

Rhodes University
Education Department

INVESTIGATING PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS' LANGUAGE NEEDS AT A
RWANDAN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING

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Abstract

The site of this research is the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST). The research was undertaken to investigate first year students' perceived English language needs in order to study successfully at KIST. The research was intended to pave the way for differentiated English language syllabuses for students of varying English proficiency. It sought to answer the following questions: (1) what are students' perceived language needs in order to study through the medium of English at KIST? (2) To what extent does the current English language programme address these perceived needs? And (3) what are the differences in students' perceived language needs at different levels of proficiency?

The research was carried out in an interpretive paradigm using both qualitative and quantitative methods. It took the form of a case study utilising questionnaires to collect data. Questionnaires were administered to students, mainstream subject lecturers and English lecturers. The student sample consisted of 212 students chosen from the four previously identified levels of proficiency (beginner, elementary, intermediate and advanced). The lecturer samples consisted of seven subject lecturers and eleven lecturers in English. The research tools used to collect data were administered questionnaires and document analysis. The chi-square statistical test was used to analyse quantitative data especially in establishing differences that appeared between dissimilar proficiency levels.

Findings have shown that, although English is no longer a credit-bearing course, students are still interested in learning it. Students expressed a high positive perception for learning language structures, listening and speaking, and a need for reading and writing.

However, although it was possible to establish stakeholders' (students, subject lecturers and lecturers in English) perceptions of students' needs, it was not easy to establish what students' real needs and difficulties in English are. Attempts to get valid answers to my questions were not conclusive.

Although this research has implications for the future of English language teaching/learning at KIST there is a need for further investigation of students' needs. An important starting point would be to begin a debate at KIST about the whole issue of students' needs. Such research would exploit research tools/methods not used in this research (e.g focus group interviews and observations).

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List of acronyms

ELT	: English Language Teaching
ESP	: English for Specific Purposes
KIST	: Kigali Institute of Science and Technology
KLC	: KIST Language Centre
L2	: Second language
LSP	: Language for Specific Purposes
NPP	: Negative perception percentage
PPP	: Positive perception percentage
PSA	: Present situation analysis
SPEN	: Special English
TSA	: Target situation analysis
UNIBO	: University of Botswana
USA	: United States of America

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a contextual framework for the research; it informs the reader about the context of the study and why it was undertaken. The reader is also informed about the goals of the research and the order in which the main parts of the thesis are organised.

1.2 Context of the study

The site of my research is the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), a Rwandan institute of higher learning where I was employed to teach English in January 2000.

The Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) is the first and the only public technological institute of higher learning in Rwanda. It offers bachelors' degrees in science and technology. Its establishment in 1997 was part of the Rwanda government's mission to build a strong human resources base, which had been damaged by the 1994 genocide. As part of this renewal policy, KIST also sought to develop trilingualism in its students (appendix A):

In order to impart equal education to all Rwandans after the 1994 genocide and bridge the Francophone-Anglophone divide towards a unified and reconciled nation, the Government of Rwanda established a bilingual policy as a way to build an incipient trilingual nation (Kinyarwanda – French – English) able to address the challenges of the globalising world. In implementation of this policy, KIST defines itself as a bilingual institution delivering education in both English and French while Kinyarwanda remains the most widely used language outside the field of science and technology. This entails that students are expected to write all their academic work including the coursework, examinations and the final research projects in either of these languages as may be required by the member of staff offering the course. (KIST, 2006, p.1)

It was within this framework that the Institute created a School of Language Studies (SOLAS), made up of the departments of English and French. The idea of offering language classes concurrently with mainstream programmes (which are conducted in either English or French according to the lecturer's preference) was, and still is, to provide added opportunities for students to benefit from the language of instruction as well as to build students' technical vocabulary in their specific mainstream disciplines.

However, in 2006, a decision was made by the administration of KIST to reduce the amount of language teaching from four years to one year and performance in language was no longer to

count for degree purposes. The English and French departments were closed down and absorbed as separate units into the newly formed KIST Language Centre (KLC), which, since January 2007, has been headed by a Director instead of an academic Dean.

The Administration required that from 2007, students should write a proficiency test in both French and English and be assigned to groups on the basis of their written proficiency. The test was written and students were allocated to groups as shown in the table on the following page.

Table 1: KIST First year students (2007 intake)

Group	Number of students	Observation
Beginners		
A	117	Two classes (A &B combined) ¹
B		
Elementary		
A	55	
B	57	
C	69	
D	70	
E	75	
F	72	
Intermediate		
A	105	Two classes (A &B combined)
B		
Advanced		
A	25	One class
Total	645	

According to the new KIST language policy (see appendix A), the time allotted to English varies from one group to another (the lower the level of proficiency, the more the time for language training) as per the situation below:

Level of proficiency	Number of hours per semester
Beginners:	150 hours
Elementary	120 hours
Intermediate	60 hours
Advanced	30 hours

¹ Classes were combined because of staff shortage

From the four schemes of work: (scheme of work for beginner group (appendix B), scheme of work for elementary group (appendix C), scheme of work for intermediate group (appendix D), and scheme of work for advanced group (appendix E), it is possible to determine the types of activities students are engaged in their respective English courses as summarised in the table below:

Table 2: Time allocated to English in English syllabuses

Activity	Number of hours			
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced
Linguistic competence	112 (74.6%)	102 (85%)	36 (60%)	2 (6.6%) for listening The remaining activities are taught in an integrated way
Listening	8 (5.3 %)	Not found (0 %)	2 (3.3%)	
Speaking	12 (8 %)	4 (3.3%)	8 (13.3%)	
Reading	12 (8 %)	10 (8.3%)	10 (16.6%)	
Writing	6 (4%)	4 (3.3%)	4 (6.6%)	

The assumption underlying both the proficiency test and the differential allotment of time is that students have different needs with regard to language.

The challenge to the staff of the newly formed language centre, of which I am one, was to design appropriate syllabuses that could be used for a one-year English course instead of a four year programme. However, thus far, very little has been done; the staff in the Department of English still use the old syllabuses designed as part of a four-year programme because they lack experience in curriculum design.

As a member of the newly formed language centre, I took up the challenge. I chose to carry out research which would equip me with the necessary skills to redesign and contribute to the development of new syllabuses.

I decided to make students' needs the focus of my research. According to Jordan (1997, p. 22), needs analysis is the starting point for designing syllabuses. It is argued that the necessity for needs analysis arises from the need to select what to teach a particular group in a particular environment as one cannot teach everything to everybody (Nunan, 1988, p. 14; Tarone, 1989, p.

31; MacDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 4). It was my intention, therefore, as a first step in designing appropriate language syllabuses for KIST, to research students' needs.

1.3 Research goals

The study aims at investigating students' perceived needs to pave the way for differentiated English language syllabuses. In order to achieve this goal, the study seeks answers to the following questions:

- What are students' perceived language needs in order to successfully study through the medium of English at KIST?
- To what extent does the current English language programme address these perceived needs?
- What are the differences in students' perceived language needs at different levels of proficiency?

This research is potentially important to students, teaching staff and the KIST Institute at large. I believe that it goes some way in highlighting students' needs and the challenges facing the teaching staff at KIST Language Centre in meeting them. Finally, it sheds some light on syllabus design and resource appropriateness.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is structured as follows:

After this introductory chapter, which has described the context from which the research has emerged, chapter 2 provides an overview of the relevant literature. The main themes dealt with are notably the evolution of needs analysis in language teaching, the rationale for needs analysis, the key concepts in needs analysis, the role of prospective learners in needs analysis and the implication of needs analysis for language teaching programmes. In chapter 3, methodological issues are described while in chapter 4 research findings are presented and discussed. The fifth and final chapter is devoted to a summary of the main findings that have emerged from the research. It also provides some recommendations and suggestions for further research in the area.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Needs analysis as a technique to design syllabuses for specific purposes has been widely recognised as a prerequisite for language teaching. As Richterich (1983, p. 4) pointed out, “We can no longer do without needs identification when introducing a teaching/learning system, drawing up a curriculum or selecting or producing teaching materials”. This chapter aims at exploring and reviewing needs analysis in relation to language teaching/learning. The focus is on the evolution of needs analysis in language teaching, the different types of needs analysis, the role of learners in needs analysis and the implications of needs analysis for language teaching/learning.

In keeping with the context and goals of this research, the review will be limited to the period from the late 1960s. This does not mean to imply that needs analysis does not have a long history. For example, the four questions commonly related to needs analysis, now referred to as the “Tyler Rationale” (Grier, 2005), and which are still used by curriculum designers and scholars, find their origin in Ralph Tyler’s book published in 1949:

1. What are the purposes or objectives of the program?
2. What experiences are likely to attain these objectives?
3. How can these experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can the effectiveness of learning be evaluated?

This chapter begins with a brief overview of how researchers became engaged with the concept of needs analysis.

2.2 The evolution of needs analysis in language teaching

The emergence of the concept of needs analysis in language teaching/learning was mainly motivated by three historical developments and their corollaries.

2.2.1 The legacy of public aid to education requiring precision in the identification of needs

The first influence was the legacy of public aid to education in the United States of America (Berwick, 1989). The 1960s in the USA was a period of rapid social change which was supported by the government. The needs assessment activities undertaken by different publicly funded educational and service providing agencies were largely motivated by federal and state legislation which required the identification of needs as a condition of receiving funds. The need for convincing precision in educational needs assessment was also reinforced during this period by the 'behavioural objectives' movement in educational planning, particularly in North America, which insisted on specifying measurable forms of all goals of importance within an educational system (Mager, as cited in Berwick, 1989). Even today, the process of needs assessment is still of vital interest to the USA because the State government provides foreign language education and training to many thousands of individuals each year (Lett, 2005). Drawing on Kaufman and Witkin, Berwick (1989) adds that the emphasis on precision and accountability clearly influenced the appearance of needs assessment as a form of educational technology and its diversification into a collection of educational research methodologies. The growing demand for accountability is still a prerequisite for funds in public life including education (Long, 2005b, p. 1).

2.2.2 The creation of the European Common Market requiring language teaching with the needs of adults in mind

The second influence can be traced to developments in the European Common Market, which were taking place in the late 1960s (MacDonough & Shaw, 1993). One of the immediate consequences of the setting up of the Common Market was the opportunity for increasing possibilities for international professional cooperation and travel for business, further study, or other purposes. The corollary to this was the educational need for change in the way in which various European languages were taught. These changes were addressed within the Council of Europe when a group of experts worked on proposals for the establishment of a scheme to teach the languages of Europe "particularly with the needs of adults in mind" (MacDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 21). Here, it is important to remember that "objectives were specified in terms of behaviour, i.e. what the learner will do with or through English, and that the behavioural specifications were derived from an analysis of the learners' needs" (Cunningsworth, 1983, p.151). Drawing on van Ek and Alexander, Richards and Rodgers (1986) provided the following account of the work of those experts:

In 1971, a group of experts began to investigate the possibility of developing language courses on a unit-credit system, a system in which learning tasks are broken into portions or units, each of which corresponds to a component of learners' needs and systematically related to all the other portions. (p. 65)

Wilkins (1976), who is said to have been very influential when these changes were taking place, proposed a syllabus design based on a functional-notional approach with communicative criteria which "take the desired communicative capacity as the starting point". Instead of asking how speakers of the language express themselves or when and where they use the language, the notional syllabus asks "what it is they communicate through language" (Wilkins, 1976, p. 18).

As a result, there was an urgent need to move from a language centred structure to communicative language teaching because of the latter's "learner-centred and experience-based view of second language teaching" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 158). Xiao (2006, p. 1), like many others, maintained that, in a learner-centred approach, "learners should be invited to express their views on their needs for learning the language and their preferred learning style."

2.2.3 The development of English for Specific Purposes

The changes in language teaching undertaken in the late 1960s and early 1970s culminated in the development of language for specific purposes (LSP). Munby (1978), one of those who examined the direct link between LSP and needs assessment, and whose approach, according to Berwick (1989), represents the most technically satisfying approach to needs assessment in LSP, described the link in these terms:

The most crucial problem at present facing foreign language syllabus designers, and ultimately materials producers, in the field of language for specific purposes, is how to specify validly the target communicative competence. At the heart of this problem is a reluctance to begin with the learner rather than the text and the lack of a rigorous system for finding out the communicative needs that are prerequisite to the appropriate specification of what is to be taught. (p. vi)

As a result of this change in approach, during the 1970s syllabuses began to emerge in which content was specified not only in terms of the language structures which the learners had to master, but also in terms of the functional skills they would need in order to be able to communicate successfully. Also, syllabus designers began to focus on "experiential content, that is, the subject matter through which the language is taught" (Nunan, 1988, p. 11).

2.3 Rationale for needs analysis

The increasing demand for accountability for funding public services has led to a realisation that in education people are teaching too much (e.g. vocabulary skills, register or style) which some learners do not need and too little that most students do need (Long, 2005). In language teaching and learning in particular, with instruction in proficiency happening at different levels, funds are well used when the intended outcomes have been achieved, that is to say, if learners have learned and know what they were supposed to learn and to know. It is argued that the identification of learners' needs before the start of a course is conducive to good teaching. Lublin and Prosser as quoted by Gibbs (1995) define good teaching as follows:

Good teaching is teaching which helps students to learn. It discourages the superficial approach to learning and encourages active engagement with the subject matter... It encourages in the learner motivation to learn, desire to understand, perseverance, a respect for the truth and a desire to pursue learning. (p. 27)

Also, it is known that "students learn English for different reasons and in different circumstances and thus should be taught differently depending on such reasons" (Harmer, 1983, p. 19).

Therefore, it would be a mistake to treat students as if they had the same language needs (Cunningsworth, 1983; Young, 2000). Moreover, we know that for various reasons, mostly because of lack of time, it is not possible to teach all of any language (Tarone & Yule, 1989; Basturkmen, 2006). This is why some selection must be made because we do not have a common agreement on what needs to be taught and to be learned (Nunan, 1988). It is argued that this selection should be made, not only for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses, but also for English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and English for General Purposes (EGP) (Robinson, 1991; Richards, 1990; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). It is within this framework that people argue that "every language course should be considered as a course for specific purposes, varying only in the precision with which learner needs can be specified" (Long, 2005, p. 1).

The purpose for which learners are taking a particular course will "depend directly upon the extent to which it can be assumed, for there is less need to say something if everybody knows what is supposed to be done" (Crocker, 1981, p. 7). Also, the question "why do learners need to learn English?" should be the starting question to any course, general or ESP. In fact, all courses are based on a perceived need of some sort. Otherwise, it would be difficult to justify why English has been given a place on a school or college timetable (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 53). Benesch (1996) argued that:

The rationale for needs analysis is that by identifying elements of students' target English situation and using them as the basis of EAP/ESP instruction teachers will be able to provide students with the specific language they need to succeed in their courses and future careers. (p. 723)

2.4 Key concepts

It has been argued that the concept of 'needs' has not been clearly defined (Richterich, 1983, p. 2), that it remains both ambiguous and imprecise (Chambers, 1980), and that it has been subject to a good deal of disagreement in the field of ELT (Brindley, 1989, p. 63). Berwick (1989, p. 52) argued that the elements of needs "change according to the values of the assessor or influential constituents of an educational system".

For Chambers (1980), the difficulty in defining the term "needs" concerns the very obvious question of whose needs we are concerned with and how they are determined. Drawing on Lawson, Brindley (1989, p. 65) argued that needs do not have of themselves an objective reality and thus are open to contextual interpretation and contain value judgements.

It is not within the scope of this research to discuss the concept of needs in its broadest sense where it may cover areas such as expectations, demands, interests, necessities, motivation, desires, ideas and even fantasies (Richterich, 1983, p. 2). However, in spite of the complexity and possible subjectivity in the concept of needs, it is possible to find a working definition that fits our situation especially by narrowing the spectrum of definitions to language teaching. For the purpose of this research, we will have to bear in mind that we are dealing with language needs which are referred to as learners' perceived needs, that is to say, what they think they need in relation to their language training (Vandermeeren, 2005).

Based on insights from the field of adult education, Brindley (1989, p. 65) defines needs as "the gap between what is and what should be". Needs are also defined as a measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desired future state (Berwick, 1989, p. 52). According to Schmuck and Runkel (1994), wherever there is a gap, there is a problem and one of the ways of identifying that problem is by describing the present situation and the desired target state. The gap between the two situations is also referred to as learners' 'lacks' (Breen, as cited in Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In the context of my research, the problem lies in the KIST students' current level of English and the level of proficiency which they require to study science

and technology through the medium of English. Identifying needs enables one to design a curriculum which bridges the gap, and by so doing tackle the problem.

2.4.2 Needs analysis

The International Dictionary of Education defines needs analysis as “a training term for an analysis to establish the instructional programme required by a particular trainee to bring him/her to the standards laid down” (1977, p. 259). A somewhat similar definition is provided by Nunan, who defines needs analysis as “techniques and procedures for obtaining information from and about learners to be used in curriculum development” (Nunan, 1988, p. 152).

Used in the context of instruction, it has been referred to as the collection and evaluation of information to answer the question “what aspects of the language does a particular group of learners need to know” (Tarone & Yule, 1989, p. 31). Similar definitions are provided by Nunan (1988) and Bachman and Palmer as cited by Xiao (2006). For Jordan (1997, p. 20), needs analysis is “the process of determining the needs for which a learner or group of learners require a language and arranging the needs according to priorities”. Basturkmen (2006) provided a definition of needs analysis which seems to summarise these different views; “the type of investigation ESP curriculum developers use to identify the gap between what learners already know and what they need to know in order to study or work in their specific target environments” (p. 15). This fits my case as my research aims at *investigating students’ perceived needs to pave the way for differentiated English language syllabuses*. Implicit in this is the fact that the course is preparing students for their future careers.

2.5 Types of needs analysis

It is believed that “there is currently no objective method of analysing learner needs, and that even the most rigorous model for needs analysis relies heavily on the user’s subjective judgement” (Cunningsworth 1983, p. 149). In this case, the type of needs analysis will depend on who is carrying out the analysis, what sort of needs he/she is looking for and for what purposes. As Robinson (1991) pointed out:

The needs that are established for a particular group of students will be an outcome of a needs analysis project and will be influenced by the ideological preconceptions of analysts. A different group of analysts working with the same group of students, but with different views on teaching and learning, would be highly likely to produce a different set of needs. (p. 7)

Chambers (1980) argued that whoever decides which needs are required largely dictates which needs are determined.

Different sources have used different terminologies while discussing needs analysis. Chambers (1980:29) argued that “needs analysis should be concerned with the establishment of communicative needs and their realisations, resulting from an analysis of the communication in the target situation.” On the other hand, Robinson (1991, p. 9) suggested that “in practice, one is likely to seek and find information relating to both target situation analysis (TSA) and present situation analysis (PSA). In this section, I will review the most commonly discussed types of needs analysis.

2.5.1 The present situation analysis

In this type of needs analysis, the aim is to seek, among other things, information about the learner and the learning environment.

2.5.1.1. Information about the learner

At the beginning of a course, the researcher will investigate the learners’ level of proficiency, their strengths and weaknesses (Robinson, 1991). It will be important to investigate the learners’ attitude towards the target language, their reasons for learning the language and their preferred learning style (MacDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 7).

2.5.1.2. Information about the learning environment

Here, the researcher may look at the following:

- the role of English in the country,
- the role of English at the school and its place in the curriculum,
- the number of students to be taught,
- time allocated to the language (MacDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 9).

2.5.1.3. Means analysis

Recently, there has been the realisation that means analysis is also important in determining learners' needs. Proponents of this view e.g. White (1988) argue that without a clear understanding of resources and constraints, the teacher, planners or user institution may face difficulties in achieving the goals specified in the needs analysis.

Drawing on Holliday and Cooke, Jordan (1997, p. 27) maintains that means analysis involves a study of the local situation i.e. the teachers, teaching methods, students' facilities, etc. in order to see how a language course may be implemented. Furthermore, he maintains that this approach is important in that it starts from a positive premise, that is to say, what might be achieved with certain given factors. Also the approach allows sensitivity to situations in any country and discourages the imposition of alien models of teaching methodology or learning.

The importance of means analysis is justifiable because, whether we want it or not, the design and choice of teaching materials as well as the capacity of teaching effectively across a range of language skills will be affected by available resources (MacDonough & Shaw, 1993).

2.5.2 Target situation analysis

Chambers (1980, p. 30) argued that "needs determined by TSA are the real needs, which all efforts should be made to fulfil". The following are the most discussed types of target situation analysis of this category:

2.5.2.1. Objective needs analysis

Objective needs analysis aims at investigating needs which "derive from different kinds of factual information about learners, their use of language in real-life communication situations as well as their current language proficiency and language faculties"(Brindley, 1989, p. 71). On the other hand, subjective (felt) needs analysis will seek to know "cognitive and affective needs of the learner in the learning situation, derivable from information about affective and cognitive factors such as personality, attitudes, learners' wants and expectations with regard to the learning of English and their individual cognitive style and learning strategies" (Brindley, 1989, p. 70).

2.5.2.2. Task analysis

Task analysis is used when the researcher wants to find out the language skills required to carry out real world communication, which is the main reason the learner has decided to take the language course. The aim is to find an answer to the question: “What are the subordinate skills and knowledge required by the learner in order to carry out real-world communicative tasks” (Nunan, 1988, p. 18-19).

2.5.2.3. Communicative needs analysis

Communicative needs analysis (Munby, 1978) is concerned with gathering information about learners’ communication needs in the target language, and involves questions such as:

- In what setting will the learner use the target language?
- What role relationship is involved?
- Which language modalities are involved (e.g. reading, listening, and speaking)?
- What type of communication events and speech acts are involved?
- What level of proficiency is involved?

2.5.2.4. Global needs analysis

Global needs analysis is used to understand the learners’ purpose in learning the language by taking into account the situations in which learners will need to use that language and a description of activities which typically occur in these situations. Some of those situations might be taking notes, reading skills, taking part in and leading discussion, etc. (Tarone & Yule, 1989).

2.6 What is entailed in doing needs analysis?

As seen in section 2.4, language needs refer to language users’ and learners’ reported needs, to what they think they need in relation to language use and training (Vandermeeren, 2005). Doing needs analysis therefore entails establishing the purposes and needs of a given group of learners or of an educational system (Nunan, 1988; Tarone, 1989; Jordan, 1997); thereafter the decision on what to teach should be based on a consideration of what the learner should most usefully be able to do with the foreign language. It is “the identification of difficulties and standard situations by observation of participants functioning in target situation in conjunction with interviews and questionnaires” (Basturkmen, 1998, p. 2). Drawing on Gillet, Basturkmen (1998) goes on to say that “the overall aim of needs analysis is the identification of elements which will

lend themselves to training” (p. 2). For Richterich and Chancerel, as cited in Basturkmen (1998), the aim of needs analysis is not only to identify these elements but to establish their relative importance, to find out what is indispensable, necessary, or merely desirable.

In my research, finding out what is indispensable is the key element given the constraint of time: the amount of time allocated to the teaching of English at KIST has been reduced from four years to one. It is this fact that has driven the research.

Talking about what is entailed in doing needs analysis, Benesch has the following to say:

The research on learners’ needs, known as needs analysis or needs assessment involves surveying and classifying assignments, observing students in naturalistic settings, such as lecture classes, and noting the linguistic and behavioural demands or combining these techniques to obtain a description of assignments, discourses and classroom behaviour. (p. 723)

For Benesch (1996), doing needs analysis also entails aiming at a critical needs analysis, that is, acknowledging the existing forms and including power relations while searching for possible areas for change.

Implicit in needs analysis is the requirement for fact finding or the collection of data. Data about the students, the subject to be studied, for example, can come from a variety of sources and can be collected via various methods. In this exercise, the starting point should be to ask the following fundamental questions (Richterich, as cited in Jordan, 1997, p. 22):

Why is the learning being undertaken? This will help in determining the type of syllabus and content, materials for teaching/learning or for placement on appropriate course.

Whose needs are to be analysed? (The students’, the sponsor’s, the teaching institution’s or the country’s?).

Who performs the needs analysis? **Who** decodes what the language needs are? (The teacher, the students, the researcher, the consultant?)

What is to be analysed? (Target situation, present situation, deficiencies, means, constraints, necessities, lack, wants?)

When is the analysis to be conducted? (Before the course, at the start of the course, during the course, at the end of the course?)

How is the analysis to be conducted? (By means of tests, interviews, questionnaires, documentation?)

Where will the course take place? (In the target country or in the students’ own country?)

In curriculum development derived from a needs analysis, the above questions may serve the following purposes (Richards, 1990, p. 1):

- providing a mechanism for obtaining a wider range of input into the content, design and implementation of the language programme by involving people such as learners, teachers, administration and employers in the planning process;
- identifying general or specific language needs that can be addressed in developing goals, objectives and context for a language programme;
- providing data that can serve as the basis for reviewing and evaluating an existing programme.

Finally, doing needs analysis entails keeping in mind the ten steps involved in that process

(Richterich, as cited in Jordan, 1997, p. 22):

1. Define the purpose of analysis
2. Delimit the student population
3. Decide upon the approaches
4. Acknowledge constraints/limitations
5. Select methods of collection of data
6. Collect data
7. Analyse data
8. Determine objectives
9. Implement decisions
10. Evaluate procedures and results

2.7 Role of prospective learners in needs analysis

It is known that people require an objective and a meaning for the activities they pursue in their life. This is also needed for students learning a language.

As Warwick (1975) pointed out:

Each of us requires a purpose in life and a meaning for the activity we pursue. Without this, boredom follows and we feel dehumanised and frustrated, and only the very able and most mature can endure long periods of seemingly purposeless activities on the promise that all will be made clear at the end. Each task we perform has a pattern of its own, but unless these individual patterns fit into some larger framework our general performance and will to succeed deteriorates. When no general purpose exists in our lives, we sink into a general lethargy from which it is difficult to recover. (p. 15)

Similarly, in order for students to make sense of the activities they are engaged in, they should be meaningful and purposeful and this is more likely if students have played a role in the planning of those activities.

Regarding learning a language, it is argued that students are aware - to some extent - of what use they want to put English to (Mackay & Mountford, 1978) and their role in matters that concern

them should not be neglected. Otherwise, we would find ourselves in the unfortunate situation depicted by Warwick (1975) wherein teachers tell their students:

We teachers have greater experience than you, the pupils. We know best. Trust us and we will organise things in such a way that things will eventually be revealed to you. The purpose behind our division of knowledge may not be immediately apparent, but at a future date you will thank us for having made it. (p. 16)

An attitude like this one should not have a place in today's teaching context.

Spratt (1999) argues that:

A learner-centred approach to lesson material and syllabus design advocates the involvement of learners in contributing to this design. Learners can be invited to express their views on, among other things, their needs for learning the language, their preferred learning style, and their beliefs about language learning or their preferred activity type

(p. 141)

Learners should be encouraged to express their learning needs, both for themselves, for their teachers and programme designers. In so doing, learners will be given an opportunity to think and to understand why they are participating in certain activities and how these activities can help them in learning both for academic purposes and even for their future careers. Once programme designers and teachers are aware of students' needs, they will plan accordingly and even think of alternatives should the case arise (Barkhuizen, 1998, p. 102).

It is important to point out that for this research, needs analysis was done with the 2007 intake of KIST first year students and that the findings will be used to shape the design of the syllabuses that will be used with prospective students. As it will not be possible to conduct a needs analysis every year, it is assumed that students' needs will be more or less constant. Teachers will, however, be expected to adjust the syllabus to respond to emerging needs.

Researchers in language teaching have advocated and justified the importance of considering learners' perceived needs in language learning programmes. In the following section, I want to highlight two advantages of involving learners in needs analysis.

2.7.1 Reducing the gap between teachers' and learners' perceptions of learning needs

One of the reasons for involving learners in needs analysis is that various studies have shown that if it is not done, there are likely to be considerable discrepancies between needs as perceived by learners and by teachers or syllabus experts (Spratt, 1999). As we know, teachers and learners play a joint role in implementing educational programmes. When learners have not been

consulted at the level of planning, this might result in a situation whereby a “divergence of teachers’ and learners’ beliefs and expectations can spell trouble for language courses as a teacher-learner gap widens and becomes increasingly difficult to close as the course progresses” (Davies, 2006, p. 3).

According to Nunan (1988, p. 78), this gap can be bridged by making the agenda of the teacher and the learner closely aligned. This can happen in two ways. First, the information provided by the learners should be used to guide the selection of content and learning activities. Second, learners should be provided with detailed information about goals, objectives and learning activities so that the learner can have a greater appreciation and acceptance of the learning experience they are undertaking or about to undertake. As Kumaravadivelu, (1991) pointed out:

Learning outcomes are the result of a fairly unpredictable interaction between the learner, the task and the task situation. From the teacher’s perspective, achievement of success depends largely on the degree to which teacher’s interaction and learners’ interpretation of a given task converge. It is believed that, if teachers are aware of where their learners are coming from, what they feel about their language learning experiences, and how they act upon these feelings, they will be able to facilitate learning in the classroom. The narrower the gap between teacher intention and learner interpretation, the greater are the chances of achieving desired learning outcomes. (p. 98)

2.7.2 Creating an atmosphere that is conducive to learning

It is believed that when learners’ wishes are taken into account in a learning programme, they are much more likely to learn well. Also, they are likely to develop a positive attitude towards what they are doing because they are motivated. Bowers, as cited in Jordan (1997) claimed that:

If we accept that a student will learn best what he wants to learn, less well what he only needs to learn, less well still what he never wants nor needs to learn, it is clearly important to leave room in a learning programme for the learner’s own wishes regarding both goals and process. (p. 26)

In a situation where students’ needs are not taken into account, we cannot expect students to put sufficient effort into what they are doing. According to Richterich (1983), all this is the consequence of educational content, methods and practices which are not adapted to the various types of learners and which do not take account of students’ differences and particularities. Conversely, when the syllabus is based on learners’ needs, it is likely to be motivating as “learners can now see the obvious relevance of what they are studying” (Basturkmen, 2006, p. 18). Therefore, the teaching should be “more closely related to learners so that they can feel more involved. Content, methods and practices should be matched to their characteristics, capabilities and interests” (Richterich, 1983, p. 2).

2.8 Who should carry out needs analyses?

In normal circumstances, the answer should be anyone (individual or institution) who is interested in the findings of the analysis for the expected purposes. However, the situation is not as simple as one might be tempted to think. Three options are envisaged:

2.8.1 Insider analyst

In many cases, the needs analysts are insiders (Robinson, 1991, p. 11), i.e. members of the institution, which will run the ensuing course. In this role they are supposed to be familiar with the PSA, and not only with the TSA. Thus, they should be able to make relatively quick and informed decisions. However, there are different degrees of 'insiderness'. While lecturers in a university or language centre, for example, may be familiar with the cultural norms and educational traditions of the country, they are still outsiders with regard to the inter-disciplinary cultures of the various university departments if they are trained in subjects different from the target ones.

2.8.2 Outsider analyst

One advantage of having an outsider do the needs analysis (Robinson, 1991, p. 10) is that he or she may be accorded special status and thus gain access to sources of information closed to the insiders. In addition, an outsider will bring a fresh pair of eyes to a situation and may be able to make an impartial assessment of what is required. However, an outsider may also have unfamiliar cultural preconceptions and may hold rather different views on teaching and learning from the institution under analysis.

2.8.3 Insider domain expert

When considering an insider analyst in a language teaching situation, one may think of the teacher in the first place, for none is more 'insider' than a language teacher or lecturer in a teaching institution. The current perception of teachers and lecturers is that they are able to carry out such research. Barkhuizen (1998) gave the following account:

In the past, L2 teachers were often perceived as mere implementers of various language-in-education policies - in terms of their interactions with - usually externally produced statements - and of various teaching methodologies - in terms of their interactions with school syllabuses and teaching approaches adopted by a particular school. More recently, however, teachers have been portrayed as experts who not only are supposed to be able to

make informed decisions about effective classroom practices, but also who have the ability to undertake reliable research in order to facilitate such decisions. (p. 86)

There is no doubt that teachers are able to do research especially within their respective areas of expertise (Tarone, 1989). However, not any teacher is equipped with the required knowledge to carry out such research. At the institution where I work, for example, language lecturers have not yet recognized that they are among the people who should carry out independent research. This need for research in curriculum development is more urgent following the decision to reduce the time allocated to English from four years to one.

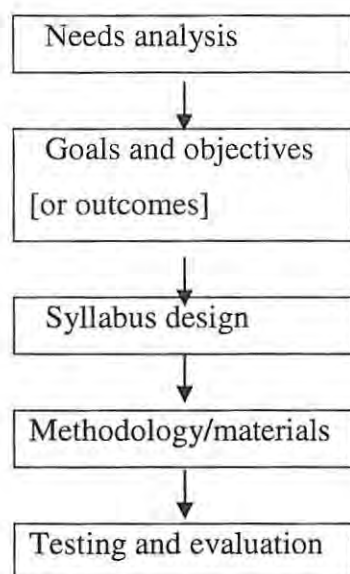
2.9 Implication of needs analysis for a language teaching programme

It is now widely accepted as a principle of programme design that needs analysis is a vital prerequisite for the specification of language learning objectives (Brindley, 1989), and that no language teaching programme should be designed without a thorough needs analysis (Harmer, 1983). As Nunan (1998) pointed out:

Assumptions about learners' purpose in undertaking a language course, as well as the syllabus designer's beliefs about the nature of language and learning can have a marked influence on the shape of the syllabus on which the course is based. Learners' purposes will vary according to how specific they are and how immediately learners wish to employ their developing language skills. (p. 13)

Another benefit of needs analysis is to remind teachers and syllabus designers that the final objective of language teaching is to enable the learner to communicate and to emphasise the range and variety of uses to which the language is put (Cunningsworth, 1983).

Finally, in the process of course design, needs analysis should precede the other activities involved in designing a language programme (Tomlinson, 1998; Richards, 1990; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The sequence of course design recommended by experts and summarised as the 'linear model x' is as follows (Tomlinson, 1998, p. 2):



This model suggests that there should be ongoing course evaluation at the end of every year (the end of the course in my case) to see whether the course has been successful or not. It also demonstrates that the teaching context and the learners' needs provide a framework for the outcomes and that the decision concerning the best methods and materials should be made accordingly.

This is the view held by Johnson (1989) when he says that the implication of needs analysis for language teaching programme is so important that it should be given the attention it deserves:

Resourceful, intelligent and determined students can achieve their aims in spite of ill-conceived policies, poorly formulated syllabuses, inadequate resources and incompetent teachers. Conversely, a well-planned curriculum with appropriate aims effectively realised and implemented achieves little if students are apathetic and unmotivated. This fact itself explains the inconclusive results of much research and will continue to bedevil curriculum research and evaluation until the role of the learner is acknowledged, and, more difficult, taken into account in research design. (p. xvi)

2.9.1 Implication of needs analysis for language teaching/learning

It is hardly possible to think of teaching/learning (or teacher/learner) without thinking of a teaching programme, whether it has been designed by the teacher himself/herself, or by a programme designer (within or outside the concerned institution or school). We know that the identification of needs is not an end in itself. Findings must be translated into a teaching programme for the target group of learners.

As mentioned earlier, the teacher and the learner in the classroom context are the main implementers of the devised teaching programme and the learner is one of the main sources of information in needs analysis (Robinson, 1991; Chambers, 1980). Therefore, the curriculum has to be seen as a unit and that unit has to be recognised by both teachers and learners.

(Warwick 1975, p. 16). As MacDonough and Shaw (1993) pointed out:

Whether goals are stated in terms of a national language policy, or in terms of the restricted environment of, say, a particular school or college, the possibility for actually implementing them will be directly related both to the learners themselves – their needs, characteristics and so on – and to the whole educational setting in which the teaching is to take place. (p. 5)

It is within this framework that I argue that a logical way of looking at the necessity for a needs analysis for language teaching and learning should be by considering the implications of a needs analysis for a language teaching programme and language teaching materials design.

2.9.2 Implication of needs analysis for materials development

Drawing on Spratt, Davies (2006, p. 4) observed that, when people are preparing language teaching materials, they often base their decisions “on either administrative convenience or teacher intuition rather than on a principled analysis of the needs of the teaching and learning situation”. In effect the choice of, or design of, materials should be driven by the needs of the learners. For example, if materials are based on learners’ needs the activities would be more likely to engage the learners. Thus, it is implicit that, if learners are involved in the needs analysis, they are also involved in the choice of teaching materials.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed the historical developments that have influenced the use of needs analysis as a technique for syllabus design and language teaching. I have explained the rationale for needs analysis and the main types of needs and needs analysis. I have also briefly discussed what it is entailed in doing needs analysis, the role of prospective learners in needs analysis and the implication of needs analysis for language teaching programmes.

Findings from this review of the literature have confirmed my belief in the importance and usefulness of needs analysis as a technique in language programme design and language teaching. They have also widened my knowledge on what needs analysis consists of. Most importantly, the review of literature has strengthened my interest and motivation in carrying out the research I have undertaken.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with methodological issues. I describe the design of the research and the tools which I used in order to collect data. Where appropriate, I use theory to justify the design and tools used. As the research is based on a needs analysis, the whole process was modelled upon steps involved in needs analysis as proposed by Richterich, as cited in Jordan (1997, p. 22) particularly the following:

- Define the purpose of analysis
- Delimit the student population
- Decide upon the approaches
- Acknowledge constraints/limitations
- Select methods of collection of data
- Collect data
- Analyse data

3.2 Research goals

The study aims at investigating students' perceived needs to pave the way for differentiated English language syllabuses at KIST. In order to achieve this goal, the following questions have shaped the theory, design, analysis, interpretation and discussion of the data:

- What are students' perceived language needs in order to successfully study through the medium of English at KIST?
- To what extent does the current English language programme address these perceived needs?
- What are the differences in students' perceived language needs at different levels of proficiency?

3.3 Choice of approach

This research was carried out in an interpretive paradigm using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research took the form of a case study.

3.3.1 Interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm is relevant for this research as it is interested in discovering how participants construct meaning and make sense of the world around them. It is also interested in finding out how they make practical judgements based on the beliefs underlying their actions (Connole, 1998). The interpretation of the data thus yielded is given meaning based on the purposes and the practical interests of the people sourced (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000).

Drawing on Miles and Huberman, Cresswell made the following point: interpretive research “is largely an investigating process where the researcher gradually makes sense of a social phenomenon by contrasting, comparing ... and classifying the object of a study” (Cresswell, 2003, p. 198).

In this research, I investigated KIST first year students’ perceived language needs as a first step in designing differentiated English language syllabuses for KIST students. As explained in chapter one, students were tested to differentiate them in terms of language proficiency and they were allocated to four different levels (beginner, elementary, intermediate and advanced); the research aims at identifying and comparing their different needs so as to appropriately design syllabuses for each level.

3.3.2 Relevance of qualitative and quantitative methods to this research

The research is qualitative since it seeks to know participants’ opinions and perceptions in order to understand the meaning they constructed about their world. As Merriam (2001) pointed out,

... all types of qualitative research are based on the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social world. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experience they have in the world. (p. 6)

My interest as a researcher is to investigate what the students’ perceived needs are in order to study in English at KIST. The points of view of students, lecturers in English and subject

lecturers are taken into account. Since perceptions are constructed by subjects, they will vary depending on whose opinion is asked.

However, my research is also quantitative because, in order to make decisions about students' needs, it is necessary to establish quantitatively the relative importance of different needs. This is especially necessary during the analysis, interpretation, discussions and, at a later stage, decisions about the design of the curriculum.

3.4 Methods

3.4.1 Case study

As I was dealing with a specific group in a specific context (students learning English at KIST) and not trying to generalise beyond this context, the research took a form of a case study. The aim is to try to understand the context in which these courses are offered and how they can be improved in a practical way by basing decisions on data collected from primary sources (Brown, 1988), in this case students who are learning English at KIST, lecturers in English, and subject lecturers. According to Becker as quoted in Merriam (2001, p. 29), the purpose of a case study is "to arrive at a comprehensible understanding of the group under study". It is also claimed that case studies are used when the purpose is to refine the ways in which practice is theorised (Feebody, 2003) and when the case is of "very special interest" (Stake, 1995, p. xi). As stated above, the ultimate aim of the research is to find a practical way of improving English courses at KIST.

3.4.2 Main features of case studies

One of the features of a case study research is that, because it focuses on a particular situation rather than a general issue, for example, focussing on the way a particular group of people confront specific problems (Merriam 2001, p. 29), findings make it possible to address practical problems in a particular way.

Commenting on the potential advantages of case studies, Cohen et al., (2000, p. 184) argue that insights from case studies can be directly interpreted and put to use: for staff or individual self-development; for within-institutional feedback; for formative evaluation, and in educational policy making. These aspects of a case study make it a valuable tool to address the need at KIST to design appropriate syllabuses for the English language programmes which meet the needs of

the students who now have to study English in one year rather than the four years that were previously allocated.

3.5. Population and sampling

3.5.1 Population

Population refers to a group of people or other unit of analysis which is the focus of the study. The population will depend upon the research and theoretical context. (Victor, 2006, p. 271). In this particular case, the population consists of KIST first year students in 2007 who are studying English, their lecturers in English and lecturers in science and technology. The selection of the population was motivated by the fact that these are the students who are facing the effects of the implementation of the new English language policy. Lecturers were also consulted because they are directly involved with the students and understand their difficulties in learning English. The role they play as teachers also provides them with insights on how the teaching and learning of English at KIST can be improved.

3.5.2 Sampling

A stratified sample best fits this situation. It is based on “dividing the population into homogeneous groups; each group containing subjects with similar characteristics” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 101). In this study, the respondents are first year students and they were allocated to groups based on their performance in the proficiency test. In order to obtain a sample representative of the whole population, a random selection of subjects from the groups was taken. Here, the homogeneity of the groups is based on their results in the proficiency test. I asked my colleagues who administered the questionnaire to make a random selection of a sample (e.g. every third, or fifth, student, etc. in a class depending on the attendance) but I cannot guarantee that it was done that way. In this study, the sample consists of 212 students chosen from the four levels of proficiency (beginner, elementary, intermediate and advanced), eleven English lecturers, and seven lecturers in science and technology.

3.6 Techniques and methods used in data collection

Because I could not afford to go back to the site of the research in Kigali (Rwanda), it was not possible to use interviews, although this would have enriched the data obtained. I used questionnaires and document analysis as my research tools, chosen for practical reasons and because of the advantages they offer to the researcher.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The research was carried out as a small scale survey using questionnaires. Three separate questionnaires were prepared and administered: one for students; one for subject lecturers (lecturers in science and technology) and one for lecturers in English (see appendices F, G, H respectively).

The questions used in the questionnaires fall into three main categories. First, there are factual questions which call for basic information about respondents. In the student questionnaire, the information from this category concerns gender, the departments in which students are registered, group level, and students' subjects in secondary school. In the lecturer questionnaires, the level of proficiency is interrogated and for the subject lecturers the concern is for subjects taught and language used in lectures.

The second category of questions contains ranking questions in which respondents grade their responses according to choices/options given for each question (e.g. in terms of importance, priority, difficulty etc.). The questions deal with perceptions of students' needs.

The third category is composed of open questions. Respondents are given an opportunity to freely express their own opinion, views, beliefs and judgements on a particular item related to students' needs.

For this research, I opted for using questionnaires because they have the following advantages (Gillham, 2000, p. 6):

First, questionnaires do not cost much in terms of time and money. Given the conditions I was working in (e.g. I was doing a one-year coursework masters, far from my research site and with limited financial resources), I found that questionnaires were appropriate research tools.

Second, questionnaires can be administered without the presence of the researcher and respondents can complete them when it suits them. As described above, the sample was taken from a population of first year students split into different classes, who do not have the same timetable. Questionnaires were judged effective because it was possible to administer them to the selected sample at a time that best suited lecturers and students and would not hinder the smooth running of other classes.

Third, questionnaires make it possible to keep respondents' anonymity and to minimize bias. Research shows that, when respondents' anonymity is guaranteed, they are more likely to provide objective and unbiased answers.

Finally, questionnaires allow the researcher to collect more opinions from many people. It was within this framework that it was possible to administer 212 questionnaires in one week.

Although questionnaires were the appropriate research tool for this particular case, they however present some shortcomings. One of the disadvantages of using questionnaires is that answers are shaped by the researcher (e.g. respondents do not have opportunities to go beyond what the researcher has asked). It is also said that what is gained in freedom might be lost in validity and accuracy of responses. Bearing this in mind, open-ended questions were included to allow respondents to go beyond the constraints of the closed questions constructed by the researcher.

Once I was clear about topics and questions to be included, it was important to find a way of arranging them in a logical and coherent way. Questions which deal with a specific topic or those which use the same response options were put together (Berdic & Anderson, 1974, p. 34), and questions were designed in such a way that only one piece of information was asked per question.

For the sake of clarity, I included a covering letter of explanation in each questionnaire. As Gillham (2000, p. 38) pointed out, even when questions are clear, it is advisable to include a covering letter of explanation as it enables respondents to have a clear idea of what the questionnaire is trying to find out, hence, making it possible for them to answer appropriately and helpfully. Finally the questions contained in the questionnaires were all designed in a way that the findings should provide answers to the research question in one way or another.

The questionnaires combined closed and open questions. Questionnaires may vary according to the nature of the questions asked. Richterich and Chancerel (1980, p. 59-60) distinguish between three types of questionnaires:

- Questionnaires that consist of closed questions
- Questionnaires that consist of open questions
- Mixed questionnaires (which consists of using both kinds of questions, e.g. closed and open questions)

3.6.1.1 Closed questions

A closed questionnaire consists of questions that are constructed in such a way that the respondent selects the answers from a number of possibilities offered.

3.6.1.2 Open questions

An open questionnaire consists of questions which do not call in advance for ready-made answers and therefore allows the person questioned more freedom of expression (Richterich & Chancerel, 1980, p. 59).

3.6.1.3 Mixed questions

A mixed questionnaire uses both kinds of questions (closed and open). This is the type of questionnaire I used in this research.

The reason for my choice was to compensate for the possible weaknesses of questionnaires as stated above. It is believed that the use of a variety of different types of questions makes it possible to reach balanced responses in terms of quality and quantity. In fact, what is lost in closed questions (e.g. lack of opportunities to express their own opinions) is gained in open questions. Technically speaking, a variety of questions is recommended to avoid the boredom that might result from answering monotonous questions (Gillham, 2000, p. 39).

3.6.1.4 Piloting the questionnaire and adjustments made

Piloting

Robinson (1991, p. 12) argued that if one decides to use a questionnaire it is essential to try it out on a few respondents first to see whether the questions are comprehensible and whether the answers can easily be analysed and compared. Mackay and Mountford (1978) add that a pilot run is a very good idea as it will indicate what questions have been poorly or ambiguously phrased and whether any important information is missing.

In my case, the pilot questionnaire was administered to eight students (two from each level), two lecturers in English and two lecturers in science and technology (see details in 3.4.5).

Adjustments made

I found the piloting phase very useful as it enabled me to identify and solve a number of difficulties, which, if they had remained unsolved, would have not only inconvenienced respondents but also negatively impacted upon the findings:

- I realised that some students had put a number in one box in a series of questions where they were supposed to write a number in all boxes;
- In one instance (questionnaires for lecturers in English), I had arranged the options in the box in a problematic way, which created confusion for respondents. For example, on question 11 for students (question 4 for lecturers in English), there was no number for the rank “a bit difficult”. On question 8 for students (question 2 for lecturers in English), the rank for “needed” was 3 instead of 2, and the rank for “little needed” was 2 instead of 3.
- In two different instances, I had forgotten to give a number to one item in the information provided in the boxes;
- I realised that, where I had asked the respondents to write the number in the appropriate box, the boxes were too small, which inconvenienced respondents.

Problems related to the layout, the size of the boxes and task instructions were corrected prior to administering the final version of the questionnaires. Additional information was added i.e.

'NB. Please write numbers in all boxes provided', the missing information was provided and boxes were made large enough to contain the required information.

3.6.2 Document analysis

Drawing on Schwandt, Hodgskiss (2007) pointed out that "document analysis refers to various procedures involved in analysing data generated by the examination of documents and records relevant to a particular study" (p. 38).

In order to have a broader view on the English courses offered at KIST, the context in which they are taught, and to understand students' perceived needs in English, it was important to look at the issue from different perspectives. While the information gathered from students, lecturers in English and subject lecturers was valuable for this research, it was likely to have more validity when compared to information from other sources. It is within this framework that document analysis was included.

In my case, the purpose of using document analysis was to broaden my knowledge of the English courses offered at KIST. Thus, the documents I looked at were those which were likely to contain useful information for my research, e.g. the Institute's current language policy (appendix A), English language syllabuses e.g. scheme of work for Beginner group (appendix B), scheme of work for the elementary group (appendix C), scheme of work for the intermediate group (appendix D), and scheme of work for the advanced group (appendix E).

The new KIST language policy provided the rationale for language teaching at KIST:

In order impart equal education to all Rwandans after the 1994 genocide and bridge the Francophone-Anglophone divide towards a unified and reconciled nation, the Government of Rwanda established a bilingual policy as a way to build an incipient trilingual nation (Kinyarwanda-French-English) able to address the challenges of the globalizing world.

In implementation of this policy, KIST defines itself as a bilingual institution delivering educations in both French and English while Kinyarwanda remains the most widely used language outside the fields of science and technology. This entails that students are expected to write all their academic work including the coursework, examinations and the final research projects in either of these languages as may be required by the member of staff offering the course.

In order to ensure that all KIST students respond efficiently to this requirement, an intensive language training programme is set up with a view to enabling students to meet academic demands of university education by enhancing their capacity to cope with lectures requirements.

(p.1)

Unfortunately, following the same language policy, languages are no longer credit rated, although they remain “compulsory subjects concurrently offered with the mainstream programmes” (p.1).

As for the schemes of work, they provided information about time allocated to English and the types of activities for each level. The information has been summarised in the following table:

Time allocated to English in English syllabuses

Activity	Number of hours			
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced
Linguistic competence	112 (74.6%)	102 (85%)	36 (60%)	2 (6.6%) for listening The remaining activities are taught in an integrated way
Listening	8 (5.3 %)	Not found (0 %)	2 (3.3%)	
Speaking	12 (8 %)	4 (3.3%)	8 (13.3%)	
Reading	12 (8 %)	10 (8.3%)	10 (16.6%)	
Writing	6 (4%)	4 (3.3%)	4 (6.6%)	

Both sets of data were used to provide a context to the study (e.g. under item 1.2) and they are referred to in the presentation and discussion sections in order to compare them with what students said they did or did not do (e.g. under item 5.2.2.2.). One might say that the new KIST language policy and the content of the schemes of work have, in a way or another, impacted on students’ and lecturers’ responses.

3.7 Editing

After the questionnaires were administered and posted to me from Kigali they needed editing. This activity consists of identifying and eliminating possible errors made by respondents. I also checked to see whether there was an answer to every question (completion) and whether all questions were answered correctly (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 265). As a reminder, questionnaires for lecturers (lecturers in science and technology and lecturers in English) were answered online while the questionnaires for first year students were administered by the respective lecturers during class time.

The four (4) questionnaires returned by lecturers in science and technology and the ten (10) questionnaires returned by lecturers in English were all retained for analysis because they were answered satisfactorily.

Of the 212 questionnaires administered to first year students, 19 were discarded either because there was no indication of the level or because there were many unanswered questions (i.e. 2/3 of the questions). Of the original 212 questionnaires, therefore, 193 were retained for analysis although some of them contained a few unanswered questions, most of which were open-ended. Next they were arranged according to their level in order to ascertain the number of respondents per level of proficiency.

3.8 Coding

Data coding consists of assigning codes (usually numbers) to each answer to a survey question, that is to say, organising raw data in a systematic format in such a way that it can be read by a computer. Coding can be done before administering the questionnaire for closed questions or after administering the questionnaire for open questions (Robson, 1993). In my case open questions were coded after administering the questionnaires.

Analysis of each of the three questionnaires (see appendices F, G and H) was divided into three sections for analysis: questions related to personal or background information, closed questions and open questions. Questionnaires for students were analysed before the questionnaires for lecturers. The Pearson chi-square (X^2) test was used in order to determine significant differences within and/or between groups.

3.9 Key issues taken heed of in this research

3.9.1 Ethical standards

Cavan (1977), as quoted in Cohen et al., (2000) claimed that:

Ethics is a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others. Being ethical limits the choices we make in the pursuit of truth. Ethics say that while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better, even if, in the extreme case, the respect of human nature leaves one ignorant of human nature. (p. 56)

Therefore, social scientists have a responsibility not only to their profession in its search for truth, but also to the subjects they depend on for their work. Cohen et al. (2000), argued further

that a questionnaire is always an intrusion into the life of the respondent, be it in terms of time taken to complete the questionnaire, the level of threat or sensitivity of the questions and the possible invasion of privacy. Researchers need reminding that their respondents are not passive data providers for researchers, that they should be considered as subjects not objects of research (p. 245).

It is within this framework that the questionnaires used in this research were made anonymous. Moreover, before administering the questionnaire, I wrote to the Director of the KIST Language Centre asking for his permission to allow me to carry out research at the KLC (appendix D). I included individual covering letters to lecturers in English and subject lecturers as part of their questionnaires (see appendix B (questionnaire for subject lecturers) and appendix C (questionnaire for lecturers in English)). The aim of the letters was to inform the respondents concerned not only about the purpose of the research but also to clarify that their participation in the study was voluntary. Also any information obtained in connection with the questionnaire that could identify them would remain confidential and would be used for the sole purpose of the intended research. The same was done with the questionnaire for first year students (see questionnaire for first year students (appendix F)).

3.9.2 Validity

Validity is the extent to which conclusions drawn from research provide an accurate description of the phenomenon under investigation (Victor, 2006, p. 311).

In order to enhance the validity of the survey, I used a stratified sample and I selected sufficient respondents to be able to make use of the Pearson chi-square test. I tried to ensure that students were selected randomly (though I cannot guarantee this) and the chi-square test was applied to the data.

The questionnaire deals with perceptions, which are subjective. Thus, I had to take into consideration the need to ensure the kinds of validity checks applied in qualitative research i.e. triangulation.

It is argued that, in qualitative data, the subjectivity of respondents, their opinions, attitudes and perspectives together contribute to a degree of bias. For this reason, validity should be seen as a matter of degree rather than an absolute state. Hence, at best we strive to minimize invalidity and

maximize validity (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 105). One of the ways to maximize validity is the use of multiple sources. As Long (2005) pointed out, unless time or resources dictate otherwise, multiple sources should always be employed both because they add breadth and depth to the analysis and because triangulation of sources offers an important means of validating data. As Victor (2006, p. 180) pointed out, triangulation is a research strategy that involves approaching a research question from two or more angles in order to converge and cross-validate findings from a number of sources.

As mentioned earlier, the sources of data for this research are questionnaires for KIST first year students, questionnaires for KIST English lecturers, questionnaires for KIST subject lecturers and documentation analysis. I believe that these different sources make it possible to converge and cross-validate findings by comparing the information generated from them.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with issues regarding the methodological approach and instruments used to collect data. While doing this, I have drawn on some of the existing literature that informs the method and the data collection tools which were judged relevant to this research. The next chapter is concerned with data analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the analysis and interpretation of data captured from the questionnaires which were designed and answered by 193 first year students of KIST, ten lecturers in English and four lecturers in science and technology. As Robson (2002) noted, the analysis of data is an important stage of research:

Analysing is necessary because, generally speaking, data in their raw form do not speak for themselves. The messages stay hidden and need careful teasing out. The process and products of analysis provide the basis for interpretation (p. 305).

The chi-square statistical test was used to analyse quantitative data especially in establishing differences that appeared between the various proficiency levels. It is important to note that, in most data sets in this study the sample sizes of some sub-groups are small. It has been suggested that when the values are small like this, Yates Correction to the chi-square test (i.e. subtracting $\frac{1}{2}$ from the difference between the actual and the expected value) should be used (Yates, 1934). The correction produces a more conservative result.

As the software used did not allow for the implementation of the Yates Correction, it was not possible to calculate the adjusted chi-square values. To compensate for the absence of the Yates Correction, I have been especially conservative in my interpretation of the non-corrected data and instead of using a possible 5% significance level I have used a 3% significance level.

4.2 Background information about respondents

4.2.1 Background information about first year students

To recap, the population consisted of the 645 first year students. In language classes, these students are grouped into four levels of proficiency. There are 117 beginner students, 398 in the elementary group, 105 in the intermediate group and 25 in the advanced group (see table 1, p. 3).

Gender of students

Here, no attempt was made to control for gender. However, it so happened that the number of male respondents in the sample is higher than female respondents. Of the 193 retained respondents, 70 were females, 120 were males and 3 did not indicate their gender. Details of gender according to language proficiency grouping can be seen in the table below.

Table 3: Gender representation of respondents

Gender		Group				Total
		Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Female	Count	6 (19.4%)	48 (39.3%)	11 (36.7%)	5 (50.0%)	70 (36.3%)
Male	Count	25 (80.6%)	73 (59.8%)	17 (56.7%)	5 (50.0%)	120 (62.2%)
Not known	Count	0 (0%)	1 (.8%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (.0%)	3 (1.6%)
Total	Count	31	122	30	10	193
	% within Group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

As said earlier, the selection was made on the basis of a stratified sample and there was no criterion set prior to the test to control gender. Yet the number of male students outweighs that of the female students. This is the general trend in Rwandan higher education especially in science and technology. Santhi and Kumaran (2005) make the following observation:

... the enrolment of women is low at all levels, and is worse particularly in higher education and specifically in the science and technology domains... The total student population in all 12 institutions is barely 10,000, only one-fourth of whom are female (p. 4).

Students' subject choice in secondary schools

Table 4: Students' subject choice in secondary school

Students' subject choice	Frequency	Percentage
Bio- Chemistry	83	43.0
Electro-mechanics	2	1.0
Electronics	1	.5
Math –physics	82	42.5
Physics	8	4.1
Subject choice not indicated	17	8.9
Total	193	100.0

It appears that biochemistry and math-physics alone count for 85 % of the total 2007 intake at KIST. This might be explained by the fact that these two subject areas were the preferred criteria for admission in science whereas math-physics was the preferred subject area for technology (engineering).

English results in the school leaving examination (Examen National)

Table 5: English results in the school leaving examination

			Group				Total
			Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Eng_Mark	0-9	Count	1 (3.2%)	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)	1 (.5%)
	10-29	Count	2 (6.5%)	2 (1.7%)	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)	4 (2.1%)
	30-49	Count	13 (41.9%)	34 (28.1%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (.0%)	48 (25.1%)
	50-69	Count	13 (41.9%)	69 (57.0%)	20 (66.7%)	3 (33.3%)	105 (55.0%)
	70-79	Count	2 (6.5%)	15 (12.4%)	6 (20.0%)	6 (66.7%)	29 (15.2%)
	80-100	Count	0 (0%)	1 (.8%)	3 (10.0%)	0 (0%)	4 (2.1%)
Total		Count	31 (100.0%)	121 (100.0%)	30 (100.0%)	9 (100.0%)	191 (100.0%)

It is not within the scope of this study to discuss the relationship between the pass mark and students' performance in English at tertiary level. However, the analysis has helped us to learn a number of interesting things. For instance, it was possible to know that not all first year students in science and technology had passed the English examination. Second, none of those who scored below 50% is in the advanced group. The one student who scored between 0% - 10% has been placed at beginner level and the four who scored between 10% and 29 % are either in beginners (2) or elementary (2). Of the four who scored 80 – 100%, one is in elementary; three are in intermediate but none in advanced (chi-square: $X^2 = 52.37$; $df = 15$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$). Here, the message is that, broadly speaking, the students have been placed in the groups one would expect them to be in although there are some anomalies.

Students' departments at KIST

Departments	Counts	Percentage
Biology	30	15.5 %
Chemistry	38	19.7 %
Electrical	10	5.2 %
Electronics and Telecommunication	7	3.6 %
Food Science	12	6.2 %
Mathematics	34	17.6 %
Physics	31	16.1 %
Civil Engineering and Environmental Technology	7	3.6 %
Computer Engineering and Information Technology	4	2.1 %
Mechanical Engineering	13	6.7 %
Teaching Education	7	3.6 %
Total	193	100.0%

4.2.2 Background information about subject lecturers

Total number of questionnaires distributed	: 7
Questionnaires returned	: 4
Percentage response	: 57.1%

Subject taught

Of the four lecturers who responded, two teach physics, one teaches chemistry and another one teaches programming with C+ computational mathematics. Two of them speak English and the other two speak French.

Language used in lectures

Two lecturers use English and two use both English and French

Language that students use in various assessments (appendix G, question 3):

Three lecturers said that students use English and one said that students use either English or French.

As we can see, even lecturers who speak French use English in their lectures. This might be due to the awareness of the role of English in science and technology in general and its use as the main medium of instruction at KIST in particular.

According to lecturers, students prefer to be assessed in English rather than French although the teaching policy at the Institute allows them to use either French or English.

4.2.3 Background information about lecturers in English

Eleven lecturers were requested to respond to the questionnaire but one lecturer did not do so because she was sick at the time it was administered. Contrary to the response of subject lecturers, the response was excellent (90.9%). This high rate of participation might be due to the fact that the researcher is a member of staff in the same department. On the other hand, the low response rate from subject lecturers should be understood as a general trend when people who are not directly involved in a programme are asked to give their opinions. Referring to his experience during the evaluation of an English programme at the University of Bophuthatswana (1987) (now the University of the North West) in South Africa, Agar has this to say:

The low response rate could be because it is possible that only those members of staff who are already involved in so called intervention programmes and/or are aware of the problems faced by so-called under-prepared students ... If this is the case, the low

response rate is a sad reflection of the lack of involvement of staff in such programmes and /or their lack of awareness of the nature of the changing student population. (p. 55)

4.3 Responses to questionnaires

4.3.1 Students' responses

4.3.1.1 Data from questions that required students to rank their needs

Question 6: How important is knowledge of English for your current studies?

193 students answered this question (100 % of the returned sample). They were asked to say whether a knowledge of English was very important, of little importance or of no importance for their current studies.

Table 6: Importance of knowledge of English for students' current studies

		Group				Total
		Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Very important	Count	29 (93.5%)	111 (91.0%)	27 (90.0%)	10 (100%)	177 (91.7%)
Of little importance	Count	2 (6.5%)	11 (9.0%)	3 (10.0%)	0 (.0%)	16 (8.3%)
Total	Count	31 (100.0%)	122 (100.0%)	30 (100.0%)	10 (100.0%)	193 (100.0%)

As we can see, all students (regardless of their group), acknowledge that English is very important for their current studies ($X^2 = 1.24$; $df = 3$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.743$).

Question 7: How do you describe the usefulness of English for graduating as a well qualified professional in your field?

Students were asked to say whether English was 'necessary' or 'not necessary' for them to graduate as qualified professionals in their fields. 190 students out of 193 answered this question.

Usefulness of English	count	percentage
Necessary	175	92.1 %
Not necessary	15	7.9 %

Overall overview of responses is as follows:

Table 7: Usefulness of English for students

		Group				Total
		Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Necessary	Count	29 (96.7%)	107 (89.2%)	29 (96.7%)	10 (100.0%)	175 (92.1%)
Not necessary	Count	1 (3.3%)	13 (10.8%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	15 (7.9%)
Total	Count	30 (100.0%)	120 (100.0%)	30 (100.0%)	10 (100.0%)	190 (100.0%)

It is interesting to see that students have ranked questions 6 and 7 above in a consistent way: between 91% and 100% (for the importance of knowledge of English for students' current studies) and between 89% and 100% (for the usefulness of English for graduating as a well qualified professional in their field).

Question 8: Show how important the following activities are for you

Question 8 a: Importance of grammar

Table 8: Importance of grammar

		Group				Total	
		Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced		
Grammar_1	most needed	Count	19 (61.3%)	55 (46.2%)	11 (36.7%)	2 (20.0%)	87 (45.8%)
	needed	Count	8 (25.8%)	42 (35.3%)	17 (56.7%)	5 (50.0%)	72 (37.9%)
	little needed	Count	3 (9.7%)	15 (12.6%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (20.0%)	21 (11.1%)
	not needed	Count	1 (3.2%)	7 (5.9%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (10.0%)	10 (5.3%)
Total		Count	31 (100.0%)	119 (100.0%)	30 (100.0%)	10 (100.0%)	190 (100.0%)

Out of 190 students who answered the question, 87 (45.8%) said grammar is most needed, 72 (37.9%) said it is needed, 21 (11.1%) said it is little needed and only 10 (5.3%) said it is not needed.

In order to make sense of the data from this question (see table 10), we can add percentages for "most needed" and "needed" together in order to form a positive perception percentage (PPP). And those for "little needed" and "not needed" can be added together to give a negative perception percentage (NPP). In so doing, the PPP becomes 87.1% for beginners, 81.5% for elementary, 93.4% for intermediate and 70% for the advanced group. By looking at the figures, one may expect to have a group effect as the lower level group seems to have higher need for

grammar. However, the chi-square test result (e.g. $X^2 = 11.83$; $df = 9$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.223$), does not show any group effect.

Question 8 b: Importance of listening skills

Table 9: Importance of listening skills

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Understanding lectures and note-taking					
Most needed	17 (54.8%)	54 (45%)	15 (51.7%)	4 (40%)	90 (47.4%)
Needed	10 (32.3%)	44 (36.7%)	11 (37.9%)	3 (30.0%)	68 (35.8%)
Little needed	2 (6.5%)	12 (10.0%)	1 (3.4%)	3 (30.0%)	18 (9.5%)
Not needed	2 (6.5%)	10 (8.3%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0%)	14 (7.4%)
Total	31 (100%)	120 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Understanding different accents of English					
Most needed	15 (48.4%)	54 (45.4%)	14 (48.3%)	6 (60.0%)	89 (47.1%)
Needed	10 (32.3%)	45 (37.8%)	7 (24.1%)	1 (10%)	63 (33.3%)
Little needed	2 (6.5%)	15 (12.6%)	6 (20.7%)	3 (30%)	26 (13.8%)
Not needed	4 (12.9%)	5 (4.2%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0%)	11 (5.8%)
Total	31 (100%)	119 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Understanding oral questions					
Most needed	16 (51.6%)	49 (41.2%)	10 (34.5%)	6 (60%)	81 (42.9%)
Needed	10 (32.3%)	47 (39.5%)	12 (41.4%)	1 (10%)	70 (37%)
Little needed	3 (9.7%)	17 (14.3%)	7 (24.1%)	2 (20%)	29 (15.3%)
Not needed	2	6	0	1	9 (4.8%)
Total	31 (100%)	119 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Answering questions orally					
Most needed	12 (38.7%)	50 (42%)	13 (43.3%)	4 (40%)	79 (41.6%)
Needed	11 (35.5%)	43 (36.1%)	12 (40%)	3 (30%)	69 (36.3%)
Little needed	6 (19.4%)	16 (13.4%)	5 (16.7%)	1 (10%)	28 (14.7%)
	19.4%	13.4%	16.7%	10.0%	
Not needed	2 (6.5%)	10 (8.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (20%)	14 (7.4%)
Total	31 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)

Findings from this table show that “most needed” is the preferred rank for the four types of listening activities. For all the levels except elementary, students with a lower level of proficiency perceive that they need more practice than those with a higher level of proficiency. But, as in the grammar section, practice in listening seems to be needed at all levels as the chi-

square test has not revealed any group effect to students' responses to their needs in listening activities. The listening activities on which students were asked to comment on and the result of the chi-square test are as follows:

- understanding lectures and note-taking ($X^2 = 7.82$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.552$),
- understanding different accents of English ($X^2 = 11.64$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.234$),
- understanding oral questions ($X^2 = 8.20$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.456$), and
- answering questions orally ($X^2 = 5.72$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.768$),

Question 8 c: Importance of speaking skills

Table 10: Importance of speaking skills

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Contributing to general conversation					
Most needed	22(71%)	65 (54.2%)	20 (66.7%)	4 (40%)	111 (58.1%)
Needed	7 (22.6%)	42 (35%)	7 (23.3%)	5 (50%)	61 (31.9%)
Little needed	2 (6.5%)	11 (9.2%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	15 (7.9%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	2 (1.7%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (10%)	15 (7.9%)
Total	31 (100%)	122 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	191 (100%)
Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)					
Most needed	13 (44.8%)	52 (43.3%)	21 (70%)	4 (40%)	90 (47.6%)
Needed	13 (44.8%)	48 (40%)	7 (23.3%)	4 (40%)	72 (38.1%)
Little needed	3 (10.3%)	19 (15.8%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	24 (38.1%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	2 (20%)	3 (1.6%)
Total	29 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Participating in a group discussion					
Most needed	23(76.7%)	62 (51.7%)	15 (50.0%)	2 (20%)	102 (53.7%)
Needed	3 (10%)	40 (33.3%)	10 (33.3%)	7 (70%)	60 (31.6%)
Little needed	4 (13.3%)	17 (14.2%)	5 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	26 (13.7%)
Not needed	0	1 (8%)	0	1 (10%)	2 (1.1%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)

Students were asked to rank the above three activities in terms of their importance; results show that there is no difference in perceived needs per group for "contributing to general conversation" ($X^2 = 10.20$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.334$). However, we notice a difference in the other two speaking activities regarding giving a talk (oral presentation in a class), $X^2 = 31.88$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$), and participating in a group discussion ($X^2 = 24.35$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.004$).

Since the p-value in the last two activities is less than 0.05 (0.000 and 0.004 respectively), this means that there is a group effect on students' attitudes to these activities. The higher the students' level of proficiency, the less they express a need for these activities.

Question 8 d: Importance of reading skills

Table 11: Importance of reading skills

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Reading at adequate speed					
Most needed	11 (36.7%)	32 (27.4%)	10 (34.5%)	3 (30%)	56 (30.1%)
Needed	9 (30%)	44 (37.6%)	17 (58.6%)	5 (50%)	75 (40.3%)
Little needed	8 (26.7%)	33 (28.2%)	1 (3.4%)	2 (20%)	44 (23.7%)
Not needed	2 (6.7%)	8 (6.8%)	1 (3.4%)	0 (0%)	11 (5.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	117 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	186 (100%)
Skimming/Scanning					
Most needed	4 (13.3%)	16 (14.5%)	5 (19.2%)	2 (20%)	27 (15.3%)
Needed	8 (26.7%)	4 (38.2%)	8 (30.8%)	4 (40%)	62 (35.2%)
Little needed	11 (36.7%)	32 (29.1%)	7 (26.9%)	4 (40%)	54 (30.7%)
Not needed	7 (23.3%)	20 (18.2%)	6 (23.1%)	0 (0%)	33 (18.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	110 (100%)	26 (100%)	10 (100%)	176 (100%)
Reading textbooks with understanding					
Most needed	21 (67.7%)	73 (62.4%)	13 (43.3%)	4 (40%)	111 (59%)
Needed	9 (29%)	34 (29.1%)	13 (43.3%)	2 (20%)	58 (30.9%)
Little needed	1 (3.2%)	7 (6%)	2 (6.7%)	4 (40%)	14 (7.4%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	3 (2.6%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	5 (2.7%)
Total	31 (100%)	117 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)
Reading and note-taking					
Most needed	9 (30%)	23 (20%)	4 (13.3%)	3 (30%)	39 (21.1%)
Needed	12 (40%)	47 (40.9%)	16 (53.3%)	5 (50%)	80 (43.2%)
Little needed	6 (20%)	35 (30.4%)	8 (26.7%)	2 (20%)	51 (27.6%)
Not needed	3 (10%)	10 (8.7%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	15 (8.1%)
Total	30 (100%)	115 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	185 (100%)
General leisure reading					
Most needed	7 (23.3%)	16 (14%)	3 (10.3%)	3 (30%)	29 (15.8%)
Needed	16 (53.3%)	51 (44.7%)	16 (55.2%)	3 (30%)	86 (47%)
Little needed	6 (20%)	37 (32.5%)	9 (31%)	2 (20%)	54 (29.5%)
Not needed	1 (3.3%)	10 (8.8%)	1 (3.4%)	2 (20%)	14 (7.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	114 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	183 (100%)

Of the five activities listed under this rubric, only one (reading textbooks with understanding) has been ranked with a group effect (table 26). The following are the activities and the results of the chi-square (X^2) test:

Reading at adequate speed ($X^2 = 11.84$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.222$),

Skimming/scanning ($X^2 = 4.96$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.837$),

Reading textbooks with understanding ($X^2 = 22.77$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.007$),

Reading and note-taking ($X^2 = 5.71$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.768$),

General leisure reading ($X^2 = 9.68$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.376$).

Respondents from the four groups have almost similar views except on “reading textbooks with understanding” where “most needed” was chosen by 21 students (67.3%) in beginners, 73 students (62.4%) in elementary, 13 (43.3%) in intermediate and by 4 (40%) in advanced. This is why we have a reversed situation for “little needed” (The higher the level of proficiency, the higher the rank). This means that there is a group effect (e.g. students’ needs vary according to their levels of proficiency) on students’ responses to the importance of “reading textbooks with understanding”. The test has not indicated any difference with the four other reading activities.

Question 8 d: Importance of writing skills

Table 12: Importance of writing skills

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
	Punctuation				
Most needed	12 (41.4%)	30 (25.9%)	8 (27.6%)	1 (10%)	51 (27.7%)
Needed	9 (31%)	39 (33.6%)	11 (37.9%)	3 (30%)	62 (33.7%)
Little needed	5 (17.2%)	33 (28.4%)	8 (27.6%)	5 (50%)	51 (27.7%)
Not needed	3 (10.3%)	14 (12.1%)	2 (6.9%)	1 (10%)	20 (10.9%)
Total	29 (100%)	116 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	184 (100%)
	Organizing information into a coherent structure				
Most needed	9 (30%)	34 (29.6%)	6 (20.7%)	5 (50%)	54 (29.3%)
Needed	13 (43.3%)	51 (44.3%)	16 (55.2%)	2 (20%)	82 (44.6%)
Little needed	8 (26.7%)	26 (22.6%)	5 (17.2%)	3 (30%)	42 (22.8%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	4 (3.5%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0%)	6 (3.3%)

Total	30 (10%)	115 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	184 (100%)
Paragraph writing					
Most needed	7 (24.1%)	21 (18.3%)	2 (6.7%)	1 (10%)	31 (16.8%)
Needed	12 (41.4%)	47 (40.9%)	17 (56.7%)	5 (50%)	81 (44%)
Little needed	8 (27.6%)	33 (28.7%)	9 (30%)	4 (40%)	54 (29.3%)
Not needed	2 (6.9%)	14 (12.2%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	18 (9.8%)
Total	29 (100%)	115 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	184 (100%)
Summarizing					
Most needed	11 (36.7%)	48 (40.7%)	11 (36.7%)	2 (20%)	72 (38.3%)
Needed	10 (33.3%)	41 (34.7%)	11 (36.7%)	5 (50%)	67 (35.6%)
Little needed	5 (16.7%)	22 (18.6%)	7 (23.3%)	3 (30%)	37 (19.7%)
Not needed	4 (13.3%)	7 (5.9%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	12 (6.4%)
Total	30 (100%)	118 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)
Writing in a formal academic style					
Most needed	10 (33.3%)	27 (23.9%)	12 (40%)	4 (40%)	53 (29%)
Needed	12 (40%)	40 (35.4%)	8 (26.7%)	4 (40%)	64 (35%)
Little needed	8 (26.7%)	34 (30.1%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (20%)	48 (26.2%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	12 (10.6%)	6 (20%)	0 (0%)	18 (9.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	113 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	183 (100%)
Writing essays					
Most needed	11 (36.7%)	32 (28.1%)	6 (21.4%)	2 (20%)	51 (28%)
Needed	10 (33.3%)	52 (45.6%)	16 (57.1%)	7 (70%)	85 (46.7%)
Little needed	9 (30%)	23 (20.2%)	4 (14.3%)	1 (10%)	37 (20.3%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	7 (6.1%)	2 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	9 (4.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	114 (100%)	28 (100%)	10 (100%)	182 (100%)
Writing reports					
Most needed	18 (60%)	52 (44.8%)	13 (44.8%)	4 (40%)	87 (47%)
Needed	7 (23.3%)	41 (35.3%)	10 (34.5%)	4 (40%)	62 (33.5%)
Little needed	5 (16.7%)	19 (16.4%)	5 (17.2%)	2 (20%)	31 (16.8%)
Not needed	0 (0%)	4 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (2.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	116 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	185 (100%)
Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies					
Most needed	7 (23.3%)	21 (18.8%)	1 (3.4%)	3 (30%)	32 (17.7%)
Needed	9 (30%)	33 (29.5%)	9 (31%)	2 (20%)	53 (29.3%)
Little needed	7 (23.3%)	34 (30.4%)	16 (55.2%)	5 (50%)	62 (34.3%)
Not needed	7 (23.3%)	24 (21.4%)	1 (10.3%)	0 (0%)	34 (18.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	112 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	181 (100%)

Responses to writing are not different from those on reading in terms of students' perceived needs; the four groups acknowledge the importance of writing. But, students' perceived needs in writing essays and writing reports are higher than in the other activities. This is confirmed in the

chi-square test where the p-value is far superior to 0.05 in all the writing activities. This is what the situation looks like:

Punctuation	($X^2 = 7.03$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.633$),
Organising information into a coherent Structure	($X^2 = 7.61$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.574$),
Paragraph writing	($X^2 = 7.28$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.607$),
Summarising	($X^2 = 6.08$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.732$),
Writing in a formal academic style	($X^2 = 13.61$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.137$),
Writing essays	($X^2 = 9.44$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.397$),
Writing reports	($X^2 = 3.96$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.914$),
Abstracts/referencing/bibliographies	($X^2 = 14.82$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.096$),

A comparison between perceived needs with regards to spoken and written language reveals that the PPP in spoken language (between 80 and 93%) are somewhat higher overall than the PPP for the written language (between 34.4% and 96.7%).

Question 10: How often do you have to do the following in English in your main areas of study?

Table 13: Frequency for activities done in English in students' main areas of study

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Reading; skimming, scanning (books/texts etc)					
Often	6 (20.7%)	26 (22.4%)	5 (16.7%)	1 (10%)	38 (20.5%)
Sometimes	11 (37.9%)	62 (53.4%)	15 (50%)	6 (60%)	94 (50.8%)
Very rarely	11 (37.9%)	20 (17.2%)	10 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	41 (22.2%)
Never	1 (3.4%)	8 (6.9%)	0 (0%)	3 (30%)	12 (6.5%)
Total	29 (100%)	116 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	185 (100%)
Writing (composition/essays, reports, summaries, etc)					
Often	6 (20.7%)	25 (21%)	11 (36.7%)	3 (30%)	45 (23.9%)
Sometimes	12 (41.4%)	64 (53.8%)	13 (43.3%)	6 (60%)	95 (50.5%)
Very rarely	8 (27.6%)	26 (21.8%)	5 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	39 (20.7%)
Never	3 (10.3%)	4 (3.4%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (10%)	9 (4.8%)
Total	29 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)
Speaking activities					
Often	7 (24.1%)	38 (31.9%)	10 (33.3%)	4 (40%)	59 (31.4%)
Sometimes	8 (27.6%)	50 (42%)	12 (40%)	2 (20%)	72 (38.3%)

Very rarely	12 (41.4%)	27(22.7%)	4 (13.3%)	4 (40%)	47 (25%)
Never	2 (6.9%)	4 (3.4%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	10 (5.3%)
Total	29 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)
Group work					
Often	2 (6.9%)	18 (15.1%)	7 (23.3%)	2 (20%)	29 (15.4%)
Sometimes	14 (48.3%)	56 (47.1%)	5 (16.7%)	4 (40%)	79 (42%)
Never	3 (10.3%)	11 (9.2%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (20%)	20 (10.6%)
Total	29 (100%)	119 (10%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)
Taking notes in English					
Often	17 (58.6%)	69 (58%)	16 (53.3%)	5 (50%)	107 (56.9%)
Sometimes	4 (13.8%)	22 (18.5%)	8 (26.7%)	5 (50%)	39 (20.7%)
Very rarely	6 (20.7%)	17 (14.3%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	26 (13.8%)
Never	2 (6.9%)	11 (9.2%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	16 (8.5%)
Total	29 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)

Giving a talk or oral presentation					
Often	4 (13.8%)	23 (19.7%)	3 (10%)	3 (30%)	33 (17.7%)
Sometimes	18(62.1%)	57 (48.7%)	16 (53.3%)	2 (20%)	93 (50%)
Very rarely	6 (20.7%)	29 (24.8%)	7 (23.3%)	5 (50%)	47 (25.3%)
Never	1 (3.4%)	8 (6.8%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	13 (7%)
Total	29 (100%)	117 (100%)	30 (10%)	10 (100%)	186 (100%)

“Sometimes” is the frequency chosen by most students (50% in each group) for all the activities except taking notes in English (the only activity which was ranked “often” (56%)). This might be explained by the fact that English is the main medium of instruction at KIST. In a situation like this, however, one would expect students to be more involved in activities related to reading, writing and speaking. Unfortunately, the above situation has revealed the contrary. Also, the chi-square statistic value does not show any significant difference except on reading, skimming, scanning (books/texts etc) where “often needed” is used with group effect: that is, those students at the lower level claim to read/scan/skim more than those at the higher level.

Question 11: Indicate how difficult the following tasks are for you

Question 11 a: Difficulties in grammar

Table 14: Difficulties in grammar

Grammar		Group				Total
		Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Extremely difficult	Count	4 (13.3%)	12 (10.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (8.6)
Difficult	Count	10 (33.3%)	28 (23.5%)	5 (17.9%)	1 (10.0%)	44 (23.5%)
A bit difficult	Count	15 (50.0%)	62 (52.1%)	17 (60.7%)	7 (70.0%)	101 (54.0%)
Very easy	Count	1 (3.3%)	17 (14.3%)	6 (21.4%)	2 (20.0%)	26 (13.9%)
Total	Count	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	28 (100%)	10 (100%)	187 (100%)

Of the 16 students who ranked grammar as “extremely difficult”, 4 are beginners and 12 are elementary students; no one from the intermediate or advanced groups reported great difficulty with grammar. Only one student from the advanced group and five students from the intermediate group ranked grammar as “difficult”.

Question 11b: Difficulties in listening activities

Table 15: Difficulties in listening activities

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Understanding lectures and note-taking					
Extremely difficult	5 (16.7%)	13 (10.8%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	20 (10.5%)
Difficult	7 (23.3%)	29 (24.2%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	38 (20.0%)
A bit difficult	13 (43.3%)	51 (42.5%)	12 (40.0%)	8 (80.0%)	84 (44.2%)
Very easy	5 (16.7%)	27 (22.5%)	14 (46.7%)	2 (20.0%)	48 (25.3%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Understanding different accents of English					
Extremely difficult	6 (20.0%)	27 (22.7%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	35 (18.5%)
Difficult	15 (50.0%)	48 (40.3%)	10 (33.3%)	3 (30.0%)	76 (40.2%)
A bit difficult	7 (23.3%)	38 (31.9%)	17 (56.7%)	7 (70.0%)	69 (36.5%)
Very easy	2 (6.7%)	6 (5.0%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	9 (4.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Understanding oral questions					
Extremely difficult	8 (26.7%)	14 (11.8%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	24 (12.7%)
Difficult	5 (16.7%)	45 (37.8%)	5 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	55 (29.1%)

A bit difficult	12 (40.0%)	44 (37.0%)	17 (56.7%)	7 (70%)	80 (42.3%)
Very easy	5 (16.7%)	16 (13.4%)	6 (20%)	3 (30%)	30 (15.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Answering questions orally					
Extremely difficult	11 (36.7%)	19 (16%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	32 (16.9%)
Difficult	8 (26.7%)	36 (30%)	9 (30%)	4 (40%)	57 (30.2%)
A bit difficult	11 (36.7%)	50 (42%)	15 (50%)	4 (40%)	80 (42.3%)
Very easy	0 (0%)	14 (11.8%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (20%)	20 (10.6%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)

Respondents' answers to listening activities show that there is group effect in the four activities; the students at the lower levels experience more difficulty than those at the higher levels. Results of the chi-square test are as follows:

Understanding lectures and note-taking ($X^2 = 11.54$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.009$),

Understanding different accents of English ($X^2 = 9.68$ $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.021$),

Understanding oral questions ($X^2 = 11.71$ $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.008$),

Answering questions orally ($X^2 = 10.28$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.016$),

Question 11c: Difficulties in speaking activities

Table 16: Difficulties in speaking activities

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Contributing to general conversation					
Extremely difficult	6 (20.0%)	13 (10.8%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	23 (12.1%)
Difficult	10 (33.3%)	40 (33.3%)	8 (26.7%)	4 (40.0%)	62 (32.6%)
A bit difficult	9 (30.0%)	50 (41.7%)	13 (43.3%)	4 (40.0%)	76 (40.0%)
Very easy	5 (16.7%)	17 (14.2%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (20.0%)	29 (15.3%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)					
Extremely difficult	4 (13.3%)	10 (8.4%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	16 (8.5%)
Difficult	12 (40.0%)	30 (25.2%)	8 (26.7%)	4 (40.0%)	54 (28.6%)
A bit difficult	10 (33.3%)	60 (50.4%)	16 (53.3%)	5 (50.0%)	91 (48.1%)
Very easy	4 (13.3%)	19 (16.0%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (10.0%)	28 (14.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Participating in a group discussion					
Extremely difficult	6 (20.0%)	7 (5.9%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	14 (7.4%)
Difficult	7 (23.3%)	24 (20.2%)	8 (26.7%)	0 (0%)	39 (20.6%)
A bit difficult	7 (23.3%)	59 (49.6%)	12 (40.0%)	9 (90.0%)	87 (46.0%)
Very easy	10 (33.3%)	29 (24.4%)	9 (30.0%)	1 (10.0%)	49 (25.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)

None of the advanced students ranked speaking activities as “extremely difficult”. As in listening activities, lower level students seem to have more difficulties than those at advanced levels.

However, the chi-square test results revealed a group effect on the third activity only “participating in a group discussion”.

Contributing to general conversation $X^2 = 4.70$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.859$),

Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class) $X^2 = 6.16$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.724$),

Participating in a group discussion $X^2 = 20.95$; $df = 9$; $p\text{-value} = 0.013$),

Question 11d: Difficulties in reading activities

Table 17: Difficulties in reading activities

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Reading at adequate speed					
Extremely difficult	9 (30.0%)	18 (15.0%)	1 (3.3%)	1 (10.0%)	29 (15.3%)
Difficult	10 (33.3%)	38 (31.7%)	8 (26.7%)	1 (10.0%)	57 (30.0%)
A bit difficult	7 (23.3%)	45 (37.5%)	15 (50.0%)	5 (50.0%)	72 (37.9%)
Very easy	4 (13.3%)	19 (15.8%)	6 (20.0%)	3 (30.0%)	32 (16.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Skimming/scanning					
Extremely difficult	7 (23.3%)	19 (16.4%)	2 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	28 (15.2%)
Difficult	16 (53.3%)	48 (41.4%)	7 (25.0%)	3 (30.0%)	74 (40.2%)
A bit difficult	5 (16.7%)	42 (36.2%)	14 (50.0%)	6 (60.0%)	67 (36.4%)
Very easy	2 (6.7%)	7 (6.0%)	5 (17.9%)	1 (10.0%)	15 (8.2%)
Total	30 (100%)	116 (100%)	28 (100%)	10 (100%)	184 (100%)
Reading textbooks with understanding					
Extremely difficult	2 (6.7%)	12 (10.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (7.4%)
Difficult	10 (33.3%)	36 (30.3%)	9 (30.0%)	0 (0%)	55 (29.1%)
A bit difficult	14 (46.7%)	56 (47.1%)	19 (63.3%)	7 (70.0%)	96 (50.8%)
Very easy	4 (13.3%)	15 (13.3%)	2 (6.7%)	3 (30.0%)	24 (12.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
Reading and note-taking					
Extremely difficult	2 (6.7%)	6 (5.0%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	10 (5.3%)
Difficult	6 (20.0%)	21 (17.6%)	2 (6.7%)	2 (20.0%)	31 (16.4%)
A bit difficult	19 (63.3%)	59 (49.6%)	10 (33.3%)	2 (20.0%)	90 (47.6%)
Very easy	3 (10.0%)	33 (27.7%)	16 (53.3%)	6 (60.0%)	58 (30.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	189 (100%)
General leisure reading					
Extremely difficult	5 (16.7%)	9 (7.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	14 (7.4%)
Difficult	11 (36.7%)	34 (28.8%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (20.0%)	52 (27.7%)
A bit difficult	11 (36.7%)	55 (46.6%)	16 (53.3%)	3 (30.0%)	85 (45.2%)
Very easy	3 (10.0%)	20 (16.9%)	9 (30.0%)	5 (50.0%)	37 (19.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	118 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)

Beginner and intermediate students find reading at adequate speed difficult. The advanced group finds skimming/scanning and leisure reading difficult. Of the five reading activities, reading textbooks with understanding and reading and note-taking do not present any group effect as seen in the following chi-square test results:

Reading at adequate speed	$X^2 = 9.70$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.021$),
Skimming/scanning	$X^2 = 14.62$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.002$),
Reading textbooks with understanding	$X^2 = 7.44$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.059$),
Reading and note-taking	$X^2 = 12.00$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.007$),
General leisure reading	$X^2 = 14.65$; $df = 3$; $p\text{-value} = 0.002$

Question 11e: Difficulties in writing activities

Table 18: Difficulties in writing activities

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Punctuation					
Extremely difficult	5 (16.7%)	27 (22.3%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	34 (17.8%)
Difficult	13 (43.3%)	28 (23.1%)	4 (13.3%)	5 (50%)	50 (26.2%)
A bit difficult	8 (26.7%)	30 (24.8%)	13 (43.3%)	3 (30%)	54 (28.3%)
Very easy	4 (13.3%)	36 (29.8%)	11 (36.7%)	2 (20%)	53 (27.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	121 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	191 (100%)
Organising information into a coherent structure					
Extremely difficult	6 (20%)	23 (19%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	29 (15.2%)
Difficult	12 (40%)	47 (38.8%)	10 (33.3%)	3 (30%)	72 (37.7%)
A bit difficult	10 (33.3%)	41 (33.9%)	19 (63.3%)	7 (70%)	77 (40.3%)
Very easy	2 (6.7%)	10 (8.3%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	13 (6.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	121 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	191 (100%)
Paragraph writing					
Extremely difficult	2 (6.7%)	7 (5.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (4.7%)
Difficult	7 (23.3%)	32 (26.7%)	5 (16.7%)	1 (10%)	45 (23.7%)
A bit difficult	15 (50%)	63 (52.5%)	13 (43.3%)	7 (70%)	98 (51.6%)
Very easy	6 (20%)	18 (15%)	12 (40%)	2 (20%)	38 (20.0%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Summarising					
Extremely difficult	5 (16.7%)	13 (10.7%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (10%)	23 (12.0%)
Difficult	9 (30%)	42 (34.7%)	6 (20%)	2 (20%)	59 (30.9%)
A bit difficult	14 (46.7%)	50 (41.3%)	16 (53.3%)	5 (50%)	85 (44.5%)
Very easy	2 (6.7%)	16 (13.2%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (20%)	24 (12.6%)
Total	30 (100%)	121 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	191 (100%)



Writing in a formal academic style					
Extremely difficult	6 (20%)	14 (11.7%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	24 (12.6%)
Difficult	16 (53.3%)	58 (48.3%)	11 (36.7%)	4 (40%)	89 (46.8%)
A bit difficult	7 (23.3%)	38 (31.7%)	12 (40%)	5 (50%)	62 (32.6%)
Very easy	1 (3.3%)	10 (8.3%)	3 (10.0%)	10 (100%)	15 (7.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Writing essays					
Extremely difficult	2 (6.7%)	10 (8.4%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0%)	14 (7.4%)
Difficult	15 (50.0%)	45 (37.8%)	4 (13.8%)	3 (30.0%)	67 (35.6%)
A bit difficult	10 (33.3%)	52 (43.7%)	19 (65.5%)	6 (60.0%)	87 (46.3%)
Very easy	3 (10.0%)	12 (10.1%)	4 (13.8%)	1 (10%)	20 (10.6%)
Total	30 (100%)	119 (100%)	29 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)
Writing reports					
Extremely difficult	3 (10.0%)	16 (13.3%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (10%)	24 (12.6%)
Difficult	15 (50.0%)	45 (37.5%)	7 (23.3%)	2 (20.0%)	69 (36.3%)
A bit difficult	10 (33.3%)	49 (40.8%)	14 (46.7%)	7 (70.0%)	80 (42.1%)
Very easy	2 (6.7%)	10 (8.3%)	5 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	17 (8.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	120 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	190 (100%)
Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies					
Extremely difficult	7 (23.3%)	26 (22.0%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	37 (19.7%)
Difficult	11 (36.7%)	39 (33.1%)	8 (26.7%)	3 (30.0%)	61 (32.4%)
A bit difficult	11 (36.7%)	35 (29.7%)	10 (33.3%)	6 (60.0%)	62 (33.0%)
Very easy	1 (3.3%)	18 (15.3%)	8 (26.7%)	1 (10%)	28 (14.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	118 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	188 (100%)

A group effect on the response to writing activities has emerged in the first two activities (punctuation and organising information into a coherent structure). In the last six activities, the degree of difficulty varies between 30% and 60% (from the higher to the lower level of proficiency) but there is no group effect to respondents' responses to these questions as shown by the results of the chi-square test below.

Punctuation ($X^2 = 19.59$ df = 9; p-value = 0.021),

Organising information into a coherent structure ($X^2 = 17.41$; df = 9; p-value = 0.043),

Paragraph writing ($X^2 = 12.88$; df = 9; p-value = 0.168),

Summarising ($X^2 = 5.12$; df = 9; p-value = 0.824),

Writing in a formal academic style ($X^2 = 7.04$; df = 9; p-value = 0.633),

Writing essays ($X^2 = 11.09$; df = 9; p-value = 0.269),

Writing reports ($X^2 = 9.70$; df = 9; p-value = 0.375),

Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies ($X^2 = 12.01$; df = 9; p-value = 0.213),

Question 13: Please comment on how well the following aspects are covered in your syllabus for English

Table 19: Comments on coverage in English syllabus

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Grammar (language structure)					
Enough	11 (36.7%)	39 (33.3%)	15 (50.0%)	5 (50.0%)	70 (37.4%)
Not enough	18 (60.0%)	73 (62.4%)	14 (46.7%)	5 (50.0%)	110 (58.8%)
Don't know	1 (3.3%)	5 (4.3%)	1 (3.3%)	0 (0%)	7 (3.7%)
Total	30 (100%)	117 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	187 (100%)
Reading					
Enough	10 (33.3%)	34 (29.8%)	17 (56.7%)	3 (30.0%)	64 (34.8%)
Not enough	19 (63.3%)	67 (58.8%)	12 (40.0%)	5 (50.0%)	103 (56.0%)
Don't know	1 (3.3%)	13 (11.4%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (20.0%)	17 (9.2%)
Total	30 (100%)	114 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	184 (100%)
Writing (essay, paragraph, reports etc)					
Enough	5 (16.7%)	40 (35.4%)	10 (33.3%)	9 (90.0%)	64 (35.0%)
Not enough	21 (70.0%)	52 (46.0%)	18 (60.0%)	1 (10.0%)	92 (50.3%)
Don't know	4 (13.3%)	21 (18.6%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	27 (14.8%)
Total	30 (100%)	113 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	183 (100%)
Speaking (oral presentation, group discussions, etc)					
Enough	5 (16.7%)	39 (34.5%)	12 (40.0%)	4 (40.0%)	60 (32.8%)
Not enough	19 (63.3%)	6 (54.9%)	16 (53.3%)	4 (40.0%)	101 (55.2%)
Don't know	6 (20.0%)	12 (10.6%)	2 (6.7%)	2 (20.0%)	22 (12.0%)
Total	30 (100%)	113 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	183 (100%)
Listening activities					
Enough	4 (13.3%)	30 (26.1%)	11 (36.7%)	4 (40.0%)	49 (26.5%)
Not enough	19 (63.3%)	61 (53.0%)	16 (53.3%)	5 (50.0%)	101 (54.6%)
Don't know	7 (23.3%)	24 (20.9%)	3 (10.0%)	1 (10.0%)	35 (18.9%)
Total	30 (100%)	115 (100%)	30 (100%)	10 (100%)	185 (100%)

Findings show that the coverage of grammar in syllabuses is “not enough” at 60% at beginner and elementary level and 46.7% and 50% at intermediate and advanced groups respectively. This implies that lower levels would like to have more of it than the higher levels. This situation presents an anomaly as grammar takes most of the time in their schemes of work. Table 2 in chapter 1 shows that the time allocated to linguistic competence are 74.6% for beginners, 85% for elementary and 60% for intermediate. Although some students said that they don't know (which means that they are not aware of their syllabuses), they should at least know what they are studying on a regular basis and make reasonable estimations. Again, this might be a result of lack of experience in dealing with evaluation of this type rather than being a result of ignorance.

A bigger difference can be seen in reading and writing. Beginner students seem to be disadvantaged in terms of reading and writing coverage in their syllabus (table 7). The advanced students' syllabus covers the most in terms of writing and the intermediate syllabus covers the most in terms of reading.

Question 15: Based on your needs in English, which among the following items constitutes a major hindrance or handicap to your learning of English at KIST? Rank the items from most to least problematic (1 being the biggest problem and 4 being the least problem).

Table 20: Main hindrance or handicap to your learning of English

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Teaching materials					
1	11 (61.1%)	43 (43.0%)	11 (36.7%)	4 (44.4%)	69 (43.9%)
2	1 (5.6%)	26 (26.0%)	10 (33.3%)	4 (44.4%)	41 (26.1%)
3	5 (27.8%)	13 (13.0%)	2 (6.7%)	1 (11.1%)	21 (13.4%)
4	1 (5.6%)	18 (18.0%)	7 (23.3%)	0 (0%)	26 (16.6%)
Total	18 (100%)	100 (100%)	30 (100%)	9 (100%)	157 (100%)
Time allotted to English					
1	4 (22.2%)	20 (20.2%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	26 (16.7%)
2	1 (5.6%)	19 (19.2%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (22.2%)	27 (17.3%)
3	8 (44.4%)	21 (21.2%)	2 (6.7%)	6 (66.7%)	37 (23.7%)
4	5 (27.8%)	39 (39.4%)	21 (70.0%)	1 (11.1%)	66 (42.3%)
Total	18 (100%)	99 (100%)	30 (100%)	9 (100%)	156 (100%)

	Quality of teaching				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
1	4 (22.2%)	21 (21.2%)	8 (26.7%)	3 (37.5%)	36 (23.2%)
2	7 (38.9%)	19 (19.2%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (25.0%)	33 (21.3%)
3	2 (11.1%)	22 (22.2%)	12 (40.0%)	3 (37.5%)	39 (25.2%)
4	5 (27.8%)	37 (37.4%)	5 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	47 (30.3%)
Total	18 (100%)	99 (100%)	30 (100%)	8 (100%)	155 (100%)
Size of your class (e.g. big group)					
1	1 (5.6%)	32 (32.3%)	9 (30.0%)	1 (12.5%)	43 (27.7%)
2	5 (27.8%)	14 (14.1%)	4 (13.3%)	0 (0%)	23 (14.8%)
3	3 (16.7%)	17 (17.2%)	3 (10.0%)	0 (0%)	23 (14.8%)
4	9 (50.0%)	36 (36.4%)	14 (46.7%)	7 (87.5%)	66 (42.6%)
Total	18 (100%)	99 (100%)	30 (100%)	8 (100%)	155 (100%)

In terms of percentage, beginners rated teaching materials as the most serious problem; the advanced group finds time allocated to English and size of classes to be the least serious problem. On this question, a group effect to responses on main hindrance was noticed on time allocated to English. ($X^2 = 28.9$; $df = 9$; p -value = 0.001): for advanced and intermediate

students, time is not a problem (no advanced student ranked time factor 1, and only 2 intermediate students (6.7%) ranked it 1). Although they have more time than others, beginner and intermediate students still seem to need more time.

If advanced students do not see any problem of class size in English classes, it is because their numbers are small (25 only) compared to other groups (see table 1, page 3). Elementary students find class size a significant issue because this is the group with the largest classes (up to 75 students in one class – see table 1, page 3).

4. 3.1.2 Data from open questions

Question 9: Are there any aspects of English not covered in question 8 which you think are important for you

On this question, as in all the open questions, the response rate was not high (51.6% of beginners, 47.5% of elementary, 46.6% of intermediate and 50% of advanced group). And many students repeated what was already given in the closed questions. The few additions are from beginner students (20% of those who answered the question) who said that they need drama and phonology. Intermediate students (30%) added letter writing, watching movies on TV and phonology. The advanced students (0%) did not add anything to the list. This suggests that students don't have a clear idea of their needs.

Question 12: Is there anything which you think is important that is not covered in your English syllabus?

The response rate to this question is no better than those to question 9 above: 11 beginner students (35.4%), 54 elementary students (44.2%), 14 intermediate students (46.6%) and 5 advanced students (50%). Responses to this question are the same for beginners and elementary students (50% in each case), who said that they are not aware of the syllabus. The few who attempted to add to the list (15% of beginners) said that drama and phonology are not covered, 12 % of elementary students added phonology and vocabulary. Others said that they are not aware of the syllabus (11 % of beginners, 18% from the Elementary group, 30% from the intermediate group and 30% from the advanced group).

Question 14: Given what you need to learn, what do you think is missing from the KIST library that could help you reach your objectives?

For beginners and elementary students, the main problem with the KIST library is the lack of textbooks (45% and 60% respectively). Another concern which is common to the four groups is the lack of sufficient newspapers written in English. Advanced students (50%) added a lack of novels

Question 17: Which part of the course English 1121/1110 has been useful to you so far?

Again, most students (60% of the respondents) repeated information already given (e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar). The only difference is at the advanced level (40%) who mentioned essay writing.

Here, one might be tempted to think that essay writing is not done until the advanced level or not done satisfactorily if ever at the beginner, elementary and intermediate levels ever.

Question 18: Which part of the course English 1121/1110 has not been useful to you?

Responses to these questions are divided into two main categories and they are almost the same for both beginner and elementary students. On the one hand, there are students who say that everything has been useful (43% and 30.8% respectively). On the other hand, there are students for whom grammar and listening are useful (57% of beginners, 69.2% of elementary and 20% of intermediate students). Of the eight advanced students who answered this question, the useful part of the course was writing (10%), reading (30%), grammar (10%). The remaining 30% of students did not find anything useful in the course.

Question 19: Please give any suggestions that you might have for the improvement of your learning English at KIST. What changes would you recommend?

As in the previous open questions, there is a lot of repetition of what was already given in the list provided (e.g. question 8). A common interest here is the need to increase speaking activities. However, respondents have raised a certain number of concerns that need to be addressed in

order to create an environment that is conducive to good learning. Findings from this question are summarised below:

- The problem of class size (23.9%)
- Insufficiency of textbooks (34.5%)
- Improving teaching materials (18%)
- Avoid changing teachers every semester (5%)
- The timetable is not conducive to learning: students think that studying from 8.am to 5 pm does not give students free time to read (12%)
- Improving the quality of teaching. (6.6%)

4.3.2 Subject lecturers

4.3.2.1 Data from questions that require lecturers to rank their students' needs

Question 4: Say how often your students have to do the following activities in English

Table 21: Frequency of English activities in subject courses

Activity		Frequency				Total respondents
		always	Sometimes	very rarely	never	
Oral presentation of task	Count	2	-	-	2	4
Group discussion in class		2	1	-		3
Read subject related book and report on findings		2	-	-	1	3
Writing reports, descriptions, process description, etc		1	1	1		3
Writing summaries of experiments		1	1	1	1	4

Lecturers' responses to this question revealed different views: two lecturers said that they never use oral presentation in English whereas two said that they always use them in English. Also, for writing summaries of experiments, four lecturers gave four different responses (always, sometimes, very rarely and never respectively). The different views might be due to individual lecturer's ways of doing things (e.g. the subject taught might not necessitate experiments or maybe the lecturer does not give students opportunities to do experiments). Also, the situation

might have been more revealing if there had been a statistically representative number of respondents.

Question 5: How often are students required to take their own notes during lectures

Frequency	Count
Always	3
Sometimes	1
Never	-

The response to this question is “always” for three lecturers. Again, we cannot generalize findings due to a limited sample, but the fact that three lecturers’ responses to this question are “always” might signal the importance of note-taking for science and technology students.

Question 6: Do students have difficulties in the following areas?

Table 22: Students’ difficulties as perceived

Areas of difficulty	Count	Frequency				Total respondents
		All of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them	
Understanding lectures in English	4		4			4
Reading written course related materials	4		3	1		4
Understanding oral questions	4	1	3			4
Asking questions in English	4		4			4
Answering question orally in English during lectures	4		4			4
Writing reports, descriptions, process description, etc.	4	1	3			4
Taking their own notes during lectures	4	2	2			4

Question 7: How are students assessed in your course?

Type of assessment	Count
Multiple choice questions	1
Open questions	4
Writing reports	2
Summarising reading from course books	-
Presenting reports in class	-

Interpreting tables/ graphs	1
Other forms of assessment (Please specify)	1*

* The other form of assessment is "explaining oral programmes used to solve assigned tasks"

The four lecturers use open questions in their assessments but vary with regard to other forms of assessment used.

Question 8: How often does it happen that your students are unable to answer a question in a test or examination because of a problem with English?

Frequency	Count
Very often	1
Sometimes	2
Very rarely	1
Never	-

Again, responses are varied. It would not be easy to say whether students have difficulties or not based on these responses.

Question 9: When you are assessing students' written work (tests, exam, reports, etc), what do you take into account?

Assessment criteria	Count
Content only	4
Both content and language	-

Findings in answer to this question are telling: lecturers in science and technology do not place a high priority on language in their assessment.

Question 10: In your opinion, how important is knowledge of English for a science/ technology student at KIST?

Importance of English	Count
Very necessary	4
Of little importance	-
Of no importance	-

The four lecturers acknowledge the importance of English for a science and technology students.

Question 11: How important are the following skills in studying science/technology at KIST? Use numbers 1 to 4 to rank the skills in order of importance

Table 23: Importance of English for first year students

Skills	Rank			
	1	2	3	4
Reading (e.g. course related materials) : Count	3	1	-	-
Writing (e.g. essays, reports, tests or exams, etc)	3	1	-	-
Speaking (presenting reports, discussion in groups etc)	1	3	-	-
Listening e.g. lectures/debates or group discussion, etc)	4	-	-	-

According to the four subject lecturers, listening is the most important skill for their students. The second most important skills are reading and writing.

4.3.2.2 Data from open questions

There was one open question for lecturers in science and technology

Question 12: What do you think KIST Language Centre needs to do to improve students' proficiency in English?

The following is verbatim what each of the four lecturers said:

- the English class they (students) follow do not appropriately address needs as far as listening and speaking are concerned
- students needs books adapted to their learning context
- the language teaching somehow must be related to the specialization
- It is very difficult to handle the I Year students when they do not have good background of English as well as French

Although they put it in different ways, respondents' opinions on this question reveal a need to teach according to students' needs, but without saying what those needs are exactly. Again, the low number of respondents does not make it possible to know what needs to be done.

4.3.3 Lecturers in English

4.3.3.1 Data from questions that require lecturers to rank their students' needs

Question 2: Please give your opinion as to your students' needs with regard to the following aspects of language

Grammar: Sentence structure and grammatical exercises

Table 24: First year students' need for grammar

	Frequency	Percent
extremely needed	5	50.0
Needed	4	40.0
little needed	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

Of the five lecturers who ranked grammar as “extremely needed”, one teaches beginners, 3 teach elementary and one teaches intermediate. Of the four who said that grammar is “needed”, one teaches beginners and three teach elementary. The advanced group’s teacher thinks that grammar is “little needed”.

Listening:

Table 25: First year students' needs with regard to listening

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Understanding lectures and note-taking					
Extremely needed	1	4	1	1	7
Needed	1	2	0	0	3
Little needed	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Understanding different accents of English					
Extremely needed	0	1	0	0	1
Needed	2	5	0	0	7
Little needed	0	0	1	1	2
Total	2	6	1	6	10
Understanding oral questions					
Extremely needed	0	3	0	1	4
Needed	2	2	1	0	5

Little needed	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Answering questions orally					
Extremely needed	1	2	0	1	4
Needed	0	4	1	0	5
Little needed	1	0	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10

In the table, “not needed” has not been used because no respondent used it. By combining frequencies for “extremely needed” and “needed” together in order to form a positive perception percentage (PPP) and those for “little needed” and “not needed” to form a negative perception percentage (NPP), it is clear that the PPP is far higher than the NPP in all activities. The first three activities seem to have equal importance while the last activity (answering questions orally) seem to be the least needed.

Speaking

Table 26: Students’ needs with regard to speaking

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Contributing to general conversation					
Extremely needed	1	3	0	1	5
Needed	1	3	0	0	4
Little needed	0	0	1	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)					
Extremely needed	1	3	1	0	5
Needed	1	3	0	1	5
Little needed					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Participating in a group discussion					
Extremely needed	0	5	0	1	6
Needed	2	1	0	0	3
Little needed	0	0	1	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10

It is interesting to see that almost all lecturers’ responses (nine out ten) to these questions are in the PPP category. The beginner and elementary lecturers have different views about students’ needs with regard to the first two activities (contributing to general conversation and giving a talk (oral presentation in a class), but, because all their responses are in the PPP only, this does not bring about any difference.

Reading

Table 27: Students' needs with regard to reading

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Reading at adequate speed					
Extremely needed	0	1	0	0	1
Needed	1	5	0	1	7
Little needed	1	0	1	0	2
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Skimming/scanning					
Extremely needed	0	3	0	1	4
Needed	0	3	0	0	3
Little needed	2	0	1	0	3
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Reading textbooks with understanding					
Extremely needed	1	0	0	1	2
Needed	1	6	1	0	8
Little needed					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Reading and note-taking					
Extremely needed	0	2	0	1	3
Needed	2	4	0	0	6
Little needed	0	0	1	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
General leisure reading					
Extremely needed	0	1	0	0	1
Needed	1	3	1	1	6
Little needed	1	2	0	0	3
Total	2	6	1	1	10

A surprising element in this table, which is not easy to explain, is to see that the two elementary groups' lecturer ranked skimming/scanning "little needed" when the advanced group's lecturer ranked it "extremely needed".

Writing

Table 28: Students' needs with regard to writing

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Punctuation					
Extremely needed	0	1	1	1	3
Needed	1	4	0	0	5
Little needed	1	1	0	0	2
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Organising information into a coherent structure					
Extremely needed	1	4	1	1	7
Needed	1	2	0	0	3
Little needed					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Paragraph writing					
Extremely needed	0	1	1	0	2
Needed	2	5	0	1	8
Little needed					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Summarising					
Extremely needed	0	0	1	0	1
Needed	2	5	0	1	8
Little needed	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Writing in a formal academic style					
Extremely needed	0	1	1	0	2
Needed	2	4	0	1	7
Little needed	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Writing essays					
Extremely needed	1	1	1	0	3
Needed	0	3	0	1	4
Little needed	1	2	0	0	3
Total	2	6	1	1	10

Writing reports					
Extremely needed	1	1	0	0	2
Needed	0	2	0	1	3
Little needed	1	3	1	0	5
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies					
Extremely needed	0	2	1	0	3
Needed	1	1	0	0	2
Little needed	1	1	0	1	3
Not needed	0	2	0	0	2
Total	2	6	1	1	10

It emerges from this table that lecturers in English perceive “organising information into a coherent structure” as the most needed writing skills for their students. But, in general, their responses indicate that students need writing skills because in most cases their responses are “extremely needed” or “needed”.

Question 4: Show how difficult the following activities are for your students

Grammar: Sentence structure and grammatical exercises

Table 29: Students’ difficulties in Grammar

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Very difficult					
Difficult	1	2	1	0	4
A bit difficult	1	4	0	1	6
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	1	10

Listening

Table 30: Students' difficulties in listening

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Understanding lectures and note-taking					
Very difficult	1	0	0	0	1
Difficult	0	3	0	1	4
A bit difficult	1	3	1	0	5
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Understanding different accents of English					
Very difficult	1	3	0	0	4
Difficult	1	3	1	0	5
A bit difficult					
Very easy	0	0	0	1	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Understanding oral questions					
very difficult	0	1	0	0	1
Difficult	0	1	0	0	1
A bit difficult	1	4	0	1	6
Very easy	1	0	1	0	2
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Answering questions orally					
Very difficult	0	1	0	0	1
Difficult	1	1	0	0	2
A bit difficult	1	4	1	1	7
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	1	10

There is a group effect in the four activities in the above table. In general, the lower levels experience more difficulties than the higher levels.

Speaking

Table 31: Students' difficulties in speaking

	Group			
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Total
	Contributing to general conversation			
Very difficult				
Difficult	2	3	0	5
A bit difficult	0	3	0	3
Very easy	0	0	1	1
Total	2	6	1	9
	Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)			
Very difficult				
Difficult	2	3	0	5
A bit difficult	0	3	1	4
Very easy				
Total	2	6	1	9
	Participating in a group discussion			
Very difficult	0	1	0	1
Difficult	2	2	0	4
A bit difficult	0	2	0	2
Very easy	0	1	1	2
Total	2	6	1	9

The advanced group's teacher did not answer this question. Only the elementary group ranked one speaking activity (participating in a group discussion) "very difficult". Elsewhere, no speaking activity was ranked "very difficult".

Reading

Table 32: Students' difficulties in reading

	Group			
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Total
Reading at adequate speed				
Very difficult	1	2	0	3
Difficult	1	2	1	4
A bit difficult	0	2	0	2
Very easy				
Total	2	6	1	9
Skimming/scanning				
Very difficult	1	1	0	2
Difficult	1	4	1	6
A bit difficult	0	1	0	1
Very easy				
Total	2	6	1	9
Reading textbooks with understanding				
Very difficult	0	1	0	1
Difficult	2	0	0	2
A bit difficult	0	4	1	5
Very easy	0	1	0	1
Total	2	6	1	9
Reading and note-taking				
Very difficult	0	1	0	1
Difficult	1	4	1	6
A bit difficult	1	1	0	2
Very easy	2	6	1	9
Total				
General leisure reading				
Very difficult	0	1	0	1
Difficult				
A bit difficult	1	5	1	7
Very easy	1	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	9

The advanced group's teacher did not answer this question.

Writing

Table 33: Students' difficulties in writing

	Group				Total
	Beginner	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	
Punctuation					
Very difficult	0	1	0	-	1
Difficult	1	3	1	-	5
A bit difficult	1	2	0	-	3
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	-	9
Organising information into a coherent structure					
Very difficult	0	0	1	0	1
Difficult	2	6	0	1	9
A bit difficult					
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Paragraph writing					
Very difficult					
Difficult	1	4	1	1	7
A bit difficult	1	2	0	0	3
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Summarising					
Very difficult	0	1	1	0	2
Difficult	1	1	0	1	3
A bit difficult	1	3	0	0	4
Very easy	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Writing in a formal academic style					
Very difficult	1	1	1	0	3
Difficult	1	4	0	0	5
A bit difficult	0	0	0	1	1
Very easy	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Writing essays					
Very difficult	2	1	0	0	3
Difficult	0	5	1	1	7
A bit difficult					
Very easy					
Total	2	6	1	1	10
Writing reports					
Very difficult	2	4	-	0	6
Difficult	0	2	-	1	3
A bit difficult					
Very easy					
Total	2	6	-	1	9

	Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies				
Very difficult	1	4	-	0	5
Difficult	1	1	-	0	2
A bit difficult	0	1	-	1	2
Very easy					
Total	2	6	-	1	9

Although findings cannot be generalised due to the limited number of respondents, it is important to note that the information from this table confirms findings from table 28 above: the writing skill which is most needed (e.g. organising information into a coherent structure) is the one which is most difficult for students.

Question 7: What, among the following types of questions, cause most difficulty to your students during assessment (test or exams)?

According to beginners' lecturers, students face most difficulties in multiple choice questions, oral tests and listening tests/exam. Advanced students find multiple choice questions and interpreting graphs and tables most difficult. Elementary and intermediate students do not find these types of question extremely difficult or too easy. Again, this situation should not be generalised as there are not enough people in the sample for it to be meaningful.

4.3.3.2 Data from open questions

There were few lecturers' responses to open questions and in many instances, it was a repetition of what was already mentioned in the list which they were asked to complete. Below is a summary of responses to open questions mainly from the lecturers for the beginners and elementary groups.

Question 3: Lecturers were asked to name any other skills that they thought their students needed apart from those listed in question 2.

Beginners:

Vocabulary building through reading

Elementary:

- Critical reading and critical writing,
- Practice in listening to radio and TV for their own training
- Letter writing

Intermediate:

None

Advanced:

None

Question 5: Please mention, in order of difficulty, any other area in which your students experience difficulty but which is not listed above

Beginners:

None

Elementary:

- Listening to different accents
- Phonology
- Note taking
- Letter writing

Intermediate:

None

Advanced:

None

Question 6: Are there any skills which your students need but which are not included in your students' syllabus for English?

Beginners

-None

Elementary

- Reading books
- Study skills

Intermediate

Not done

Advanced

Not done

Question 8: Are there any constraints which prevent you from meeting your students' needs?

Beginner's lecturer:

- Class size
- Inappropriate Implementation Language policy

Elementary lecturer:

- Supplementary reading material for all levels not conducive to learning. Size of classes
- Timetable does not leave room for individual study (8-5 everyday)
- Lack of motivation for both students and lecturers

Intermediate lecturer:

- lack of facilities for supplementary teaching materials: photocopying for facilities.

Advanced:

Not done

The problem of class size is raised at the beginner and elementary levels. This is understandable because these are the large classes as seen in the table 1 on page 3:

Large classes are a problem especially in a situation where students need a lot practice.

However, teachers are expected to find ways to overcome this problem as small classes are unusual in any teaching environment.

Question 9: What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the teaching/learning of English at KIST?

Respondents' responses have been put together regardless of the levels as suggestions apply to all classes, except the size of the classes. Below is a summary of responses:

- Needs analysis conducted by expert before taking any decision regarding language policy
- Developing reading culture
- Class size
- Experience in teaching material design
- Not enough textbooks
- Appropriate teaching materials lack of knowledge in material design
- Making English classes compulsory

4.4 Document analysis

The four schemes of works (appendices B, C, D, and E) are designed differently, which might have influenced responses from students and lecturers in English. The schemes of work for beginner, elementary and intermediate students (which are based on *The New Cambridge English Course* textbook) are mainly language centred. As can be observed from table 2, page 4, language structure takes most of the time allotted to English (74.6% for beginners, 85% for elementary and 60% for intermediate students). On the other hand, the scheme of work for the advanced groups is more balanced in terms of language activities. It is designed in such a way that it can be taught in an integrated fashion. This might be one of the reasons we have a group effect noticed in students' responses to the question related to their difficulties in reading activities (table 17), where results showed that the degree of difficulty perceived corresponds to the level of proficiency of the students. This situation is interesting because the selection of teaching materials and their sequencing for the advanced group were done by the teachers themselves, maybe because they are not using the *New Cambridge English Course* textbook. It is possible to learn from this situation.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter (analysis and interpretation of data) has provided the reader with information gathered from the three types of questionnaires. The information was related to the background information of respondents and their responses to the closed and open questions. The next chapter is an attempt to discuss these findings in the light of the literature reviewed and the sources used to collect data, which will be summarised in the conclusion section towards the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The main concern of this chapter is a discussion of the findings as detailed in the previous chapter. The focus will be on the interpretation of data gathered from first year students as this constitutes the essence of the research (see point 1.2). Where appropriate, I will draw on the literature review (chapter 2); findings from data gathered from subject lecturers and lecturers in English; and information provided in the KIST language policy and syllabuses in order to support arguments. The last part of this chapter is a discussion of the potential value of the study, its limitations and recommendations for further research.

5.2 Discussion

The discussion section consists of a pulling together of the threads that make up the whole thesis (especially the analysis part of it) in such a way as to arrive at a meaningful conclusion. The whole exercise aims to create a framework that provides some kind of answer to the research question of investigating students' perceived needs to pave the way for differentiated English language syllabuses. The investigation attempted to find answers to the following research questions:

- What are students' perceived language needs in order to study through the medium of English at KIST?
- To what extent does the current English language programme address these perceived needs?
- What are the differences in students' perceived language needs at different levels of proficiency?

The assumption underpinning this research is that (1) English is an important tool for science and technology students at KIST, that (2) learners know what they need to learn and that (3) learners at different levels of proficiency "perceive" language needs differently.

5.2.1 English results in the school leaving examination (Examen National)

The language test implemented by KLC was used as a criterion to allocate students to groups on the basis of their level of proficiency in English. While it should be acknowledged that it provided a temporary solution to the dilemma the newly formed KLC faced after the time allocated to English was reduced, the test did not solve all the problems. One of the weaknesses is that not one of the students who performed very well in the school leaving exam (80% -100%) is in the advanced group: one is in the elementary group; three are in intermediate group but none are in the advanced group.

It is important to note that this situation did not have a major effect on the chi-square result which confirmed the hypothesis that group allocation is associated with students' levels of proficiency (see table 5, chapter 4). This situation suggests that the KLC may need to investigate the test itself and also the way it is marked.

5.2.2 Students' perceived language needs in order to study through the medium of English successfully at KIST

5.2.2.1 Importance and usefulness of English for students (Question 6 and 7)

As mentioned previously, students were allocated to groups on the basis of their results in the proficiency test and it was assumed that they would perceive language needs differently. Findings have shown that this was not necessarily the case in all instances.

Students were asked to say how important the knowledge of English is for their current studies (appendix F, question 6) and to describe the usefulness of English for graduating as a well qualified professional in their field (question 7). Observed frequencies revealed that responses to question 6 were "very important" at 93.5% for beginners, 91.0% for elementary, 90.0% for intermediate and 100% for the advanced group. The chi-square test showed that the importance of English is not related to the groups as there is no significant difference.

The situation is the same with question 7. Respondents answered with "necessary" at 96.7% for beginners, 89.2% for elementary, 96.7% for intermediate and 100% for the advanced group. The chi-square ($X^2 = 3.99$; $df = 3$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.262$) confirms that English is important and useful to all students at all levels as there is no group effect in the responses to the two questions. This

is further confirmed by responses from lecturers in science and technology to question 10 (appendix G), expressing the view that a knowledge of English for science and technology students at KIST is “necessary”. One may wonder why 16 students (although they only represent 8.3%) do not see the importance of English. As in some other instances, this might be a result of students’ lack of experience in dealing with questions of this type.

5.2.2.2 Students’ perceived needs with regard to English activities

There was a high PPP for students’ need for grammar as described in table 8 (87.1% for beginners, 81.5% for elementary, 93.4% for intermediate and 70% for the advanced group); listening, table 9 (87.1% for beginners, 81.7% for elementary, 89.6% for intermediate and 70% for the advanced group), and speaking (table 10). In grammar as well as in listening, the chi-square test and responses from lecturers in English (table 24) confirmed the assumption that the level of difficulty varies from one group to another (the lower the level, the more difficult the skills are perceived to be). This is seen from students’ responses to the question related to their perceived difficulties in sentence structure and grammatical exercises (question 11, appendix F).

Although grammar, listening and speaking were ranked higher than reading and writing by students, a close look at the findings about other activities (tables 11 and 12) reveals that grammar, listening and speaking are not necessarily more important than reading and writing (at least for students’ academic life). The reason might rather be the fact that grammar, listening and speaking are the activities which challenge students most in their day-to-day English, be it in classroom or even outside of the class when they are trying to get their message across. Students do not have enough challenging activities in reading and writing and table 2, page 2 shows that the majority of time is given to linguistic competence (e.g. grammar). This might be the reason why students seem not to realise the real importance of these activities and even the difficulties they might have. This situation may be explained by the fact that, although they ranked grammar as “most needed”, they find it the least difficult of all the English activities (table 14).

5.2.2.3 Differences in students’ perceived language needs at different levels of proficiency

It is interesting to see that both students and lecturers in English have a high PPP for grammar and the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and that the degree of difficulty varies according to the level of proficiency. However, responses from students and lecturers (i.e.

subject lecturers and lecturers in English) have not provided clear and conclusive differences in needs and difficulty at the four different levels of proficiency.

As reported in the literature review, Nunan (1988, p. 78) argued that the information provided by the learners should be used to guide the selection of content and learning activities. But findings from this research have shown that not all students are able to provide useful information regarding their needs.

Commenting on this issue, Richterich (1983, p. 3) observed that a learner may not be able to say much about his/her needs if “they are interpreted as the reflection of the language skills and content which he will use in the future when he has learned the language” and this is the case with my respondents. This is why, in most cases, findings for the different skills are very similar (e.g. tables 8, 9, 10 related to need in grammar, and the four skills) and, in some cases, present anomalies. For instance, students indicated that grammar is not sufficiently covered in their syllabuses (table 19) with 60% at beginner and elementary level and 46.7% and 50% at intermediate and advanced groups respectively. Yet, grammar takes most of the time in their schemes of work (table 2, chapter 1). Another anomaly from students’ responses is where the students with lower levels of proficiency have expressed less need than those with higher levels of proficiency regarding giving a talk (oral presentation in a class) and participating in a group discussion (table 10, question 11 of appendix F).

Responses from lecturers in English are not conclusive either, and hence it is not possible to make generalisations nor to take action based on them. In addition, the sample of lecturers is not evenly distributed at the four levels of proficiency (2 at the beginner level, 6 at the elementary level, 1 at the intermediate level and 1 at the advanced level). Furthermore, lecturers in English did not provide enough information on which to base future changes or action. For instance, in almost all the open questions, the few additions made to the list provided were a repetition of what was given by the researcher. Many questions were left unanswered especially at the level of beginner, intermediate and advanced groups (appendix H, Questions 3, 5, 6, and 8).

However, this does not mean that stakeholders are ignorant of what students need, far from it. What it means more likely, is that they are not experts in syllabus design, which is illustrated in the case of the two questions discussed above.

5.2.2.4 To what extent do the current English language programmes address students' perceived needs?

The time allotted to English in the KIST English syllabuses, as seen in table 2 on page 4, shows what the teaching focuses on and how it is allocated to the different skills. The majority of time seems to be spent on linguistic competence (i.e. grammar) and very little time is spent on reading and writing. This might have had an impact on students' and lecturers' responses. In fact, the research has revealed that grammar, listening and speaking, were ranked higher than reading and writing and, in general, the students with the lower level of proficiency have more difficulty in English than the students with higher level of proficiency.

As was noted in items 5.2.2.2 and 5.2.2.3 above, responses from students and lecturers were given in general, repetitious and sometimes ambivalent ways. For instance, students' needs are almost the same and where they are different, the higher level expressed more need than lower levels (question 8c, appendix F, table 10 of chapter 4, related to the importance of speaking, and table 27, related to students' perceived difficulties with regard to reading, appendix H). On question 9, appendix, F, only a few students were able to add to the provided list and those who did repeated what had already been given. This was the same with questions 12, 14, 17, 18 and 19 (see chapter 4). It is therefore not possible to come up with a clear answer to the above question (item 5.2.2.4) unless further research (using different questions and different research tools) has been done.

Although it has been extremely difficult to establish students' needs in a valid way, the chi-square test has revealed some answers that (though not always conclusive due to reasons seen above), are worth mentioning here.

It is interesting to see how students would like to read in English. Regarding the importance of reading, Peirce (1994, p. 5) has argued that "exposure to and practice in the target language are considered necessary conditions for the second language learning and that language cannot proceed without exposure and practice". Extensive reading is an important way in which students can gain exposure to and learn English, As Murray (2007) pointed out:

In Namibia, Lesotho and Rwanda, learners do not get many opportunities to interact with English speakers and listen to English at the right level of difficulty, so reading can be a very important source of input. Furthermore, learners can do it in their own time outside of the classroom, which extends their exposure to English. This is essential if they are going to reach the levels of English they need to use it as a medium of instruction. (p. 8)

Cunningham and Stanovich (2003) have argued that vocabulary is one of the most important factors in fluent and easy reading and that it is reading volume rather than oral language that is the primary source of learners' differences in vocabularies.

The fact that students have prioritised listening (see question 8 b, table 9 in chapter 4 as confirmed in table 25 related to lecturers' responses on the importance of listening for students) as an activity, finds support from applied linguists as far as language acquisition is concerned.

One of them, Huizenga (1990), argued that:

Listening input is recognised as an essential component of the language acquisition process. Recent second language classroom research has much to tell us about the amount of input we should provide classroom learners as well as about the type of input that is most salient. (p. 141)

Also, students' strong perceptions regarding their need to speak English find support from researchers who maintain that, although comprehensible input is necessary for language acquisition, it is not sufficient. Drawing on Swain, for example, Skehan (2001) proposed the comprehensible output hypothesis: "to learn to speak", he argued, "we have to actually speak" (p 5).

Nunan (1988, p. 78) argued that the information provided by the learners should be used to guide the selection of content and learning activities. However, findings from this research have shown that not all students are able to provide useful information regarding their needs.

Finally, students were asked to give suggestions for changes they would recommend for the improvement of learning English at KIST (question 19). As with the previous open questions, there is a lot of repetition of what had already been given in the questionnaire. However, a common suggestion is the need to increase speaking activities (63% of beginners, 51% of elementary students, 60% of intermediate students and 49% of advanced students). This is not surprising given students' high positive perception for speaking (table 10). It was also noted that respondents raised a certain number of concerns that need to be addressed in order to create an environment that is conducive to good learning of English. The main concerns are the following:

- The problem of class size
- Insufficiency of textbooks and reading books/newspapers
- Improving teaching

- Avoiding changing teachers every semester
- The timetable (e.g. studying from 8.am to 5 pm) does not give students free time to read
- Improving the quality of teaching.

The problem of size is a real issue in some teaching contexts and it impacts on the quality of teaching/learning. Gibbs (1995) researched this issue and had this to say:

We also have evidence about the effect of class size at a macro-level: on students and teacher behaviour in seminars, for example. We know that the proportion of teacher-talk increases with class size and that as class size increases, students talk less and their questions and answers get shorter and the cognitive level of their contributions declines so that in groups of 16 and over the majority of students' contributions are at the lowest (knowledge level). (p. 20)

If a class of 16 is a problem, how much more difficult is it to handle a class of up to 70 students (table 1, chapter 1)? However, we should remember that people are learning in different contexts, and that, even in such adverse conditions, teachers are teaching and students are learning, although not without difficulties. Teachers should not therefore fold their arms or surrender. They have to confront the situation, knowing that they are not alone and, most importantly, should do their best to manage their own situation in a positive manner. Regarding the issue of large classes, Ur (1996) made the following observation:

Large is of course a relative term, and what a "large class" is will vary from place to place. In some private language schools a group of twenty may be considered large; in my own teaching situation, 40 – 45; in some places numbers go up to the hundreds. Probably, however, the exact number does not really matter: what matters is how you, the teacher see the class size in your own specific situation. (p. 32)

This quote is insightful and telling. The problem of class size is one among many problems that teachers are faced with in different teaching contexts and at different levels of difficulty. Here, the individual teacher's experience, knowledge and motivation will help him/her to strive to deal with the problem in a successful way.

There was one open question for lecturers in science and technology (appendix G, question 12): What do you think KLC needs to do to improve students' proficiency in English? Findings were summarized into four points:

- the English syllabus the (students) follow does not appropriately address needs as far as listening and speaking are concerned,
- students need books adapted to their learning context,

- the language teaching somehow must be related to the specialization,
- It is very difficult to handle first year students when they do not have good background in English as well as French

Although they put it in different ways, respondents' opinions on this question reveal a need to teach according to students' needs. Unfortunately, the needs have not been identified.

As said earlier, there seems to be some ambivalence with regard to the importance of English as perceived by lecturers in science and technology. On the one hand, the four respondents said that English is very necessary (appendix G, question 10) and that English should be taught according to students' needs (question 12). On the other hand, the same lecturers confirmed that only content is considered when they are assessing students' written work, tests, exam, reports, etc. (question 9). Here, the problem remains: how can students be motivated to improve their language when they know that it will not affect their assessment and results in any way?

Similar attitudes on the part of subject lecturers were reported by Agar in his report on the evaluation of Special English (SPEN) at the University of Bophuthatswana (1990), when he made the following observation:

The evidence is that mainstream staff do not reinforce and in some cases do not demand some of the skills and processes taught in SPEN. In my opinion this is one of the major limitations of SPEN's impact. If this is so, staff development is a crucial area for the future success of the course. In the short-term it may be possible to invite a few interested members of specific departments to teach a SPEN course for a limited period. In the long-term [it may be possible to think of] a research project which investigates and documents the course demands made on students in different schools – the language and learning skills and processes demanded by the teaching and assessment of mainstream courses. (p. 2)

While it is not possible to generalize findings from the four lecturers in science and technology due to insufficiency of the sample, and although no strong opinions have emerged, their responses can be used as a starting point for discussion.

One of the ways for such discussions to be generated is by means of a forum which could be organised by the KLC in which the English teaching staff can meet with the teaching staff from the Faculty of Science and Technology in order to discuss the issue of students' performance in English. This is likely to be successful since the four respondents from science and technology have acknowledged the importance and the usefulness of English for science and technology students. This should be an asset to build on to promote the teaching of English. The dilemma is

how to reconcile science and language for lecturers in science and technology (i.e. to give importance to language while teaching and evaluating). This would also be an opportunity to ask the four lecturers who have taken part in this research to voice their views in a more direct way.

5.3 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to investigate students' perceived needs to pave the way for differentiated English language syllabuses for KIST first year students. The research questions were designed to find out students' perceived language needs, to know whether those needs were different for different groups (e.g. different levels of proficiency) and to what extent the current language programme addresses this issue.

In addition to the information about the importance and usefulness of English for KIST students, the research was centred on students' perceived needs of and difficulties in certain activities done in English. Findings from this research can be summarised as follows:

Although English is no longer a credit-bearing course, findings showed that knowledge of English is very important for all students at all levels and that all students view English as a useful tool for their current studies. It was revealed that students are still interested in learning and improving their English and all the concerned parties (teaching staff, the department of English, the KLC and the Institute as a whole) should support this positive attitude.

It was found out that students have a high positive attitude about the importance and usefulness of English. There is high positive perception percentage (PPP) for the importance of English for students' current studies (between 93.5% and 100% for the importance of English and between 89% and 100% for the usefulness of English for graduating as a well qualified professional in students' respective fields).

Another interesting finding is that grammar is still needed at all levels though to a different degree: the higher the level of proficiency, the easier the students' find English grammar. There was a PPP of between 70% and 93%. The situation is the same with the importance of listening activities.

While students fairly uniformly express a high positive perception for language structures, listening and speaking, they also showed that they perceived a need for reading and writing. It

was observed that there was group effect in some instances (e.g. importance and/ or usefulness of English and even at the level of language difficulties). However, it should be made clear that group effect is not a synonym for absence of needs, far from it. Rather, it simply means that needs are there but at different degrees. For instance, the PPP for reading is 96% for beginners, 91.5% for elementary students, 86.6% for intermediate students and 60% for the advanced group. Moreover, even where there are no significant differences in perceived importance or in difficulties experienced with regard to a particular skill, it does not necessarily mean that students have exactly the same perception regarding the importance or difficulties in English language.

Finally, a look at the way English activities are planned in the schemes of work, especially for beginner, elementary and intermediate levels (appendices B, C, D respectively) reveals that there is an urgent need for integrative teaching, that is to say, “the teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in conjunction with each other as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing” (MacDonough & Shaw 1993, p. 201). Therefore, the selection of activities should not be done in isolation of or without taking into account their relationship with other activities. The choice should be guided by the principle of integrating the teaching.

Besides their needs, students also expressed a number of concerns that should be addressed if any improvement is to take place. The issues concerned are (1) problems related to class size especially at the beginning and elementary levels, (2) insufficiency of textbooks and reading materials (novels and newspapers written in English) and (3) improving teaching materials.

5.4. Limitations of the research

As related in the literature review, the rationale for needs analysis is based on the fact that, once students needs are identified and used as a basis of EAP/ESP instructions, teachers might be able to provide students with the specific language they need not only to succeed in their courses, but also in their future careers (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Also, it is argued that findings from a needs analysis have implications for the English language teaching programmes (Nunan, 1988) and for the development of teaching materials (Davies, 2006). In this particular case, the limitations of the research have made it difficult to specify its implications.

In fact, although it was possible to establish stakeholders' (students, subject lecturers and lecturers in English) perceptions of students' needs, it was extremely hard to establish the required detail as to what these needs are. By carrying out a survey with a sufficient large sample to apply the chi-square test to, I have attempted to get valid answers to my questions, but these answers are not always conclusive. Here, it is important to acknowledge some of the reasons that might have led to this situation.

First, it must be borne in mind that the research was carried out at a distance from the research site. The questionnaires were designed by myself at Rhodes University, where I am studying and were sent to Kigali (Rwanda), where lecturers in the department of English administered them to their respective students. Although every effort was made to ensure that the questionnaires were administered following the guidelines I had given to them, I cannot guarantee that this was done. Furthermore, it would have been advantageous if I had been there personally to attend to students' queries/difficulties. This might account in part for the incomplete or unclear responses to open questions.

Secondly, it is possible that some questions were not asked in a way that could lead to direct, valid and unequivocal answers. This should be taken into account if research of this kind were to be repeated.

Third, it seems that students and even lecturers were not sufficiently prepared and experienced to answer the questions. Also, the way they answered the questions might have been constrained by the way the course is designed and taught. Again, this might be the reason why open questions were not answered well.

The last (but not the least) limitation is the limited scope of the research itself. This was a case study which mainly focused on some aspects of the present situation analysis (see items 2.5.1 of chapter 2) and which only identified stakeholders (students, subject lecturers and lecturers in English) perceptions of students' needs. Within those parameters there are some missing pieces of information which would have been made deeper analysis possible if other techniques/methods such as objective needs analysis, task analysis and communicative needs analysis (see item 2.5.2 of chapter 2) were used to collect data.

5.5 Potential value of the research

In spite of the limitations as discussed above, the research has value (although limited in scope) which need to be mentioned here.

Firstly, this research has shown that, although English is no longer a credit bearing course, it is still very important for all KIST first year students at all levels and that all students view English as a useful tool for their current studies.

Secondly, the research has inspired me, not only as a researcher, but also as a member of staff of the Department of English (the research site). I have not only grown in terms of my understanding of the skills required for research, but have also become aware of what is expected from teachers of English at KIST. By comparing what I used to do as a teacher with what students are expecting from teachers (myself included), I realised that a lot of changes and improvements need to be made in order to meet students needs.

Thirdly, as stated in the introduction of this study, (chapter 1, page 4), One of the reasons I decided to carry out this research was that I wanted to be equipped with the necessary research skills which would help me (at a later stage) to contribute to the development of new English syllabuses at KIST. Here, I believe that this objective has been achieved because the research has provided me with tools and knowledge to inform my colleagues at KIST and to take the debate forward and to carry out further research.

5.6 Recommendations

A small scale project like this one with its limitations as pointed out above cannot pretend to have found all the answers to the complex issue regarding students' needs in order to study successfully in English at KIST. The purpose of the recommendations which follow is essentially to give some directions for the future research regarding language teaching at KIST.

Regarding the proficiency test, the fact that some students who performed very well in the school leaving exam are not in the advanced group suggests that there is need to investigate both the test itself and the way it is marked.

Given the reluctance of subject lecturers to participate in the investigation that aimed at improving the teaching of English at KIST, and based on the responses provided by the few subject lecturers, the KLC should think of arranging a forum that would bring together lecturers in science and technology and lecturers in English in order to find ways and means to work together for the improvement of English teaching/learning at KIST.

Students have expressed high PPP for English activities. What is at issue here is to have a clear idea of what students' English language needs and difficulties are at different levels of proficiency. There is an immediate need for a more equitable programme to be followed to correct the imbalance in the way the English activities are taught in the KIST language syllabuses (i.e. more time is devoted to grammar) while a long term solution is sought.

Finally, it is acknowledged that this study does not exclude the possibility of improving and expanding the research. In fact, this study recommends the need for further research to get a real picture of students' needs, and an important starting point would be to begin a debate at KIST about the whole issue of students' needs. Such research would exploit research tools/methods which have not been used in this study, which constitutes a limitation of the current study. Such tools are focus group interviews; observations (e.g observing the students while they are in their subject lectures to establish what they do in English); analysing the assessment activities students are involved in their other subjects; assessing their competence in their other subjects; interviewing students and lecturers so that the researcher can probe the problem more deeply than is possible via a questionnaire. It is believed that triangulation of all these data would make it possible to establish what students' needs are in a more valid and unequivocal way.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE NEW KIST LANGUAGE POLICY

Background

In order to impart equal education to all Rwandans after the 1994 genocide and bridge the Francophone-Anglophone divide towards a unified and reconciled nation, the Government of Rwanda established a bilingual policy as a way to build an incipient trilingual nation (Kinyarwanda-French-English) able to address the challenges of the globalizing world.

In implementation of this policy, KIST defines itself as a bilingual institution delivering educations in both French and English while Kinyarwanda remains the most widely used language outside the fields of science and technology. This entails that students are expected to write all their academic work including the coursework, examinations and the final research projects in either of these languages as may be required by the member of staff offering the course.

In order to ensure that all KIST students respond efficiently to this requirement, an intensive language training programme is set up with a view to enabling students to meet academic demands of university education by enhancing their capacity to cope with lectures requirements.

Following the degree structure in KIST Qualification Framework, is not credit rated, but it remains a compulsory subject concurrently offered with the mainstream programmes.

In line with this policy, language classes will formally run only in Year 1 of study from January 2007 with the assumption that students entering KIST have had enough language previously. It is therefore believed that one- year refresher course will enable them to embark on science and technology without substantial language barrier and with a very negligible gap between what is expected of them and their real performance.

At the same time that the scaling down of language hours helps reduce the length of engineering programmes and consequently the number of years students spend at the institute, it also allows students who enter KIST with sufficient language abilities to use this time to improve other areas of their academic career.

However, if engineering programmes are shorter elsewhere, it is because the language component is not taken into account; but Rwanda is a special case, where language appears to be more a tool in the acquisition of science and technology than an academic discipline aiming at training language specialists. Students in Rwanda still need this tool to help carry science and technology commodities from lectures to students so that upon graduation students can disseminate the technological know-how to the grassroots, where it is most needed. This is the very essence of the bilingual policy of the Government of Rwanda referred to earlier.

All KIST language courses will be given the same weight i.e. hours-credit, with a specific number of contact hours not exceeding 18 hours a week, an equal number of hours for student learning effort split into directed and self-directed study. The rationale behind this distribution is the necessity to help students become independent learners.

Depending on the student's level of proficiency (category), the number of contact hours progressively decreases as the time allocated to direct and self-directed study increases.

All students, including those on the Girl's Empowerment Programme, are required to take language classes, do all the course work (CAT) and pass the examinations on the same footing as all the other subjects.

From 2007, KIST will establish a Language Proficiency Certificate (LPC) that will be awarded to students upon successful completion of all the required language courses.

This certificate will be awarded alongside with the main degree certificate at graduation. KIST language certificate is expected to be of high quality to entitle its holder to a waiver for such international tests as TOEFL, IELTS and DALF. It is in this regard that KIST intends to become a regional center of excellence for language testing and effective learning service provision. The KIST language proficiency certificate will be awarded to any person who meets the conditions and pays a fee. International students willing to pursue further studies abroad may apply for the L.PC.

In order to determine the level of every student both in French and in English a language proficiency test will be administered to all students prior to entrance. The test will be written in November every year so as to allow enough time to the faculty to allocate students to their respective levels of proficiency and language.

In Year 1, study skills modules (ENG 3110 and ENG 3120) will be offered to students who have cleared their language courses or to those who came in with an excellent level of proficiency language while in Year 3, all students will be taught English for Academic Purposes (ENG 3311) more as a skills in academic writing than a language component

After Year 1, an Effective Learning Service (ELS) will be established to provide students with the necessary assistance in a variety of language aspects (essay writing, pronunciation, language structure, reading etc). At least four lecturers will be on duty every week to give remedial practice.

The implementation of this language policy entails the running of two parallel programmes,(1) the old programme where all students were studying language according to their respective years of study and applies to all continuing students (those currently in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3) and (2) the new programme based on students' real language proficiency level and applies only to the 2007 intake .Detail are out below.

Old programme (ending October 20079)

2007

Year of Study	Semester	Course Cde	Course Title
2	1	ENG 3211	Français Général II
	2	ENG 3221	Général English III
3	1	ENG 3311	English for Technology I
	2	ENG 3321	English for Technology II
4	1	ENG 3411	English for Academic Purposes

Year of Study	Semester	Course Code	Course Title
2	1	FRE3211	Français Général II
	2	FRE 3221	Français Général III
3	1	FRE 3311	Français pour Technology I
	2	FRE 3321	Français pour Technology II
4	1	FRE 3411	Français Professional I

2008

Year of Student	Semester	Course Code	Course Title
3	1	Eng 3311	English Technology I
	2	FRE 3321	Français pour Technology II
4	1	FRE 3411	Français Professionnal I

Year o Student	Semester	Course Code	Course Title
3	1	FRE 3311	Français pour Technology I
	2	FRE 3321	Français pour Technology II
4	1	FRE 3411	Français Professionne I

2009

Year of Study	Semester	Courses Code	Course Title
4	1	ENG 3411	English for Academic Purpose

Year of Study	Semester	Course Code	Course Title
4	1	FRE 3411	Français Professionnel I

New programme (effective January 2007)

On the basis of the results of the proficiency test, students may fall in one or another of the following categories:

Category 1: Excellent in French, Excellent in English: no language at all.

Category 2: Excellent in one language, good in the other: 2 hours/week.

Category 3: Excellent in on language, some competency in the other:

Category 4 Excellent in on language, poor in the other: 8 hours/week.

Category 5 Neither one nor the other: 10 hours/week.

While the four categories are real, the fifth one is possible for weak language learners, a category rely solely on memorization of lecture notes because they draw from the lecture itself is nothing but a black void.

In view of this description, the new programme will run as following:

Category 5: No French, No English:(10hours/week)

Year 1	Code	Title	Course hours	Directed study	Self Directed study	Total credits
Sem, 1	ENG1111	General English 1	150	25	25	20
	FRE 1111	Français Général 1	150	25	25	20
Sem, 2	ENG 1121	General English II	150	25	25	20
	FRE 1121	Français Général II	150	25	25	20

Category 4: Excellent in on language, poor in the other:(hours/week)

Year 1	Code	Title	Contact hours	Directed study	Self directed study	Total credits
Sem 1	ENG 1111	GeneralEnglish III	120	40	40	20
	FRE 1111	Français Général III	120	40	40	20
Sem 2	ENG 1121	General English IV	120	40	40	20
	FRE 1121	Français Général IV	120	40	40	20

Category3: Excellent in one language ,some competence in the other: (4 hours/week)

Year 1	Code	Title	Contact hours	Directed study	Self directed study	Total credits
Sem 1	ENG 1111	General English V	60	70	70	20
	FRE 1111	Français Général V	60	70	70	20
Sem 2	ENG 1121	General English VI	60	70	70	20
	FRE 1121	Français Général VI	60	70	70	20

Category 2: Excellent in on language, good in the other: hours/week.

Year 1	Code	Title	Contact hours	Directed study	Self directed study	Total credits
Sem 1	ENG 1110	ENG for Science & Technology 1	30	85	85	20
	FRE 1110	Français pour la Science & la Technologie I	30	85	85	20
Sem 2	ENG 1120	English for Science & Technology II	30	85	85	20
	FRE 1120	Français pour la Science & la Technologie II	30	85	85	20

Category 1: Excellent in English, Excellent in French: (hours/week.

Year 1	Code	Title	Contact hours	Directed study	Self directed study	Total credits
Sem 1	ENG 1110	Study Skills	30	85	85	20
Sem 2	ENG 1120	Study Skills	30	85	85	20

Year 3

Year 1	Code	Title	Contact hours	Directed study	Self-directed study	Total credits
Sem 1	ENG 1311	English for Academic Purposes	30	85	85	20

Course content**Objectives**

- To implement the bilingual policy of the Government of Rwanda
- To bring all students to a higher level of proficiency in a relatively shorter period of time
- To enhance students' ability to cope with lecture requirements in science and technology
- To enable students to be competitive in the labour market at home, in the region and beyond

Intended outcomes

The course aims to help students develop abilities in:

- The basis language structure so as to enable them develop an understanding of spoken and writing speech
- The use of the language in a variety of situations inside and outside the classroom
- The reading of simple, general and field-specific text and the writing process
- The use of conventions in academic writing and related requirements
- Research skills including paraphrasing, synthesizing quoting, referencing, noting

Implications for new programme

1. This programme is ambitious in nature and its running entails a competent, well-trained and equipped staff.
2. A language laboratory will be necessary to help reduce the number of physical contact in the classroom and this is likely to help students become more independent learners. At the elementary level, students can, as indicated through directed and self-directed study, work independently to improve their abilities in prosodic and supra-segmental features (pronunciation, weak/strong forms, intonation, rhythm, stress....), complete exercises on the structure of the language, etc. At advanced stages, students could, in study skills, be trained to increase their reading speed. note taking addressing examination questions such as discuss, assess, comment analyse, compare/contract, review, etc

3. The success of such a course entails a continuous spiraling of the contents so that the present spread-out guarantees effective leaning outcomes. This means that a student who is in category 5 will have to go through level 4,3 and 2 before s/he can be expected to reach the proficiency of category 1. Similarly, assuming that a category 4 student can, in one year of study, reach the performance of a student is unrealistic.
4. There is very little likelihood of category 5 to exist, in which case, emphasis will be put on the virtual categories.
5. Because of the intensive character of the course, an effective leaning service is provident throughout the programme.
6. The content of the new programme will be focused enough to meet the required learning outcomes.
7. Because language will no longer be taught according to students' year of study and stream, the timetable should provide for language classes to take at the same time

APPENDIX B: SCHEME OF WORK FOR BEGINNER GROUP

**KIGALI INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY
KIST LANGUAGE CENTRE
ACADEMIC YEAR 2007**

SCHEME OF WORK, BEGINNERS GROUP SEMESTER II, 2007

Week	Date	contents	Number of Hours		Reference	Observation
			Contact	Practice		
I.		- Reported speech; would - Talking about probability certainly and about the future expressing agreement & disagreement, should - Discussion on building Exercise on modal verbs	2hrs		NCEC Book 2 lesson 19-20	
			2 hrs			
				2 hrs 2 hrs		
II.		- Conditional sentences; capitalization and punctuation (continued) - Expressing feeling about people expressing interest and the use of preposition. Reading: little Masha and Msha the Bear Exercises on sentence building punctuation and capitalization	2 hrs		NCEC Book 2 lesson 21-22	
			2hrs			
				2 hrs	Storytelling in ELT, IAT EFL,2003	
				2 hrs		
III.		- Present progressive with future meaning, time preposition - making appointments - Summary D Revision D & Test D	3hrs		NCEC Book 2 lesson 24	
			1hr			
				2 hrs 2hrs		
IV		- Talking about manufacturing and other process -The simple present passive and the simple past passive - listening Reading: TAUSI Discussion on Education in Rwanda - Discussion on AIDS	2 hrs		NCEC Book 2 lesson 24-25	
				2hrs		
				2hrs		
V		- Talking about causes of past events: the past passive (continued) - Listening: decoding rapid speech. Discussion on sports in Rwanda and Africa	3hrs		NCEC Book 2 lesson 26-27	
			1hr			
				4hrs		
VI		- Describing and comparing;	2 hrs		NCE C Book	

		so/neither -Relative clause with who, both and neither in sentences. - Language of definition	2 hrs		2 lesson 28-29	
		Summary E. Revision E & Test E		4 hrs		
VII		- Expressing time relations, sequencing makers: as soon as before, then, yet, already etc. - Listening practice - Discussion on Town & village - Writing a narrative paragraph.	3hrs 1 hr		NCE C Book 2 lesson 31	
				2 hrs 2hrs		
VIII		The past perfect tense - Listening for general info Reading: A Writing a narrative paragraph (continued)		2 hrs 2 hrs	NCEC Book 2 Lesson 32 Storytelling ELT, iatefl, 2003	
IX		- Making questions and commands - Listening for comprehension Discussion on Rural development and Gender	2 hrs	1 3	NCEC Book 2 lesson 33	
X		The past conditional tense Talking about hypothetical situations in the past - Prefix and suffix in word formation -Exercise on word formation prefixation and suffixation	2hrs 2hrs		NCE Book 2 lesson 14 Storytelling iatefl 2003	
				4hrs		
XI		- Talking about situational language - The pronunciation of letter 'r' - Discussion on life on the university campus	2 hrs 2 hrs		NCE Book 2 lesson 15	
				4 hrs		
XII		- Making, accepting and rejecting offers use of I'll in making decisions offers - Discussion on students behavior in class and on campus.				
XIII		- Summary E. Revision F& Test F - Writing practice (topic pounded) by the lecturer - Discussion on	4 hrs			
				4hrs		
XIV		Reading Discussion	2hrs 2hrs	4 hrs		
XV	EXAM					

APPENDIX C: SCHEME OF WORK FOR ELEMENTARY GROUP

KIGALI INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (KIST)

**KIST LANGUAGE CENTRE (KLC)
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

ACADEMIC YEAR 2007, 1ST YEAR SCHEME OF WORK, SEMESTER II

ELEMENTARY GROUP

WEEK	DATE	CONTENT	REFERENCE
1.	25 th June---2 nd July	Expressing future with if, will, may. Reported speech, listening for gist, “if” clauses discussion. Supplementary grammar test.	NCEC Book 2 Lessons 19, 20,21 http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/literacy.html
2.	3 rd July---10 th July	Ways of expressing feelings, expressing interest in other people, vocabulary, ways of giving advice, present progressive.	NCEC Book 2 Lessons 22, 23, 24
3.	11 th July---17 th July	Supplementary material- Reading comprehension- The old man and his grandson	Grimm’s Fairy Tales http://esl.about.com/
4.	18 th July—26 th July	Practicing speaking and writing with simple present passive, ways of expressing past events, pronunciation, expressing probability. Supplementary material on present simple.	NCEC Book 2 Lessons 25,26,27 http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/literacy.html
5.	27 th July---1 st August	Tips for understanding newspaper headlines.	http://esl.about.com/
6.	2 nd Aug...10 th Aug	Describing, comparing, writing, discussion, summary and revision	NCEC Book 2
7.	11 th Aug---15 th Aug	How to read using context	http://esl.about.com/
8.	16 th Aug---23 rd Aug	Talking about sequences, unexpected events, listening for gist, question tags.	NCEC Book 2 Lessons 31, 32,33
9.	24 th Aug---30 th Aug	Reading comprehension- The frogs and the well	Aesop’s Fables http://esl.about.com
10.	2 nd Sept---6 th Sept	Past conditional, situational language, offers and polite replies, summary and revision	NCEC Book 2 Lessons 34,35,36

Note to the teachers: The above table indicates the basic plan of course delivery for this semester, choice of supplementary materials is left to the lecturer’s discretion.

APPENDIX D: SCHEME OF WORK FOR INTERMEDIATE GROUP

**KIGALI INSITTUTE OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY
KIST LANGUAGE CENTRE, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
SCHEME OF WORK FOR INTERMEDIATE GROUP SEMISTER 1, 2007**

WEEK	DATE	CONTENT	REFERENCE	OBSERVATION
6	FEB 12 TH TO 16 TH	Conversation skills ways of making and replying to offers and requests, handling formal and informal languages. Modal auxiliary verbs Reading for main ideas; skimming Summary Revision and Test	NCEC Book 3 Lessons A7, A8 and revision exercises Student and Practice	
7	FEB 19 TH TO 23 RD	Revision and Fluency practice. DEBATE OF STUDENTS' CHOICE.	Revision A and Test A	
8	FEB 26 TH TO MAR 2 ND	Reporting and respond to emergencies Present perfect to announcing that events have just happened Tenses of there is Pronunciation Lexical fields (Parts of car/everyday objects) Reading practice Justice	NCEC Book 3 Lessons B1 and B2 Student and Practice Looking for a Rain God Page 26	
9	MAR 5 TH TO 9 TH	Reading, speaking and writing skills Comparative structures (worse, the worst) Predicting sentences, dividing texts into paragraphs, Expanding stories	NCEC Book 3 Lessons B3 and B4 Student and Practice Looking for a rain God	
10	Mar 12 th 16 th	Language in use (greeting and welcoming people, asking for and confirmation Propositions in question	NCEC Student and Practice Book 3 Lessons B5 and B6 Looking for a Rain God	

WEEK	DATE	CONTENT	REFERENCE	OBSERVATION
11	Mar 19 th TO 23 RD	Ways of expressing opinions, and of agreeing and disagreeing with other people's opinions (neither/so/nor do I) Describing strategies, guessing unknown words Summary and revision	NCEC Book 3 Lessons B7 and B8 Student Practice Looking for a rain God Page 46	
12	MAR 26 TH TO 30 TH	Reading comprehension The case of the Prison Monger	Looking for a Rain God Page 31	
13	APRIL 2 ND TO 6 TH	Listening for specific information Reading for overall meaning Electrical appliance Two word-verbs Stress and rhythm, hearing unstressed syllables	NCEC Book 3 Lessons C1 and C2	
14	APRIL 9 TH TO 13 TH	Giving opinions, giving a prepared talk Modal verbs, infinitives of purpose, (by...ing) Text structure Guessing unknown words Simple past and past progressive tenses Initial consonant clusters	NCEC book 3 Lessons C3 and C4 Student Practice	
15	APRIL 16 TH TO 21 ST	Reading skills Asemka GENERAL REVISION FOR EXAMS.	Looking for a rain God Page 55	

Please, note that your assignment and other classroom activities will be part of your students' evaluation and assessment, so you are requested to improvise with any other supplementary materials plus the e-learning ref.

Please also note that the CAT and end of semester exams will be prepared according to the KLC timetable.

Year 2 CAT and exams will be prepared by your contribution according to how much we shall have covered, so please note down all the areas of evaluation.

I welcome and treasure all your proposals and suggestions for the excellence of our students, KLC and KIST as a whole.

From Year 2 Co-ordinator,

APPENDIX E: SCHEME OF WORK FOR ADVANCED GROUP

**KIGALI INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY
KIST LANGUAGE CENTRE, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
SCHEME OF WORK FOR INTERMEDIATE GROUP SEMESTER 1, 2007**

VEE	LISTENING	SPEAKING	READING	WRITING
1.	TOEFL Listening Practice	Interviews	Thirsty Africa faces food crisis (Skimming)	Revision of some Grammar notions: Complex sentence writing
2.		Interviews(cont`d) Tutorial/Oral presentation of field-specific topics	Thirsty Africa faces food crisis- continued (Skimming)	Revision of writing section: -Complex sentence writing practice -Summary writing
3.		Oral presentations on field-specific topics continued	Eating the Rwandan Way (Scanning)	Revision of: -Memo writing -Letter writing
4.		Class debate: Food and Health	Eating the Rwandan Way- continued (Scanning)	-Business Letter Writing -Application Letter and CV writing practice.
5.		Class debate continued: Food and Health	Genes Hint at HIV Genesis(Scanning)	Paragraph writing (Recapitulation)
6.		Tutorial/Oral presentation of field-specific topics	That was the food that was?	Essay Writing
7.	CAT	CAT	CAT	CAT
8.		Tutorial/oral presentation of field-specific topics continued	-Tanzania-a strong Sense of National Ownership (Main idea) -Multivitamin regimen delays AIDS progress (Skimming)	TOEFL Written Practice
9.		Tutorial /oral presentation of field-specific topics continued	Human nutrition in the developing world (Skimming)	TOEFL Written Practice Continued
10.		Oral presentations continued	Human nutrition in the developing world (Skimming)-continued	Structure of a Technical Report

1.		Class debates: The role of Food Science and Technology in Rwanda	Human nutrition in the developing world-continued	Technical Report Writing (continued)
2.		Debates continued: The Role of Food Science and Technology in Rwanda	Food and Agriculture in Rwanda (Scanning)	Technical Report Writing: Practice
3.		Debates continued	Gender and Food Security-Agriculture (Scanning)	Technical Report Writing: Practice
4.		Class discussion: As a Prospective Food Scientist and Technologist, what will be your role in the development of Rwanda?	Food Safety Guide for Food Establishment Personnel (Skimming)	Technical Report Writing: Practice
5.		Class discussion continued	Food Safety Guide for Food Establishment Personnel (continued)	
6.	EXAMINATIONS	EXAMINATIONS	EXAMINATIONS	EXAMINATIONS

ASSESSMENT

CAT:

- 1 Assignment : 15 marks
- Listening: 15 marks
- written: 70 marks
- Total: 100%

EXAMINATION

- Listening: 15 marks
- Speaking: 15 marks
- Written: 70 marks
- Total: 100%

APPENDIX F: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KIST FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KIST FIRST YEAR STUDENTS (academic year 2007)

Dear student,

I would like to ask you to complete the questionnaire below.

I am employed as an English lecturer at KIST. I am currently doing a Master of Education in English Language Teaching at Rhodes University in South Africa and my research aims at identifying first year students' perceived needs in English in order to study successfully in English at KIST.

You have been randomly selected from your group but you are free to answer the questionnaire or not.

If you decide to answer the questionnaire, please keep in mind that your opinions on the topics covered in the questionnaire are very valuable. So if you decide to answer the questionnaire, please note the following:

- **Mark the appropriate box with an X mark for multiple choice questions;**
- **For open questions, try to be as precise as possible;**
- **Should you have any questions, please feel free to ask your lecturer;**
- **Please answer all the questions.**

Thank you for your co-operation.

Joseph Magambo

1. Tick where appropriate:

Male

Female

2. What was your section in secondary school? -----

3. Tick the box that corresponds to your results in English in the National examination (in percentage)

0 – 9

10 – 29

30 – 49

50 – 69

70 – 79

80 – 100

4. Which department are you registered in? Please tick the appropriate box.

Biology

Chemistry

Electrical

Electronics and Telecommunication

- Food Science
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Civil Engineering and Environmental Technology
- Computer Engineering and Information Technology & IT
- Mechanical Engineering
- Teaching Education

5. Please indicate which group you are in for English by ticking the appropriate box

- Beginner
- Elementary
- Intermediate
- Advanced

6. How important is the knowledge of English for your current studies? (Tick the box corresponding to your answer).

- Very important
- Of little importance
- No importance

7. How do you describe the usefulness of English for graduating as a well qualified professional in your field?

- Necessary
- Not necessary

8. Show how important the following activities are for you by writing a number from 1 to 4 in the appropriate box

NB. Please write numbers in all boxes provided.

1 = most needed	2 = needed	3 = little needed	4 = not needed
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Grammar:

Sentence structure and grammatical exercises

Listening:

Understanding lectures and note-taking

Understanding different accents of English

Understanding oral questions

Answering questions orally

Speaking:

Contributing to general conversation

Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)

Participating in a group discussion

Reading:

- Reading at adequate speed
- Skimming/scanning
- Reading textbooks with understanding
- Reading and note-taking
- General leisure reading

Writing:

- Punctuation
- Organising information into a coherent structure
- Paragraph writing
- Summarising
- Writing in a formal academic style
- Writing essays
- Writing reports
- Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies

9. Are there any aspects of English not covered in the list above which you think are important for you? List them below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

10. How often do you have to do the following in English in your main areas of study? Use numbers 1 to 4 in the appropriate box

NB. Please write numbers in all boxes provided.

1 = Often	2 = Sometimes	3 = very rarely	4 = never
-----------	---------------	-----------------	-----------

- Reading; skimming, scanning (books/texts etc)
- Writing (composition/essays, reports, summaries, etc)
- Speaking activities
- Group work
- Taking notes in English

Giving a talk or oral presentation

11. Indicate how difficult the following tasks are for you by using numbers 1 to 4 in the appropriate box.

NB. Please write numbers in all boxes provided.

1 = Extremely difficult	2 = difficult	3 = a bit difficult	4 = very easy
-------------------------	---------------	---------------------	---------------

Grammar:

Sentence structure and grammatical exercises

Listening:

Understanding lectures and note-taking

Understanding different accents of English

Understanding oral questions

Answering questions orally

Speaking:

Contributing to general conversation

Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)

Participating in a group discussion

Reading:

Reading at adequate speed

Skimming/scanning

Reading textbooks with understanding

Reading and note-taking

General leisure reading

Writing:

Punctuation

Organising information into a coherent structure

Paragraph writing

Summarising

Writing in a formal academic style

Writing essays

Writing reports

Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies

12. Is there anything which you think is important that is not covered in the English 1121/1110 syllabus? Please list below.

13. Please comment on how well the following aspects are covered in your syllabus for English 1121/1110 by using numbers 1 to 3 in the box.

NB. Please write numbers in all boxes provided.

1 = enough	2 = not enough	3 = don't know
------------	----------------	----------------

Grammar (language structure)

Reading

Writing (essay, paragraph, reports etc)

Speaking (oral presentation, group discussions, etc)

Listening activities

14. Given what you need to learn, what do you think is missing from the KIST library that could help you reach your objectives?

Please answer according to your priorities from 1 (the highest priority) to 3 (the lowest priority)

1. -----

2. -----

3. -----

15. Based on your needs in English, which among the following items constitutes a major hindrance or handicap to your learning of English at KIST? Rank the items from most to least problematic (1 being the biggest problem and 4 being the least problem).

NB. Please complete all spaces provided.

Teaching materials -----

Time allotted to English -----

Quality of teaching -----

Size of you class (e.g. big group) -----

16. Please mention, in order of importance, any other problem or needs that you might have apart from those listed above. Use numbers 1 (the most serious problem) to 3.

1:

2:

3:

17. Which part of the course English 1121/1110 has been useful to you so far?

18 Which part of the course English 1121/1110 has not been useful to you?

19. Please give any suggestions that you might have for the improvement of your learning English at KIST. What changes would you recommend?

Thank you.

APPENDIX G: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LECTURERS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Questionnaire for KIST first year lecturers in science or technology (2007)

Dear colleague,

I wish to ask you to complete the questionnaire attached herewith.

I am employed as an English lecturer at KIST. I am currently doing a Master of Education in English Language Teaching at Rhodes University (South Africa) and my research aims at identifying first year students' perceived needs in English in order to study successfully in English at KIST.

You have been selected as a possible participant in this research because you are currently involved in teaching first year students and I am very interested in your opinions with regard to the topics covered in the questionnaire. However, you are free to take part or not. If you do, your response will be highly valued.

If you decide to answer the questionnaire, please do it electronically and e-mail it back to me.

I can assure you that any information that is obtained in connection with the questionnaire and that can be identified with you shall remain confidential and that it will be used for the sole purpose of the intended research.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Joseph Magambo
Staff in KIST Language Centre (currently on study leave)
jeffmagambo@yahoo.co.uk

1. What subject do you teach the current first year students? (e.g.. Maths, chemistry, electrical, etc.) : _____

2. Tick or cross the box corresponding to the language you use in lectures:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| English | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| French | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| English and French | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. Tick or cross the box corresponding to language that your students use in their assessment (test or exams)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| English | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| French | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Either English or French | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Say how often your students have to do the following activities in English by writing a number from 1 to 4 in the appropriate box.

1 = Always	2 = Sometimes	3 = Very rarely	4 = Never
------------	---------------	-----------------	-----------

- Oral presentation of a task
- Group discussion in class
- Read subject related books and report on findings
- Writing reports, descriptions, process description, etc.
- Writing summaries of experiments

5. How often are students required to take their own notes during lectures (Tick or cross the box corresponding to your answer)

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

6. Do students have difficulties in the following areas? Write a number from 1 to 4 in the appropriate box.

1 = All of them	2 = Some of them	3 = Very few of them	4 = None of them
-----------------	------------------	----------------------	------------------

- Understanding lectures in English
- Reading written course related materials
- Understanding oral questions
- Asking questions in English
- Answering question orally in English during lectures
- Writing reports, descriptions, process description, etc.
- Taking their own notes during lectures

7. How are students assessed in your course? Tick the box corresponding to the types of assessment you use.

NB. You can tick more than one type of assessment

- Multiple choice questions
- Open questions
- Writing reports
- Summarising reading from course books
- Presenting reports in class
- Interpreting tables/ graphs
- Other forms of assessment. (Please specify):

8. How often does it happen that your students are unable to answer a question in a test or examination because of a problem with English? (Tick the box corresponding to your estimation)

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Very rarely
- Never

9. When you are assessing students' written work (tests, exam, reports etc), do you take into account (Tick or cross the box corresponding to your answer):

Content only

Both content and language

10. In your opinion, how important is knowledge of English for a science/ technology student at KIST? (Tick or cross the box corresponding to your answer)

Very necessary

Of little importance

Of no importance

11. How important are the following skills in studying science/technology at KIST? Use numbers 1 to 4 to rank the skills in order of importance.

Reading (e.g. course related materials)

Writing (e.g. essays, reports, tests or exams, etc)

Speaking (presenting reports, discussion in groups etc)

Listening e.g. lectures/debates or group discussion, etc)

12. What do you think KIST Language Centre needs to do to improve students' proficiency in English? (Please detail):

Thank you for your valuable contribution

APPENDIX H: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LECTURERS IN ENGLISH

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KIST FIRST YEAR LECTURERS IN ENGLISH (Academic year 2007)

Dear colleague,

I wish to ask you to complete the questionnaire attached herewith.

I am currently doing a Master of Education in English Language Teaching (MEd in ELT) at Rhodes University in South Africa and my research aims at identifying first year students' perceived needs in English in order to study successfully in English at KIST.

You have been selected as a possible participant in this research because you are currently involved in teaching first year students and I am very much interested in your opinions with regard to topics covered in the questionnaire. However, you are free to take part or not.

If you decide to answer the questionnaire, please do it electronically and e-mail it back to me. I assure you that any information that is obtained in connection with the questionnaire and that can be identified with you shall remain confidential and that it will be used for the sole purpose of the intended research.

Note: Please answer all questions.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Joseph Magambo
jeffmagambo@yahoo.co.uk

1. Which group of first year English students are you teaching? Please tick the appropriate box.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Beginner | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Intermediate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Advanced | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. Please give your opinion as to your students' needs with regard to the following aspects of language by writing a number from 1 to 4 in the appropriate box for each skill.

1 = extremely needed	2 = needed	3 = little needed	4 = not needed
----------------------	------------	-------------------	----------------

Grammar:

Sentence structure and grammatical exercises

Listening:

Understanding lectures and note-taking

Understanding different accents of English

Understanding oral questions

Answering questions orally

Speaking:

- Contributing to general conversation
- Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)
- Participating in a group discussion

Reading:

- Reading at adequate speed
- Skimming/scanning
- Reading textbooks with understanding
- Reading and note-taking
- General leisure reading

Writing:

- Punctuation
- Organising information into a coherent structure
- Paragraph writing
- Summarising
- Writing in a formal academic style
- Writing essays
- Writing reports
- Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies

3. Is there any other skills that your students need but which is not included in the above list?
Please specify.

4. Show how difficult the following activities are for your students by using numbers 1 to 4 in the appropriate box

1 = very difficult	2 = difficult	3 = a bit difficult	4 = very easy
--------------------	---------------	---------------------	---------------

Grammar:

- Sentence structure and grammatical exercises

Listening:

- Understanding lectures and note-taking
- Understanding different accents of English
- Understanding oral questions
- Answering questions orally

Speaking:

- Contributing to general conversation
- Giving a talk (oral presentation in a class)
- Participating in a group discussion

Reading:

- Reading at adequate speed
- Skimming/scanning
- Reading textbooks with understanding

- Reading and note-taking
- General leisure reading

Writing:

- Punctuation
- Organising information into a coherent structure
- Paragraph writing
- Summarising
- Writing in a formal academic style
- Writing essays
- Writing reports
- Abstracts/ referencing/ bibliographies

5. Please mention, in order of difficulty, any other area in which your students experience difficulty but which is not listed above.

- 1: -----
- 2: -----
- 3: -----

6. Are there any skills which your students need but that are not included in their syllabus for English 1121/1110? Please list them below.

7. What, among the following types of questions, cause most difficulty to your students during assessment (test or exams)? Rank them using numbers 1 (most difficult) to 7 (least difficult).

- Multiple choice questions
- Open questions
- Summarising texts
- Oral test/exam
- Listening (test/exam)
- Inferring meaning from context
- Interpreting graphs or tables

8. Are there any constraints which prevent you from meeting your students' needs? Please list them below.

9. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the teaching/learning of English at KIST? (Please use the space below).

Thank you for your information

**APPENDIX I: A LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR, KLC: ASKING A PERMISSION TO
CARRY OUT RESEARCH**

**Joseph MAGAMBO
Reg. N^o 607M4869
Education Department
Rhodes University
South Africa**

9th August 2007

The Director
KIST Language Centre
PO BOX 3900
Kigali
RWANDA

Re: Permission to carry out research at KIST

Dear Sir,

I hereby wish to ask you to allow me to conduct a needs analysis with the current first year students at the Kigali Language Centre.

I am currently registered for a programme leading to the award of Master of Education in English Language Teaching at Rhodes University (South Africa) and my research aims at identifying first year students' perceived needs in English in order to study successfully in English at KIST. I find this topic interesting as it will inform (at a later stage), an English syllabus for KIST Students and, as such, is beneficial not only to the KLC but also to KIST Institute at large.

A questionnaire will be administered to a sample of students during their class time. This can be done at any time convenient to the respective students and lecturers. Questionnaires will also be administered to lecturers. Copies of the questionnaires are attached for your information.

I promise that the data collected will be treated confidentially and for the sole purpose of the intended research and that a copy of the thesis will be available at the KIST library upon completion of the research.


A copy of my research proposal is attached for your information. The proposal has been approved by the Faculty of Education Higher Degrees Committee at Rhodes University.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

Joseph Magambo

APPENDIX J: A LETTER FROM DIRECTOR, KLC: GRANTING A PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

From: "John Rusine" <j.rusine@kist.ac.rw>  Add to Address Book

Subject: Re: Permission to carry out research at KLC

To: "Joseph magambo" <jeffmagambo@yahoo.co.uk>

Date: Tue, 21 Aug 2007 14:35:59 +0100

Dear Joseph,

The Directorate of KIST Language Center (KLC) is pleased to grant you permission to carry out your needs analysis in Year 1 in the area of language teaching/learning.

Sorry for the delay in responding. The mail sent on my professional address met more urgent items, which distracted my secretary and myself from other mail.

Regards.

