

**A STUDY OF ENGLISH USAGE BY IT PERSONNEL
IN THE GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK**

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

PORNTIP NARTTHANARUNG

**Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree in Business English for International Communication
at Srinakharinwirot University**

March 2004

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**A STUDY OF ENGLISH USAGE BY IT PERSONNEL
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AN ABSTRACT

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This research attempted to survey the English usage in the daily work and the problems faced by the IT personnel in the Government Savings Bank (GSB). The subjects consisted of 40 IT personnel. The data were collected by questionnaires and then analyzed by SPSS for Windows. The findings were as follows:

1. Reading was the most used skill, followed by listening, writing and speaking, respectively.

2. The main reading problem of the IT personnel was a lack of vocabulary and they failed to grasp the main point of what they read. The listening problems resulted from hearing unfamiliar accents, fast speech, deficient vocabulary and a lack of background knowledge. The writing problems they usually faced were grammatical errors, writing style and use of proper words. Finally, their speaking problems were grammatical errors, mispronunciation and a lack of self-confidence.

From the findings, it is suggested that the training programs for the IT personnel should greatly emphasize reading and moderately stress listening. Reading training programs should emphasize technical vocabulary and moderately stress general vocabulary. The listening program should be trained by native speakers in order to familiarize them with accents and vocabulary. The course also should aim at enabling the personnel to master the specific vocabulary which was frequently found at work.

การศึกษาการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของบุคลากรด้านเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ
ในธนาคารออมสิน

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

นางสาวพรทิพย์ นารณนระรุ่ง

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัยมหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจเพื่อการสื่อสารนานาชาติ

มีนาคม 2547

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งานวิจัยนี้เป็นการศึกษาถึงการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษรวมถึงปัญหาที่พบในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของบุคลากรด้านเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศในธนาคารออมสิน โดยรวบรวมข้อมูลจากแบบสอบถามจากพนักงานจำนวน 40 คน ข้อมูลที่ได้นำมาแปลด้วยโปรแกรม SPSS ได้ผลดังนี้

1. การอ่านเป็นทักษะที่พนักงานเหล่านี้ใช้กันมากที่สุด ทักษะที่ใช้เป็นลำดับถัดมาคือ การฟัง การเขียน และการพูด

2. ปัญหาที่พบในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษของบุคลากรด้านเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศในด้านการอ่าน คือการไม่สามารถจับใจความได้ รวมทั้งความรู้ในคำศัพท์ที่มีอยู่จำกัด ปัญหาในด้านการฟัง คือการไม่คุ้นเคยไม่สำเนียงที่ได้ฟัง การพูดที่เร็วเกินไป ความรู้ทางด้านคำศัพท์ และการขาดพื้นฐานทางความรู้ในเรื่องที่ฟัง ส่วนปัญหาที่พบในการเขียนก็คือความผิดพลาดในด้านไวยากรณ์ รูปแบบการเขียน และการเหมาะสมในการใช้คำต่าง ๆ และปัญหาที่พบในการพูดก็คือความผิดพลาดในด้านไวยากรณ์ การออกเสียงผิด ๆ รวมทั้งการขาดความมั่นใจในตัวเอง

ข้อเสนอแนะในการวิจัยนี้ คือ ควรจะมีการจัดฝึกอบรมให้กับบุคลากรด้านเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศในทักษะที่ใช้กันบ่อยก็คือ การอ่านและการฟัง ในด้านการอ่านนั้นควรจะเน้นที่คำศัพท์ทางเทคนิค รวมทั้งคำศัพท์โดยทั่ว ๆ ไป ส่วนในด้านการฟังนั้นควรจะเน้นที่สำเนียงการพูด และคำศัพท์ โดยจัดหาผู้สอนชาวต่างชาติมาเป็นผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อให้พนักงานเหล่านี้คุ้นเคยกับสำเนียงและรู้คำศัพท์มากขึ้น

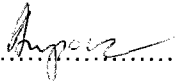
The Master's Project advisor, Chair of Business English for International Communication and Oral Defense Committee have approved this master's project as partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Master of Arts degree in Business English for International Communication of Srinakharinwirot University.

Project Advisor



.....
(Mr. Lee Quick)

Business English for International Communication Chair



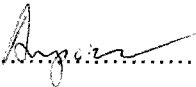
.....
(Assistant Professor Dr. Amporn Srisermbhok)

Oral Defense Committee



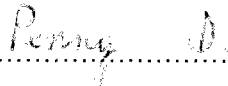
..... Chair

(Mr. Lee Quick)



..... Committee

(Assistant Professor Dr. Amporn Srisermbhok)



..... Committee

(Assistant Professor Penny Diskaparakai)

The Faculty of Humanities has approved this master's project as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Business English for International Communication of Srinakharinwirot University.



..... Dean of Faculty of Humanities

(Assoc. Prof. Supha Panjaroen)

9 March 2004

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Sincerest thanks to Mr. Lee Quick, my chair, Asst. Prof. Dr. Amporn Srisermbhok and Asst. Prof. Penny Diskaparakai, the committee, for their criticism and generous assistance.

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Finally, I also would like to give my special acknowledgment to the authors of various works whose names are listed in the bibliography.

Porntip Nartthanarung

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Nowadays, in the globalization era, languages work as an important tool to connect countries in the world together, in terms of relationships, trade, and culture (Klein. 1990 : 33-35). Therefore, it is helpful for them to have an international language for communicating. Currently, there are 4,000 to 5,000 living languages in the world but English is the most widely used language (Broughton; et al. 1980 : 1). It is estimated that 2 billion people, about a third of the world's population, use and speak English and it is predicted that, by 2050, half of the world's population will be competent in English (Salverda. 2002 : 6).

The ability to use English paves the way to social advancement and economic accomplishment. Further, it is the most commonly used instrument to contact the outside world. English serves the needs of international communication, the domains of science and high technology, international commerce, long-distance transportation, and mass entertainment. Moreover, Smith (1976 : 39) has claimed that English plays a significant role in both professional business transactions and industries.

In the business world, those who want to sell their products, read instruction manuals, or conduct business outside their country, need English (Kennedy; & Bolitho. 1984 : 2). Likewise, Crystal (1995 : 106) declared that English is the language used for most commercial transactions because of the USA's dominant economic position which acts as a magnet for international business and trade.

In the industrial world, English is regarded as an important tool for learning in the twenty first century because it handles the concepts and terms of modern science and technology. More than half the world's science journals are in English (Salverda. 2002 : 6).

In Thailand, English is regarded as the most widely used international language as well. It is estimated that the number of Thais who use and speak English is 600,000 to a million (Phinit-Akson. 2001 : 6). Foley (2001 : 24) has shown the major domains of English usage in Thailand as follows :

TABLE 1 THE MAJOR DOMAINS OF ENGLISH USAGE IN THAILAND

Major Domains of English	
1.	Working language of international organizations and conferences
2.	Scientific publications
3.	International banking, economic affairs and trade
4.	Advertising for global brands
5.	Audio-visual products (e.g. film, TV, popular music)
6.	Tourism
7.	Tertiary education
8.	International safety (e.g. 'AIRSPEAK', 'SEASPEAK')
9.	International law
10.	Interpretation and translation
11.	Technology transfer
12.	Internet communication

Table 1 shows that English plays a leading role in Thai business. In addition, English is accepted as a major part of globalization and technology for not only people in the academic and business world, but for all professions. The higher level of English proficiency one has, the better one can access modern technology, communication, and individual professional advancement.

Similarly, in Thailand, English has played a major role in computer and information technology in several aspects. Firstly, the researches and developments in the field are focused in the US. Secondly, the literature and conferences concerning the research findings and developments are English based. Thirdly, communication technology and software documents have been developed around the English language. Finally, the user base of new technology is primarily located in the US (Graddol. 2001 : 33).

Because of the significant roles mentioned above, IT personnel in Thailand should have a good command of English to serve their main objectives for their studies and professions. This is also true for those who work at the Government Savings Bank.

Statement of the Problem

The Government Savings Bank or GSB is a state enterprise which is also a juristic person guaranteed by the government. It is under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance, with 524 branches nationwide (Government Savings Bank. 2003 : Online). Because of high competition in the global economy, the GSB has developed its business, personnel, and information technology (IT) continuously in order to meet its customers' demands (Government Savings Bank. 2001 : 40-41).

The information technology system is a major part of the bank's system to help the customer service section and the back office to work more comfortably, speedily and accurately, and also keep the work up-to-date. However, the IT system of the GSB has developed rather more slowly than similar systems in other banks. The obvious example is the ATM service. The GSB has provided this service more slowly than other banks for several years. As a result, the number of GSB's customers is lower than at other banks.

The development of the GSB IT system is slower than at other banks because of the IT personnel themselves and their weak English skills. These personnel routinely work with high technology and must also update their technological knowledge by studying English documents. They also have to use English to contact foreigners. However, in fact, their English is not good enough. The obvious example is that when the personnel attended a seminar introducing new software or hardware, the spokesperson speaks in English. Some IT personnel understand, some do not. In this situation, the bank invests its money and time, but doesn't capitalize on the opportunity to get new technology to develop the bank.

Therefore, this research focuses on the English usage of the IT personnel in the GSB. The researcher will analyze the actual usage of English and usage problems among IT personnel and also present the findings as a factor in planning systematic English language training courses for the personnel.

Objectives of the Study

This study was carried out in an attempt to study the English skill levels of the IT personnel at GSB, the frequency they use English in their daily work and the problems they face when they use English. The findings can be used for planning and developing systematic English language courses for these personnel in the GSB.

Research Question

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What language skills do the GSB IT personnel use in their daily work, and how often do they use each of them?
2. What problems do the GSB IT personnel face when using each language skill?

Significance of the Study

IT plays a major role in the era of globalization. As seen above, the English language plays a major role in computer and information technology. The higher level of English proficiency IT personnel have, the better they can develop and create their work and organizations. In addition, proper use of English can reduce the waste of time and money in organizations. Based on this, this research studied the actual usage of English and the usage problems among IT personnel in the GSB. The findings can be used to better develop GSB personnel. The higher efficiency IT personnel of the GSB have, the more benefit the GSB has.

Scope of the Study

This research studied the English language used by the IT personnel at the Government Savings Bank in 2003. The subjects of this research were forty IT personnel who worked in the Information Technology Department and Software Development Department.

Expected Outcome

This study investigates the English usage of IT personnel in the Government Savings Bank. The findings will be useful to indicate the actual usage of English and the usage problems among IT staff. The results of this study will assist the GSB executives to realize how important English skills are for their IT personnel and inform the GSB executives what specific language skills and lexical areas of English are needed by IT personnel to effectively perform their work. This will be beneficial in planning for systematic English language development and training courses. It will also assist the planning and development of English teaching curricula and courses at the GSB Training Center. In addition, it will be a springboard for further research and study for researchers interested in English language needs analysis and training program design.

Definition of Terms

1. **GSB** referred to the Government Savings Bank.
2. **IT personnel** referred to those who worked for the Information Technology

Department and Software Development Department.

3. Language skills referred to the ability to listen, speak, read and write in English.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The related literature of this survey of English usage is divided into two areas: (1) English language needs in foreign countries and (2) English language needs in Thailand.

The Study of English Language Needs in Foreign Countries

Mosallem (1984) conducted a study entitled "English for Police Officers in Egypt". The survey showed that English played an important role in the work of police officers in Egypt. The degrees of priority and the frequency of English use were determined by the specialized departments in which the officers worked. As many as 95.6% of officers in the Tourist Department, and 45% of officers in the Arresting Department, indicated that speaking and listening were the two most important skills in their daily work.

Svendson; & Krebs (1984) surveyed the language forms and the contexts that health care officers use in their daily work. The results revealed that listening and writing were the language skills most required for their work.

Junge; Daniels; & Karmos (1984) surveyed personnel managers' opinions regarding the specific skills required for successful employment. The findings demonstrated that listening and speaking were rated the most important skills for the private sector, business and industries.

Tsui (1992) conducted a survey entitled "English Business Communication Skills and Training Needs of Non-native English-speaking Managers: A Case in Taiwan". The results confirmed that those non-native English-speaking managers seriously needed to

improve their English for business communication. As relatively little emphasis had been placed on the realistic communication in Taiwan's formal English language education, it was found that the list of the most urgently needed training courses for managers was English conversation and telephoning. Moreover, they also needed English for oral presentations, letter and report writing, visitor-reception communication and office communication.

Leila Barbara; et al. (1996) did a survey of how English was used for various communication purposes in a number of Brazilian business organizations. The objectives of the survey were to identify the languages used and the communicative tasks carried out by the business organizations and to obtain a profile of the companies according to their size and type. The results showed that 1) all organizations normally used Portuguese, but the great majority (72%) used English as the language of international communication. 2) Among the general documents produced, the following were more widely produced in English: proposals, prospectuses, reports and projects. This is because, these documents were particularly meant for external communication, which often required the use of an international language.

The Study of English Language Needs in Thailand

Karnchanasathit (1980) did a research entitled "A Survey of the Needs for the Use of Business English of Private Sectors". The survey aimed to find out the actual skill proficiency of the personnel and the actual proficiency needed by the business community. It also investigated whether the English skills of their personnel were good enough for work performance. The results revealed that most companies used English in

business transactions. Therefore, their personnel were required to have proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating, respectively. However, the most required skill was reading. Moreover, most of them thought that the English they had studied in educational institutes was not good enough to achieve the target performance.

Sonsa-ardjit (1980) did a survey entitled "Needs of English for Government Departments and State Enterprises in Bangkok". She investigated the degree of English used, the function of each skill and the level of competence required. The findings revealed that, generally, English was used moderately in the government departments and state enterprises. Reading was the most used skill, while translating was the least. The findings also showed that the actual language proficiency of the personnel in the surveyed departments was lower than the competence required by the organizations themselves.

Junsatitkul (1988) analyzed the needs of English for taxi drivers in Bangkok. She found that most taxi drivers in Bangkok needed English for their work, especially in terms of listening and speaking; they, in fact, needed to improve their speaking skills. The major purpose of English used was to introduce tourist sites. The inability to accurately communicate with foreigners was the primary problem for taxi drivers in Bangkok.

Narunartsenie (1989) studied English used in the professional and social lives of immigration police officers who graduated from the Police Cadet Academy in Bangkok. The finding indicated that speaking skills were needed most, followed by listening, reading and writing, respectively.

Boonjaipect (1992) surveyed the needs for English among the officers at the counters of the post offices in metropolitan Bangkok. It showed that the officers used

English extensively in the workplace. They rated speaking and listening as the most needed language skills. Another finding demonstrated that the most frequent task was giving service information. However officers often encountered problems with foreigners' speaking speed and accent.

Pholsward (1993) conducted a research entitled "English Language Needs of Thai Computing Professional". The information for this study was collected through questionnaires and interviews. The findings indicated that speaking skills were the most important in almost all positions, followed by reading and writing, respectively. The study also revealed the lack of language skills impeded the growth of the company with regard to its personnel development and competitiveness in the industry.

Akkakoson (1994) carried out an examination of English use for business communication in top Thai companies. The results of the study revealed that English was an important tool for business communication and that all four skills were very useful for most of the employees and were required most of the time at the managerial level. The high status group in the human resource management department gave the opinion that all four skills were also important to the supervisory level staff while only listening and speaking skills were very important to junior level staff. The middle status group thought that only listening and reading were of importance to the supervisory level whereas the low status group considered that listening, speaking and writing were essential to the supervisory level.

Jiranapakul (1996) did a research entitled "English Language Needs for Communication by Thai Engineers". The results revealed that all four skills are very useful for the engineers in doing their job well and in their career advancement. Most of

the engineers perceived that their reading skills were better than listening, speaking, and writing, respectively. The operational engineers needed listening and speaking training courses the most, whereas the managerial engineers needed writing and speaking the most.

Suphaprucksapongse (1998) studied the English language used at the Mining Business Unit, Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand. The finding revealed that reading was the most frequently used skill among the MBU staff, while translating was the least. The staff used English for cooperating in the workplace, writing reports and minutes, and summarizing texts and/or journals and so on. The major difficulties in using English that the MBU staff faced in their daily work were with vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, the training program for the MBU staff should be focused on reading and writing.

Phensiri (1999) investigated English used among Thai government officials in the Ministry of Education. The findings indicated that currently reading was the most frequently used skill, followed by writing, speaking, listening and translating, respectively. The findings also revealed that the subjects' language abilities were inadequate for their work requirements.

Yutdhana (2000) conducted a survey entitled "English Language Needs of Businesspeople in Chiang Mai". It was conducted to investigate the English needs of businesspeople in Chiang Mai categorized into seven types of business – real estate and decoration, tourism business, agriculture and agro-industries, finance and banking, handicraft and industries, health and education, and trading. The results showed that the overall English needs of businesspeople in Chiang Mai were at a high level. It also

showed that listening skills were a necessary skill for the businesspeople. She suggested that because, overall, the business people mostly listened to customers in business contacts, English language training for the businesspeople in Chiang Mai should be focused on conversational skills. Also, courses about making business contacts were important for them.

Khangkhun (2000) did a study entitled "Needs for English in the Telephone Organization of Thailand". She found that listening and speaking were the most needed skills. She also revealed that the problems and difficulties most affecting ability were derived from the language background of the learners themselves, their attitudes towards learning English, and the teaching methods used by English language instructors. Consequently, she suggested that the English curriculum and the teaching methods should be improved to be more practical.

Meemark (2002) conducted a study entitled "Needs and Problems of English among the Tourist Police". The findings indicated that all sections of the tourist police strongly needed all four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). However, listening was considered the most important. Engaging in telephone conversations, listening to complaints or misunderstanding foreign accents were regarded as the crucial problems. She recommended that, in the training courses, listening and speaking skills, together with vocabulary, should be emphasized for the tourist police.

As seen above, research on the needs for English in various careers were investigated, but no research was undertaken on the importance of English for IT personnel in the globalization era. Therefore, this research was conducted to discover the English skill levels of the IT personnel at GSB, the frequency they use English in their

daily work and the problems they face when they use English, so that the findings can be employed in planning a system of English language development and training courses for IT personnel at GSB.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology of the research. It contains data about the population of the study and sampling, the questionnaire, data collection, and data analysis and statistical procedures.

Population

The target population of this study were 368 IT personnel of the Government Savings Bank. They were grouped into 2 departments as follows:

1. Information Technology Department	256
2. Software Development Department	<u>112</u>
Total	368

Sampling Procedures

Forty IT personnel were randomly selected from the population as the subjects for this study as follows:

TABLE 2 THE NUMBER OF IT PERSONNEL PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

Department	Number of personnel	Chosen number
1. Information Technology Department	256	20
2. Software Development Department	112	20
Total	368	40

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was constructed to study the English usage of IT personnel at the GSB (See Appendix). The questionnaire consisted of 3 parts:

Part 1 General data

This part only required the respondents to indicate their departments. There were two choices: Information Technology Department or Software Development Department.

Part 2 Language skills used in the current job

This part only required the respondents to specify how often they used English language skills in their current job. There were four choices: often, sometimes, hardly ever, or never.

Part 3 Data regarding each skill

Questions covered data regarding the use of each English skill: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A four-point scale were used.

Listening skills

Item 1 required the respondents to specify who and what they listened to in English at work. Eight sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 2 required the respondents to specify the situations in which they used English listening skills. Four sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 3 required the respondents to specify the purposes for which they used English listening skills at work. Four sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 4 was an open-ended question concerned with listening problems the respondents faced when using English at work.

Speaking skills

Item 5 required the respondents to specify who they spoke to and what they spoke about in English at work. Six sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 6 asked the respondents to specify the situations in which they used English speaking skills. Four sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 7 asked the respondents to specify the purposes for which they used English speaking skills at work. Five sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 8 was an open-ended question concerned with speaking problems the respondents faced when using English at work.

Reading skills

Item 9 asked the respondents to specify what English they read at work. Seven sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 10 asked the respondents to specify the purposes for which they used English reading skill. Three sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 11 was an open-ended question concerned with reading skill problems the respondents faced when using English at work.

Writing skills

Item 12 asked the respondents to specify what they wrote in English at work and how often. Four sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents need it.

Item 13 asked the respondents to specify the purposes for which they used English writing skill. Three sub-items were included. An open-ended statement was also provided if the respondents needed it.

Item 14 was an open-ended question concerned with writing problems the respondents faced when using English at work.

Data Collection

The data was collected through the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed to 40 subjects in the Information Technology Department and Software Development Department at the GSB.

Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

After the researcher received the complete questionnaires, the data were interpreted, categorized and tabulated on computer sheets. Then the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to complete the data analysis. The analyzed data were interpreted with regard to the research questions.

In this study, the statistic formulas used were as follows:

1. Percentage (%)
2. Mean (\bar{X})
3. Standard Deviation

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This purpose of this chapter is to report the results of the study. The research questions formulated in Chapter 1 were used to organize the presentation of the findings. The findings are based upon the answers obtained from the returned questionnaires, as follows:

Research Question 1: What language skills do the GSB IT personnel use in their daily work, and how often do they use each of them?

The information obtained from Part 2 of the questionnaire was calculated to assess the frequency and percentages of English skills used by the IT personnel. Then, the t-test was employed to test significant differences between the mean scores of each English skill used by the Information Technology Department (ITD) and the Software Development Department (SDD).

TABLE 3 A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF ENGLISH USAGE BY IT PERSONNEL IN THE GSB

Skill	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Total
Listening	8	13	15	4	40
(Percentage)	(20.00)	(32.50)	(37.50)	(10.00)	(100.00)
Speaking	1	4	25	10	40
(Percentage)	(2.50)	(10.00)	(62.50)	(25.00)	(100.00)
Reading	17	17	6	0	40
(Percentage)	(42.50)	(42.50)	(15.00)	(0.00)	(100.00)
Writing	2	15	19	4	40
(Percentage)	(5.00)	(37.50)	(47.50)	(10.00)	(100.00)

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage uses of the English skills of the IT personnel in the GSB. It shows that the personnel used all skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing, in their daily work. It can be concluded from Table 3 that reading was the most frequently used skill of the IT personnel, listening was second, writing was third, and speaking skills was the least used. This implies that reading was the most important skill for the personnel in the GSB. This was because the IT personnel regularly studied technical papers related to IT, modern technology and computer information that was taken from manuals, handbooks, textbooks, journals, articles, news, or the Internet. It was necessary for them to read these documents because they had to create, develop and increase their knowledge of their work in order to bring benefits to the GSB and also achieve their work targets.

TABLE 4 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Skill	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Listening	ITD	20	2.80	0.95	1.28	0.63
	SDD	20	2.45	0.89		
Speaking	ITD	20	1.85	0.59	-0.57	0.15
	SDD	20	1.95	0.76		
Reading	ITD	20	3.25	0.79	-0.22	0.83
	SDD	20	3.30	0.66		
Writing	ITD	20	2.35	0.67	-0.20	0.74
	SDD	20	2.40	0.82		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the ITD and the SDD at the 0.05 level in means of using English skills.

The information obtained from Part 3 of the questionnaire (Items 1–14) was calculated to determine the frequency and percentage of activities in each skill. Then, mean scores were computed. The results are shown in Tables 5-16.

TABLE 5 A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE USE OF ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Total
Visitors	0	7	17	16	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(17.50)	(42.50)	(40.00)	(100.00)
Consultants	0	6	11	23	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(15.00)	(27.50)	(57.50)	(100.00)
Telephone	2	2	15	21	40
(Percentage)	(5.00)	(5.00)	(37.50)	(52.50)	(100.00)
Daily conversation	0	5	18	17	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(12.50)	(45.00)	(42.50)	(100.00)
News	3	14	13	10	40
(Percentage)	(7.50)	(35.00)	(32.50)	(25.00)	(100.00)
Conferences/ Seminars	5	23	5	7	40
(Percentage)	(12.50)	(57.50)	(12.50)	(17.50)	(100.00)
Training	1	21	12	6	40
(Percentage)	(2.50)	(52.50)	(30.00)	(15.00)	(100.00)
Recommendation s/Presentations	2	8	21	9	40
(Percentage)	(5.00)	(20.00)	(52.50)	(22.50)	(100.00)

Table 5 illustrates the frequency and percentage of use of the listening skills of the IT personnel in their work activities. The data show that the personnel used this skill most frequently in "Conferences/Seminars". Other activities for which they used listening skills quite frequently include "News", "Training", and "Recommendations/Presentations".

TABLE 6 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING
ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITES

Activities	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Visitors	ITD	20	1.80	0.70	0.17	0.03*
	SDD	20	1.75	0.79		
Consultants	ITD	20	1.60	0.82	0.24	0.34
	SDD	20	1.55	0.69		
Telephone	ITD	20	1.60	0.94	-0.19	0.94
	SDD	20	1.65	0.67		
Daily conversation	ITD	20	1.60	0.68	-0.89	0.78
	SDD	20	1.80	0.70		
News	ITD	20	2.30	1.08	0.30	0.26
	SDD	20	2.20	0.77		
Conferences/ Seminars	ITD	20	2.70	0.86	0.37	0.50
	SDD	20	2.60	0.99		
Training	ITD	20	2.30	0.80	-0.96	0.64
	SDD	20	2.55	0.76		
Recommendations/ Presentations	ITD	20	2.00	0.73	-0.53	0.30
	SDD	20	2.15	0.88		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 6 shows that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of listening skills used with visitors by the personnel in the ITD and the SDD. The mean scores of the ITD (1.80) were higher than those of the SDD (1.75). Therefore, the ITD used English listening skills with visitors more frequently than the SDD.

TABLE 7 A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE USE OF ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

Situations	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Total
Face-to-face	3	10	16	11	40
(Percentage)	(7.50)	(25.00)	(40.00)	(27.50)	(100.00)
Telephone	2	4	20	14	40
(Percentage)	(5.00)	(10.00)	(50.00)	(35.00)	(100.00)
Conferences/ Seminars	4	15	15	6	40
(Percentage)	(10.00)	(37.50)	(37.50)	(15.00)	(100.00)
Recommendations/ Presentations	2	14	18	6	40
(Percentage)	(5.00)	(35.00)	(45.00)	(15.00)	(100.00)

Table 7 shows the frequency and percentages of situations when/where the IT personnel had to use English listening skills. According to this Table, the personnel used this skill most frequently in "Conferences/Seminars" situations. They also used this skill quite frequently for "Recommendations/Presentations", "Face-to-face" communication, and "Telephone" conversations, respectively.

TABLE 8 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING
ENGLISH LISTENING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

Situations	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Face-to-face	ITD	20	2.30	1.03	1.38	0.35
	SDD	20	1.95	0.76		
Telephone	ITD	20	1.95	1.00	0.78	0.92
	SDD	20	1.75	0.55		
Conferences/ Seminars	ITD	20	2.35	0.88	-0.60	0.48
	SDD	20	2.50	0.89		
Recommendations/ Presentations	ITD	20	2.20	0.77	-0.72	0.36
	SDD	20	2.40	0.82		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 8 shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the ITD and the SDD at the 0.05 level in means of using English skills.

TABLE 9 A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE USE OF ENGLISH SPEAKING
SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Total
Visitors	0	2	20	18	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(5.00)	(50.00)	(45.00)	(100.00)
Consultants	0	5	13	22	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(12.50)	(32.50)	(55.00)	(100.00)
Trainer	0	7	9	24	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(17.50)	(22.50)	(60.00)	(100.00)
Telephone	2	4	17	17	40
(Percentage)	(5.00)	(10.00)	(42.50)	(42.50)	(100.00)
Daily conversations	0	6	19	15	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(15.00)	(47.50)	(37.50)	(100.00)
Conferences/ Seminars	0	11	12	17	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(27.50)	(30.00)	(42.50)	(100.00)

Table 9 indicates the frequency and percentages in using English speaking skills of the IT personnel in their work. It shows that the personnel used this skill most frequently on the telephone. They did not use this skill as much for "Visitors", "Consultants", "Trainers", "Daily conversations", or "Conferences/Seminars".

TABLE 10 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

Activities	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Visitors	ITD	20	1.60	0.60	0.00	0.16
	SDD	20	1.60	0.60		
Consultants	ITD	20	1.65	0.81	0.38	0.68
	SDD	20	1.55	0.76		
Trainer	ITD	20	1.45	0.76	-0.92	0.40
	SDD	20	1.70	0.80		
Telephone	ITD	20	1.70	1.03	-0.55	0.74
	SDD	20	1.85	0.59		
Daily conversations	ITD	20	1.65	0.81	-1.10	0.73
	SDD	20	1.90	0.55		
Conferences/ Seminars	ITD	20	1.65	0.81	-1.37	0.22
	SDD	20	2.05	0.83		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 10 illustrates that there was no statistically significant difference in the means of using English speaking skills in different activities between the ITD and the SDD at the 0.05 level.

TABLE 12 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING
ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

Situations	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Face-to-face	ITD	20	2.00	1.03	0.55	0.77
	SDD	20	1.85	0.75		
Telephone	ITD	20	1.80	0.95	0.42	0.74
	SDD	20	1.70	0.57		
Conferences/ Seminars	ITD	20	1.75	0.79	-0.70	0.10
	SDD	20	1.95	0.76		
Recommendations/ Presentations	ITD	20	1.55	0.89	-1.22	0.04*
	SDD	20	1.95	0.83		

* p < 0.05

Table 12 illustrates that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of speaking skills in Recommendations/Presentations by the ITD and the SDD. The mean scores of the SDD (1.95) were higher than those of the ITD (1.55). Therefore, the SDD used English speaking skills in Recommendation/Presentation situations more frequently than the ITD.

TABLE 13 A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE USE OF ENGLISH READING
SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Total
Letters/Faxes/					
E-mails	20	18	2	0	40
(Percentage)	(50.00)	(45.00)	(5.00)	(0.00)	(100.00)
Agendas					
	0	5	17	18	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(12.50)	(42.50)	(45.00)	(100.00)
Minutes					
	0	5	15	20	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(12.50)	(37.50)	(50.00)	(100.00)
Texts/Journals					
	19	14	6	1	40
(Percentage)	(47.50)	(35.00)	(15.00)	(2.50)	(100.00)
Manuals/					
Handbooks	22	14	4	0	40
(Percentage)	(55.00)	(35.00)	(10.00)	(0.00)	(100.00)
Articles					
	10	22	8	0	40
(Percentage)	(25.00)	(55.00)	(20.00)	(0.00)	(100.00)
Magazines/News					
	9	13	17	1	40
(Percentage)	(22.50)	(32.50)	(42.50)	(2.50)	(100.00)

Table 13 displays the frequency and percentages in using English reading skills of the IT personnel in the above activities. It shows that the personnel used this skill quite frequently in reading "Manuals/Handbooks", and less frequently in reading "Letters/Faxes/E-mails".

TABLE 14 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING
ENGLISH READING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITES

Activities	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Letters/Faxes/ E-mails	ITD	20	3.65	0.49	2.18	0.86
	SDD	20	3.25	0.64		
Agendas	ITD	20	1.60	0.60	-0.64	0.64
	SDD	20	1.75	0.79		
Minutes	ITD	20	1.60	0.60	-0.21	0.72
	SDD	20	1.65	0.81		
Texts/Journals	ITD	20	3.35	0.75	0.55	0.64
	SDD	20	3.20	0.89		
Manuals/ Handbooks	ITD	20	3.45	0.60	0.00	0.13
	SDD	20	3.45	0.76		
Articles	ITD	20	3.15	0.67	0.81	0.16
	SDD	20	2.95	0.69		
Magazines/News	ITD	20	2.85	0.88	0.70	0.52
	SDD	20	2.65	0.81		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 14 points out that there was no statistically significant difference between the ITD and the SDD at the 0.05 level in means of using English reading skills in different activities.

TABLE 15 A FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE USE OF ENGLISH WRITING
SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Total
Letters/Faxes/ E-mails	9	18	9	4	40
(Percentage)	(22.50)	(45.00)	(22.50)	(10.00)	(100.00)
Agendas	0	2	11	27	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(5.00)	(27.50)	(67.50)	(100.00)
Minutes	0	2	11	27	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(5.00)	(27.50)	(67.50)	(100.00)
Work Reports	0	2	14	24	40
(Percentage)	(0.00)	(5.00)	(35.00)	(60.00)	(100.00)

Table 15 illustrates the frequency and percentages in using English writing skills of the IT personnel in their work activities. The table shows that this skill was used frequently for letter/fax/e-mail writing. They did not use this skill as much for "Agendas", "Minutes", and "Work reports".

TABLE 16 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ITD AND THE SDD OF MEANS IN USING ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS IN DIFFERENT ACTIVITES

Activities	Department	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation	T-test	P-value
Letters/Faxes/ E-mails	ITD	20	3.00	0.86	1.28	0.41
	SDD	20	2.60	0.94		
Agendas	ITD	20	1.35	0.49	-0.33	0.13
	SDD	20	1.40	0.68		
Minutes	ITD	20	1.35	0.49	-0.33	0.13
	SDD	20	1.40	0.68		
Work Reports	ITD	20	1.35	0.49	-1.28	0.15
	SDD	20	1.55	0.69		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 16 points out that there was no statistically significant difference between the ITD and the SDD at the 0.05 level in means of using English writing skills in different activities.

Research Question 2: What problems do the GSB IT personnel face when using each language skill?

In this part, problems in English usage by the IT personnel obtained from part 3 of the questionnaire (Item 4, 8, 11, and 14) were reported skill by skill. All problems noted were from the returned questionnaires.

Listening Problems

The ITD

The listening problems of the ITD were classified into two main groups, namely problems caused by speakers and problems caused by listeners.

1. Problems caused by speakers.

Speed was the greatest problem in this category. The ITD sometimes lost some of the content when they listened to unfamiliar accents, especially from those who were non-native English speakers. Native speakers who spoke too fast also caused problems for the ITD.

2. Problems caused by listeners.

The lack of knowledge of technical terms was a primary problem which the ITD faced. Also, lack of practice; that is, the ITD seldom listened to English, therefore, they usually had difficulty in comprehending what was being said.

The SDD

The listening problems of the SDD were classified in two main groups as follows:

1. Problems caused by speakers.

Speed was also a major problem in this category. The other problem was the speakers' accent, especially from those who were non-native English speakers, such as Malaysians or Indians.

2. Problems caused by listeners.

Similar to the ITD, the lack of knowledge of technical terms and lack of practice also caused misunderstanding and incomprehension from the SDD.

Speaking Problems

The ITD

The speaking problems of the ITD were twofold: (a) problems caused by the language and (b) problems caused by the ITD themselves.

1. Problems caused by the language.

The most important aspect of this problem was mispronunciation. They were worried about pronunciation and often pronounce words incorrectly, which confused foreigners. The other problem was vocabulary; that was they were unable to use the proper words to express their ideas in a fluent form.

2. Problems caused by the ITD themselves.

They had a limited knowledge of vocabulary because they did not practice. They had little opportunity to use the speaking skills every day, which caused a reduction of speaking fluency. In addition, they usually thought in Thai, then translated it to English.

The SDD

Similar to the ITD, the speaking problems of the SDD were classified into problems caused by the language and problems caused by the SDD themselves.

1. Problems caused by the language.

Their major problem was using appropriate words, especially formal or technical words, while talking. Another problem was English grammar.

2. Problems caused by the SDD themselves.

Lack of self-confidence was the biggest problem in this area. They often pronounced words incorrectly. Thus, they were reluctant to speak English because they felt embarrassed. Similar to the ITD, they had little opportunity to use the skill and usually translated from Thai to English.

Reading problems

The reading problems of the ITD and the SDD were similar. The major problem for them was vocabulary. The findings showed that sometimes it was difficult for them to understand and sometimes they misunderstood. They occasionally didn't understand what they read. This was due to their limited vocabulary. They also failed to grasp the main points of what they read.

Writing problems

The major problem of the ITD and the SDD was grammatical errors including misspelling, no conjunctions between clauses, and errors in tenses. Moreover, it was

difficult for them to choose the most suitable words to express their ideas clearly and correctly.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a conclusion of the study and discussion, including an interpretation of the findings. The research questions formulated in Chapter 1 were used to organize the conclusion. Finally, suggestions for designing English training programs for the IT personnel at the GSB are presented.

Conclusion

This research study investigated the English usage by the IT personnel in the Government Savings Bank. In conducting this research, the researcher asked the following questions: (1) what language skills do the IT personnel use in their daily work, and how often do they use each of them?; and (2) what problems do the IT personnel face when using each language skill?

The findings are as follows:

Research Question 1: What language skills do the GSB IT personnel use in their daily work, and how often do they use each of them?

The findings: the IT personnel used the four English language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but their use frequency varied.

Reading was ranked as the foremost used skill. According to the frequency-scale ranking, manuals/handbooks were read most frequently.

Listening was ranked as the second most used skill. The type of listening that the IT personnel most engaged in was conferences/seminars.

Writing was ranked as the third most used skill. According to the frequency-scale ranking, the IT personnel used English writing to write letters/faxes/e-mails most frequently.

Speaking was ranked as the least used skill. The IT personnel used spoken English largely on the telephone

Research Question 2: What problems do the GSB IT personnel face when using each language skill?

Based on the findings, the listening problems of the IT personnel resulted from hearing unfamiliar accents, fast speech, deficient vocabulary and a lack of background knowledge.

The speaking problems of the IT personnel were grammatical errors, mispronunciation and a lack of self-confidence.

The reading problem of the IT personnel was they failed to grasp the main point of what they read and a lack of vocabulary.

The writing problems of the IT personnel were grammatical errors, writing style, and use of proper words.

In summary, reading was the most frequently used skill of the IT personnel. They used this skill most frequently in "Manuals/Handbooks". This was because they regularly studied technical papers related to IT, high technology and computers. However, they had some problems with vocabulary and failing to grasp the main points of what they read.

Listening was a skill they used moderately. They most often used this skill in conferences/seminars. The problems they faced when using this skill were unfamiliar accents, fast speech, vocabulary and a lack of background knowledge.

Writing was ranked as the third most used skill. The IT personnel most frequently used English writing to write letters/faxes/e-mails. The writing problems they usually faced were grammatical errors, writing style and use of proper words.

Speaking was ranked as the least used skill. They used spoken English primarily on the telephone. The problems they regularly faced were grammatical errors, mispronunciation and a lack of self-confidence.

Discussion

The findings of this research study showed that reading was the most frequently used skill. It was not surprising that the findings of this research paper were consistent with those of previous research studies, as have been discussed in Chapter 2. This was because most employees in such organizations did not deal regularly with foreigners. In fact, they work mainly with documents.

The findings of this research study, however, were not consistent with some of the studies discussed in Chapter 2. This contrast occurred because some careers or personnel worked mainly with foreigners, whereas the IT personnel studied by the researcher did not. Speaking and listening was not as important as reading because the main work of the IT personnel in the GSB was to create and develop IT systems to assist the customer service sections and the back office to work more comfortably, speedily and accurately, and also to keep the work up-to-date and compete with other banks.

Therefore, the IT personnel regularly studied technical papers related to IT, technology and computers. IT, modern technology and computer information were taken from manuals, handbooks, textbooks, journals, articles, news, or the Internet. Accordingly, it made sense that the personnel used reading skills the most. They read to create, develop and increase their knowledge of their work in order to bring benefits to the GSB and also achieve their work targets.

In addition, the findings of this research study show that the ITD and the SDD used their reading skills in much the same way. A possible explanation is that their knowledge is similar. Most of them graduated with bachelor of computer science degrees which did not emphasize English. Therefore, their English knowledge is not always adequate to meet the requirements of their jobs. This problem, however, can be solved by training and reading more technical documents to enhance their knowledge of technical vocabulary.

The findings also reveal that the ITD and SDD use the same language skills. The language ability problems and differences of the IT personnel are not determined by which department they work with, ITD or SDD. Therefore, they should be trained in the same programs and the programs given should be those they need the most in order to increase their work efficiency.

Though the language ability is sufficient for the current work, the organization must take charge in providing appropriate intensive training all personnel. The course should be designed according to the English usage and needs of the personnel and the level of language skill required for the work.

Suggestions

Based on the overall findings, the training programs for the IT personnel should greatly emphasize reading and moderately stress listening.

For the reading program, the most important aspect should be vocabulary. Training programs should emphasize technical vocabulary highly and stress general vocabulary moderately.

As for the listening program, accents and vocabulary should be stressed. The IT personnel should be trained by native speakers in order to familiarize them with accents and vocabulary. The course also should aim at enabling the personnel to master the specific vocabulary which is frequently found at work.

Recommendations for further research

Based on the findings, the following areas for further research are suggested:

1. Further research concerning English usage at other departments in the GSB, such as the Foreign Relations Department, or apart from IT personnel, such as engineers or receptionists, should be conducted because information from the whole organization would be useful for new personnel recruitment and for planning suitable training programs for existing personnel at GSB.

2. Further study should include questions to ask the GSB executives about their perceptions of the IT personnel's English proficiency, training needs of the personnel, and training provisions in GSB. As a result, it would be useful for colleges or universities and training institutes for their course or syllabus design.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Part 1 General Data

Please answer the following questions based on actual information.

Name of Department Information Technology
 Software Development

Part 2 Language Skills usage in the current job

Please read and answer every question by putting an X on the scale showing the frequency of your English language usage.

Often = 20 – 30 times a month

Sometimes = 10 – 19 times a month

Hardly ever = 1 – 9 times a month

Never = 0 times

How often do you use English skills in your current job?

Skills	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Listening				
Speaking				
Reading				
Writing				

Part 3 Data Regarding Each Skill

Please read and answer every question by putting an X on the scale showing the frequency of your English language usage.

Often = 20 – 30 times a month

Sometimes = 10 – 19 times a month

Hardly ever = 1 – 9 times a month

Never = 0 times

Listening Skills

1. Who and what do you **listen** to in English at work?

Listening Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Visitors				
Consultants				
Telephone				
Daily conversation				
News				
Conferences/Seminars				
Training				
Recommendations/Presentations				
Other				

2. In what situations do you use **English listening skills** and how often do they occur?

Listening Situations	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Face-to-face				
Telephone				
Conferences/Seminars				
Recommendations/Presentations				
Other				

3. For what purposes do you use **English listening skills** at work?

(You can indicate more than one choice)

- To respond to conversations
- To summarize
- To write reports/minutes
- To analyze
- Other

4. Please state your problems (if any) concerning **English listening skills** that you encounter while working.

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Speaking Skills

5. In what activities do you **speak** English and how frequent does it occur?

Speaking Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
With visitors				
With consultants				
With trainers				
On telephone				
Daily conversation				
Conferences/Seminars				
Other				

6. In which situations do you use **English speaking skills** and how frequently do they occur?

Speaking Situations	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Face-to-face				
Telephone				
Conferences/Seminars				
Recommendations/Presentations				
Other				

7. For what purposes do you use **English speaking skills** at your work?

(You can select more than one choice)

- To respond to conversations
- To co-ordinate
- To give information/ideas
- To discuss
- To ask/answer questions
- Other

8. Please state your problems (if any) concerning **English speaking skills** you encounter while working.

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Reading Skills

9. How often do you use **English reading skills** for the following?

Reading Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Letters/Faxes/E-mails				
Agendas				
Minutes				
Texts/Journals				
Manuals/Handbooks				
Articles				
Magazines/News				
Other				

10. For what purposes do you use **English reading skills** at your work?

(You can indicate more than one choice)

- To get information for corresponding letters
- To study
- To analyze
- Other

11. Please state your problems (if any) concerning **English reading skills** that you encounter while working.

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Writing Skills

12. How often do you use **English writing skills** for the following activities?

Writing Activities	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never
Letters/Faxes/E-mails				
Agendas				
Minutes				
Work Reports				
Other				

13. For what purposes do you use **English writing skills** at your work?

(You can select more than one choice)

- To correspond with letters/faxes
- To perform daily work
- To request cooperation
- Other

14. Please state your problems (if any) concerning **English writing skills** you encounter while working.

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VITAE

VITAE

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