

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents in four sections the findings of the study. The first section presents the analysis of data obtained from the students' questionnaires and interviews. The second section presents the analysis of data obtained from lecturers' questionnaires as well as interviews with them. The third section presents the summary of the findings. The last section presents the recommendations made by the students and lecturers to improve the reading component.

#### 4.1 DATA OBTAINED FROM STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS

##### 4.1.1 STUDENTS' CHOICE OF ENGLISH READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.1 : Students' Choice of English Reading Materials

Type Of Reading Material	Percentage of Students
Newspapers	95%
Magazines	81%
Business related reference materials	61%
Story books	28%
Others (mail, internet, newsletters)	6%

(The total does not come up to 100% because students could have more than one option).

Table 4.1.1. shows that the majority of the students (95%) read newspapers whereas 81% read magazines. 61% referred to reference

materials related to the business course. Only 28% of the students read story-books and 6% read other reading materials.

#### 4.1.2 REASONS FOR READING

Table 4.1.2 : Hierarchy Of Reasons For Referring To Materials In English.

Reasons For reading	Percentage Of Students
To pass examination	71%
To improve general knowledge	68%
To obtain essential information	56%
To obtain additional information	48%
To complete assignments	46%
Others	7%

As shown in Table 4.1.2, the majority of the students (71%) indicated that the main reason for reading was to pass examinations. 68% of the students read in order to improve their general knowledge. This is followed by 56% who cited reading as a means to obtain essential information, 48% read to obtain additional information, and 46% read to complete assignments. A small group – 7% gave other reasons such as interest, culture, and personal development.

During the interviews, some students said that they read newspaper and magazines to improve their general knowledge. They realized that better general knowledge aids comprehension of texts. They discovered that as their general knowledge increased, they were able to draw on prior



knowledge to understand the texts and do the tasks. The other students said that they read business related reference materials to substantiate knowledge gained from lectures or tutorials. These students mentioned that they obtained essential and additional information from the reference materials to prepare for examinations and complete assignments.

#### 4.1.3 COMPREHENSION OF MATERIALS IN READING COMPONENT

Table 4.1.3 : Comprehension Ability Of Students

Comprehension Ability	Percentage Of Students
Understand all of the materials- 100%	10%
Understand 75% of the materials	57%
Understand about 50% of the materials	33%
Understand less than 25% of the materials	0%
Understand 0% of the materials	0%

The students' view on their ability in comprehending materials in the reading component is shown in Table 4.1.3. A small percentage of the students were good readers and could understand all the contents of the materials. The majority (57%) indicated they understood about three quarters of the materials and 33% indicated they were able to understand about half of the materials. This level of comprehension is unsatisfactory because it may lead to partial understanding, unintelligent guessing or wrong interpretation.

Generally, students' comprehension is believed to be at satisfactory level when they could understand about 75% of the texts.

The findings suggest that students need help in comprehending texts. Instruction on reading should be able to improve their reading ability. There should be more effort to help weaker students understand the text.

#### 4.1.4 HINDRANCES TO COMPREHENSION OF READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.4 : Students' View On Aspects Of English That Hinder Comprehension

Aspect That Hinders Comprehension	Percentage Of Students
Vocabulary	81%
Lengthy paragraphs	59%
Unfamiliar topic & content	57%
Grammar	42%
Organization	0%
Others	2%

(The total does not come up to 100% because students could have more than one option).

The study also attempted to find out what hindered the students' comprehension of materials in the reading component. The responses as represented in Table 4.1.4, show that the majority of the students (81%) believed that not knowing the vocabulary was the main hindrance to comprehension of materials in the reading component. Long paragraphs and unfamiliar contents hindered the comprehension of 59% and 57% of

the students respectively. 42% cited grammar as a hindrance to comprehension and 2% stated other aspects without elaboration. None of the students had problems with the organization of the text.

#### 4.1.5 GENERAL VIEW ON THE READING MATERIALS

The evaluation of the reading materials began with analyzing the usefulness, level of interest and level of difficulty of the materials. Subsequently, it proceeded to analyze specific aspects of the materials. Lastly, the students concluded on the value of the materials.

##### (a) USEFULNESS OF THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.5 (a) : Students' View On The Usefulness Of The Reading Materials

Usefulness Of Material	Percentage Responses
Very useful	11%
Useful	70%
A little useful	19%

As shown in Table 4.1.5 (a), the majority (70%) found that the materials were useful. 11% of the students rated the materials as very useful. 19% of the students were of the opinion that the materials were a little useful.

Students commented in the interviews that they found the materials useful because these materials had increased their knowledge of business culture, environment and practices in foreign countries and improved their comprehension of business texts. The students also said that the

knowledge gained had improved their understanding of certain issues in other subjects. All of the students interviewed found that the materials were relevant to the course and enabled them to apply the reading skills learned.

(b) LEVEL OF INTEREST

Table 4.1.5 (b) : Students' View On The Level Of Interest Of The Reading Materials

Level Of Interest	Percentage Responses
Very interesting	1%
Interesting	75%
Uninteresting	24%
Very uninteresting	0%

As for the level of interest, the majority of the students (75%) found the materials interesting. However, quite a large percent (24%) of the students found the materials uninteresting. The results are shown in Table 4.1.5 (b).

During the interviews, the students who found the materials interesting said the materials were interesting because many new business concepts, themes and trends were introduced. They mentioned that they found it interesting to learn about business events that happened in other countries and compare the advantages and disadvantages of certain practices. The students who found the materials uninteresting said the contents of the materials were too technical and difficult for weak students.

(c) LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Table 4.1.5 (c) : Students' View On The Difficulty Level Of The Materials

Level Of Difficulty	Percentage Responses
Very difficult	1%
Difficult	31%
Right level	63%
Easy	5%

According to Table 4.1.5 (c), most of the students considered the materials were of the right level. A total of 63% of the students were comfortable with the level of difficulty encountered while doing the tasks in the reading component. 5% considered the materials easy. However, 31% considered the materials difficult and 1% rated the materials as very difficult.

During the interviews, the students said they considered the materials as difficult because many new vocabulary and long sentences in the texts hindered their comprehension. The students also mentioned that the materials should be difficult because there were students who sought help from friends and lecturers to complete reading tasks given by the lecturers.

#### 4.1.6 VIEWS ON FOUR ASPECTS OF THE READING MATERIALS

##### (a) VOCABULARY

Table 4.1.6 (a) : Students' View On Vocabulary In The Reading Materials

Description	Percentage Responses
Very difficult	14%
Difficult	58%
Right level	26%
Easy	2%

Table 4.1.6 (a) shows that the majority of the students (72%) felt that the vocabulary tasks in the reading materials were difficult or very difficult. 26% of the students felt the vocabulary tasks were of the right level. A negligible percentage, 2% of the students thought the vocabulary was very easy.

This was confirmed in the interviews in which the majority of the students mentioned that the vocabulary was difficult and they frequently used the dictionary to find the meanings of unknown words while reading the texts. Some students said that they were still unable to fully comprehend the texts after finding meanings of unknown words in the dictionary.

(b) THE LANGUAGE USED IN THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.6 (b) : Students' View On The Language Used In The Materials

Description	Percentage Responses
Very difficult	Nil
Difficult	25%
Right level	73%
Easy	2%

According to Table 4.1.6 (b), the majority of the students (73%) felt that the language used was of the right level. 25% of the students, however, were of the opinion that the language was difficult. A negligible percentage (2%) described the language as easy.

During the interviews, the students who found the language used in the reading materials was of the right level said that the materials had the same standard as texts in other core subjects of CIMA Course such as Accounting, Management and Law. They realized the language of the examination questions is difficult so it would be good for them to familiarize themselves with difficult texts. The students who found the language difficult explained that students with poor command of English were unable to understand certain complex vocabulary and sentence structure in the texts.

(c) PASSAGES IN THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.6 (c) : Students' View On The Passages In The Reading Materials

Description	Percentage Responses
Very interesting	1%
Interesting	81%
Uninteresting	18%
Very uninteresting	0%

As shown in Table 4.1.6 (c), the majority (81%) of the students found the passages interesting. However, a substantial percentage of the students (18%) described the passages as uninteresting.

The interviews reveal that many students considered the passages as interesting because they could gain knowledge about current issues in the business world. Those students who found the passages uninteresting said the materials were stereotype and lengthy.

(d) TASKS IN THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.6 (d) : Students' View On The Tasks In The Reading Materials.

Description	Percentage Responses
Too many	5%
Many	10%
Sufficient	67%
Too few	18%



As shown in Table 4.1.6 (d), the students were divided in their views regarding the total number of tasks in the reading materials. The majority (67%) felt there were sufficient tasks. 18% of the students wanted more tasks. However, some felt that there were too many tasks in the reading component.

The results of interviews reveal that the majority of the students believed there were sufficient tasks for them to practise the skills learned. The students commented that the tasks increased their confidence of applying most of the skills learned. Their comprehension had improved as a result of sufficient practice. However, those students who felt there were insufficient tasks suggested that more tasks need to be included.

#### 4.1.7 BENEFITS OF USING THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.1.7 : The Benefits Of Using The Reading Materials

<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage Responses</b>
Benefit greatly	5%
Benefit	71%
Little benefit	24%
No Benefit	0%

According to Table 4.1.7, all students had benefited from using the materials. Among them 5% admitted they had benefited greatly. The majority (71%) indicated they had benefited from using the materials.

However, a substantial percentage of students said they derived little benefit from using the materials.

#### 4.1.8 THE BENEFITS OF READING THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Table 4.1.8 : The Benefits Of Reading Newspaper Articles

Areas Of Improvement	Percentage Responses
Increase vocabulary	84%
Understand important business topics	80%
Know the changes, trends and problems in business	76%
Improve grammar knowledge	0%

(The total does not come up to 100% because students could have more than one option).

The students reported that the newspaper-reading project, which was an extension of the reading component, had brought many benefits. As shown in Table 4.1.8, the majority (84%) of students said reading business articles in the newspapers helped them to increase their vocabulary, 80% said it helped them to understand business topics whereas 76% indicated they know the changes, trends & problems in business. None of the students indicated improvement in grammar knowledge as benefit of reading newspaper articles.

#### 4.1.9 THE MERITS OF THE READING TASKS

Table 4.1.9 : The Merits Of Doing The Reading Tasks.

Areas Of Improvement	Percentage Responses
Know more business key words	92%
Know the relation of facts in the text	61%
Improve pronunciation	49%
Understand graphic information	45%
Differentiate important from unimportant information	39%
Find main points quickly	39%
Reduce the time spent on reading	50%

(The total does not come up to 100% because students could have more than one option).

Positive responses were received regarding the reading tasks in the reading component. The findings as shown in Table 4.1.9, show that doing the reading tasks had helped the majority of the students (92%) to know more business key words. This is followed by 61% who knew the relation between facts. 49% had improved pronunciation, 45% understood graphic information, 39% could differentiate important from unimportant points, 39% could find main points quickly and 50% could read faster.

#### 4.1.10 STUDENTS' VIEW ON READING SKILLS THAT IMPROVED COMPREHENSION OF BUSINESS TEXTS.

The following data presents the analysis of the nine reading skills taught in the reading component of the Business English Courses.

Table 4.1.10: Reading Skills That Improve Comprehension Of Business Texts

Reading Skills	Percentage Responses
Locating main points	66%
Scanning for information	64%
Getting a general view of text	63%
Skimming for information	63%
Referencing skill	32%
Locating topic sentence	29%
Recognizing connectors	20%
Finding meanings of unknown words	0%
Predicting what will happen	0%

(The total does not come up to 100% because students could have more than one option).

Table 4.1.10 shows that the students were of the opinions that seven skills learned had improved their comprehension of business texts. The majority of them indicated skills such as “locating main points”, “scanning”, “skimming” and “getting general view of text”, were important to comprehension of texts. About 30% of the students found “referencing” and “locating topic sentence” helpful for comprehension. There were only 20% of the students who found “recognizing connectors” helpful for comprehension. With regard to “finding meanings of unknown words” and “predicting what will happen”, no student considered them to be helpful for comprehension.

#### 4.1.11 FREQUENCY OF USING READING SKILLS

Table 4.1.11 : Frequency Of Using The Reading Skills Taught

Frequency Of Usage	Percentage Responses
Most frequently	17%
Frequently	64%
Occasionally	15%
Rarely	4%

According to Table 4.1.11, 17% and 64% of the students used the skills most frequently or frequently. 15% of them used the skills occasionally. There were 4% who rarely used the skills.

#### 4.1.12 APPLICATION OF EACH READING SKILL IN READING BUSINESS TEXTS

##### (a) LOCATING MAIN POINTS

Table 4.1.12 (a) : Students' View On Application Of "Locating Main Points" In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	38%
Frequently	48%
Occasionally	14%
Never	Nil

According to Table 4.1.12 (a), about half of the students (48%) frequently used “locating main points”. A smaller percentage used it most frequently and only 14% used it occasionally.

(b) SCANNING FOR INFORMATION

Table 4.1.12 (b) : Students’ View On Application Of “Scanning For Information” In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	31%
Frequently	62%
Occasionally	7%
Never	Nil

As shown in Table 4.1.12 (b), about one-third of the students–31% used the “scanning” skill most frequently whereas the majority of the students (62%) used it frequently. There were 7% who used it occasionally.

(c) GETTING A GENERAL VIEW OF TEXT

Table 4.1.12 (c) : Students’ View On Application Of “Getting A General View Of Text” In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	39%
Frequently	47%
Occasionally	14%
Never	Nil

The figures in Table 4.1.12 (c) show that the majority of the students frequently used “getting a general view of text”. This is followed by 39% of the students who used it most frequently and 14% of the students used it occasionally.

(d) SKIMMING FOR INFORMATION

Table 4.1.12 (d) : Students’ View On Application Of “Skimming For Information” In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	14%
Frequently	66%
Occasionally	19%
Never	1%

Concerning “skimming”, the findings in Table 4.1.12 (d) show that the majority of the students (66%) used “skimming” skill frequently. 14% of the students related they were able to use “skimming” skill most frequently. 1% of the students said the “skimming” skill was not used in reading.

- (e) REFERRING TO INFORMATION MENTIONED EARLIER OR LATER

Table 4.1.12 (e) : Students' View On Application Of "Referring To Words That Link Ideas" In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	9%
Frequently	53%
Occasionally	38%
Never	Nil

According to Table 4.1.12 (e), 9% of the students used "referring to words that link ideas" most frequently. 53% of the students utilized "referencing" skill frequently and 38% of the students utilized it occasionally.

- (f) LOCATING TOPIC SENTENCE

Table 4.1.12 (f) : Students' View On Application Of "Locating Topic Sentence" In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	9%
Frequently	51%
Occasionally	39%
Never	1%

Table 4.1.12 (f) shows that half of the students (51%) utilized "locating topic sentence" skill frequently. 1% of the students indicated that "locating topic sentence" was not used while reading. For the other students, 9%



said they utilized it most frequently, and the remainder of the students (39%) used it occasionally.

(g) RECOGNIZING CONNECTORS

Table 4.1.12 (g) : Students' View On Application Of "Recognizing Connectors " In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Students
Most frequently	6%
Frequently	44%
Occasionally	43%
Never	7%

The study found that about half of the students (44%) said they utilized "recognizing connectors" frequently and 43% of the students said they utilized it occasionally although it was reported in page 69 that only 20% of the students indicated that this skill had improved their comprehension of texts. 7% of the students did not refer to connectors while reading. These findings are shown in Table 4.1.12 (g).

(h) PREDICTING WHAT WILL FOLLOW

Table 4.1.12 (h) : Students' View On Application Of "Predicting What Will Follow" In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Response
Most frequently	7%
Frequently	38%
Occasionally	44%
Never	11%

The study found that 38% of the students used the “predicting” skill frequently. The majority of the students used it occasionally. 11% of the students indicated they did not use this skill. These findings are shown in Table 4.12 (h).

(i) FINDING MEANINGS OF UNKNOWN WORDS

Table 4.1.12 (i) : Students’ View On Application Of “Finding Meanings Of Unknown Words” In Reading Business Texts

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Response
Most frequently	37%
Frequently	46%
Occasionally	17%
Never	Nil

Although “finding meanings of unknown words” was reported in page 69 as not helpful in improving comprehension, many students mentioned that they used the dictionary extensively. Slightly less than half (46%) of the students consulted the dictionary frequently. In addition, 37% of the students used this skill most frequently. These findings are shown in Table 4.1.12 (i).

#### 4.1.13 A LIST OF SKILLS THAT WERE USED FREQUENTLY OR MOST FREQUENTLY BY STUDENTS

Table 4.1.13 : A List Of Skills Used Frequently Or Most Frequently By Students

Skills That Were Taught	Used Most Frequently	Used Frequently	Total Percentage Of Students
Scanning for information	31%	62%	93%
Locating main points in text	38%	48%	86%
Getting general view of text	39%	47%	86%
Referring to linking words in text	9%	53%	62%
Locating topic sentence	9%	51%	60%
Skimming for information	14%	66%	80%
Recognizing connectors	6%	44%	50%
Finding meanings of unknown words	37%	48%	83%
Predicting what will follow	7%	38%	45%

Table 4.1.13 shows the percentage of students who used the reading skills most frequently (used more than 75% of the time) or frequently (used more than 50% of the time). The findings reveal that “scanning” for information has the highest percentage of students (93%) who could use it frequently or most frequently. This is followed by four skills that more than 80% of the students who indicated using frequently or most frequently. About 60% of the students used “referring to linking words” and “locating topic sentence” most frequently or frequently. The data shows that only 50% of the students used “recognizing connectors” in text, frequently or most frequently.

“Predicting what will follow” had the lowest percentage of students who used it frequently or most frequently.

During the interviews, the students who had difficulty applying “recognizing connectors” explained that they were not very sure about the meanings of connectors that were not common. Those students who had difficulty “locating topic sentence” said that whenever they had no prior knowledge about the passage and when the texts contained long sentences and paragraphs, they were not successful in finding the topic sentence. Some students revealed that “referring to linking word” was difficult because not many reading tasks in the secondary level required them to use this skill. Most of the students mentioned that “predicting skill” was not applied because business texts were technical and factual so they had to pay attention in order to understand the texts. They were more interested in finding answers to questions than predicting what would be found in the later part of the texts.

#### **4.1.14 RATING THE READING SKILLS**

For the purpose of rating the reading skills taught in the reading component, the following features i.e. range, applicability and emphasis, were rated by the students.

(a) RANGE OF READING SKILLS

Table 4.1.14 (a) : Students' View On The Range Of Skills Taught

Range	Percentage Responses
Not enough skills	32%
Sufficient skills	64%
Too many skills	4%

The general view of the students on the range of reading skills taught was positive. The majority of the students (64%) indicated that the range of skills taught was sufficient, 32% felt the range was too narrow and 4% felt the range was too broad. The results are shown in Table 4.1.14 (a).

According to the interviews, the students who had the view that sufficient reading skills were taught said the reading component had included the most useful reading skills that can improve comprehension. On the contrary, some students felt that other skills such as pronunciation and phonetics should be included in the component.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF SKILLS

Table 4.1.14 (b) : Students' View On The Applicability Of Skills Taught

Applicability	Percentage Responses
Not applicable	3%
Quite applicable	92%
Very applicable	5%

The opinions of the students on the applicability of skills are shown in Table 4.1.14 (b). Almost all of the students considered the skills as quite applicable. This is followed by 5% of the students who found the skills to be very applicable. However, 3% could not apply the reading skills taught.

Most students said in the interviews that the reading skills taught were relevant to their needs and they were able to apply most of the skills taught. The other students said predicting skill was not applicable.

(c) **EMPHASIS PLACED ON TEACHING THE SKILLS.**

Table 4.1.14 (c) : Students' View On The Emphasis Placed On Teaching Reading Skills

<b>Emphasis Placed On Teaching Reading Skills</b>	<b>Percentage Responses</b>
Not enough emphasis	32%
Sufficient emphasis	67%
Too much emphasis	1%

The majority of the students (67%) stated that there was sufficient emphasis on teaching the skills. 32% of the students felt that not enough emphasis was placed on teaching the skills. A negligible percentage, (1%) felt that the reading skills were over-emphasized. These figures are shown in Table 4.1.14 (c).

During the interviews, the students who felt there was enough emphasis placed on teaching the skills said there were clear instructions on

application of the reading skills. The students added that they had enough practices and supervision on the skills learned. The students who felt that not enough emphasis was placed on teaching the skills mentioned that they still could not apply certain skills despite the instructions given.

#### 4.1.15 TIME ALLOTMENT FOR TEACHING READING SKILLS

Table 4.1.15 : Students' View On Allotment Of Time

Percentage Of Students	Opinions On Time Allocation
3%	Too much time
74%	Sufficient time
23%	Too little time

The total contact hours for the Business English Courses were 126 hours. From this, 40 hours were scheduled for the completion of the reading component. The majority of the students (74%) were of the opinion that the time allotment for teaching the reading skills was sufficient while 23% felt more time should be allocated for teaching them. A small percentage, (3%) of the students, felt that too much time was assigned. These results are shown in Table 4.1.15.

During the interviews, most of the students commented in the interviews that the ability of the majority of the students in applying the skills learned shows that sufficient time was spent on teaching them. Students who felt that too little time was spent on teaching these skills proposed an increase in time allocated so that instructions on reading skills can be carried out at

a slower pace. They also said that they usually require more time for learning because of their low language proficiency.

#### 4.1.16 CRITICAL THINKING

Table 4.1.16 : The Benefits of Doing Critical Thinking Tasks

Areas Of Improvement	Percentage Responses
Spend time to think about topics and questions	60%
Analyze, evaluate a topic before answering	75%
Substantiate comments with facts	56%
Overcome fear of speaking	56%
Ask question after hearing comments	38%
The tasks were not beneficial	4%

(The total does not come up to 100% because students could have more than one option).

Table 4.1.16 shows the benefits of learning critical thinking skills. The majority (75%) said the critical thinking tasks helped them to analyze and evaluate topic before answering. 60% indicated that learning critical thinking skills enabled them to think about interesting topics and difficult questions. About half of the students (56%) said they were able to substantiate comments with facts. The same number of students, (56%) gained confidence in speaking and 38% asked questions after hearing others' opinions.



#### 4.1.17 EFFECTS OF TEACHING READING SKILLS

Table 4.1.17 : Students' View On Effects Of Teaching Reading Skills

Progress In Comprehension	Percentage Of Students
Improvement	85%
No Improvement	15%

The positive effects of instruction on reading skills are shown in Table 4.1.17. 85% of the students indicated improvement in their comprehension of business texts as a result of learning the reading skills. The rest of the students indicated there was no improvement in their comprehension of business texts.

During the interviews, the students who believed that there was improvement in their comprehension said that after learning the reading skills they were able to use contextual clues to guess meanings of unknown words. At the end of the semester, they were less dependent on the dictionary therefore they took shorter time to understand the texts. These students also pointed out that their vocabulary has improved so they could understand the texts and the business section of the newspaper better. All believed that their reading comprehension has improved because they had more correct answers for reading tasks given by the lecturers compared to previously.

#### **4.1.18 STUDENTS' CONCLUSION ABOUT THE READING COMPONENT**

Table 4.1.18 : Students' Conclusion About The Reading Component

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage Response</b>
Excellent	0%
Good	28%
Average	68%
Poor	4%

According to Table 4.1.18, the majority of the students (68%) rated the reading component as average. 28% of the students felt that the reading component was good. A small percentage rated the reading component as poor.

During the interviews, the students who gave positive comments about the reading component said they were satisfied with the content and language level of the reading passages. However, some students said that the presentation of the texts was poor and some passages were out-dated and difficult.

## 4.2 DATA OBTAINED FROM LECTURERS' QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS

This section presents the data gathered from 16 questions in the lecturers' questionnaires as well as interviews with them. The data reveals the lecturers' perceptions of the business students, the reading skills taught and the reading materials used. The purpose of the interviews was to supplement the findings in the questionnaires. The probing method used encouraged the lecturers to elaborate and give explanations for some of their responses in the questionnaires. The responses to the first four questions of the lecturers' questionnaire provide information on the lecturers' background, hence this information has been presented in selection of subjects in Chapter Three.

### 4.2.1 LECTURERS' VIEW OF THE BUSINESS STUDENTS

Table 4.2.1 : Lecturers' View Of The Business Students

Comprehension Ability Of Students	Percentage Of Lecturers
Good	0%
Average	80%
Poor	20%

Table 4.2.1 shows that 80% of lecturers considered the majority of the CIMA students as average readers. 20% of the lecturers considered them as poor readers.

#### 4.2.2. LECTURERS' VIEW ON STUDENTS' COMPREHENSION OF READING MATERIALS IN THE READING COMPONENT

Table 4.2.2 : Lecturers' View On Students' Comprehension Ability

Comprehension Ability Of Students	Percentage Of Lecturers
100%	0%
About 75%	20%
About 50%	60%
About 25%	20%

Table 4.2.2 shows that 60% of the lecturers perceived that the majority of their students were able to comprehend about half of the business text.

During the interviews, the lecturers who felt that students could only understand about 50% of the texts explained that they had this view because most of the time the majority of the students managed to find answers for about half of the comprehension questions or reading tasks given in the class. The students were also unable to discuss the topics of the business texts satisfactorily without assistance from the lecturers. One lecturer said that the majority of the students had improved their comprehension and could understand about 75% of the texts before the final examination. Another group of lecturers said that without assistance from lecturers and friends, the majority of the students could only understand about 25% of the texts. From this observation, the lecturers concluded that the majority of the CIMA students probably had difficulties comprehending business texts.

#### 4.2.3 LECTURERS' VIEW ABOUT ASPECTS OF ENGLISH THAT HINDER COMPREHENSION OF STUDENTS

Table 4.2.3 : Lecturers' View On Aspects That Hinder Comprehension Of Students

Aspect That Hinders Comprehension	Percentage Of Responses
Vocabulary	80%
Lengthy paragraphs	40%
Unfamiliar topic & content	80%
Grammar	40%
Organization	0%
Others	0%

Feedback from the lecturers points out that difficult vocabulary, unfamiliar content, the complexity of grammar rules and long paragraphs were hindrances to students' comprehension of reading materials in the reading component. Both vocabulary and content were stated as the major hindrances to reading comprehension with 80% of the lecturers indicating these two aspects in their responses. 40% of the lecturers said grammar and long paragraphs made the text incomprehensible. The feedback from the lecturers and the students regarding hindrances to comprehension of business texts were similar (Table 4.2.3 and Table 4.1.4). This leads to the conclusion that both students and lecturers agreed that difficult vocabulary, unfamiliar topic and content were the main hindrances to students' comprehension of materials in the reading component.

#### 4.2.4 LECTURERS' VIEW ON THE READING MATERIALS

##### (a) USEFULNESS OF THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.2.4 (a) : Lecturers' View On The Usefulness Of The Reading Materials

Usefulness Of Material	Percentage Of Lecturers
Very useful	40%
Useful	20%
A little useful	40%

Table 4.2.4 (a) shows that 40% of the lecturers felt that the materials were very useful and 20% of the lecturers rated the materials as useful. There were 40% of the lecturers who believed the materials were a little useful.

During the interviews, the lecturers who found the materials useful said that the main benefit of the reading component is guiding the students to focus on the objectives of reading. These lecturers said reading materials, which illustrated happenings in the workplace, were useful in helping students increase their knowledge about the business environment and enabled them to practise the reading skills learned as well as improved their comprehension.

There were some lecturers who considered the materials as of little use because the materials were extracted from different books which had varied presentations. Besides, the lecturers remarked that the materials were too technical and had foreign setting. From the pedagogical aspect, the

lecturers felt that it was difficult to teach using materials that were extracted from different books. The lecturers' frustrations in using the materials caused them to view the materials as not very useful.

(b) LEVEL OF INTEREST

Table 4.2.4 (b) : Lecturers' View On The Level Of Interest Of The Reading Materials

Level Of Interest	Percentage Of Lecturers
Very interesting	0%
Interesting	20%
Uninteresting	80%
Very uninteresting	0%

Although the majority of the students found the reading materials interesting, the lecturers had differing opinions. The majority (80%) of the lecturers found the materials uninteresting. These lecturers commented in the interviews that the materials were out-dated and most of the materials were too technical. Besides that the materials were not coloured, had blur pictures and words because they were duplicated from business texts. The findings are shown in Table 4.2.4 (b).

(c) LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Table 4.2.4 (c) : Lecturers' View On The Difficulty Level Of The Reading Materials

Level Of Difficulty	Percentage Of Lecturers
Very difficult	0%
Difficult	80%
Right level	20%
Easy	0%

As shown in Table 4.2.4 (c), the majority (80%) of the lecturers felt that the reading materials were difficult for the students. Only 20% of the lecturers felt the materials were of the right level.

The interviews reveal that most lecturers attributed the difficulty of the materials to the source of the materials. The materials were targeted for native speakers of English so the texts contained complicated sentences, colloquial expressions used in the west and phrases and expressions not commonly used in Malaysia. One lecturer said that the materials were of the correct level because students must be exposed to materials that have similar standard as the examination questions.



#### 4.2.5 SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.2.5 (a) : Lecturers' View On Vocabulary In The Reading Materials

Description	Percentage Of Lecturers
Very difficult	20%
Difficult	60%
Right level	20%
Easy	0%

As shown in Table 4.2.5 (a), the lecturers were divided in their view regarding the level of difficulty in the vocabulary tasks. The majority of the lecturers considered the vocabulary in the materials as difficult for their students. 20% of the lecturers indicated the vocabulary tasks were easy for their students.

#### (b) THE LANGUAGE USED IN THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.2.5 (b) : Lecturers' View On The Language Used In The Reading Materials

Description	Percentage Of Lecturers
Very difficult	Nil
Difficult	80%
Right level	20%
Easy	Nil

The findings as shown on Table 4.2.5 (b) reveal that the majority (80%) of the lecturers felt that the language used in the reading materials was difficult. 20% of the lecturers thought that the right level of language was used.

(c) PASSAGES IN THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.2.5 (c) : Lecturers' View On The Passages In The Reading Materials

Description	Percentage Of Lecturers
Very interesting	0%
Interesting	20%
Uninteresting	80%
Very uninteresting	0%

80% of the lecturers (the majority) considered the passages as uninteresting. Only 20% of the lecturers thought the passages were interesting. These figures are shown in Table 4.2.5 (c).

(d) TASKS IN THE READING MATERIALS

Table 4.2.5 (d) : Lecturers' View On The Tasks In The Reading Materials.

Description	Percentage Of Lecturers
Too many	0%
Many	0%
Sufficient	80%
Too few	20%

As shown in Table 4.2.5 (d), the majority (80% of the lecturers) thought there were sufficient tasks in the reading component for students to work on. However, 20% of the lecturers thought there were too few tasks.

#### 4.2.6 LECTURERS' VIEW ON TEXT TYPES.

##### (a) TEXT TYPES

Table 4.2.6 (a) : Lecturers' View On Text Types.

Lecturers' View On Text Types	Percentage Of Lecturers
Good	80%
Poor	20%

As shown in Table 4.2.6 (a), the majority (80%) of the lecturers felt that there was a good selection of texts for the reading component because many essential business themes were included. 20% of the lecturers felt that the concentration on business themes placed restriction on variety. This small group of lecturers suggested the inclusion of communication and management materials in order to break the monotony and increase the coverage.

##### (b) ORGANIZATION OF MATERIALS

Table 4.2.6 (b) : Lecturers' View On Organization Of Materials

View On Organization Of Materials	Percentage Of Lecturers
Good	60%
Poor	40%

60% of the lecturers found the organization of materials based on business themes was appropriate as each theme was self contained and could be used in any sequence. 40% of the lecturers commented that this way of organizing the materials only appeared fine but in practice, it revealed that

there was no depth in teaching and there was little room for development and extension of the themes.

**4.2.7 LECTURERS' VIEW ON STUDENTS' APPLICATION OF EACH READING SKILL TAUGHT.**

**(a) LOCATING MAIN POINTS**

Table 4.2.7 (a) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Locating Main Points" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	20%
Frequently	80%
Occasionally	0%
Never	0%

The lecturers believed that students could apply the skill of "locating main points" while reading. The majority (80%) of the lecturers indicated that the students applied the skill frequently. This is shown in Table 4.2.7 (a).

**(b) SCANNING FOR INFORMATION**

Table 4.2.7 (b) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Scanning For Information" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	40%
Frequently	60%
Occasionally	0%
Never	0%

Table 4.2.7 (b) shows the lecturers' views on students' application of the "scanning" skills. The majority of the lecturers felt that the students used "scanning" skill frequently. 40% of the lecturers indicated that the students were able to use "scanning" skill most frequently.

(c) OBTAINING GENERAL VIEW OF TEXT

Table 4.2.7 (c) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Obtaining General View Of Text" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	60%
Frequently	40%
Occasionally	0%
Never	0%

60% of the lecturers indicated that students used "obtaining general view of text" most frequently and 40% of the lecturers stated the students used it frequently. The results are shown in Table 4.2.7 (c).

(d) SKIMMING FOR INFORMATION

Table 4.2.7 (d) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Skimming For Information" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	40%
Frequently	60%
Occasionally	0%
Never	0%

Table 4.2.7 (d), shows that there were 40% of the lecturers who indicated that the students used the “skimming” skill most frequently and 60% of the lecturers felt that the students used the skill frequently.

(e) REFERRING TO WORDS THAT LINK IDEAS

Table 4.2.7 (e) : Lecturers’ View On Application Of “Referring To Words That Link Ideas” By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	0%
Frequently	40%
Occasionally	60%
Never	0%

According to Table 2.7 (e), the lecturers’ views on students’ application of “referencing” skill were divided. 40% of the lecturers felt that their students applied “referencing” skill frequently and 60% of the lecturers felt that their students used this skill occasionally.

(f) LOCATING TOPIC SENTENCE

Table 4.2.7 (f) : Lecturers’ View On Application Of “Locating Topic Sentence” By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	0%
Frequently	40%
Occasionally	40%
Never	20%

The results presented in Table 4.2.7 (f) show that 40% of the lecturers indicated that their students frequently looked for topic sentence. The same percentage of lecturers said the students used the skill occasionally. 20% of the lecturers felt that the students did not use this skill. During the interviews, some lecturers believed many students were not able to locate topic sentences. They said that there were a high percentage of students who lifted the whole paragraph instead of the relevant points in the paragraph while answering comprehension questions in examinations. The other lecturers said their students had little difficulty locating topic sentence.

(g) RECOGNIZING CONNECTORS

Table 4.2.7 (g) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Recognizing Connectors" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	0%
Frequently	40%
Occasionally	60%
Never	0%

Table 4.2.7 (g) reveals that the students probably had problems recognizing the connectors while reading business texts. There were more lecturers (60%) who believed their students used the skill occasionally.

During the interviews, most of the lecturers commented that the students did not have problems with understanding common connectors (*but, and, or, nor, unless ...etc*) but were unsure of the meanings and usage of difficult connectors (*provided, hence, accordingly, notably, namely, alternatively... etc*) As a result, not many students were confident in using connectors to aid comprehension. The other lecturers felt that the good students did not have problems with difficult connectors so they could use the skill frequently.

(h) PREDICTING WHAT WILL FOLLOW

Table 4.2.7 (h) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Predicting What Will Follow" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	0%
Frequently	20%
Occasionally	80%
Never	0%

The lecturers were of the opinion that not many students used the skill "predicting what will follow" in their reading. As shown in Table 4.2.7 (h), the majority (80%) of the lecturers felt the students used this skill occasionally.

During the interviews, most lecturers believed that students hardly use predicting skill because most business texts are content based, the



students' attention was on comprehending the texts to obtain information and not on predicting the outcome. The lecturers also commented that the texts in the reading component were too difficult for the students with low language proficiency. These students were not able to see the relationship between ideas found in the texts. The students were trying to understand every word and sentence; thus, they did not predict the end result.

(i) FINDING MEANINGS OF UNKNOWN WORDS

Table 4.2.7 (i) : Lecturers' View On Application Of "Finding Meanings Of Unknown Words" By Students

Frequency Of Use	Percentage Of Lecturers
Most frequently	20%
Frequently	60%
Occasionally	20%
Never	0%

As shown in Table 4.2.7 (i), 60% of the lecturers felt that students frequently consult the dictionary to find meanings of unknown words.

The interviews reveal that many lecturers felt that although students frequently looked up the meanings of unknown words during reading lessons, they were still unable to comprehend the text. This was because the students were unable to select the most appropriate meaning from the list of meanings presented in the dictionary. This could be the reason why students did not include "referring to dictionary" as a skill that had

improved their comprehension of the text. One lecturer reported that some students used the dictionary occasionally because they depended on the lecturers to explain the meanings of unknown words instead of working it out on their own.

#### 4.2.8 LECTURERS' VIEW ON SKILLS USED FREQUENTLY AND MOST FREQUENTLY BY STUDENTS

Skills That Were Taught	Used Most Frequently	Used Frequently	Total Percentage Of Lecturers
Scanning for information	40%	60%	100%
Locating main points in text	20%	80%	100%
Getting general view of text	60%	40%	100%
Referring to linking words in text	0%	40%	40%
Locating topic sentence	0%	40%	40%
Skimming for information	40%	60%	100%
Recognizing connectors	0%	40%	40%
Finding meanings of words	20%	60%	80%
Predicting what will follow	0%	20%	20%

Table 4.2.8 shows the views of the lecturers on the skills that students used frequently and most frequently while reading business texts.

100% of the lecturers were of the opinion that students used "locating main points", "scanning for information", "getting a general view of text" and "skimming for information" frequently or most frequently.

80% of the lecturers believed that students used “finding meanings of unknown words” frequently or most frequently. 40% of the lecturers believed students used three skills frequently or most frequently. Only 20% of the lecturers perceived that students used “predicting what will follow” frequently or most frequently.

#### 4.2.9 RATING THE READING SKILLS TAUGHT

In order to rate the reading skills taught in the reading component, the lecturers were asked to evaluate the range of skills, applicability of skills and the emphasis placed on teaching the skills.

##### (a) RANGE OF READING SKILLS

Table 4.2.9 (a) : Lecturers' View On The Range Of Skills Taught

Range Of Skills Taught	Percentage Of Lecturers
Not enough skills	20%
Sufficient skills	80%
Too many skills	0%

The lecturers' view on the range of skills taught is shown in Table 4.2.9

(a). The majority (80%) of the lecturers felt that the reading component had a good coverage of the reading skills. They felt that the range of skills taught was sufficient. A small percentage of the lecturers, felt that more skills should be taught but did not suggest what other skills should be included.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF SKILLS

Table 4.2.9 (b) : Lecturers' View On The Applicability Of Skills Taught.

Applicability Of Skills Taught	Percentage Of Lecturers
Not applicable	0%
Quite applicable	100%
Very applicable	0%

Table 4.2.9 (b) shows that all of the lecturers believed that the skills taught were quite applicable. The students could use most of them while reading business texts.

(c) EMPHASIS PLACED ON TEACHING THE SKILLS

Table 4.2.9 (c) : Lecturers' View On The Emphasis Placed On Teaching Reading Skills

Emphasis Placed On Teaching Reading Skills	Percentage Of Lecturers
Not enough emphasis	40%
Sufficient emphasis	60%
Too much emphasis	0%

As shown in Table 4.2.9 (c), 60% of the lecturers felt enough emphasis was placed on teaching the reading skills whereas 40% felt there was insufficient emphasis. During the interviews, two of the lecturers explained that their instructions were rather brief because of time constraint. As a result, the students who were learning the skills for the first time had problems with difficult reading skills so they were not confident in using them. The other lecturers said that there was enough

emphasis on teaching the skill and most of their students could apply the skills learned.

#### 4.2.10 TIME ALLOTMENT FOR THE READING COMPONENT

Table 4.2.10 : Lecturers' View On Allotment Of Time For The Reading Component

Description	Percentage Of Lecturers
Too much time	Nil
Sufficient time	60%
Too little time	40%

Table 4.2.10 shows that 60% of the lecturers felt that sufficient time was allocated for teaching the reading skills in the reading component. 40% of the lecturers, however, felt that too little time was allocated. During the interviews, the lecturers who preferred more time mentioned that many students probably had not learned the reading skills in secondary schools. Furthermore, some students were not proficient in English so they did not like to read. During the reading lessons, a small group of students could not finish reading the passage or do the reading tasks assigned. Most probably, more time will enable these students to practise and improve the skills learned. On the contrary, other lecturers felt that they were satisfied with the time allotted for the reading component.

#### 4.2.11 EFFECTS OF TEACHING READING SKILLS

Table 4.2.11: Lecturers' View Regarding Effects Of Teaching Reading Skills

Effects On The Students	Percentage Of Lecturers
Benefit greatly	60%
Little benefit	40%
No benefit	Nil

As shown in Table 4.2.11, the lecturers' views on the effects of teaching reading skills were divided. 60% of the lecturers noted that the students benefited greatly from learning the reading skills whereas 40% of the lecturers believed that the students obtained little benefit from learning the skills. During the interviews, some of the lecturers stressed that the time constraint had affected their instruction on the reading skills. The students who were learning these skills for the first time probably needed more practice. Insufficient practice could be the reason for the students' lack of confidence in using the difficult reading skills. They believed that little benefit could be derived if students could not use the skills to help them read faster and better. The other lecturers said that the improvement in students' comprehension is an indication of benefits received by students.

#### 4.2.12 THE VALUE OF THE READING COMPONENT

Table 4.2.12 : The Value Of The Reading Component

Description	Number Of Lecturers
Essential	100%
Not Essential	Nil

The findings in Table 4.2.12 show that all the lecturers felt that the reading component was essential. The students needed guidance on the application of reading skills. During the interviews, all lecturers agreed that students who were not taught the reading skills would be at a disadvantage. These students probably would need to spend more time getting information from business texts because they were not focused in their reading. The students who were taught the skills could apply the skills to get information from the texts at a faster speed.

All of the lecturers felt that the inclusion of the reading component was timely and important. The lecturers mentioned in the interviews that it was through this component that the reading skills were introduced and taught formally to students who had not been exposed to these techniques. They were of the opinion that those students who had learned the skills also benefited because the reading component provided opportunities for them to revise and improve their reading abilities

These lecturers commented that after learning these reading skills, the students were more aware of their purposes in reading. The students would apply some of the skills such as: skimming and scanning, studying the organization, looking out for the transitional markers, spotting the placement of topic sentence and supporting details while reading. These

lecturers believed that the application of these skills had helped the students to be more analytical, efficient and effective readers.

They also pointed out that the usefulness of learning reading skills is not limited to college education only. The knowledge gained is applicable to their reading at leisure and in their workplace.

#### 4.2.13 WAYS TO IMPROVE READING ABILITY OF STUDENTS

Table 4.2.13 : Ways For Improving Reading Ability Of Students

Ways For Improving Reading Ability	Percentage Of Lecturers
Participate in activities organized by English Department	20%
Increase vocabulary	20%
Allocate time for speaking in class	20%
Use newspapers as teaching materials	20%
Provide a more relaxed learning environment	20%
Encourage extensive reading	20%

Table 4.2.13 contains the lecturers' suggestions for improving the reading ability of the students. 20% of the lecturers recommended stimulating the students' interest in reading through activities organized by the English Language Department in the college. The lecturers suggested that more vocabulary exercises should be given to the students. They believed that increasing the students' vocabulary will lead to improvement in reading. The same percentage of lecturers also pointed out that the inclusion of oral practice would result in better pronunciation. Other suggestions included



introducing NIE (newspaper in education) in class, creating a more relaxed atmosphere as well as holding informal discussion could remove inhibitions of speaking. All the lecturers highlighted the importance of acquiring the reading habit.

#### **4.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The conclusions that are drawn from the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews with the lecturers are listed below.

##### **(a) VIEWS ABOUT THE CIMA STUDENTS**

- **Comprehension Ability**

The findings reveal that the majority of the CIMA students were average readers. The majority of the students indicated that they could understand 75% of business texts and 33% of the students stated they could understand about 50% of the texts. On the other hand, the lecturers noted that the majority of the students could probably understand 50% of the business texts. This level of comprehension is not satisfactory and the students need guidance on reading skills.

- **Students' Choice of English Reading Materials**

The most popular reading material was the newspaper. Students read newspapers to increase their general knowledge. More than 80% of the students read magazines and 61% of the students read business related reference materials to

obtain essential and additional information to complete assignments and prepare for examinations.

- **Hindrances To Comprehension**

81% of the students indicated that vocabulary was the main hindrance to their comprehension of business texts. 59% of the students said lengthy paragraphs made comprehension difficult. Unfamiliar topic and content were believed to have hindered comprehension of 57% of students.

Most of the lecturers also identified vocabulary as the main hindrance to students' comprehension. The lecturers also stated unfamiliar topics and content hindered the comprehension of students.

**(b) VIEWS ABOUT THE MATERIALS USED IN THE READING COMPONENT**

- **Usefulness**

The materials were considered useful by about 80% of the students. 60% of the lecturers considered the materials were useful because the students gained knowledge of business vocabulary, learned to apply the reading skills taught and had improved their comprehension.

- **Level Of Interest**

76% of the students found the materials and the passages interesting because they learned new business concepts, themes, trends and current issues in the business world.

Only 20% of the lecturers found the materials interesting because some of the materials were out-dated, too technical and had poor presentation as a result of photocopying.

- **Level Of Difficulty**

63% of the students indicated that the reading materials used were of the right level because they have the same level of difficulty as those that appear in the examinations. The majority of the students (73%) felt that the correct level of language was used because they were accustomed to reading Accounting, Management and Law texts which contained difficult language

Only 20% of the lecturers considered the materials as well as the language were of the right level. They explained that the contents and the foreign settings made the materials difficult and students could only understand the materials well with assistance and help from lecturers and friends.

- **Selection And Organization**

The majority (80%) of the lecturers believed that there was a good selection of texts in the reading component. 60% of the lecturers were satisfied with the organization of text in the reading component.

- **Task**

Both the lecturers and the students felt that there were sufficient tasks for the students to practise the reading skills learned. They also felt that the vocabulary tasks in the reading materials were difficult.

Learning more business vocabulary, improving understanding of business texts and reducing the time required in reading business texts were the main benefits received by the students for doing the reading tasks.

**(c) VIEWS ON THE READING SKILLS TAUGHT**

- **Range And Benefits Of Learning Reading Skills**

Generally, instruction on the reading skills has been useful and beneficial to the students. The majority of the students and lecturers believed that sufficient range of reading skills was taught. Seven of the skills taught had improved the students' comprehension of business texts.

More than 60% of the students indicated the following 4 skills i.e. “locating main points”, “scanning for information”, “getting a general view of text” and “skimming for information”, had improved their comprehension.

More than 60% of the students indicated the following 4 skills i.e. “locating main points”, “scanning for information”, “getting a general view of text” and “skimming for information”, had improved their comprehension.

About 30% of the students noted that “referencing”, “locating topic sentence” had improved their comprehension. Only 20% of the students mentioned that “recognizing connectors” had improved their comprehension.

- **Emphasis Placed On Teaching The Skills.**

About 60% of the students and lecturers believed that enough emphasis was placed on teaching the skills. There were clear instruction and enough tasks for students to practise the skills learned.

- **Applicability Of Skills**

Instructions on the reading skills are considered effective because 81% of the students used the skills taught frequently or most frequently. All the lecturers felt that the skills taught were quite applicable. This finding is supported by the high percentage of students who could use frequently or most frequently more than half of the skills taught.

More than 80% of the students noted that they used frequently or most frequently 5 out of the 9 skills taught. The skills used are “scanning”, “locating main points in text”, “getting general view of text”, “skimming” and “finding meanings of unknown words”.

The views of the lecturers on the skills used frequently or most frequently by students correspond with the views of the students. The lecturers believed that 5 skills (“scanning”, “locating main points in text”, “getting general view of text” “skimming” and “finding meanings of unknown words”) were used frequently or most frequently by students.

Both students and lecturers believed that skills such as “referring to linking words in text”. “locating topic sentence” and “recognizing connectors” were used frequently or most frequently by a smaller percentage of students.

Only 45% of the students used “predicting what will follow” frequently or most frequently.

20% of the lecturers indicated that “predicting what will follow”, was used frequently or most frequently by students. Both lecturers and students indicated that the least students used “predicted skill” frequently or most frequently.

Skills such as “locating topic sentence”, “referencing”, “recognizing connectors” and “predicting” were considered difficult by students.

- **Time Allotment**

The majority of the students and lecturers felt that sufficient time was spent on teaching the reading skills.

#### **4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE READING COMPONENT**

##### **4.4.1 STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS**

According to the replies in the questionnaires, 68% of the students suggested ways to improve the materials used in the reading component. Their suggestions are as follows:

1. Include materials from different sources and about different fields to increase the variety of materials used.
2. Use more interesting approaches as well as materials.
3. Use updated materials.
4. Improve the presentation of the materials by typing adapted articles, and having coloured materials.
5. Include more grammar tasks.
6. Allocate more time for reading component.

#### **4.4.2 LECTURERS' SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

In order to improve the reading component, the lecturers suggested the following:

1. Include materials from different fields if the aim of the course is to improve the proficiency of the students.
2. Use suitable course books for all levels of the Business English Courses in order to ensure continuity, development and progression in contents and level of difficulties.
3. Use materials of the right level if the aim is to teach reading skills.
4. Allocate more time for completion of the reading component so that the students could have more practice on the skills learned.

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