

Evaluation of an English Undergraduate Program

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Abstract

The quality of university education is a national concern. Inadvertently, or by design as it may be, university education in Yemen is losing credibility and relevance. Our certification is not much valued by employers and our programs are delinked from professional requirements, the result being internal defeat and external skepticism. This paper offers an evaluation of one of the programs offered by Taiz University. The current English undergraduate program at the Faculty of Arts is about twenty one years old and there has been little attempt on the part of faculty or administration to update the program content or revise the program structure. The present evaluation attempt is both qualitative and quantitative. The program is examined in detail in order to uncover its strengths and weaknesses with regard to the program content and program structure. This qualitative analysis is informed by the researcher's insider knowledge of the current program, and is backed up by a quantitative analysis of an online survey targeting program completers in the past three years, i.e. 2009 to 2012. The findings of the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the current program inform the recommendations made for the program designers and program executors.

Introduction

A university is a place where orthodoxies are challenged, where innovative thinking is encouraged and where new paradigms are formulated. As such, universities should continually update their programs to remain relevant and to maintain their youth empowerment role.

Since its inception in 1991, the English undergraduate program at the Faculty of Arts, Taiz University (henceforth TU) has undergone no major revision. The program is about twenty one years old and there has been little attempt on the part of faculty or administration to update the program content or revise the program structure.

The department offers a four-year program upon completion of which a student is awarded a Bachelor Degree in English Language and Literature. To qualify for admission into the program, a student should be holding a General Secondary Education Certificate with an overall grade of at least 70% (grades subject to change every year). After meeting this condition, the candidates appear for an English Admission Test. The test, written by a teaching staff of the department, takes up where high school English classes left off and takes into consideration the minimum English proficiency level required by the undergraduate program of instruction. The number of students admitted into the program is determined by the incoming capacity of the department which is, surprisingly, a decision not of the English Department Council but of the University Council of Student Affairs. The test cut-off score is 50 but students are selected in accordance with the department seating capacity regardless of the cut-off score. In almost all admission test sessions more than half the students admitted scored below the cut-off score. What this means is that the admitted students are heterogeneous in terms of their linguistic ability and do not all meet the admission requirements set by the department.

This incoherent group of students meets at least six times a week for eight semesters each lasting three months. In order to graduate, they have to pass a total of 52 courses offered by the department. Twenty one of these courses are on literature, eleven on language skills, eight on linguistics, four on translation, one on research methodology and seven are non-English courses. Frequent cries of

dissatisfaction with the program structure and content from both students and faculty are the main drive behind the program evaluation attempted in this paper.

Objectives of the Study

The present investigation is an attempt to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the current program strengths and weaknesses with regard to the program content and program structure?
2. What is the program completers' assessment of the current program with regard to the language requirements of their current professions?
3. What revisions can be suggested to enhance the relevance of the current program content and structure to the professional language requirements of the program participants?

Methodology of Evaluation

The evaluation of the current English undergraduate program proceeds at two levels. The program is examined in detail in order to lay bare its strengths and weaknesses with regard to the program content and structure. This qualitative analysis is informed by the researcher's insider knowledge of the current program, and is backed up by a quantitative analysis of an online survey targeting program completers in the past three years.

The Qualitative Evaluation

The qualitative evaluation aims at providing a detailed description of the current program structure and content. The courses on offer will be grouped according to their thematic relatedness and their content spelled out as and when required. The program structure will therefore be detailed under five groups, viz., the language skills courses, the literature courses, the linguistics courses, the other English courses, and the non-English courses. After presenting the description of the program structure and content, the researcher lists the program drawbacks which necessitate program revision.

The Quantitative Evaluation

The sample. The study targets program completers during the years 2009 and 2012. The research population is 240 and the sample size is 70, constituting around 30% of the population. The survey is published online because the survey targets (program completers during the past three years) are difficult to reach, especially in the absence of a university alumni system in the specific research context.

The instrument. The online survey has two sections. The first section of the survey elicits information on the program completers' graduation year and current occupation. The second section constitutes the core of the survey and elicits the program completers' evaluation of the program in relation to their current job language requirements. This section lists all the courses on offer (a total of 52 courses) and the respondents are asked to rate them as either not relevant at all, slightly relevant, adequately relevant or very much relevant to the language demands of their current profession (cf. Appendix B).

The face and content validity of the online survey have been established via a panel of teachers involved in executing the current program. The feedback on the items relevance and on the representativeness of survey items has been considered in producing the final version of the survey.

After presenting the findings of the program evaluation carried out by the researcher and the program completers' evaluation of the program, the final recommendations of the study are listed for the benefit of program designers and program executors.

Procedure of evaluation. The program completers' responses to each component of the current program are analyzed to determine the average mean of frequency and average mean of percentage for each ordered choice. The weighted average and relative importance for each course on the program are also calculated. The components of the program with the lowest weighted average and relative importance, thus requiring intervention, are presented first, and the components with the highest weighted average and relative importance which require little intervention figure last in the discussion below.

The Current Program

Program Structure

The current program contains 52 courses: 14 courses in the first year, 14 in the second, 12 in the third and 12 in the fourth. The number of English courses is 45, and the remaining 7 are non-English courses (cf. Appendix 1). The following table provides a more detailed overview of the program structure.

Table 1

An Overview of the Current Program Structure: Number of Courses Offered

Year	Language	Translation	Research	Linguistics	Literature	Non-English	Total
First	6	--	--	--	3	5	14
Second	4	2	--	3	3	2	14
Third	--	1	1	3	7	--	12
Fourth	1	1	--	2	8	--	12
Total	11	4	1	8	21	7	52

As shown by the table, the program has a heavy concentration of literature courses, which constitute more than 40% of the courses offered – a dominance that is perhaps explained by the department affiliation to the Faculty of Arts. In the first two years, only 6 literature courses are offered compared to 15 in the last two years. In comparison, the first two years offer 10 language courses, compared to only 1 in the last two years. A plausible explanation for this course arrangement is that the first two years aim at improving the students' language skills before they are introduced to literature. This may also explain why the translation, linguistics and research classes are introduced from the second year onward. The non-English courses, it may be noted, are all introduced in the first two years, which may be rationalized by the 'preparatory' nature of the first two years.

Program Content

The language skills courses. The current program offers a total of 11 language courses (about 21% of the courses offered). Ten of these courses are offered in the first two years and only one in the last two years, specifically in the first semester of the final year. The language courses offered in the first year are Reading and Composition (I and II), Spoken English (I and II), and English Grammar (I and II). The second year offers Reading and Composition (III and IV)

and English Usage (I and II). The one course offered in the final year is Advanced Writing Skills.

The four Reading and Composition courses aim to introduce the students to different types of texts like narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative texts. They also aim to help the students acquire reading skills like scanning and skimming and writing skills like summarizing long texts and expanding short statements. The two Spoken English courses aim to engage the students in communicative tasks and language functions and introduce them to different accents of English. The two Grammar courses are graded. Grammar I is remedial and consolidates prior knowledge of grammar acquired at the school level, while Grammar II introduces 'new' grammar points. The Usage courses also introduce grammar like the relative clause and the articles but focus on the notion of appropriateness beside grammatical correctness.

The linguistics courses. The linguistics courses offered are 8, constituting over 15% of the total courses on offer. No linguistics courses are offered in the first year. The second year offers three courses, viz. Introduction to Language (I and II) and History of English Language. The first two courses aim at developing in the students an analytical awareness of how language operates. The first of these two courses introduces elementary phonetics and phonology and basic concepts in semantics, while the second course introduces basic concepts in morphology and syntax. The third course aims at "making the students aware of the important phonological, syntactic and semantic changes that have taken place from old English through Middle English to Modern English".

The third year also offers three linguistics courses. These are English Morphology and Syntax, Sociolinguistics, and Stylistics. The first course aims at creating an analytical awareness of English morphology and syntax, the second at introducing basic concepts in sociolinguistics and the third at introducing theories of style and sample stylistic analyses.

The last two linguistics courses (Topics in Applied Linguistics and Semantics) are offered in the second semester of the fourth year. In the first course, the students apply their knowledge of language and linguistics to practical problems in language teaching. The second course introduces basic concepts in semantics and presents "a standard but eclectic view of modern semantics".

The literature courses. The literature courses offered are 21, constituting more than 40% of the total number of courses. In the first year, three courses are

offered (Introduction to Literary Forms, Language through Literature, and Short Story). The first of these courses introduces the literary genres and the figures of speech, the second focuses on “the elegance in the use of language in literature”, while the third focuses on the structural and rhetorical aspects of selected short stories. The second year offers three more literature courses, viz. 18th-century English Novel (which focuses on the characteristics of English fiction in the 18th century), Survey of English Literature (which gives a historical perspective of English literature), and Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (which aims to give a critical awareness of drama written in this period of time). The remaining 15 courses are offered in the final two years. All the courses offered (cf. Appendix A) aim to give a critical and historical awareness of the literature written in a particular period of time. Two of these courses are on Novel, three on Poetry, three on Drama (one of which also offers poetry), two on American Literature, two on the historical development of Criticism, one on Literary Text Analysis, one on World Literature and the final course is one Comparative Literature.

The other English courses. The current program offers five other English courses (four on translation and one on research methods). The four translation courses offer graded training in the techniques of translation, graded exposure to texts of different lengths and graded exposure to topic ranging from general interest to legal and scientific. The one course on research methods introduces the students to the process of producing a research paper, starting from selecting a topic and ending with producing the final draft.

The non-English courses. The current program also offers seven non-English courses, all of which are offered in the first two years. Five of these courses (Arabic Language I and II, French Language I and II, and Islamic Culture) are introduced in the first year, while the remaining two courses (Arabic Language III and IV) are introduced in the second year. The content of these courses is determined not by the department of English but by the course instructors who belong to other departments of the university. Generally, the content is introductory and supplements the linguistic, and critical, concepts introduced in English.

Disadvantages of the Current Program

1. Only two Spoken classes are offered by the current program. It is difficult to cram all speaking skills, language functions and immersion situations into these two courses and even more difficult to give individual attention

to the students in order to improve their fluency. Besides, the absence of separate tutorial classes to focus on accuracy means that the spoken classes will take care of both accuracy and fluency, which will cut into the time specified for fluency and considerably reduces the amount of time to be allocated for individual speakers. In addition, introducing the dialects of English at this stage (in the first year) is inappropriate. The students are still struggling with the basics of English pronunciation and the introduction of dialects will lead to more confusion than appreciation.

2. The skills of reading and composition are offered in the same courses, four of them. Although this may sound like presenting language in a life-like format, the mixing of skills will eat into the time for each skill.
3. The current program offers two courses on grammar and two on usage. These courses repeat themselves and, judging by the course description, introduce grammar in a discrete-point fashion.
4. Introducing the History of English Language and the “changes that have taken place from Old English through Middle English to Modern English” in the second year when the students are still struggling with the basics of English linguistics is inappropriate. The course will only complicate the students’ problems and may even turn them off linguistics. This course is more appropriate with students “studying” language than with students “learning” it (Widdowson, 1985).
5. The basic concepts of Morphology and Syntax and Sociolinguistics have already been introduced by the second year introductory courses to linguistics. The third year courses will therefore either repeat the introductory courses, which is unnecessary, or introduce more advanced concepts in the field, which is inappropriate in the present context.
6. The current program is characterized by a heavy tilt towards literature, with the literature courses forming more than 40% of the courses on offer.
7. The Short Story course is introduced early (in the first year) when the students are still struggling with less figurative and less extended discourses.
8. The content of the literature concentration of the current program is obviously Anglo-centric. This Anglo-centricity reflects itself not only in the choice of courses (half of the courses offered are on British literature) but also on the chronological arrangement of these courses on the syllabus.

The courses start from the 16th century and move forward in time till the 20th century. There is also a course that surveys English literature right from before Chaucer till the 20th century. The concern of these courses is the literature and culture of England, or indeed the cultural heritage of England – a concern which is obviously at odds with the learning objectives of non-native speaking learners of English. This Anglo-centric approach is more appropriate in first language contexts and in more advanced stages of English education. It may be noted that the two courses on American literature and the one course on World literature serve only to highlight the concern of the program with Anglo-centricity.

9. The chronologically progressive, period-based arrangement of courses also presents extra linguistic difficulty. The texts belonging to the Old English or Middle English periods will present unfamiliar English at a stage when the students are still struggling with familiar English.
10. The course on Literary Text Analysis is dispensable. If the text analysis will be made using stylistic approaches, the course on stylistics will suffice. If the analysis will be made using other critical approaches, the course on critical approaches offered in the final year suffices.
11. The course on the history of criticism from Aristotle to Arnold is also dispensable. The content of this course could be covered under the course on critical approaches offered in the last year.
12. The current program offers a course on research methods but does not offer a sequel course where this theoretical knowledge of research methodology could be put in practice.
13. The program offers four courses on Arabic. Two courses, one surveying Arabic Literature and the other Arabic Linguistics, could suffice.
14. The course on Islamic Culture is also dispensable because it is not seen to serve any purpose related to the program objectives.
15. The introduction of the two courses on French in the first year is inappropriate. It is thought best not to introduce another foreign language in the first year when the students are still struggling with the basics of English.

The Findings of the Online Survey

The non-English courses in the program (the Arabic and French courses) have the lowest mean weighted average (2.13) and mean relative importance (0.53) in the entire program. These courses are estimated to be the least relevant to the program completers' professional requirements. The response 'Not relevant at all', for example, has a mean frequency more than twice as high as that of the response 'Very much relevant', which reflects that the respondents' evaluation of the relevance of these courses to their job demands (Table 2).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Program Completers' Responses to the Non-English Courses Component

	Not relevant at all		Slightly relevant		Adequately relevant		Very much relevant		Weighted average	Relative Importance
	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
Islamic Culture	33	47.14	12	17.14	12	17.14	13	18.57	2.07	0.52
Arabic Language I	20	28.57	16	22.86	18	25.71	16	22.86	2.43	0.61
French Language I	29	41.43	19	27.14	9	12.86	13	18.57	2.09	0.52
Arabic Language II	30	42.86	17	24.29	13	18.57	10	14.29	2.04	0.51
French Language II	31	44.29	20	28.57	11	15.71	8	11.43	1.94	0.49
Arabic Language III	27	38.57	19	27.14	14	20.00	10	14.29	2.10	0.53
Arabic Language IV	25	35.71	20	28.57	9	12.86	16	22.86	2.23	0.56
MEAN	27.86	39.80	17.57	25.10	12.29	17.55	12.29	17.55	2.13	0.53

The literature component of the program is the second least relevant in the program completers' estimation. It has a mean weighted average of 2.27, which falls between 'slightly relevant' and 'adequately relevant', and a mean relative importance of 0.57. These figures indicate that the literature component of the program is not much relevant to the program completers' professional requirements and are not regarded as important by the program completers. Of the 21 courses which make up the literature component of the program, eleven courses have a weighted average below 2 and a relative importance of 0.50 and below (Table 3). These courses are regarded as irrelevant to the program completers' professional requirements. With more than 50% of the courses on the literature component having a relative importance of 0.50 or less and with 2.73 recorded as the highest weighted average for a course on the literature component, it can be safely concluded that the this component of the program is not regarded by the program completers as much relevant to the demands of their profession.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Program Completers' Responses to the Literature Component

	Not relevant at all		Slightly relevant		Adequately relevant		Very much relevant		Weighted average	Relative Importance
	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
Introduction to Literary Forms	23	32.86	21	30.00	10	14.29	16	22.86	2.27	0.57
Language through Literature	13	18.57	15	21.43	20	28.57	22	31.43	2.73	0.68
Short Story	25	35.71	14	20.00	16	22.86	15	21.43	2.30	0.58
18 th Century English Novel	29	41.43	22	31.43	10	14.29	9	12.86	1.99	0.50
Survey of English Literature	39	55.71	21	30.00	6	8.57	4	5.71	1.64	0.41
Drama (Elizabethan-Jacobean)	32	45.71	20	28.57	7	10.00	11	15.71	1.96	0.49

Metaphysical and Augustan Poetry	36	51.43	16	22.86	8	11.43	10	14.29	1.89	0.47
19 th Century English Novel	35	50.00	19	27.14	6	8.57	10	14.29	1.87	0.47
Shakespeare	38	54.29	11	15.71	10	14.29	11	15.71	1.91	0.48
Romantic Poetry	36	51.43	13	18.57	12	17.14	9	12.86	1.91	0.48
Analysis of Literary Texts	28	40.00	20	28.57	6	8.57	16	22.86	2.14	0.54
18th Century Poetry and Drama	36	51.43	17	24.29	9	12.86	8	11.43	1.84	0.46
Literary Criticism (Aristotle to Arnold)	47	67.14	18	25.71	2	2.86	3	4.29	1.44	0.36
20 th Century English Poetry	35	50.00	16	22.86	11	15.71	8	11.43	1.89	0.47
20th Century English Drama	40	57.14	18	25.71	5	7.14	7	10.00	1.70	0.43
19th Century American Literature	26	37.14	9	12.86	17	24.29	18	25.71	2.39	0.60
Comparative Literature	27	38.57	17	24.29	12	17.14	14	20.00	2.19	0.55
20th Century English Novel	30	42.86	15	21.43	11	15.71	14	20.00	2.13	0.53
World Literature	26	37.14	7	10.00	16	22.86	21	30.00	2.46	0.61
20th Century American Literature	22	31.43	12	17.14	19	27.14	17	24.29	2.44	0.61
Critical Approaches to literature	33	47.14	10	14.29	15	21.43	12	17.14	2.09	0.52
MEAN	31.24	44.63	15.76	22.52	10.86	15.51	12.14	17.35	2.27	0.57

The linguistic component of the program has a relatively higher mean weighted average (2.60) and mean relative importance (0.65). This component tilts towards the ‘adequately relevant’ response. All the courses in this component have a weighted average of above 2.50 and a relative importance higher than 0.50, the only exception being the History of English Language course (Table 4). This

particular course has the lowest weighted average in the entire program and so is the least relevant to the program completers' professional requirements.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Program Completers' Responses to the Linguistics Component

	Not relevant at all		Slightly relevant		Adequately relevant		Very much relevant		Weighted average	Relative Importance
	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
Introduction to Language I	13	18.57	16	22.86	29	41.43	12	17.14	2.57	0.64
Introduction to Language II	15	21.43	14	20.00	21	30.00	20	28.57	2.66	0.66
History of English Language	41	58.57	19	27.14	5	7.14	5	7.14	1.63	0.41
English Morphology and Syntax	14	20.00	16	22.86	16	22.86	24	34.29	2.71	0.68
Sociolinguistics	13	18.57	19	27.14	18	25.71	20	28.57	2.64	0.66
Stylistics	12	17.14	13	18.57	17	24.29	28	40.00	2.87	0.72
Topics in Applied Linguistics	15	21.43	11	15.71	15	21.43	29	41.43	2.83	0.71
Semantics	9	12.86	16	22.86	21	30.00	24	34.29	2.86	0.71
MEAN	16.5	23.57	15.5	22.14	17.75	25.36	20.25	28.93	2.60	0.65

The translation and research methods courses, which together make up the Other English Courses component, have almost the same mean weighted average (2.85 and 2.84, respectively). All the courses in this component have a weighed average higher than 2 and a relative importance higher than 0.50, which indicates adequate relevance to the program completers' professional requirements (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Program Completers' Responses to the Translation Courses

	Not relevant at all		Slightly relevant		Adequately relevant		Very much relevant		Weighted average	Relative Importance
	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
Translation I	10	14.29	14	20.00	19	27.14	27	38.57	2.9	0.73
Translation II	13	18.57	15	21.43	17	24.29	25	35.71	2.77	0.69
Translation III	10	14.29	16	22.86	19	27.14	25	35.71	2.84	0.71
Advanced Translation	12	17.14	12	17.14	17	24.29	29	41.43	2.90	0.73
MEAN	11.25	16.07	14.25	20.36	18	25.71	26.5	37.86	2.85	0.71

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics of Program Completers' Responses to the Research Methods Course

	Not relevant at all		Slightly relevant		Adequately relevant		Very much relevant		Weighted average	Relative Importance
	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
Research Methods	11	15.71	14	20.00	20	28.57	25	35.71	2.84	0.71

The last component of the program is the language skills component. Almost all the courses in this component have a weighted average of 3 and above and a relative importance of 0.75 and above. The mean weighted average for the component is 3.22, which falls between 'adequately relevant' and 'very much relevant', and the mean relative importance is 0.81. With 3.50 recorded as the highest weighted average for a course in this component and with 0.88 recorded as the highest relative importance for a course, it can be concluded with little doubt

that this component is the most relevant to the program completers' professional requirements (Table 7).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Program Completers' Responses to the Language Skills Component

	Not relevant at all		Slightly relevant		Adequately relevant		Very much relevant		Weighted average	Relative Importance
	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%	F	P%		
Reading and Composition I	6	8.57	7	10.00	22	31.43	35	50.00	3.23	0.81
Spoken English I	4	5.71	8	11.43	15	21.43	43	61.43	3.39	0.85
English Grammar I	7	10	10	14.29	15	21.43	38	54.29	3.20	0.80
Reading and Composition II	10	14.29	9	12.86	27	38.57	34	48.57	3.50	0.88
Spoken English II	5	7.14	7	10.00	14	20.00	44	62.86	3.39	0.85
English Grammar II	8	11.43	9	12.86	12	17.14	41	58.57	3.23	0.81
Reading and Composition III	9	12.86	7	10.00	19	27.14	35	50.00	3.14	0.79
English Usage I	9	12.86	10	14.29	20	28.57	31	44.29	3.04	0.76
Reading and Composition IV	11	15.71	10	14.29	18	25.71	31	44.29	2.99	0.75
English Usage II	10	14.29	10	14.29	22	31.43	28	40.00	2.97	0.74
Advanced Writing Skills	5	7.14	7	10.00	16	22.86	42	60.00	3.36	0.84
MEAN	7.64	10.91	8.55	12.21	18.18	25.97	36.55	52.21	3.22	0.81

Recommendations for Program Designers and Executors

On The Non-English Component

1. The highest weighted average for a course in this component is as low as 2.43 and the lowest is below 2. The courses on this component need immediate intervention.
2. The Arabic courses should be reduced by two and their content amended so they map out Arabic linguistics and literature. This should give the participants a critical outlook with which to approach the learning of English language and literature, and make the courses relevant to the overall program objective.
3. The French courses should be delayed till the graduation year for at least three reasons. First, it is thought best not to introduce another foreign language in the first year when the students are still struggling with English. Secondly, the students will have reached a level of proficiency in English and competence in language analysis that allows them to learn and appreciate French in a better way. Thirdly, the students' knowledge of French would be fresh after graduation and may well come in handy at the workplace. .

On The Literature Component

1. This is the largest component of the program, constituting over 40% of the total number of courses on offer. The weighted average and relative importance of this component, however, are the second lowest, second only to the non-English component. The courses on this component are not regarded as relevant to the program completers' professional requirements; hence the need for revision.
2. The exclusive concern with canonical texts and the chronological arrangement of the literature courses reflect an Anglo-centricity inappropriate for the present context. This Anglo-centric orientation is more appropriate with English native-speaking undergraduates than with non-native learners of English language and literature. Accordingly, the arrangement of the courses on the syllabus should be based on linguistic rather than historical criteria, and the content of these courses should include any text, canonical or non-canonical, written in English.

3. The courses with the lowest weighted average, viz. Survey of English Literature and Literary Criticism, should be replaced by courses which contribute more directly to the participants' learning objectives.
4. Exposure to language in use should expand to include non-literary discourses beside the literary discourse. It is therefore recommended that the program introduces at least two Non-literary discourse Analysis courses which cover analysis of media, political, legal, sport and commercial texts.
5. Non-fiction should also be introduced so that the participant's are encouraged to investigate real-world contemporary issues such as the war on terror, nuclear armament and the changing world order.

On The Linguistics Component

1. All the courses in this component, save the History of English Language, have a weighted average of 2.5 and above. The History of English Language course is not considered relevant by the program completers and should be left out of the program. The other courses should be retained.
2. It is recommended that the Topics in Applied Linguistics course be repeated in the second semester of the graduation year. The objective is teacher preparation and topics to cover in the two modules include language acquisition and language learning, methods of teaching, materials production, curriculum design, language testing, and learner psychology. These two courses should be introduced in the graduation year because many students of the department take up teaching posts after graduation and the knowledge of language pedagogy offered by these courses will remain fresh in the students' minds after graduation.

On The Other English Courses Component

1. All the courses in this component have a weighted average of above 2.7 and are judged relevant to the program completers' professional requirements. All the courses should therefore be retained.
2. It is recommended that the course on Research Methodology be moved to the first semester of the final year and a new 'Graduation Project' course introduced as a sequel in the second semester where theoretical concept may be put into practice.

On The Language Skills Component

1. All the courses in this component have high weighted average and relative importance and are therefore considered the most relevant to the program completers' professional language requirements. All these courses should be retained but some minor revisions may be suggested to further enhance the relevance of these courses.
2. The four courses on Reading and Composition should be split into their component skills of Reading and Writing. By multiplying the number of courses, the instructors will have more time to focus on the relevant skills and the students will get more time to practise these skills. These additions should enhance the students' language proficiency, particularly their reading skills and writing proficiency.
3. The Grammar courses should be combined with the Usage courses so they become Grammar and Usage. This will ensure that grammar is not presented in a discrete-point fashion but instead in extended discourse and context, and in accordance with the dictates of communicative approaches to language teaching.
4. The Spoken classes should be split into Tutorials and Language Production classes. The Language Tutorials will supplement the Language Production classes by focusing on accuracy. The participants get individualized attention and sufficient practice in sound identification and production, while their language fluency is taken care of in the Language Production classes.

On the Program Structure and Content

1. The number of courses offered each year should be evened out, preferably 6 every semester.
2. The language courses should be offered in the first two years as preparation for subsequent textual analysis
3. No literature courses should be offered in the first two years, when the participants are still struggling with less fictional text worlds. The first two years aim to enhance the students' English proficiency and serve to sharpen their analytical awareness of the structure and operation of the different levels of language organization. In this way, the students are

better prepared to take on language in actual use, literary and non-literary, and more likely to benefit maximally from these courses.

4. The 'learning' of literature should be introduced in the first semester of the third year. The 'study' of literature may be initiated in the first semester of the graduation year when the participants have had enough training in language-based approaches to literature. In other words, the learning of literature should come first as a precondition for subsequent study. This comes in line with the previous recommendation that the language and linguistics courses are introduced before the literature courses
5. The current program should be revised so that its concern is the 'learning' not 'study' of literature (Widdowson, 1985) and the methodology in literature classes starting from text selection to testing adapted accordingly.

Conclusion

The qualitative evaluation of the undergraduate program revealed the literature component of the program is Anglo-centric in focus, the language component relevant but disorderly, the linguistics component and the translation sub-component relevant but repetitive, the non-English component overrepresented, and the research sub-component underrepresented. The findings of the qualitative analysis refined the findings of the qualitative analysis. The non-English and literature components are judged to be the least relevant to the program completers' professional language requirements. The other components showed varying degrees of relevance, with the language skills component ranked 'the most relevant' and the other English courses, viz. translation and research methods, ranked second most important. In short, it may be concluded that the literature component needs change of focus from Anglo-centricity to language simplicity; the language component needs course re-arrangement, course fusion and division; the linguistics component needs enrichment; the translation sub-component needs content revision; the non-English component needs reduction; and the research component needs accretion.

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APPENDIX A
CURRENT SYLLABUS CONTENT

FIRST YEAR			
First Semester		Second Semester	
Course Name (and Description)	Code	Course Name (and Description)	Code
Reading and Composition I	101	Reading and Composition II	105
Spoken English I	102	Spoken English II	106
English Grammar I	103	English Grammar II	107
Introduction to Literary Forms	104	Language through Literature	108
Islamic Culture		Short Story	109
Arabic Language I		Arabic Language II	
French Language I		French Language II	
SECOND YEAR			
Reading and Composition III	201	Reading and Composition IV	207
English Usage I	202	English Usage II	208
18 th Century English Novel	203	Drama (Elizabethan-Jacobean)	209
Introduction to Language I	204	Introduction to Language II	210
Survey of English Literature	205	History of English Language	211
Translation I	206	Translation II	212
Arabic Language III		Arabic Language IV	
THIRD YEAR			
Metaphysical and Augustan Poetry	301	Romantic Poetry	307
19 th Century English Novel	302	Analysis of Literary Texts	308
English Morphology and Syntax	303	18 th Century Poetry and Drama	309
Research Methods	304	Literary Criticism (Aristotle to Arnold)	310
Shakespeare	305	Translation III	311
Sociolinguistics	306	Stylistics	312
FOURTH YEAR			
Advanced Writing Skills	401	20 th Century English Novel	407
20 th Century English Poetry	402	Topics in Applied Linguistics	408
20 th Century English Drama	403	Semantics	409
19 th Century American Literature	404	World Literature	410
Comparative Literature	405	20 th Century American Literature	411
Advanced Translation	406	Critical Approaches	412

APPENDIX B
Program Completers' Online Survey

This survey seeks to elicit background information on your graduate education and your work history since graduation. It also seeks to elicit your opinion on the effectiveness of the English undergraduate program and its relevance to the demands of your current job.

1. I am

male

female

2. When did you finish your undergraduate education?

July 2012

July 2011

July 2010

July 2009

3. Are you currently employed?

Yes

No

3. What is the nature of your job?

Administrative

Teaching

Translation

Freelancer

Other. Please specify

4. How would you rate the relevance of the courses on the program to the demands of your current job?

	Not relevant at all	Slightly relevant	Adequately relevant	Very much relevant
Reading and Composition I				
Spoken English I				
English Grammar I				
Introduction to Literary Forms				
Islamic Culture				
Arabic Language I				
French Language I				
Reading and Composition II				
Spoken English II				
English Grammar II				
Language through Literature				
Short Story				
Arabic Language II				
French Language II				
Reading and Composition III				
English Usage I				
18 th Century English Novel				
Introduction to Language I				
Survey of English Literature				
Translation I				
Arabic Language III				
Reading and Composition IV				
English Usage II				
Drama (Elizabethan-Jacobean)				
Introduction to Language II				
History of English Language				
Translation II				
Arabic Language IV				
Metaphysical and Augustan Poetry				
19 th Century English Novel				
English Morphology and Syntax				
Research Methods				
Shakespeare				
Sociolinguistics				
Romantic Poetry				
Analysis of Literary Texts				
18 th Century Poetry and Drama				
Literary Criticism (Aristotle to Arnold)				
Translation III				
Stylistics				

Evaluation of an English Undergraduate Program

Dr. Gibreel Sadeq Alaghbary

Advanced Writing Skills				
20 th Century English Poetry				
20 th Century English Drama				
19 th Century American Literature				
Comparative Literature				
Advanced Translation				
20th Century English Novel				
Topics in Applied Linguistics				
Semantics				
World Literature				
20 th Century American Literature				
Critical Approaches to literature				