

تصورات طلبة الاقتصاد والعلوم الإدارية فيما  
يتعلق بحاجتهم إلى مساقات اللغة الإنجليزية  
لأغراض تجارية وأثر استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية  
كلغة التدريس الغالبة في تحصيلهم

**Jordanian Economics and Administrative  
Science Students' Perceptions of the Need  
for Business English Courses and the  
Potential Impact of the Use of English as  
the Predominant Medium of Instruction  
on Academic Achievement**

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## تصورات طلبة الاقتصاد والعلوم الإدارية فيما يتعلق بحاجتهم إلى مساقات اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض تجارية وأثر استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة التدريس الغالبة في تحصيلهم

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### الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء آراء ٣٢٦ من طلبة كلية الاقتصاد والعلوم الإدارية في جامعة اليرموك (إربد، الأردن) حول حاجتهم إلى مساقات اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض تجارية، وأثر استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة التدريس الغالبة في تحصيلهم الأكاديمي، والمشكلات التي قد يواجهونها نتيجة لهذا الاستخدام. كما عُنيت بالكشف عما إذا كان هناك آثار للتخصص، أو المستوى، أو المعدل التراكمي في هذه الآراء. وقد استخدمت الباحثان استبانة مكونة من ثلاثة أجزاء لجمع البيانات، واستخدمتا الإجراءات الإحصائية المناسبة لتحليلها حتى الإجابة عن أسئلة الدراسة. وقد بينت النتائج أن الطلاب غير قادرين على الجزم فيما يتعلق بأثر استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة التدريس الغالبة في تحصيلهم. كذلك بينت النتائج أن هناك أثراً لكل من التخصص، والمستوى، والمعدل التراكمي على تصوراتهم فيما يتعلق بأثر استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة التدريس الغالبة في تحصيلهم، والمشكلات التي قد يواجهونها نتيجة لهذا الاستخدام، وليس على تصوراتهم فيما يتعلق بحاجتهم إلى مساقات اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض تجارية. كذلك أظهرت النتائج أنه على الرغم من وعي هؤلاء الطلبة بالعلاقة الوثيقة بين قدرتهم في اللغة الإنجليزية وتحصيلهم، نجد أنهم لم يظهروا قدرة على الربط بين المفاهيم التجارية ومساقات اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض تجارية ربما لعدم تعرضهم سابقاً لمثل هذه المساقات. وقد ظهر جلياً عدم رضا هؤلاء الطلبة عن محتوى مساقات اللغة الإنجليزية العامة التي تطرحها الجامعة، وترحيبهم بطرح مساقات اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض تجارية.

## **Jordanian Economics and Administrative Science Students' Perceptions of the Need for Business English Courses and the Potential Impact of the Use of English as the Predominant Medium of Instruction on Academic Achievement**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the need for Business English courses, the impact of using English as the predominant medium of instruction on academic achievement and the potential difficulties resulting from this use as perceived by 326 students from the departments of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yarmouk University, Jordan. The effect of the students' field of study, year of study, and GPA on their perceptions is also investigated. The students were undecided as to the impact of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction on their academic achievement. Field of study, year of study, and GPA were found to affect the respondents' perceptions of the impact of and the difficulties resulting from the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction but not those of the need for Business English courses. The findings reveal that although the respondents seemed aware that their proficiency in English is positively related to their academic achievement, they were not always able to make the connection between business concepts and specialized Business English courses, probably because of their lack of exposure to these courses. It was fairly evident that the students across the sample are not fully satisfied with the content of the English language skills courses offered by the University and, thus, would welcome the provision of specialized Business English courses.

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### **Introduction and Background**

English is the lingua franca of the business world. Widdowson (1982:3) claims that “the principal reason why English is an international language is because, by historical accident, it was found to be a convenient means for establishing international groups of people with purposes and expertise in common”. Along the same lines, Burchfield (1986:160) states that:

English has also become a lingua franca to the point that any literate, educated person on the globe is in a very real sense deprived if he does not know English. Poverty, famine, and disease are instantly recognized as the cruelest and least excusable forms of deprivation. Linguistic deprivation is a less easily noticed condition, but one nevertheless of great significance.

In answering a question about whether there is a need to be concerned about the future of the English language in the twenty-first century, Hasman (2000) maintains that English continues to be the world's standard language. The global spread of English over the last 40 years has been both remarkable and unprecedented in terms of the increasing number of its users, depth of penetration into societies and range of functions. The factors which contribute to this spread are the use of English in sciences, technology and commerce; its ability to incorporate vocabulary from other languages; and the acceptability of its various dialects.

In the context of this widespread use of English, Jordan has recognized the need for English and incorporated it in its educational and vocational fields in order to meet international communication and job performance requirements. In order to be good users of English, Jordanian school children are taught English in school from the first (formerly, fifth) to the twelfth grade. Furthermore, some Jordanian universities use English as the predominant medium of instruction, especially in the faculties of science, medicine and medical sciences, engineering and economics and administrative sciences.

At Yarmouk University, the departments of Economics, Public Administration, Business Administration, Finance, Marketing and Accounting at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences (henceforth, FEAS) at Yarmouk University

offer Bachelor and Master's degrees, although only Bachelor students are targeted in this study. These students are required to study 132 credit hours (or 44 courses) to be granted a Bachelor degree. Seven courses are university requirements, which are all offered in Arabic except for the two General English language courses and one computer skills course. In addition, two elective courses are required the choice of which is left to the students' discretion. A third English non-credit course is mandatory for students who fail the English language placement test.

A survey of the academic plans and personal communications with the heads and a few of the faculty members of the six departments reveal that the 11 major courses under faculty requirements are all offered in English. However, although each department requires its students to study 24 courses, the degree of extensiveness with which English is used varies considerably. On one hand, the departments of Business Administration and Marketing offer all their courses in English. On the other hand, 87.50%, 79.17%, 70.83% and 80% of the courses of the departments of Public Administration, Finance, Accounting and Economics are offered in English.

No English for business purposes (henceforth, EBP) courses are offered. The three language skills courses offered as university requirements (viz., LC 099, 100 and 111) are highly general in content. They do not focus on one specific field of study, which may render them insufficient to fulfill the students' language requirements and, thus, inadequate to substitute for English for Specific Purposes (henceforth, ESP) courses.

From the outset, it is worth emphasizing that this investigation examines students' perceptions of their difficulties and, thus, seeks to make available insider perspectives. The present researchers attempt to identify the students' perceptions of whether or not they need ESP/EBP courses and the potential difficulties they face as the result of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction and its impact on their academic achievement. More specifically, they seek to answer the following questions:

1. Do FEAS students perceive themselves to be in need for ESP/EBP courses, especially in their first year of study?
2. Do FEAS students perceive the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction to influence their achievement in their respective fields of study?
3. What are the difficulties FEAS students perceive themselves as facing due to the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction?
4. What are the effects of the students' field of study, year of study and grade point average on their perceptions of the impact of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction on their achievement, the potential problem they face, and their need for business English purposes?

The researchers could not locate any previous literature which is strongly related to the problem at hand. However, since English is highly instrumental in education, international communication and the labor market, numerous studies have been conducted in the fields of ESP and EBP. Widdowson (1990) states that ESP instruction focuses on concepts and communication as well as vocabulary and grammar, which provides the learners with models of how English is used to communicate business information.

Gerzymisch-Arbogast (1988) argues that “interactive business competence” in both English and German is based on the understanding that language is a form of interaction which requires skills in both language and culture. She claims that business language courses should be oriented to the role students will assume in their future jobs emphasizing formal and informal communication and preparing them to competently interact in English.

Winter (1993) argues that business graduates need effective skills in communication. Business communication requires skills such as the ability to use the language effectively, analyze a listener/reader’s situation and needs, and persuade him/her to adopt one’s point of view. She claims that business students should learn basic skills in English, rhetorical techniques, and sales techniques, which may all help them use the language effectively when doing business.

Iacobelli (1993) discusses the increasing foreign students’ enrollment in business programs at American universities and the need for specialized English as a Foreign Language (henceforth, EFL) courses for business students. She found that of the 55 subjects who participated in her study, 73% favor separate or optional additional EFL courses for business students, 75% would have taken such a course, and 47% would take such a course in addition to the standard EFL courses.

In a unique study which shares the focus of the present one, Al-Bazzaz (1994) has investigated the problem of unsatisfactory achievement in the Business English of Kuwaiti students of Business Studies. He found that (a) his subjects suffer from low proficiency in both General and Business English; (b) the labor market English language requirements are attainable and realistic but not fully considered in the English courses offered at the College; and (c) many students find the courses taught in English difficult to learn as a result of their lack of competence in General and Business English.

## Sample and Instrumentation

The population of this study is all 3,034 students enrolled at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences in the second semester of the academic year 2001/2002. A random sample of 326 students (10.74% of the population) was drawn, distributed into 22 (9.61%) of the 229 students of the Department of Economics, 31 (14.69%) of the 211 students of the Department of Public

Administration, 38 (8.05%) of the 472 students of the Department of Business Administration, 71 (9.85%) of the 721 students of the Department of Finance, 38 (11.80%) of the 322 students of the Department of Marketing, and 126 (11.67%) of the 1080 students of the Department of Accounting.

To best achieve the objectives of this study, the present researchers have designed a questionnaire which consists of three sections. The first section collects personal data about the respondents (viz. field of study, year of study, accumulative average, the number of credit courses studied, and the number of credit courses studied in English) while the second and third are 23-item, 5-point likert scaled and 4-item open ended questions which collect data about the impact of the predominant medium of instruction on students, academic achievement. The second section of the questionnaire is designed to be answered on a five-point Likert scale of *strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree*. For the purpose of statistical analysis, the positive items are scaled 5 through 1 respectively whereas the negative items are scaled 1 through 5 respectively. Due to the heterogeneity of the population and the possibility that some of the participants are not adequately competent in English, the questionnaire was administered in Arabic (for the English translation, see the Appendix) in the presence of one or both researchers.

For the purpose of establishing the reliability of the questionnaire, Chronbach Alpha was used, which yielded a 0.81 coefficient. The validity of the questionnaire was established by showing it to a jury of experts in the fields of curriculum and instruction, business administration, public administration and English. The jury's suggestions for adding, deleting or modifying certain items were all taken into account in the final stages of the production of the questionnaire.

## Findings and Discussion

From the onset, it is worth noting that the discussion of the findings would proceed in two tracks, one which addresses the four research questions, namely whether or not the students perceive themselves to be in need for ESP/EBP courses, especially in their first year of study and whether or not they perceive the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction to influence their achievement in their respective fields of study and the difficulties they perceive themselves as facing as the result of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction. In the second track, the third research question will be revisited during the discussion of the open-ended questions as part of the researchers' attempt to identify the difficulties the students perceive themselves as having.

The subjects were found to predominantly answer with undecided to the 23 items in the second section of the questionnaire investigating the impact of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction on the students' academic achievement with a mean of 3.008 and a standard deviation of 1.24. The present

researchers believe that the students' undecidedness may result from the lack of awareness of the existence of ESP/EBP courses, and the lack of exposure to them which may have muddled their judgement. Furthermore, students may not be aware of what it is they need to learn, which may render them incapable of identifying the role of English in their respective fields of study.

Table (1) shows One-Way ANOVA of the students' responses to these items among and within the departments of Public Administration, Marketing, Finance, Business Administration, Economics and Accounting.

**Table 1: One-Way ANOVA of the Students' Responses according to Field of Study**

Question	Source	D. F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F. Value
1 Perceptions of the need for Business English courses	Among Groups	5	101.27		
	Within Groups	320	7218.48	20.25	0.90
	Total	325	7319.75	22.56	
2 Perceptions of the impact of using English as the predominant medium of instruction of academic achievement	Among Groups	5	249.67	49.93	3.99**
	Within Groups	320	4007.92	12.52	
	Total	325	4257.59		
3 Perceptions of the difficulties resulting from using English as the predominant medium of instruction	Among Groups	5	303.51	60.70	3.25*
	Within Groups	320	5968.91	18.65	
	Total	325	6272.42		

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$  \*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$

Table (1) reveals nonstatistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the students' perceptions of the necessity to have EBP courses for first-year students ( $F = 0.90$ ). However, the findings reveal statistically significant differences in the students' perceptions of the impact of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction on their academic achievement ( $F = 3.99$ ; sign. at 0.01) and the difficulties they face as a result ( $F = 3.25$ ; sign at 0.05), which can be attributed to their respective fields of study. Although the students all answered with undecided, there exist differences in the answers between Economics students on one hand and those of Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Business Administration and Public Administration on the other. The present researchers believe that although the students of the six departments have shown undecidedness, Economics students were more positive in their answers than the rest.

This is further supported by the students' answers to the first open-ended question, addressing their perceptions of their proficiency in General and Business English, which further shows that Economics students perceive themselves as weakest in both General and Business English. Thus, the slight differences between Economics students and those of the other five departments may be readily attributed to the fact that since they perceive themselves to be the weakest in English,



Economics students reportedly face the most serious difficulties as a result of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction.

Newman-Keuls Post-hoc Analysis of the students' perceptions of the impact of English on their academic achievement according to their respective fields of study shows that there are statistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) among the students of the six departments. There exist differences between Economics students on one hand and those of Marketing, Finance, and Accounting on the other, where the mean of the former is 19.36 and those of the latter are 15.55, 16.83 and 16.99 respectively.

Similarly, Newman-Keuls Post-hoc Analysis of the students' perceptions of the difficulties they face as a result of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction according to their fields of study reveals statistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) among the students of the six departments. There exist differences between Economics students on one hand and those of Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Business Administration and Public Administration on the other, where the mean of the former is 20.18 and those of the latter are 15.66, 16.73, 17.05, 17.18 and 17.52 respectively.

Table (2) shows One-Way ANOVA of the students' responses among and within first-, second-, third- and fourth-year students.

**Table 2: One-Way ANOVA of the Students' Responses according to Year of Study**

Question	Source	D. F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F. Value.
1 Perceptions of the need for Business English courses	Among Groups Within Groups Total	3 322 325	118.29 7201.46 7319.75	39.43 22.36	1.76
2 Perceptions of the impact of using English as the predominant medium of instruction of academic achievement	Among Groups Within Groups Total	3 322 325	29.70 4227.90 4257.60	9.90 13.13	0.75
3 Perceptions of the difficulties resulting from using English as the predominant medium of instruction	Among Groups Within Groups Total	3 322 325	231.18 6041.24 6272.42	77.06 18.76	4.11*

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$

Table (2) reveals nonstatistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the students' perceptions of the necessity to have ESP/EBP courses for first-year students or their perceptions of the impact of the use of English on their academic achievement. However, statistically significant differences exist ( $F = 4.11$ ; sign at  $\alpha = 0.01$ ) in the students' perceptions of the difficulties they face due to the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction.

Students of different years of study responded with undecided but first-year stu-

dents offered more positive answers than the rest, probably because they are the least exposed to major courses (since they tend to study more general university requirements than major courses in their freshman year). Therefore, freshmen could be incapable of identifying the difficulties resulting from the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction. Furthermore, they may be incapable of evaluating their own proficiency in English due to their lack of exposure to major courses. The fact that they have not yet started studying major courses in English may have biased their judgment of their proficiency since they have not yet put this proficiency to the test.

Table (3) shows One-Way ANOVA of the students' perceptions among and within students with different grade point averages (henceforth, GPAs) (viz., below 60%, 60%-69%, 70%-79% and 80% or above).

**Table 3: One-Way ANOVA of the Students' Responses according to GPA**

Question	Source	D. F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F. Value.
1 Perceptions of the need for Business English courses	Among Groups	3	40.36	13.45	0.59
	Within Groups	322	7279.39	22.61	
	Total	325	7319.75		
2 Perceptions of the impact of using English as the predominant medium of instruction of academic achievement	Among Groups	3	237.28	79.09	6.33*
	Within Groups	322	4020.32	12.49	
	Total	325	4257.60		
3 Perceptions of the difficulties resulting from using English as the predominant medium of instruction	Among Groups	3	628.07	209.36	11.94*
	Within Groups	322	5644.35	17.53	
	Total	325	6272.42		

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$

Table (3) reveals nonstatistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the students' perceptions of the necessity to have ESP/EBP courses for first-year students ( $F = 0.59$ ). However, there are statistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.01$ ) in the students' perceptions of the impact on their academic achievement ( $F = 6.33$ ) and the difficulties they perceive themselves as having due to the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction ( $F = 11.94$ ).

Newman-Keuls Post-hoc Analysis of the students' perceptions of the impact of the use of English on their academic achievement reveals statistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.01$ ) among students of different GPAs. There exist differences between students with GPAs below 60% on one hand and students with GPAs of 80% or above and 70%-79% on the other, where the mean of the former is 19.04 while those of the latter are 15.68 and 16.57 respectively. Furthermore, there exist differences between students with GPAs of 60%-69% on one hand and students with GPAs of 80% or above and 70%-79% on the other, where the mean of the former is 17.56 while those of the latter are 15.68 and 16.57 respectively.

Similarly, Newman-Keuls Post-hoc Analysis of the students' perceptions of the

difficulties they face as a result of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction reveals that there are statistically significant differences (at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) among students with different GPAs. There exist differences between students with below 60% GPAs on one hand and those with GPAs of 80% or above, 70%-79% and 60%-69% on the other, where the mean of the former is 20.78 while those of the latter are 14.70, 16.58 and 17.58 respectively. Furthermore, the findings reveal a difference between students with GPAs of 60%-69% on one hand and those with GPAs of 80% or above on the other, where the mean of the former is 17.58 while that of the latter is 14.70. Similarly, there exists a difference between students with GPAs of 70%-79% on one hand and those with GPAs of 80% or above on the other, where the mean of the former is 16.58 and that of the latter is 14.70.

The findings show that the students with GPAs above 60% responded with "undecided" while those with GPAs below 60% expressed agreement. These differences may be because English may be a problem for low average students who may be more in need to be adequately proficient in English to meet their educational needs and, thus, gain better academic achievement. Students with low GPAs are probably weak in English, which may make major courses difficult to learn and, thus, be the main cause of their low achievement.

Tables (4), (5), (6), and (7) present the findings of the four open-ended questions which address the students' perceptions of their proficiency in General and Business English, the potential difficulties they face in learning and understanding the major courses taught in English, the role of school in preparing them to study major courses in English, and their suggestions to improve the current instructional practices at FEAS to better meet their current educational and future occupational needs.

Table (4) presents the students' perceptions of their proficiency in General and Business English. The frequencies under high mean that these students perceive themselves as highly proficient and can easily meet their current educational and future occupational needs. Frequencies under moderate mean that these students consider themselves fairly proficient but can hardly meet their educational and future occupational needs, while frequencies under low mean that these students view themselves as weak in General and Business English to the extent that they cannot meet their educational and future occupational needs.

Table 4: Students' Perceptions of their Proficiency in General and Business English

Department	Number of Respondents	General English			Business English		
		High	Moderate	Low	High	Moderate	Low
Accounting	102	50	33	19	57	37	8
Business Administration	34	19	11	4	16	11	7
Public Administration	25	9	9	7	8	13	4
Finance	63	27	24	12	30	24	9
Economics	20	6	6	8	6	6	8
Marketing	29	19	7	3	17	9	3
Total	273	130	90	53	134	100	39
Percentage	83.74%	47.62%	32.97%	19.41%	49.08%	36.63%	14.29%

Table (4) shows that, overall, 47.62% of the respondents perceive themselves as highly proficient in General English compared to 32.97% and 19.41% who perceive their proficiency to be moderate and low respectively. On the other hand, 49.08% perceive themselves as highly proficient in Business English as opposed to 36.63% and 14.29% who perceive themselves of moderate or low proficiency.

The findings reveal that 40% of Economics students perceive themselves as weak in both General and Business English, followed by 28% of Public Administration students who perceive themselves as weak in General English and about 21% of Business Administration students who perceive themselves as weak in Business English. Of all the respondents, students of Economics are reportedly the weakest in both General and Business English, while Public Administration students are reportedly the weakest in General English and Business Administration students are reportedly the weakest in Business English, which means that the English language is a problem for these students which may contribute to their low academic achievement. Consequently, since proficiency in English is positively related to academic achievement and the students of Economics, Public Administration and Business Administration are the weakest in English, they are probably more in need to be proficient in English in order to gain better academic achievement.

Overall, 19.41% of the sample perceive themselves as weak in General English while 14.29% perceive themselves as weak in Business English, which may be taken to reveal their inability to meet their educational needs. This could be further taken to mean that English is so difficult for these students that the major courses taught in English may become the main cause of their low academic achievement.

Table (5) presents the findings related to the students' perceptions of the difficulties they face due to the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction according to their fields of study. The numbers represent the frequencies of these

difficulties which were grouped into instructor-, student-, language-, and content-related difficulties. A category was set to cater for students who reported not facing any difficulties due to the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction.

**Table 5: Students' Perceptions of the Difficulties Resulting from the Use of English as the Predominant Medium of Instruction**

<i>Area of Difficulty</i>	<i>Acct.</i>	<i>B.A.</i>	<i>P.A.</i>	<i>Fin.</i>	<i>Econ.</i>	<i>Mkt.</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b><i>Instructor-Related Difficulties</i></b>	<b>51</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>115</b>
speed of presentation	3	2	0	1	0	0	6
style of presentation	24	11	2	12	4	2	55
use of Arabic	4	2	1	4	1	2	14
Instructor's weakness in English	19	5	4	5	1	0	34
neglecting individual differences	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
use of English	1	0	2	1	0	0	4
<b><i>Student-Related Difficulties</i></b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>37</b>
students' weakness in English	3	1	3	4	4	2	17
lack of initiative to improve one's English	2	0	0	3	2	1	8
lack of opportunities to practice English	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
dependence on the instructor	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
general academic weakness	2	1	3	0	1	1	8
<b><i>Language-Related Difficulties</i></b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>
difficulty of English	4	0	1	1	1	2	9
lack of EBP courses	3	0	0	1	0	1	5
Exclusive use of Arabic	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Exclusive use of English	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
no coordination when using Arabic and English	3	3	0	1	0	0	7
<b><i>Content-Related Difficulties</i></b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>77</b>
lack of technical translations for difficult business concepts	23	9	7	30	2	6	77
<b><i>No Difficulties</i></b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>Percentage of Respondents(%)</b>	<b>90.47</b>	<b>97.37</b>	<b>93.55</b>	<b>98.59</b>	<b>90.91</b>	<b>78.95</b>	<b>92.02</b>

One hundred and fifteen (38.33%) of the respondents report facing instructor-related difficulties such as the instructor's rate and style of presentation, use of Arabic in teaching major courses (which should be otherwise taught in English) and some instructor's weakness in English. Similarly, 37 (12.33%) of the respondents report facing student-related difficulties such as their weakness in English, dependence on the instructor and lack of English practice, while 26 (8.67%) report facing language-related difficulties such as the difficulty of the language used to teach major courses, the lack of coordination in the use of Arabic and English when teaching major courses (which should be otherwise taught in English) and the lack of EBP courses. Seventy seven (25.67%) of the respondents report facing content-related difficulties such as the difficulty of the business concepts themselves, while 45 (15%) of the respondents report facing no difficulties at all.

Table (6) presents the findings related to the students' perceptions of the role of school in preparing them to study university major courses in English. The numbers under the heading yes represent the frequencies of students who perceive themselves as having been properly prepared by school to study university major courses in English. Frequencies under to some extent represent the students who consider themselves fairly prepared to study university major courses in English but aspire for improvement while those under no represent students who view themselves as not properly prepared to study university major courses in English.

**Table 6: The Students' Perceptions of the School's Role in Preparing them to Study in English**

<i>Department</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>To Some Extent</i>	<i>No</i>
Accounting	105	31	8	66
Business Administration	33	8	5	20
Public Administration	25	5	3	17
Finance	63	15	3	45
Economics	17	2	1	14
Marketing	26	15	4	7
Total	269	76	24	169
Percentage of Respondents (%)	82.52%	28.25%	8.92%	62.83%

The findings show that only 76 (37.17%) of the 269 respondents believe that they have been prepared by school to study major courses in English, while a vast majority of 62.83% do not believe so.

Table (7) presents the findings of the fourth open-ended question which elicits the students' suggestions to improve their English proficiency to be better able to meet their current educational and future occupational needs. These suggestions are grouped into instructor-, student-, language-, school-, and university- related suggestions. A category was set for students who did not offer any suggestions.

Table 7: Students' Suggestions for Increasing their Proficiency in English

<i>Type of suggestion</i>	<i>Acct.</i>	<i>B.A.</i>	<i>P.A.</i>	<i>Fin.</i>	<i>Econ.</i>	<i>Mkt.</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b><i>Instructor-Related Suggestions</i></b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>
providing technical translation for the business concepts and focusing on them	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
adopting better teaching styles	6	1	0	0	0	0	7
using easy and clear language of testing	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
improving one's performance	2	1	0	1	0	1	5
<b><i>Students-Related Suggestions</i></b>	<b>37</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>72</b>
further reading of Business English books	12	1	1	5	2	1	22
more practice of English in and outside the classroom	8	0	1	7	0	0	16
self- development	16	5	2	7	1	2	33
<b><i>Language-Related Suggestions</i></b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>
no use of Arabic	5	1	0	3	1	4	14
no use of English	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
coordinating the use of Arabic and English when teaching major courses	2	0	2	2	0	0	6
<b><i>School-Related Suggestions</i></b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>
better performance	6	3	2	3	0	0	14
teaching English from the first grade	2	1	0	1	0	0	4
<b><i>University-Related Suggestions</i></b>	<b>58</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>155</b>
offering EBP/ESP courses	24	6	3	21	4	4	62
offering training courses in English	30	13	8	14	10	5	80
offering modern teaching aids	2	1	1	0	1	0	5
providing students with opportunities to practice what they learn (on- and off-campus)	2	2	0	1	0	1	6
offering business courses in Arabic	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
<b><i>No Suggestions</i></b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Participants</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>99.21</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80.65</b>	<b>98.59</b>	<b>86.36</b>	<b>52.63</b>	<b>91.10</b>

Of the 297 respondents to this question, 15 (5.05%) gave instructor-related suggestions such as offering technical translations for the business concepts, resorting to better teaching and testing styles, and developing faculty members' performance. On the other hand, 72 (24.24%) made student-related suggestions such as self-development, referring to Business English books, and practicing English inside and outside the classroom. Twenty four respondents (8.08%) offered language-related suggestions such as the use of Arabic only, English only or a combination of the two languages, while 18 (6.06%) suggested that school play a better role in preparing students to study university major courses in English. However, an overwhelming majority of 155 respondents (52.19%) made university-related suggestions such as offering EBP courses, General English courses, modern teaching aids, and practical application of what the students learn both on and off campus. Thirteen (4.38%) of the respondents offered no suggestions at all.

Language seems to be a recurring theme in the students' suggestions. Of the 15 respondents who made instructor-related suggestions, 13.33% suggested that instructors offer technical translations for the major business concepts while a little over 22% of the 72 respondents suggested that students practice English both in and outside the classroom. Similarly, of the 155 respondents who made university-related suggestions, 51.61% suggested offering training courses in English while 40% suggested offering EBP courses for first-year students.

In light of the students' responses, the present researchers believe that the problem may not be English itself but rather how it is used to teach major courses. Since they report that English is a concern in doing homework and examinations, among other things, students are aware that their proficiency in English is positively related to their academic achievement. However, these students may not be able to make the connection between business concepts and EBP courses due to their lack of exposure to such courses. It is fairly evident that the students of different fields of study, years of study and GPAs are not fully satisfied with the content of the English language skills courses offered by the University.

The present researchers share the view that English is a concern in education and business, among other fields, which makes it imperative that ESP be adopted in higher education as a means of having students meet their respective workplace language requirements. They agree with Iacobelli (1993) that EBP courses should be offered at least to first-year students, for improving these students' Business English may not be solely their own responsibility but also that of their instructors, faculty and university itself. Furthermore, since the difficulty of the business concepts is reportedly a serious one among the students, the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences is called upon to see to it that EBP courses are offered, especially for first-year students.

Some students claimed that they have never heard of commercially produced self-study Business English books which could make up for the lack of EBP courses. In light of their reported interest in reading additional books to improve their English, instructors are urged to include a list of recommended readings in every course outline. Furthermore, to overcome the students' complaint of not having the time or inclination for further reading, instructors may assign reading one or more of these books as an ongoing individual or group classroom project. Instructors may also help their students overcome the difficulties of understanding the major courses taught in English through the provision of technical translations for the major business concepts presented in their respective courses.

The present researchers further recommend that more research be done to investigate the students' actual level of English proficiency since the present study has been solely concerned with these students' perceptions of their proficiency, for the students' mere belief that the lack of English skills is hampering their academic



achievement may not necessarily mean that this is the case. Appropriate achievement tests may be designed and used for this purpose.

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## Appendix

## A Translated Version of the Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

The present researchers are conducting a study entitled Jordanian Economics and Administrative Science students' Perceptions of the Need for Business English Courses and the Potential Impact of the Use of English as the Predominant Medium of Instruction on Academic Achievement. You are kindly requested to answer the items of this questionnaire carefully and accurately. Be assured that the information obtained in the course of this study will be kept confidential and used only for the purposes of academic research.

Thank You.

## PART I: Personal Information

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Point Average: \_\_\_\_\_

The Number of Major Courses Studied thus Far: \_\_\_\_\_

The Number of Major Courses Studied in English: \_\_\_\_\_

***PART II: The impact of the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction on the achievement of the students of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yarmouk University***

Number	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The use of English as the medium of instruction is the main cause of my low academic achievement.					
2.	Teaching the major courses in English is the main cause of my low academic achievement.					
3.	The instructor's use of Arabic in teaching major courses (which should be otherwise taught in English) is the main cause of my low achievement.					
4.	My academic achievement would improve if Arabic were the medium of instruction.					
5.	I can comprehend the meanings of the business concepts despite the lack of special courses in Business English.					

Number	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6.	There is a need for studying additional Business English courses, which would facilitate my understanding of the major business concepts in the courses taught in English.					
7.	Studying Business English courses would have a positive impact on my academic achievement.					
8.	The General English language skills courses (viz., LC 099, LC 100, and LC 111) help improve the English I gained from school.					
9.	There should be a mechanism to ensure students' enrollment in LC 099, LC 100, and LC 111 in their first year of study in order to facilitate their learning of the major courses taught in English.					
10.	The content of LC 099, LC 100, and LC 111 is enough to satisfy my current educational and future occupational needs.					
11.	LC 099, LC 100, and LC 111 cannot replace a specialized Business English course.					
12.	My proficiency in English affect neither my academic achievement nor my potential future job performance.					
13.	I resort to literal translation of the content of the major courses taught in English to facilitate my learning and understanding.					
14.	There is a problem in my understanding of the major courses taught in English due to the lack of special English language courses which may help me better understand the content of these courses.					
15.	Studying Business English courses would facilitate my understanding of the major courses taught in English.					
16.	English is one of my concerns in homework and examinations.					
17.	I face a problem in identifying what I should learn and understand as a result of my weakness in English.					
18.	Even if my proficiency in English is low, I can still satisfy my educational needs.					

Number	Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19.	My proficiency in English, which I gained from school, is enough to understand the major courses taught in English.					
20.	Studying Business English courses would help me perform better in the labor market.					
21.	I have never heard about the existence of special Business English books.					
22.	I have enough time to read additional materials which help improve both my General and Business English.					
23.	I am interested in reading additional materials to improve my English.					

### PART III: Open-Ended Questions

1. How do you evaluate yourself in terms of your proficiency in General and Business English? Are you proficient enough to satisfy your current educational and future occupational needs?

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2. Does the use of English as the predominant medium of instruction have an impact on your academic achievement? If so, what are the difficulties that face you in your understanding of the major courses taught in English?

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3. Has secondary school prepared you to study university major courses in English?

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4. What do you suggest to improve the current instructional situation at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences?

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*Please, feel free to use the back of this sheet for extra space.*

*Thank You.*