unit 2 or 3. This results in a negative implication on language practice, classroom time (period allocation), and students’ perception of the unit itself if some units are long and some short students may feel that some units are important than others.

This lack of uniformity and unprofessional typographical and design conventions adopted in the textbook is compensated for by the overall coherence achieved through the binding together of different and interesting components like completing a note while listening to a talk on books used for keeping accurate accounting records instead of answering listening comprehensive question. The writing a summary of the listened text in section 2, then reading a passage on the different types of accounts that might appear in a ledger in section 4 and talking in group on how to make double entries on a ledger in section 6. So, such variety of approach blended with the linear progression gives the material satisfactory cohesion. In general, the average degree of relevance, accessibility and cohesion can help us to conclude that English for Commerce has a fair design.

#### 4.3.1.1 Description of Language Content

Here, focus will be made on the content to be followed by an attempt to the underlying goal of the textbook in terms of the position of the language content described as compared to process and product. Predominantly, the textbook presents thematic content as the bulk of the listening, reading comprehension and writing sections revolve around Business English and each unit is full of technical language used in Economics: Supply and Demand, Management; Departmental Organization, Accounting; Book keeping and the like. However, since the textbook makes it clear from the outset about its audience it is at liberty to present authentic language sampling like the stream of terms like equilibrium price, debit - credit, voucher, bill of landing acts, staff welfare, price bridge, demand curve et cetera.

There is an equal division in the considerations given to linguistic and situational content. Every third section gives data on situation context, while every fifth section is left for linguistic content. For example, language practice section 3 has exercise on expressing certainty, probability, possibility, improbability and impossibility while language practice section 5 has exercise on completing sentences by using 'therefore', 'consequently', 'as a result' and so.

As to the aspects of language form presented, the greater proportion is devoted to discourse through summary writing, discussing in groups, letter writing, explaining to class, report writing et cetera. As mentioned previously due to the highly business governed content employed throughout the text the English taught falls into occupational register.

#### 4.3.2.2 Organization of the Textbook

English for Commerce has been used as a text for the past ten years at Addis Ababa Commercial College. The material was prepared by a team consisting of one native speaker and two Ethiopian academicians. The textbook was first published in 1991 and was reprinted the following year in 1992. The course material preparation was commissioned as a project by the Ministry of Education, Higher Education Main Department that solely owns the copyright. To date, the textbook has not been adopted nor brought into the language teaching program of any other educational institute.

As we come to the organization of the textbook, English for Commerce has five units each of which is divided into seven uniformly labeled sections.

These are:

1. Listening
2. Oral and written summary
3. Language practice (1)
4. Language practice (2)
5. Speaking
6. Writing

As supporting materials, the textbook has two additional components that are teachers' manual and an accompanying cassette. The teachers' manual contains detailed and guiding points on the:

- Views on language and language teaching
- Approaches to the course and materials
- Objective of each section and skill
- Suggested answers to exercises in students textbook
- Special inputs intended for the teacher only
- Suggestions for additional activities.

The students' textbook has a total of 102 pages and is sold for a relatively very fair price. Although the textbook has served for almost a decade no evaluative attempts have been made on it to date.

The intended audience: English for commerce targets at students who are studying business related subjects in the regular and extension program.

The proficiency level: The course book is designed for second year college students and aims at learners who have a relatively acceptable fluency and working knowledge of English.

The context: The textbook is English for Academic purpose.

Language presentation and organization: The language is presented in five units each divided into seven testable sections. Each section can take 45 minutes to 1 hour and the whole textbook provides material for 35-45 hours of teaching.

Aims of the textbook: As expressed by the writers the textbook aims at helping second year students learn their main subjects more effectively in English.

What students should be able to do with the language: The textbook attempts to enable students to:

- Listen to lectures, talks and discussions on commercial topics,
- Read advanced texts on commercial topics,
- Write notes, summaries, official letters and business reports, and
- Talk about commercial topics.

#### 4.3.2.3 Description of The Textbook

To arrive at the core of this description and determine to what extent English for Commerce is successful in achieving its goal and determine its particular strengths and weakness further inspection is necessary.

As can be seen from the Table 4 the textbook has structural, functional and discourse features. The first section of all units is based on topic-related texts. Students practice listening comprehension, note-taking and information transfer by completing tables, graphs, and flow charts.

The oral and written summary in each unit tries to focus on using the information from the listening part for verbal or written summary. Students are asked to fill blanks, give full answers to questions, and write descriptive paragraphs and summaries. Here there is a listening–speaking, and listening–writing skills integration but in a low proportion.

The two language practices, Sections 3 and 5 have input of linguistic and situational content. Students are asked to make sentences by extracting information from tables, graphs and charts that they have used in section one.

Some practice is done on sentence construction in Section 3 where little practice on paragraphs and brief passages is done in Section 5.

For instance:

- A. A particular model is give like a conditional sentence like the following:  
If the price were 32 cents, the supply would be 25 thousand.
- B. Use the market supply schedule you completed in section 1 to write four more similar sentences in your exercise book  
(Section 3, exercise 2)
- C. Now, write a similar passage from the supplier's point of view using the table you completed in the previous section to help you. Many of the sentence types in Section 3 will also be of help.  
(Section 5, exercise 1)

TABLE 4 : Content description of the textbook 'English for Commerce'

Unit	1. Supply & Demand	2. Departmental Organization	3. Business Transactions	4. Book Keeping	5. The purpose of function of Accounting
1. Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. The price of eggs.</li> <li>. Completing a table and graph</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Marlin Boat Company</li> <li>. Completing Harts and notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Exporting</li> <li>. Completing Flow chart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Accounting Records</li> <li>. Completing Notes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Financial Report</li> <li>. Note taking</li> </ul>
2. Oral and Written Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Filling words in blanks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Discussion</li> <li>. Descriptive Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Summarizing a Talk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Summarizing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Summary</li> </ul>
3. Language Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Certainty &amp; Probability</li> <li>. Sentence Construction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Sentence Construction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Ordering in a Sentence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Passive Voice</li> <li>. Should/ought</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Definitions</li> <li>. Sentence Construction</li> </ul>
4. Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Completing Table &amp; diagrams-ms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Preparing org. chart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Completing A table</li> <li>. Naming Documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Filling ledgers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Making a Tree diagram</li> <li>. Giving financial statements</li> </ul>
5. Language practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Sentence Construction using therefore consequently As a result</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Matching &amp; sentence computation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Paragraph writing</li> <li>. Stating difference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Rewriting and reconstruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Writing brief passages</li> </ul>
6. Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Group Discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Group Discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Discussion</li> <li>. Preparing Documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Group Work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Discussions (problem solving)</li> </ul>
7. Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Address, greetings ending of Business letters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Replying to letter of equity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Letter of compliant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Completing notes on feasibility</li> <li>. Report writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Report writing</li> <li>. Using information form maps and filing tables</li> </ul>

Such attempts to link Sections 3 and 5 in each unit have given the textbook striking coherence, cohesion and recycling of elements even though there is lack of intensity and frequency.

#### The Reading part (Section 4 of each unit)

This section involves extracting information to complete tables, charts and diagrams. In so doing skimming, scanning and reading between lines are fully brought to use. Questions like:

- Complete the demand and supply schedules below.
- Match each statement with an appropriate diagram below
- Name each document according to the passage, prepare an organization chart for x, y, z Co. limited.

The reading is followed by an activity that requires students to process information and put it to actual use.

#### The productive skills

The last two sections give practice in speaking and writing. The speaking part requires students to get information from diagrams charts (department organization), tables (ledgers) and lists (price, items et cetera.) and mainly focuses on making students speak about what they know in small circles.

- Discuss that following problem in your group.
- Discuss which chart is most suitable.
- In your group, work on the following problems.

The writing part (Section 7) is devoted to business letter and report writing. Each section gives few models before requiring students to produce one. The writing progresses from letter of enquiry to a complete feasibility report. This seems to be another merit of the textbook. However the frequency of such complex writing especially on the part of the students is so limited that the possibility for recycling is narrowed.

#### 4.3.2.4 Shortcomings of The Textbook

Among the notable shortcomings of the textbook, lack of adequate input stands out prominently. The language practice is limited in scope as students are merely asked to rewrite sentences in a number of ways and summarize what they have heard from the listening part. There is limited room for drills, word building, mechanics, pronunciation, idioms, professional phrases and discourse. In other words linguistic and situational content is too much played down and this will retard the ultimate achievement expected considering the background of our students.

Secondly, adequate attempts are not made to diversify and simulate the real professional environment that students will eventually operate in. Dealing with people in multiple circumstances calls for the art of maneuvering the raw linguistic corpus into an effective and appropriate communicative tool. Though this is not to be reached by the end of a course, moderate sampling like conducting a business meeting, booking reservation, briefing, telephone conversation, negotiation, public speech, role-playing, debating, advertising et cetera. would help for the development of the speaking sub-skills . The some deficiency is seen in the writing part, as enough attention is not given to connecting sentences, developing a topic, supporting a central idea, coherence and cohesion in and between paragraphs, clarity and transparency, formatting et cetera.

Thirdly, though models of letters and reports are given in the last three units, the exercises lack the intensity to produce a long lasting effect. Giving explicit instruction about the format or the accepted order of parts in a letter or report will not suffice as the students will face the pitfall of thinking the conventional sequence is the only focus they will need. For instance, the only two exercises on report writing based on the ready made data could have been supported by dictation, brainstorming, note taking, preparing notes and minute of a meeting et cetera. Making outline, writing draft, could also precede all writing practices, editing and proofreading activities.

Finally, though cost-effectiveness and the priority of the material preparation team can be taken into consideration, the low quality of typography and printing can still be improved. Moreover, the scant volume caused by the fewness of the units and the lack of presentation of short dialogues, introduction of current professional phrases, of grammatical items, definitions, adequate explanations and appendixes are drawback that cannot be overlooked.

In this part of the study a fair attempt is made to evaluate the textbook 'English for commerce' in the light of the most workable evaluation criteria recommended by scholars like Penny Ur, Skierso, Mc Donough and Shaw, and Cunningsworth and other more. Accordingly the strength and weakness of the material are fairly described but further studies and expertise can reveal what this attempt has failed to reach.

As reflected in the step-by-step discussion the textbook exhibits good acquaintance with the central issues of current paradigms of material design on the part of writers. The meticulous care in directing the progression of the unit towards the realization of the skills can still be upgraded by creating flow of content and the well-graded presentation and tasks.

The needs of the target group can be kept in focus if each section deals with authentic models and relevant issues that are practical for students of commerce. Thought supplementary materials can be thought of for intensity sake the major input can be refined by continuous needs analysis to keep the material fundamentally suitable for senior level business students. Therefore, the total view to be made about the textbook 'English for Commerce' is that though the textbook has its strong sides future revision and upgrading should be scheduled in order to increase its quality and relevance to the desired degree.

#### **4.4 Evaluation and Grades**

##### **4.4.1 Final Examinations of The academic year 1998/1999 and 1999/2000**

After describing and studying the textbook 'English for Commerce', it was necessary to study the evaluation of the course. This allows a complete analysis of the course and gives concrete information to empirically assess the strengths and weakness its' design. According to the course outline ( see Appendix D) the objectives of the course are to enable students to:

- Produce various business Letters applied in business environment,
- Have theoretical and practical knowledge of information and analytical business report writing,
- Take and make notes and write minutes.
- Take and carry out instructions in office situations effectively,
- Communicate orally in business office situations.

These objectives are assumed to be achieved through lectures, group work and writing exercises, individual and/or group of class writing assignments and lab. Oral Communication tasks.

As the study of the organization of the textbook (point 4.3.2.2 above) and the content description in Table 4 depict, each unit is divided into seven sections concentrating on listening, oral and written summary, reading, language practice, speaking and writing. The emphasis and implementation of each focus area is presented in the internal description of the textbook (point 4.3.3). To assess the extent to which the examinations cover the content and focus area of the course, the semester examinations of the academic year 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 are comparatively studied. As the two examinations follow the same format, the semester examination of the academic year 1999/2000 (see Appendix G) is take for description.

As can be seen from Table 5, the examination aims to measure the reading, language practice, and writing aspects of the course. Since few areas of instructional behaviors like taking and carrying out instructions, and communicating orally in office situation are not sampled the exam may be said to lack content validity in the strictest sense. However, since the examination contains 50% of the semester grade and the remaining half is assessed by using various in-class, off-class and lab. assignment, the examination may have been designed accordingly .

The question items like short answers, referencing, matching, drawing charts, supplying missing words, and writing letter of application and writing a report by applying the proper format follow the pattern of the exercises in the textbook and strengthen the construct validity of the examination. Moreover, sampling of skills such as information transfer, letter writing and report writing is done in proportion to the importance they are given in the textbook, giving comprehensiveness to the design.

In general, the examination may be said to have an acceptable validity and can adequately reflect the content and skills treated in the course book taking the mentioned exception and limitation in design into cautious consideration.

Table 5: Addis Ababa Commercial College Department of Language and Business Communication. Content Analysis of English for Commerce (LBC201) Final exams of the Academic Year 1999/2000.

Contents	Items	Weight
Reading Comprehension	-Short answers	2 ½ marks
	-reference	2 ½ marks
	-matching	5 marks
Information Transfer	-Drawing charts	10 marks
	-labeling diagrams	5 marks
Vocabulary and grammar	-Supplying missing words	5 marks
	-Using appropriate verbs and prepositions	5 marks
Letter writing	Letter of application	20 marks
	Price list	
Report writing	Write a report ,applying the format of report writing (i.e. topic, introduction, finding, conclusion, recommendation and summary)based on given data	20 marks

Table 6. A comparative presentation of the contents of the textbook 'English for Commerce' and the final Examination of the AY 1999/2000

	Textbook	Final Exam
1	Listening	----
2	.Oral  written summary - filling blanks -descriptive writing -summarizing	.-  -supplying missing words -writing descriptions
3	Language practice - sentence construction - sentence ordering - passive voice and modals	-giving short answers - referencing - using appropriate verbs

4	Reading - completing tables, diagrams, charts, - filling ledgers, tree diagrams	- information transfer: from chart to script
5	Vocabulary - words from comprehension passages	- supplying missing word in sentences (passage)
6	Speaking	-----
7	Writing - Business letters - Reports	- letter of application - report writing using the practiced format

#### 4.4.2 Business English Courses Grades and Cumulative Grade Point Averages of The Academic Years 1998/1999 and 1999/2000

The description and study of the textbook 'English For Commerce' and the comparative study of the semester examinations together give information on the design and implementation of the Business English course. However, data on grades of the graduates will be required as they are the key informants of the research. The Business English course grades and the cumulative GPAs of the graduates of the academic years 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 were studied. Table 6 shows the percentage of students who scored from 'A' to 'F' and those who have not completed the course (NC) with the corresponding average of the cumulative GPAs for the first semester of the academic year 1999/2000.

Table 7: Semester Grade for Business English LBC (201) and Average of Cumulative GPAs of The Five Department Students for The Academic Year 1999/2000

Department	Semester Grade of Students for LBC (201)						Avr. of CGPA
	A	B	C	D	F	NC	
Accounting	29%	26%	27%	8.7%	-	9%	2.51
Secretarial science and Office Management	21%	23%	43%	4%	-	9%	2.55
Banking and Finance	21%	19%	33%	18%	-	9%	2.52
Purchasing and Supplies Management	26%	29%	22%	11%	7%	5%	2.37
Personnel Management	17%	37%	19%	23%	-	4%	2.55

Based on the grade report of the Registrar Office of the College the mean of the achievement of each department is taken for the course Business English and the mean of cumulative GPAs of the same group is calculated. The result obtained from report shows that the graduates can be labeled as average achievers in both grading systems not focusing on individual differences between extreme high and low achievers. As Table 6 above presents, of the graduates of the academic year 1999/2000 an average of 25% and 26.8% of the graduates have scored 'A' and 'B' respectively in the semester final examination for Business English course while only 13% and 1.4% scored D and F respectively. These figures show that the great majority of the graduates were average students in the course Business English and having a cumulative GPA of 2.5 which makes them ideal subjects for the research.

#### 4.5 Findings and Discussion

##### 4.5.1 Findings from Employee Questionnaires and Employers Interviews

##### 4.5.1.1 Issues to be addressed about employee and employer respondents

Out of the 129 employees who graduated in 1999 and 2000 EC questionnaires were distributed to 100 employees of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. From the 100 questionnaires 82 were properly filled. The 82 respondents were 65 male and 17 female. The subjects work in one of the following 17 branches and foreign exchange offices.

Table 8: Target Branches and Foreign Exchange Offices of The Commercial Bank.

Branch		No of employees	No of employers		Branch	No of employees	No of employers
1	Aba Koran	5	1	10	Ghion	4	1
2	AddisAbaba Airport	4	1	11	Hilton	3	1
3	Addis Ketema	3	1	12	Legehar	9	1
4	Africa Hall	4	1	13	Mehal Ketema	4	1
5	Andinet	4	1	14	M/Ghandi	4	1
6	Anwar Mesgid	5	1	15	OAU	5	1

7	Arada	6	1	16	Selassie	6	1
8	Arat Killo	7	1	17	Thehdros	4	1
9	Bole	5	1		Total	8 2	17

The graduates employed by the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in 1999 and 2000 EC were 147 in number from whom 107 were male and 40 female. The employees were graduates from five different departments as shown in table 8 below:

Table 9: Fields of study of Graduates Employed by the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in the years 1998 to 2000 EC.

Majoring field		Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Accounting	58	23	81
2	Banking and Finance	26	8	34
3	Personnel Management	12	--	12
4	Purchasing and Supplies Management	11	--	11
5	Secretarial Science and Office Management	--	9	9

The 82 respondents who filled the questionnaires properly stated their present position of work as different: clerical, secretarial and customer connected responsibilities.

As noted in the third chapter, the content of the questionnaire has three parts. The first part is for personal information about the respondents. The remaining part can be classified into two. One part deals with quantitative data where the employees are required to show their choice numerically whereas, the other portion is concerned with the qualitative types in which case the graduates have to express their opinions to the open-ended questions. The responses to the open-ended questions have been used as supplement to the qualitatively given responses. In addition, some informal interviews and

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dialogues have been made with the employees to substantiate the results obtained from the quantitative data.

#### 4.5.1.2 Frequency of Specific Communicative Skills

The graduates were asked to rank the frequency of specific communicative skills. The ranking was according to the frequency of the use of each skill in their day-to-day work. Table 10 presents the findings.

Table 10: The assessment of the Degree of Frequency of Specific Communicative skills and the percentage of responses.

Communicative skills		Assessment by graduate employees				
		Very frequently	Frequently	Some times	Rarely	Never
1	Attending to customers' Requests in person	20 -- 24%	19 -- 23%	22 -- 27%	14 -- 17%	7 -- 9%
2	Listening to instructions	2 -- 2.4%	6 -- 7.6%	19 -- 24%	23 -- 28%	32 -- 39%
3	Listening to formal speech and reports	1 -- 1.2%	8 -- 9.7%	4 -- 5%	43 -- 53%	26 -- 31%
4	Receiving phone calls	31 -- 37.8%	20 -- 24%	29 -- 35%	2 -- 2.2%	-
5	Giving information to customers	39 -- 47.6%	35 -- 43%	7 -- 9%	-	1 -- 1.2%
6	Interacting with clients	23 --- 28%	21 -- 26%	13 -- 16%	19 % -- 23%	6 -- 7.3%
7	Making oral reports				39 -- 48%	42 -- 51%
8	Passing messages on the phone	9 -- 11%	12 -- 15%	15 -- 18%	26 -- 32%	20 -- 24%
9	Reading statements and checks	28 --- 34%	27 -- 33%	16 -- 20%	8 -- 9.7%	3 -- 4%
10	Reading bank documents	35 -- 43%	26 -- 32%	17 -- 21%	4 -- 5%	-
11	Reading reports	-	2 -- 2.4 %	-	13 -- 16%	67 -- 81%
12	Reading business letters and correspondence	12 -- 15%	15 -- 18%	25 -- 30%	19 - 23%	11 -- 13%
13	Reading fax messages	8 -- 10%	12 -- 15%	17 -- 21%	7 -- 9%	38 -- 46%
14	Reading memos	5 -- 6.1%	22 -- 27%	14 -- 17%	20 -- 24%	21 -- 26%

	Communicative skills	Very Frequently	Frequently	Some times	Rarely	Never
15	Writing business Reports	12 -- 15%	19 -- 23%	15 -- 18%	24 --30%	12 -- 15%
16	Writing business letters	10 --- 12%	14 --17%	21 -- 25%	18 -- 22%	19 -- 23%
17	Writing drafts and filling forms	21 -- 26%	25 -- 30%	30 -- 37%	4 -- 5%	2 -- 2.4%
18	Writing telegrams	14 -- 17%	19 -- 23%	22 -- 27%	17 -- 20%	8 -- 9.8%
19	Writing fax messages	11 -- 13.4%	16 --20%	14 -- 17%	22 -- 27%	19 -- 23%

The ranking was made using 1-5 scale where 1 means the most frequently used skill and 5 means not used all. In order to get the mean score for each choice, rank values were multiplied by the number of respondents of the respective variables. Results were then added up and divided by 82, the total number of respondents. As 1 is the most frequent in the ranking, the higher the mean (closer to one), the most frequently used is the skill by employees on work.

Accordingly, out of the total 82 respondents who filled the questionnaires properly, 39 (47.6%) of them have ranked giving information in person as the most frequent communicative skills on their job. Again 35 (42.6%) of the respondents ranked reading bank documents as the most frequent skill while receiving phone calls was also ranked the same by 31 (38%) them. On the

hand skills like reading report, listening to instructions and making speeches were not mentioned as very frequent by any of the respondents. For example only 2% of the respondents reported reading reports as frequent and 7.6% of them ranked listening to instructions as frequent. Table 11 below presents the mean score of each skill.

TABLE 11: Mean score of specific communicative skills as ranked by employees.

Item	Mean score	Item	Mean score
1	1.2	11	4.6
2	3.9	12	3.2
3	4	13	3.6
4	2	14	3.3
5	1.6	15	3.4
6	2.1	16	3.2
7	4.3	17	2.3
8	3.4	18	2.8
9	2.1	19	3.2
10	1.8		

The numbers 1 to 19 represent the specific communicative skills listed in Table 10. As the mean score gets greater than 1 the higher is the frequency of the specific skill in the duties of the graduates. Therefore, based on the responses of the employees, skills such as attending to customers request, receiving and making phone calls, interacting with clients in person and familiarity with different forms of documents are very essential skills that graduates should develop before embarking on their career.

Moreover, statistical analyses of the raw data indicate that the graduate with two years of service use the specific skills more frequently than those with one year of service. Association between year of service and the frequent use of the specific skills is tested by using chi-square. Taking .05 as the standard significance value, association is tested between experience and communicative skill like explaining facts, giving information and writing reports. Tables 12 present the probability value for the skills of explaining facts and giving information.

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Table 12: Percentage distribution of employees by Year of Experience and rating of Explaining Facts.

Ranks	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two Years		
Very frequently	8.2	57.6	25.16	.000
Frequently	34.7	24.2		
Sometimes	24.5	9.1		
Rarely	22.4	6.1		
Never	10.2	3.0		
Total	100.00	100.00		

Table 13 :Percentage distribution of employees by Year of Experience and rating of Giving Information

Ranks	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two years		
Very frequently	30.6	48.5	8.35	.039
Frequently	51.0	21.2		
Sometimes	18.4	27.3		
Rarely	--	--		
Never	--	3.0		
Total	100.00	100.00		

The initial hypothesis is that there is no association between the years of service and the acquisition of the specific skills.  $H_0$  ( null association) and  $H_1$  (there is association) are the two alternative hypotheses for the analysis. The result of the statistical computation as presented in the above two tables show the significance values for the skills of explaining facts and giving information are .000 and .039 which are both much below .05 . This gives us a result of  $H_1$  which indicates that there is clear association between the length of experience and the development of the two skills.

Chi-square was used to also test the association between the location of the branches and the frequency of specific skills like interacting with customers, conducting business on the telephone and using computers and fax machines. Taking .05 as standard significance value Table 14 and Table 15 present the results of statistical analysis between location and the skills of using fax machines and interacting with customers.

Table14: Percentage distribution of Employees by Location and rating of Using Fax Machines

Ranks	Location		Chi-square Value	P-value
	Local	International		
Very frequently	1.7	27.7	22.33	.0 00
Frequently	28.3	45.5		
Sometimes	31.7	27.3		
Rarely	30.3	--		
Never	8.3	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

Table 15:Percentage distribution of employees by Location and rating of Interaction With Customers

Ranking	Location		Chi-square value	P-value
	Local	International		
Very frequently	20.0	22.7	26.47	.0 00
Frequently	28.3	78.2		
Sometimes	41.7	-		
Rarely	10.0	--		
Never	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

As can be seen from the above two tables, the significance values for the skills of using fax machines and interacting with customers is .000 (Alfa) or much below .05 . The result is therefore H1 or indicating that there is clear association between the location of the branches and the frequency of the use of the two skills. This shows that there is a difference of degree in the use of the specific skills between branches as those located within international organizations reported more percentage of very frequent usage than those independently located branches.

The overall result of the statistical analysis from all the above tables and from additional tables and cross tabs in the appendix, is that even though there is a difference of degree due to variables like year of service and location the specific communicative skills are frequently used and required by the graduates.

The graduates' response to the open-ended questions also reflect the above findings. They were asked what specific skills are missing in the course and what areas of renovation they suggest. Most of the respondents stated that

skills like giving information, clarity in explaining procedures, conducting business on the telephone, fluency, creating rapport with new clients, using word processor, and using the internet are not given due attention in the course. They have underlined the fact that the course should particularly give emphasis to developing verbal interaction skills to the desired level and introduce modern communication facilities as part of the instruction. Many of them suggested that the student model bank and language laboratory should be upgraded and be effectively utilized as an integral part of the course work.

#### 4.5.1.3 Findings From Employers Semi-Structured Interviews

Besides their use for cross-validation, semi-structured interviews were used in order to find out more about the target situation from employers' point of view.

The respondents for the semi-structured interviews were branch managers, supervisors and section heads of the above-mentioned 19 branches and foreign exchange offices of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. The most important findings from the semi-structured interviews are summarized.

Most of the interviewees explained that the graduates from the Commercial College have important roles in the wide services of the bank and underlined the need for effective Business English proficiency and standardized communicative skills. They stated that English is still the office language of the bank even though there is an evident decline in the communicative proficiency of the current general staff.

The interviewees ranking of specific communicative skills according to the frequency of use the skills on the job was similar to the findings of the employees' questionnaires.

Almost all the interviewees reported that receiving telephone calls, giving information, handling requests and interacting with clients are highly frequent skills that recur in the day-to-day work of employees.

Most interviewees reaffirmed the need for fast and accurate reading skill of contractual agreements, financial statements, bonds, vouchers, checks, ledgers and similar bank documents.

The employers have also reported the poor proficiency of the graduates in writing business letters, inter-organization correspondences, memos, and monthly unit reports. Specially those interviewees from offices connected with Western Union international money transfer and those located in international organizations like the Economic Commission for Africa , Bole International Airport, Hilton etc. have remarked the need for specific communicative and professional skills like handling the copier, telex and fax machines, using word processor , electronic mails and the internet. The summary of the semi-structured interviews is presented in Table 16 below.

Table 16 : Employer's assessment of the importance and frequency of specific communicative skills in their branches.

Items in the interviews	Interviewees code and the ratings they gave																
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1.Telephone Communication	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	1
2.Creating rapport with customers	3	1	3	2	2	2	3	3	4	1	1	2	3	4	1	1	1
3.Listening to customers request	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	2
4.Giving information	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	3	2
5.Reading letters and fax messages	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	3	2	3	1	3	3
6.Reading documents	1	1	2	1	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	3
7.Reporting	3	2	3	2	5	3	5	2	3	2	1	3	2	4	2	3	3
8.Writing letters, telegrams etc.	3	2	4	1	3	4	5	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	1	3	2
9.Using fax and computer	3	1	3	1	2	2	4	2	1	2	1	1	2	4	1	2	2

In the above table the interviewees code A to Q stand for target branches represented by numbers 1 to 17 on table 7. As can be seen ,from the 17 branch administrators 14 interviewees or 82% of them have ranked the three skills, telephoning, giving information in person and using fax and computers as the most frequent activities from the listed nine items. The mean score for each of these skills is 1.7 while the secondly frequent skills are listening to customers request and reading documents each of them having a mean score of 1.8. Table 17 below presents the mean score of each specific skill as ranked by interviewees.

TABLE 17: Mean score of the ranking of the specific skills from the semi-interview

Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Mean score	1.7	2.2	1.8	1.7	2.4	1.8	2.5	2.5	1.7

The extent to which the graduates meet the standard of communicative skills expected by the bank is assessed by the branch managers and supervisors. The finding from their response show that the graduates need further preparation to meet the required skill level. The employers' response to the question to what extent the graduates meet the standard of communicative competence expected from them is reported in the table 18 below.

TABLE 18 :The employers' responses as to whether the graduates meet the communicative skills required of them on their work.

	Subjects:	%
Yes, the graduates meet the standard very well	1	5.8
Yes, the graduates meet the standard but fairly	5	29.4
Undecided	2	11.7
No, the graduates do not meet the standard fully	9	52.9
No, the graduates do not meet the standard at all	-	-
Total	17	100

As can be observed from Table 18 above, out of the 17 interviewees 9 (52.9%) of them have responded that the graduates do not meet the standard of communicative skills expected of them. For lack of exposure to the graduates 2 (11%) of the respondents showed reservations on the assessment. The second large group 29.4% of the employers said that the graduates meet the standard fairly while only 5.8% of the respondents hesitantly said that they meet the standard very well. The great majority of the interviewees, that is, about 74 % of them, however, have unambiguously reported the lack of competence and the need for improvement in the communicative skills of the graduates. These

comments were similar to the ones given by the graduates themselves and one source of information supports the other for crosschecking purposes.

Questions of the same type were given to the graduates and the employers regarding how far the course has prepared the graduates for the work, the need for revision of the course and the need for offering a continuation of the course in the following semester. The percentage distribution of the response from the two sources of information and the cross tab of the results from the chi-square computation are give in the following three tables.

Table 19:Percentage distribution of the Sources of Information and rating of how far the course prepares graduates

Ranking	Sources of Information		Chi-square value	P-value
	Employers	Graduates		
Excellently	-	11.7	<b>5.80</b>	<b>.122</b>
Very well	17.6	5.9		
Satisfactorily	47.1	70.6		
Poorly	35.3	11.8		
Neutral	--	--		
Total	100.00	100.00		

The probability value for the association between the two sources of information, the employers and the graduates, as presented in Table 19 above is .122 which is much higher than .05 the standard significance level. For this case the hypothesis is  $H_0$  or that there is no association

between the sources of information and the rating of the effect of the course holds true. The majority of the sample population from both cases, 47.1% of the graduates and 70.6 % of the employers, have rated the effectiveness of the course in preparing graduates as not satisfactory. This fact shows that a course evaluation may be needed to upgrade the quality and effectiveness of the Business English course.

Table 20: Percentage distribution of the sources of information and the ranking on the need for the offering of a continuation of the course

Ranking	Sources of Information		Chi-square value	P-value
	Employers	Graduates		
Strongly Agree	76.5	88.2	<b>0.81</b>	<b>.368</b>
Agree	23.5	11.8		
Neutral	--	--		
Disagree				
Strongly disagree				
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

Table 21: Percentage distribution of Sources of Information and rating of the need for the revision of the course

Ranking	Sources of Information		Chi-square value	P-value
	Employers	Graduates		
Strongly Agree	76.5	88.2	<b>0.81</b>	<b>.452</b>
Agree	23.5	11.8		
Neutral	--	--		
Disagree	--	--		
Strong Disagree	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

As Tables 20 and 21 show the significance value for rankings of both the need for a continuation of the course and the need for a revision of the course are .368 and .452 respectively. As both values are much higher than .05 again the hypothesis  $H_0$  or that there is no association between the sources of information and the variables holds true. A great majority of the respondents from both sources i.e. 76.5% of the employers and 88.2% of the graduates have strongly agreed that the course Business English(LBC 201) needs a continuation may be an (LBC 202) in the following semester. In the same manner,76.5% of the employers and 64.7 % of the graduates have strongly agreed that the currently offered Business English course (LBC 201 ) needs to be revised. This shows the importance that proficiency in Business English has for both the graduates and the employing companies while at the same time indicating the need to assure the relevance of the course through needs analysis and renovation.

General comments were also given by some of the interviewees. They expressed their views that the courses at the college should give emphasis to the kind of skills and tasks that the graduates will be required to perform on their future jobs. Among the mentioned skills were fluency in speech, accuracy in receiving and passing of messages through fax, telegrams, telephone ,correct use of grammatical rules and expressions, appropriacy, clarity in conveying ideas and self confidence in an act of communication, familiarity with modern office facilities. When asked to suggest possible steps of insuring the development of the mentioned skills, they expressed their opinions.

The main suggestions given were:

1. To increase the exposure of the students to real life communicative events and technological facilities.
2. To include projects and career-oriented tasks in the course works.
3. To introduce and make good use of modern technological facilities and effective language teaching aids.
4. To send senior students to different organizations for office practices and practical trainings before graduation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary of the Major Findings

In this study three questions were raised : How far is the course Business English LBC (201) relevant to graduates of the college? Is the textbook 'English for Commerce' effective in realizing the objective of the course? Do graduates meet the communicative skills expected by employers?

In line with these questions, three instruments were used: questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document . The major findings obtained using these techniques are reported below:

In order to assess the extent to which the course 'English for Commerce' has been relevant to graduates, 82 employees of the Commercial Bank who graduated from the Commercial College in the academic year 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 have properly filled the given questionnaires. Information from the questionnaires (Table 11 and Table 12) that the most frequently needed specific communicative skills are not given due emphasis in the course Business English LBC(201).

Most respondents expressed their difficulties in conducting verbal interactions with clients in giving service information, explaining money transfer procedures, clarifying currency rates and bank policies. This may be an aspect of the failure of the course in developing the graduates' competence in interaction skills.

Handling fax messages, telegrams, bonds and contractual documents, and inter-organization correspondences are also activities that graduates that have to acquire from senior employees.

When asked to what extent the Business English course has prepared them for their job, out of the 82 respondents 27 (33%) of them answered as 'poorly'. In addition to their general comment on the unsatisfactory lab work and student model bank, 92% of the respondents have strongly agreed with the idea of revising the course. This may be because of lack of thoroughness in the needs analysis of the

course. It may also be the effect of the fact that no attempt has been made to upgrade it in the past decade.

Moreover, to see the extent to which the graduates meet the communicative skills expected by employers, semi-structured interviews were conducted with branch managers and supervisors of the Commercial Bank. The results from the semi-structured interview with their superiors indicate that the graduates have serious difficulties in handling foreign customers and show incompetence in activities that require Business English proficiency. Though most of the interviewees expressed their preference for graduates of the Commercial College for the work, 9 of them (53%) ranked the communicative skills of the graduates as unsatisfactory.

The interviewees reported the unfamiliarity of graduates with modern communicative facilities and specific skills like handling fax messages and electronic mails. Besides pointing out the fact that the official language of the bank is English, most of the interviewees stated that the bank work would increasingly be demanding Business English skills as the future management of the bank will be shared with personnel from English speaking nationalities.

Furthermore, to find out whether the textbook 'English for Commerce' reflects the objectives of the course and also helps the students to develop the skills required of them, textbook description and study was conducted. A comprehensive content description (Table 4) and unit-by-unit study of the textbook was conducted to assess its effectiveness in the light of current Business English course book designs, the course objectives and the target situation analysis. The results of the study reveal the fact that the course book needs a revision on the basis of further needs analysis. The communicative skills demanded by the target situation and the focus and exercise of the units show a disparity that greatly reduces the relevance of the course work. The undue emphasis given to the symmetry of units and replication of few formats makes the exercises redundant while important communicative skills and authentic tasks are not treated at all. Therefore, the study of the textbook also supports the conclusion that the course in general needs revision and upgrading in order to have the degree of relevance that the graduates and employers demand.

In this research, it was also found out that there is more frequent need for diverse communicative skills and efficiency in the use of modern communicative facilities in the branches located within international organizations and foreign exchange offices than in the independent local branches. As the number and service areas of the branches with frequent foreign customers grow and the future plan of sharing the

management of the bank with English speaking personnel reaches implementation stage, the demand of proficiency and skillfulness on the graduates will accordingly grow drastically. Thus, taking the required steps to assure the relevance of the Business English course (LBC 201) may be a question of urgency.

## 5.2 Conclusions

On the basis of the findings, it can be concluded that the Business English course (LBC 201) does not prepare graduates in the business communicative skills to the level demanded by the target situation. The evidence from the study shows that the proficiency and standard expected from the graduates by the major employing company, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia is not met adequately.

In the same manner, the course was assessed by the graduates themselves and labeled as lacking coverage of specific communicative skills that are of great importance on their day-to-day duties. Moreover, the course needs reorientation in focus and emphasis as the most frequent skills required by the target situation have not been fully treated and developed by the graduates to the satisfaction of the employers.

From the above facts and findings, it may be concluded that the course Business English (LBC 201) lacks the degree of relevance aimed at by the Department of Language and Business Communication of the Commercial College of Addis Ababa. This calls for the revision and upgrading of the course in order that it may meet the standard and quality demanded by the target situation and thereby assure its relevance.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made.

### 5.3.1 The Design of the Business English Course

In the present study, the course Business English (LBC 201) is found to be very important for the graduates of the college and employing companies. However, the course should be renovated and upgraded in a way that includes and develops all the currently needed specific Business English skills. The detailed specification of the communicative and professional skills to be included and the revised focus area of content of such a course may be determined by further studies based on the target situation.

### 5.3.2 The Textbook English For Commerce

The textbook English For Commerce as described and studied in the light of the paradigms of current Business English course book designs and the target situation analysis, has shortcomings that call for revision. The revised course book should address the questions of coverage, authenticity of tasks, variance of emphasis and integration of the salient communicative skills and activities. It should enable the students to exercise and develop the required skills according to the degree of importance the activities have in future careers.

### 5.3.3 The Continuation of the Course

Findings indicate that the course Business English (LBC 201) needs a continuation (LBC 202) in the following semester so as to have comprehensive coverage, strengthening of newly acquired skills and lasting effect on the proficiency of the students.

### 5.3.4 The Methods of Instruction

The Business English course is a practical course, thus, requires practical methodologies of implementation. Simulated projects, office practices and spot visits to the target situation should be used to expose and familiarize the students to the tasks and activities taking place in the real occupational situations. To this end, on campus facilities like the students model bank and the language laboratory should also be revamped to give full service for practical sessions.

### 5.3.5 Further Research

The present study is a first attempt to assess the degree of relevance of the Business English course offered by the Commercial College of Addis Ababa. As a case study, the subjects and the target situation were limited to 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 graduates of the college and the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. Therefore, there are various aspects of the course that have not been adequately and critically dealt with. Hence, further comprehensive and rigorous research is recommended, particularly on:

1. the communicative skills and Business English proficiency of subjects who graduated before the academic year 1998/1999 and of those employed in other organizations;
2. the learning situation analysis;
3. the syllabus of the LBC 201 course in relation to equivalent course offered locally and overseas, and
4. the expectations and requirements of the stakeholders based on a wider and comprehensive sampling.

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## Appendix- A

**Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies**  
**Questionnaire for graduates of the academic year**  
**1998/1999 and 1999/2000**  
**Addis Ababa Commercial College**  
**For the Analysis of Target Situation**

Dear Respondent:

This questionnaire is part of a research project, which attempts to analyze the relevance of the Business English course of the Addis Ababa Commercial College to graduates and stakeholders. All responses will be kept confidential. So, you are requested to fill the required information as earnestly as possible.

### Section 1: Information about yourself

- 1.1. Nationality \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.2. Sex \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.3. Area of specialization \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.4. Year of graduation \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.5. Position of employment at this organization \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.6. Year of work experience \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 2. Target Needs Assessment

2. How often do you actually use the following specific skills in your job?

[Use this scale to rate them: 1-very frequently, 2-frequently

3- sometimes, 4- rarely , 5- never \*Circle the number]

- 2.1 Listening activities you perform on your job:

2.1.1. Attending to customers' requests in person 1 2 3 4 5

2.1.2. Receiving verbal instruction 1 2 3 4 5

2.1.3. Receiving verbal reports 1 2 3 4 5

2.1.4. Receiving phone calls 1 2 3 4 5

2.1.5 If there are other listening activities you actually perform on your job, please specify and rate them below \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.2 Speaking activities you are required to perform:

2.2.1 Giving information to customers 1 2 3 4 5

2.2.1 Interacting with clients 1 2 3 4 5

2.2.2 Giving verbal report 1 2 3 4 5

2.2.3 Assisting customers in person 1 2 3 4 5

2.2.4 If there are other speaking activities you actually perform on your job, please specify and rate below: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.3 Reading activities you are required to perform:

2.3.1 Reading bank documents 1 2 3 4 5

2.3.2 Reading reports 1 2 3 4 5

2.3.3 Reading business letters 1 2 3 4 5

2.3.4 Reading fax messages 1 2 3 4 5

2.3.5 Reading memos 1 2 3 4 5

2.3.6 If there are other reading activities you perform on your job, please specify and rate them below: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2.4. Writing activities you are required to performed on your job:

2.4.1 Writing reports 1 2 3 4 5

2.4.2 Writing business letters 1 2 3 4 5

2.4.3 Writing notes 1 2 3 4 5

2.4.4 Writing telegrams 1 2 3 4 5

2.4.5 Writing fax messages 1 2 3 4 5

2.4.6 If there are other writing activities you are required to perform on your job, please specify and rate them below: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

3 Which skills do you think are missing in the undergraduate 'Business English' course you have taken \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4 How do you feel about the course 'Business English'(LBC 201) having a continuation course in the second semester? 1. strongly agree 2. agree  
3. neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

5 To what extent do you think the course has prepared you for your job?

(Circle the appropriate number) 1. excellently 2. very well  
3. satisfactorily 4. poorly 5. not at all

6 How do you feel about the course being revised ?

1 .strongly agree

2.agree

3.neutral

4.disagree

5.strongly disagree

If you agree or strongly agree what areas of renovation do you suggest?

---

---

---

6 Please add any other comment you may have regarding the 'Business English' Course in relation to the task on your job:\_\_\_\_\_

---

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Thank You.

## Appendix -B

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School of Graduate Studies Semi-Structured Interview**  
**for Employing Company**

### Introduction

Dear respondent.

This semi-structured interview is part of a research project which attempts to analyze the relevance of the 'Business English' course at Addis Ababa Commercial College to graduates and stakeholders. Be assured that all responses will be kept confidential in all circumstances as part of research ethics.

#### I. Information about yourself

- 1.1 Nationality \_\_\_\_\_  
 1.2 Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 1.3 Position in the management \_\_\_\_\_  
 1.4 Year of experience \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Information about employees and the target situation

2. A. How was the communicative skills of graduates assess when they joined the organization? \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. In what areas did they show lack of skills and to what extent?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. A. To what extent and in what areas is the company using English to conduct business? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

B. What will be the effect of the company's future plan (especially of the plan to share the bank's management with foreigners) on the use of English? \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

4. How do you rate the following communicative skills of the 1998-2000 graduates of the Commercial College working in your branch?

(use the scale 1.very good 2.good 3.average 4.weak 5.very weak)

1. Telephoning \_\_\_\_\_
2. Creating rapport with customers \_\_\_\_\_
3. Giving explanations and presenting facts \_\_\_\_\_
4. Comprehending customers requests \_\_\_\_\_
5. Reading bank documents \_\_\_\_\_
6. Reading letters, fax and memos \_\_\_\_\_
7. Writing letters, fax and memos \_\_\_\_\_
8. Using word processor and other office facilities \_\_\_\_\_
9. Reporting \_\_\_\_\_
10. Others (please specify and rate them) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are your employees (who graduated from the Commercial College) made capable by the Business English course to conduct business in English?

- |                   |                   |              |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Yes, very well | 2. Yes, fairly    | 3. Undecided |
| 4. No, not fully  | 5. No, not at all |              |

6. What efforts are made to upgrade the Business English skills of the graduates after employment? \_\_\_\_\_

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7 How do you feel about the 'Business English' course being revised and renovated?

- 1.Strongly agree      2.Agree      3.Neutral  
4.Disagree      5.Strongly disagree

8. How do you feel about the 'Business English' course having a continuation (part II) ?

- 1.Strongly agree      2.Agree      3.Neutral  
4.Disagree      5.Strongly disagree

9. Please add any other comment you may have regarding the Business English skills and the college training of your employees who graduated from the Commercial College?

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THANK YOU

## Appendix C

Addis Ababa University  
School of graduate studies  
Survey Questionnaire for Five Business Colleges in Addis Ababa

### Introduction

Dear respondent.

This questionnaire is prepared to gather preliminary data from Business Colleges in Addis Ababa. It surveys all Business English language courses offered, Their objectives, materials, and miscellaneous pieces of information about the courses.

The questionnaire is part of a research project. You are therefore requested to be genuine in giving responses to every item in it. Be assured that all your responses will be kept confidential in all circumstances as part of research ethics. Before you start responding, it is helpful for you to read once the entire questionnaire and the following instruction.

### Instructions

Please give response to all section in this questionnaire by:

1. Filling in the columns or tables the required information in brief or,
2. Putting an asterisk (\*) or a tick mark (✓) where special instruction is given or,
3. Writing in the blank spaces for some open-ended questions.

Thank you in advance.

### Section 1: Introduction

1. Name of college \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of Establishment \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your position in the college \_\_\_\_\_
4. Departments taking Business English Courses \_\_\_\_\_


## Section 2: Business English and Affiliated Courses

Business English Courses on offer.					
Courses title and credit hrs	Objectives	Semester and Year	Materials And Pub. Date	No. of Students Attending Now	How Long On Offer
1					
2					
3					
4					

## Section 3. Other English Courses

Other English Courses					
Course title and Credit hrs.	No. of Students Attending	Year and Semester In which it is offered	Materials Used	Objectives	How long offered

1. Remarks on the above points (If any) \_\_\_\_\_

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Section 4. Teachers' Qualification (Start from the lowest educational level)

Educational Level	Field of qualification	NUMBER		
		Male	Female	Total
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

Section 5. Admission and Examination

5a. Specify below the college's criteria for admission of student

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

5b Is there an entrance examination? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, is it oral \_\_\_\_\_ written \_\_\_\_\_ both \_\_\_\_\_

Section 6. Miscellaneous pieces of Information

1. what kind of syllabus is used? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the average class-size? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of evaluation is used?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What feedbacks are gathered from stakeholders so for? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. If there is any point worth mentioning about the business courses and the college not included in this questionnaire (section 1-6), please write it below.

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Thank You!

## Appendix-D

ADDIS ABABA COMMERCIAL COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION  
COURSE OUTLINE

Course Title : Business English  
Course number; LBC 201

Date: 2000/2001 AY

### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

**This course aims at quipping graduating students with a working knowledge of business writing and oral communication skills required on their jobs. The course will be officered in the classroom as will as in Language Laboratory of the College.**

### II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. General: This practical course enable students to :

- \_ Produce various business letters applied in business environment
- \_ Have the theoretical and practical knowledge of information and analytical business report writing
- \_ Take end make notes and write minutes
- \_ Take and carryout instructions inn office situations effectively
- \_ Communicate orally in business situations

### III. METHODOLOGY

**Because of the practical nature of the course, the methodology to be adapted in the teaching learning process will be one of the communicative approach . Thus, lectures, in class group work and writing exercises, individual and /or group off- class writing assignments and lab oral communication tasks will be implemented.**

### IV. COURSE OUTLINE

#### 1. Business writing

- \_ Business letter styles and contents
- \_ Letter of enquiry and reply
- \_ Letter of order and acknowledgment
- \_ Letter of complied and adjustment
- \_ Letter of application and curriculum vitae

#### 2. Business Report writing

##### 2.1 Business reports / report types/

##### 2.2 Informational report writing

- \_ periodic report
- \_ progress report

##### 2.3 Analytical report writing

- \_ Research report Writing
- \_ Proposal report Writing ect. that provide solutions and recommendations to the Problems

##### 2.4 Oral Communication

- \_ Listening
- \_ Attending simulated employment interviews

**V. REQUIRED TEACHING MATERIAL;**

- \_ ENGLISH FOR COMMERCE Oliver Hunt, Girma and Alemayehu, 1992 EMPDA
- \_ A supplementary text and other hand – outs to be prepared by the staff in the progress of the course

**VI ASSESSMENT;**

- \_ various in- class off- class and lab. Assignment 50%
- \_ Final Exam 50%

**VII. ATTENDANCE;**

Because of the nature of the course students are required to attend all classes

## Reference:

- \_ Business Communication, R.T.Chappell & W.L. Reed
- \_ Effective Business English, Robert R. Aumer.
- \_ Business English in Communications William Hunstreet et.al.
- \_ Communication in Business, Peter Little
- \_ Model Business letter, L Gartside

## Appendix-E

**Addis Ababa Commercial College**  
**Department of Languages and Business Communication**  
**English For Commerce (LBC 201)**

First semester Final Exam

Date; January 21,1999  
 Time allowed; 2:15hrs.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ section \_\_\_\_\_ I.D NO \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer all the questions on the separate answer sheet**

**1. Read the following carefully and answer the questions below it.**

When we talk about making decisions in business we tend to think of the major decisions which are made from time to time ,such as the decision to go ahead with the Eurotunnel project ,or the decision to appoint a new chairperson for the National coal board . The fact is that a multitude of decision are being made in business everyday .Certainly there are major decisions in process as the boards of directors and chief executives in large public companies decide to enter new markets, send millions on new plant and machinery or advertising campaigns , and buy new buildings or make takeover bids against their most treating. Competitors .yet for every one of these monumental decisions there are a hundred decisions made by more ordinary mortals.

In fact, man is a decision-making animal .He is continuously making decisions every moment of his life. Many of us wake in the morning to the sound of all arm lock. Here is our first decision of the day. Should we turn of the alarm and go back to sleep? Or should we turn off the alarm and get up? There is even a possible compromise .we can turn off the alarm and stay half-awake for another few minutes.

We come down to breakfast and face another decision. Do we have toast or cereals? One or two slices? And what about some thing to drink? Fruit juice or tea? Coffee? Black or white?

Breakfast over we more on to the next bout of decision-making what shall wear today? The blank shoes or the brown? Shall we take a raincoat or an umbrella? Shall we go by bus or tube? The decisions we are obliged to make, are endless and interestingly , all the decisions we are obliged to make ,to the extent that we are logical in our approach , are dealt with in precisely the same way.

We are comforted with a problem. We then look for the alternative solutions to the problem , weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of each and select the one which allow us either to achieve our objectives at the lowest possible cost, or allow us to emerge with the greatest profit.

Take the case of Eurotunnel. As Britain is now a member of the European Community her trade with Europe is growing .Unlike the other members of the community we are an island, separated by an inconvenient expense of water. Do we build a bridge? Or a tunnel? What Would be the advantages of a bridge? And the disadvantages? What sorts of tunnel ?How much would each of the alternatives cost? And how much would they cost to maintain? How much traffic could they take? How much revenue could they be expected to earn? And who would provide the funds/These Were the questions Which needed to be answered by the French and British government and their respective entrepreneurs before any decisions are made

These are, of course, momental decisions, but the basic principle is the same; the advantages and disadvantages of the various possible alternatives are weighed up and an option is chosen that is how all our decisions are made.

**A) Give short answers to the following questions,(21/2 marks)**

1. What do you understand about decision-making according the passage?
2. When does one make a decision of something?
3. What is the meaning of the phrase man is decision making animal'?
4. What does one do while making a decision?
5. What is Eurotunnel?

**B) Reference questions.( 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> marks)**

1. What does the phrase 'ordinary mortals' in the last sentence of paragraph one refer to ?

---

2. 'one' in paragraph five sentence two means

---

3. 'Her' in paragraph six sentence two refers to

---

4. Again, in paragraph six 'alternatives' refers to

---

5. What does 'these' represent in the last paragraph sentence one

---

**C. Match the meanings under column B with the words under column A (5 marks)**

<u>Column A</u>	<u>Column B</u>
_____ 1. Option	a. armpit
_____ 2. Maintain	b. important
_____ 3. Confronted	c. a lot/many
_____ 4. Bout	d. fearful
_____ 5. Monumental	e. fearful
_____ 6. Tend	f. Come out
_____ 7. Multitude	g. half way
_____ 8. Threatening	h. choice
_____ 9. Emerge	i. Incline
_____ 10. Compromise	j. happy
	k. Work/activity

**II Draw the Organization Chart of TYF Textile factory based on the following information. (10 marks)**

TFY Textile Factory was set up at the cost of 4 million Barr at Gullet in 1998. It has 40 Employees. Its annual sale is about a million Birr. The owner is the manager of the business. He has a personal assistant.

There are three divisions and two offices under him. These are the Sales Division, the Production Division, The Financial Division, The Administrative office and the personnel office. An administrator heads the Administrative office. There are the offices of the secretary and the general service officer under the Administrative office. Section, the cleaners' section and the plumbers' section.

There are also three sections that are controlled by the secretary. In each of these sections, there three junior secretaries Who do the day to day copying of various documents.

The sales and Production Division are leaded by managers. The sales Division is divided into the factory sales shop and External sales Shop and each of these shops is headed by a director the financial division is headed by a manager. The financial Division Is divided into Cash and Auditing Departments. These departments are head by directors.

The personnel Office which is under the control of a personnel officer is divided into the staff Welfarer, the recruitment and the staff Recreation Section, These three sections are controlled by section heads

So all the workers of TYF Textile Factory do their work diligently and cooperatively. The production of the factory has been increasing from time to time as the management and the workers are trying hard to make the factory more competitive in this free market economy.

### III Letter Writing

Answer any two of the following three questions.(20 marks)

1.You work for jams cairn Cross and Sons Co Cumberland Avenue, London, E.C.3., Which produces electric lamp bulbs. You received an inquiry letter from a retailer in

Ethiopia inquiring a quotation for your "Britelite" Electric lamp bulbs. Send them Your latest Price list and tell them that you are prepared to allow a special discount of 15 percent on orders for not fewer than 500 lamp bulbs. This rate of discount Would be Progressively increased as larger quantities are ordered.

1. Write to your supplier (Jelly and son .Ltd, New Era Works, Cambridge, England) Explaining that in a delivery of metal Waste paper bins fifty were either slightly dented or bald scratched and that you(a retailer in Ethiopia) have had to sell them at a Price considerably below the recommended retail selling price. Write to the above-mentioned company for the deference between the recommended retail price and the price at which the damaged bins were sold.

## 2. Wine Trade

Applicants are invited from graduates of Commercial College interested in making a career in the Wine Trade. The Successful applicant will be directly responsible to the MARKETING Manager and will be required to travel with him to the European Vineyards visiting Growers and shippers and will learn all aspects of the wine trade Fluent in English is required. Apply to; The Manager, Awash Wineries, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

IV. Applying the format of report Writing (i.e. Topic, Introduction, Finding, Conclusion, Recommendation& Summary),write a report based on the Following;

Assume that you are students affairs Officer of Addis Ababa commercial College. A lot of Complaints are voiced by students of the college as regards the services rendered by the students 'cafeteria of the college. In the light of this, The dean of the college instructed you on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2000 to investigate the problems that forced the students to voice their complaints and provide recommendations that enable the college to improve the service that the cafeteria renders.

## Appendix-F

Addis Ababa Commercial College  
Department of languages and Business Communication  
English For Commerce (LBC 201)

Regular programmer  
 Date: January 25,2000  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_

First semester Final Exam  
 Time allowed: 2:15 hrs  
 section \_\_\_\_\_ I.D NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Answer all the questions on the separator answer sheet

I read the following passage carefully and answer the questions below it, so you fancy yourself as a manager? You are not alone in having that ambition what does it mean to be a manager? I suppose the first thought that comes to mind is that a manager gives orders and tells other people what to do. That is partly true. But it is not quite as simple as that. In fact, managers have to take orders as much as anyone else. the term 'excutive' actually implies executing orders-orders perhaps not under their power to influence.

Every Business has to decide when it is going. What it is trying to achieve. Words like objectives and targets are used in management theory. Whether these targets are related to items such as sales or budgets, they are broken down in to sub-targets as they go further down the organizational hierarchy. The managers at various levels in the structure are given these targets or objectives to achieve, sometimes they are given considerable freedom to achieve the targets in the way they see best. Sometimes their independence is limited, perhaps very limited.

subject to these constraints a manager has certain clear-cut functions. First he has to plan-to look ahead-to anticipated. When you drive a car you look as fare ahead as you can to see what hazards lie ahead. If you see some children playing in the road ahead you start to slow down, check your breaks are working and generally watch for trouble. What would you think of a driver who kept his eyes on the road-six feet in front of his bonnet? A manager who is able to anticipate problems has more chance of coping with them

Another function of managers is to control. We have already that managers are expected to achieve targets of some sort or another. The manager has to keep these

targets clearly in mind when he is involved in the decision-making process. Progress towards the targets needs to be monitored and any deviations corrected. It is a bit like the captain of a liner sailing across Atlantic to New York. Every now and again he will check to see whether or not the ship is on course. If it is beginning to drift to port or starboard he has to bring it back on to course. That is what we mean by control.

Managers are expected to get results of one sort or another, in one way or another, but they get their results through people. The manager of England football team never kicks a ball in an international football match, he is expected to get the best out of his team. Everyone in the team is expected to co-operate to get the ball in the back of the opposing team net. All have to be persuaded to pull together in the same direction. In management terminology this aspect of a manager's work is called co-ordination.

**A. Give short answers to the following questions (2<sup>1/2</sup> marks)**

1. What is the most important duty of a manager according to the passage?
2. What do people think concerning the duty of a manager?
3. What should any business do in order to succeed?
4. What should a manager do to be able to solve a problem?
5. Does a manager get result in an organization alone? Why?

**B. Reference Questions. (2<sup>1/2</sup> marks)**

1. What does 'them' in the third paragraph last sentence refer to?

---

2. 'it' paragraph two second sentence refers to

---

3. 'That' in paragraph one represents

---

4. 'they' in the second paragraph fourth sentence stands for

---

5. In the same second paragraph the second sentence from the last 'they' refers to

---

**C. Match the meanings of the words under column B with the words under column A (5 marks)**

**Column A**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. ambition
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. involved
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. constraints
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. deviations
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. fancy
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. anticipate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. monitored
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Considerable
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. executing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. hazards

**Column B**

- a. Controlled
- b. mistakes
- c. dangers
- d. enough
- e. expect
- f. problems
- g. took part/participated
- h. high expectation
- i. Performing/doing
- j. imagine/think
- k. hoping

**II. Write the organizational description of PTY soap factory based on the following information (10 marks)**

Name-PTY Soap Factory

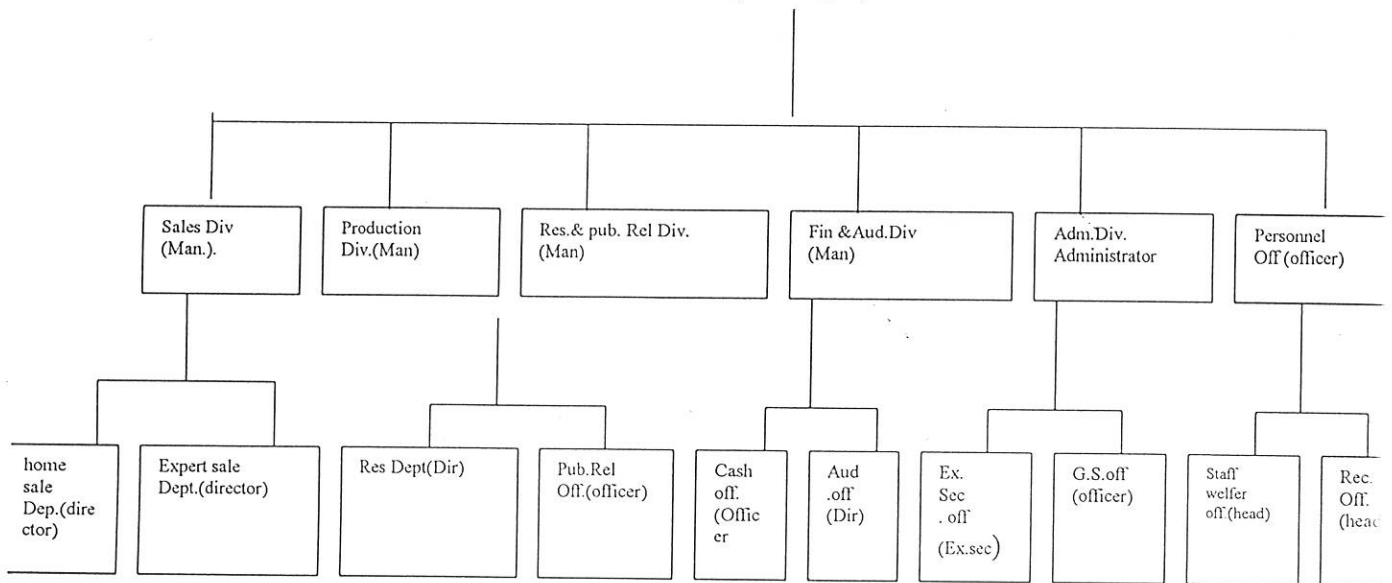
Established -1996

Location-Akaki

Product-different types of soap

Market-local & external

PTY soap Factory  
(Manager)



Note: Div=Division  
Ex.Sec=Executive secretary  
Off. = Officer  
G.S.off = General Service officer  
Adm. = Administration  
Dep. = Department

Pub.Rel. =Public Relation  
Dir. =Director  
Aud. = Auditing  
Man. = Manager  
Res. = Research  
Fin. = Financial

### III Letter Writing

Answer any two of the following three questions. (20 marks)

1. The sales manager of ETHOF of placed an order for 80 Hoka type domestic refrigerators with Fuji-Tawa Electrical Co. Of Yokohama, Japan on 14 January 2000. He now wishes to amend the order to 70 HOKA domestic refrigerators and 10 FREEJA storeroom type. Your boss (the sales manager of ETHOF) asks you to write a letter to Fuji- Taws detailing the

amendment with the hope that it reaches them before shipment is made. If too late, inform them that immediate shipment of the 10 store room type refrigerator is required urgently for a special customer.

2. Assume that you have a large stationery where you sell stationery materials and some imported books. Recently you received books from a publisher in India. On receiving the books you found that half the pages of most books had not been cut and the flyleaf bearing the date of publication of all books had been torn away. Write a letter to the publisher (Chaterjee and Lakshman Oxprint Ltd., 135 Taj Mahal place Bombay India) explaining your disappointment and demanding action.

### 3. International Travel Agent

#### REQUIRES SALES CLEARANCE

Excellent English essential. Must have smart, courteous manner for dealing with the public; a commercial college graduate. Experience in travel or similar an advantage but not necessary, as training will be given. Age preferably between 20-25. Write to: The General Manager World Over Travel, P.O.Box 1010, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

IV Applying the format of report writing (i.e. Topic, Introduction, Findings, Conclusion, Recommendation & summary), write a report based on the following.

Assume that you are the chief librarian of Addis Ababa Commercial College. Students of the college as regards the services the library renders are voicing a lot of complaints. In the light of that, the dean of the college authorized you on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2000 to investigate the causes of the complaints and provide recommendations that enable the library to improve the services that it renders.

## Appendix-G

### Employers Response to Semi-structured Interviews. (The cassette is available)

Branch managers ,supervisors and section heads were interviewed from seventeen branches of the commercial Bank .Three of the questions with randomly selected three answers for each are presented below.

Q1. What will be the role of English in your bank (especially with the future plan of sharing the management of the bank with foreign personnel?)

R1. English has been the office language of our bank as back as I remember and it will still be the same for the future. The only thing that might change is the demand of better level of proficiency on us and our staff. This might give us some challenge.

R2. Bank service is highly routine work and once a person get familiar with the routine there will not be much difficulties. It is the same with the role of English .And about he the plan of working with foreign personnel you mentioned ,it has been an issue for many years and we don't expect it to happen so easily.

R3. This an interesting question because for various reasons the English skills of the staff has been declining from time to time. Taking the requirements of the bank into consideration I think we need to improve the fluency of our bankers in one way or another. Otherwise the growing need for better English speaking bankers and the decline in the kind of employees we have will have a negative effect on our Bank.

Q2 .What efforts are made to upgrade the Business English skills of the graduates after employment?

R1. There is a department in the head office called human resource and development that is responsible for such matters .However, as far as I recall no attempts have made to upgrade the employees` skills in Business English.

R2. Some of the employees attained extension programs to upgrade their educational level. Except that there is no education give to the staff regarding Business English.

R3. The graduates are employed by the head office and once they start work they are in continues learning process from their seniors. That is how good banker are made through experience and sharing of skills. I remember that the bank once selected a few of our staff and taught French, Arabic and Italian languages. But so far I have no information on English language courses give by the bank

Q3.Please add any other comment you may have regarding the Business English skills and the college training of your employees who graduated from the Commercial college.

R1. The graduates from the Commercial College are very fitting for the bank work. They come with good knowledge in their subject areas and gradually become very good at their jobs. I can not say much about the language training they had at college but mostly they are shy and lack the confidence to use English .May be the college should help them to develop the confidence to use English before they graduate.

R2. The graduates should be sent to different companies before they finish the course so that they may learn from practice and return to the college to associate it with their lessons . Secondly ,the college should introduce new technological facilities to the lesson. I myself was a student of that college many years back. The college has to modernize itself.

R3. Most of the graduates from the Commercial college are average in their ability to conduct Business in English. They can easily learn the required skills from their colleagues and seniors. But I think it would be much better if they acquire and practice all the skills at school instead of coming to their career with less English skills. Especially they have to have good ability is the verbal communication area.

## Appendix –H

### Statistical Results presented in tables and cross tabs

Test of Associations, significance values and percentage distributions for the hypotheses based on the results of statistical computation using Chi-square.

#### 1. Percentage distribution of Employees by Year of experience and writing reports

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two Year		
Very frequently	6.1	42.3	<b>19.85</b>	<b>.001</b>
Frequently	32.7	27.3		
Sometimes	32.7	6.1		
Rarely	22.4	15.2		
Never	6.1	9.1		
Total	100.00	100.00		

2. Percentage distribution of Employees by Year of experience and ranking of Attending to customers requests

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two Year		
Very frequently	10.2	48.5	<b>19.68</b>	<b>.001</b>
Frequently	34.7	33.3		
Sometimes	36.7	18.2		
Rarely	12.2	--		
Never	6.1	--		
Total	100.00	100.00		

3. Percentage distribution of Employees by Year of experience and ranking of using the telephone for official purposes

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two Year		
Very frequently	14.3	54.5	<b>15.62</b>	<b>.001</b>
Frequently	36.7	24.2		
Sometimes	24.5	9.1		
Rarely	14.5	6.1		
Never	10.2	6.1		
Total	100.00	100.00		

4. Percentage distribution of Employees by Year of experience and ranking of reading business letters and correspondence

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two Year		
Very frequently	16.3	27.3	6.42	.170
Frequently	49.0	24.2		
Sometimes	28.6	39.4		
Sometimes	6.1	6.1		
Rarely	--	3.0		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

5. Percentage distribution of Employees by Year of experience and Rating of interacting on personal level

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two Year		
Very frequently	20.0	22.7	26.7	.000
Frequently	28.3	78.2		
Sometimes	4.17	--		
Rarely	10	--		
Never	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

6. Percentage distribution of Employees by Location and Ranking of the use word processor

Rating	Location		Chi-square value	P-value
	Local	International		
Very frequently	11.4	35.3	21.73	.0 00
Frequently	18	53		
Sometimes	23.6	11.7		
Rarely	35.7	--		
Never	11.3	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

7 .Percentage distribution of Employees by Location and ranking of writing reports and bank documents

Ranking	Location		Chi-square value	P-value
	Local	International		
Very frequently	14.2	32.6	26.32	.0 00
Frequently	21.7	35		
Sometimes	23.6	27		
Rarely	38.3	5.4		
Never	2.2	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

8. Percentage distribution of Employees by Location and Rating of How far the college prepares graduates for the tasks on jobs

Ranking	Location		Chi-square value	P-value
	Local	International		
Excellently	13.3	9.1	<b>21.3</b>	<b>.042</b>
Very Well	15.0	27.3		
Satisfactorily	43.3	54.5		
Poorly	28.4	9.1		
Not at all	--	--		
Total	100.00	100.00		

9. Percentage distribution of Employees By Year of experience and ranking of the skills of giving information

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two year		
Very frequently	30.6	48.5	<b>18.35</b>	<b>.009</b>
Frequently	51.0	21.2		
Sometimes	18.4	27.3		
Rarely	--	--		
Never	--	--		
Total	100.00	100.00		

10. Percentage distribution of Employees By Year of experience and ranking of ability to create rapport

Ranking	Experience		Chi-square value	P-value
	One year	Two year		
Very frequently	15.5	27.3	19.54	.002
Frequently	23.9	34.8		
Sometimes	33	24		
Rarely	13.6	13.9		
Never	14	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

11. Percentage distribution of Employees by Status of employment and ranking of the need for the offering of a Continuation of the course

Ranking	Status		Chi-square value	P-value
	Managers	Other employee		
Strongly Agree	76.5	88.2	.81	.368
Agree	23.5	11.8		
Neutral	--	--		
Disagree	--	--		
Strongly disagree	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

12 . Percentage distribution of Employees by Status of employment and ranking of the need for a revision of the course

Ranking	Status		Chi-square value	P-value
	Managers	Other employee		
Strongly Agree	76.5	64.7	<b>.058</b>	<b>.452</b>
Agree	23.5	35.3		
Neutral	--	--		
Disagree	--	--		
Strongly disagree	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

13. Percentage distribution of Employees by Status of employment and ranking of how far the course prepares graduates for the tasks on jobs

Ranking	Status		Chi-square value	P-value
	Managers	Other employee		
Excellently	-	11.8	<b>5.80</b>	<b>.122</b>
Very well	17.6	5.9		
Satisfactorily	47.1	70.6		
Poorly	35.3	11.8		
Not at all	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

12 . Percentage distribution of Employees by Status of employment and ranking of the need for a revision of the course

Ranking	Status		Chi-square value	P-value
	Managers	Other employee		
Strongly Agree	76.5	64.7	<b>.058</b>	<b>.452</b>
Agree	23.5	35.3		
Neutral	--	--		
Disagree	--	--		
Strongly disagree	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

13. Percentage distribution of Employees by Status of employment and ranking of how far the course prepares graduates for the tasks on jobs

Ranking	Status		Chi-square value	P-value
	Managers	Other employee		
Excellently	-	11.8	<b>5.80</b>	<b>.122</b>
Very well	17.6	5.9		
Satisfactorily	47.1	70.6		
Poorly	35.3	11.8		
Not at all	--	--		
Total	10 0.00	10 0.00		

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my work and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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