

Investigating the Relationship between the Initial English Reading Skills of Newly Enrolled Engineering Undergraduates and their Academic Success – A Case Study*

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With an ever-growing influence of the English language in the realm of higher education of non-English-speaking countries, various questions have been raised regarding the relationship between students' proficiency in the language and their academic performance. The present study was conducted at Shamoon College of Engineering with the aim of shedding further light on the relationship and investigating whether an initial level of English language proficiency of newly enrolled students, specifically their reading comprehension skills, prior to embarking upon academic courses is influential on the students' academic achievements. The collected data encompassed 1973 students who started their studies in the academic years 2015–2016 at the college. Drawing on the results obtained, there is a significant relationship between the students' academic performance, as well as their commutative GPA, and their beginning level of English proficiency throughout the first academic year. The paper concludes that students' English proficiency level, mainly reading comprehension skills on entry to the college, plays a significant role in their subsequent academic performance.

Keywords: English proficiency; engineering undergraduates; first year students; student success

1. Introduction

In the light of ongoing globalization processes embracing various aspects of contemporary international life, English has gained a pivotal role in diverse fields of science, research, international communication, business, cutting-edge technology and education. Being commonly used language in these and other domains of human development, English is considered a window on the world through which stakeholders are granted access to valuable information necessary for keeping abreast of the developments in their fields. The resort to the language creates new opportunities and confers distinct advantages to those involved in the process providing fertile ground for making satisfactory progress within the scope of their expertise. This rapidly growing demand for English in non-English-speaking countries (NESC) results from deepening globalization and serves as a catalyst for an ever-increasing number of stakeholders to plunge more actively into the new reality. With the emerging and mushrooming demand for the language, its influence over different facets of modern life has

become overwhelming making it an integral component of many domains in the context of globalization.

Among the domains, increased emphasis is placed on higher education sector where the English language broadly prevails [17]. The significance of what has been happening with the spread of the language in the arena over a couple of decades, potential far-reaching consequences of the global trend, both positive and negative, are yet to be properly assessed and analysed. Without detracting from the importance of addressing varied difficulties and challenges of the prevailing use of English as a lingua franca, the issue of learners' insufficient command of the language comes to the fore most clearly. Due to the fact that a substantial amount of worldwide information related to science, technology and higher education "is expressed" [16, p. 43] in the language, students' inadequate grasp of the latter is one of the pressing problems that need to be addressed through coherent and concerted actions of policy and decision makers in the field of education. Ignoring the problem would be a largely short-sighted stance owing to negative consequences it

may have on higher education settings and on society as a whole.

2. Literature Review

Prior to providing available insight into the matter of learners' proficiency in English within academic frames, it is imperative that we delve into more detail on levels of language proficiency. Cummins [4] highlights a distinct difference between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The former concept is used to refer to a language's conversational fluency [7] while the latter is defined by the author as "expertise in understanding and using literacy-related aspects of language" [6, p. 70]. Being considered as the two levels of language proficiency, BICS and CALP are conceptualized along two context-embedded and context-reduced continua respectively [5]. The context-reduced side of the continuum is identified with a "lack of extralinguistic cues and feedback" [14, p. 16] which are not required for interacting "with text or oral cognitively-demanding tasks" [13, p. 186]. Context-reduced communication falls outside the scope of a context that is mutually understood [12], and knowledge of the language is crucial for the successfulness of the type of communication [5] being contingent upon it. This dependence stands in sharp contrast to the context-embedded side of the continuum associated with resorting to "a wide range of meaningful paralinguistic and situational cues" [5, p. 138] with the aim of supporting the language within earlier mentioned scope and allowing "individuals to gain meaning" [13, p. 186].

In view of the above, it is of vital importance to ascertain the extent to which students' academic English language proficiency, namely their entry level of English proficiency, can be related to their overall academic performance. With this purpose in mind, it is worth noting that the issue may and should be approached from a broad range of angles in order both to discover its full depth and to take into account its various aspects. Among the aspects rendering essential influence on learners' academic performance are their educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, learners' major fields of study, educators' teaching methods, stakeholders' mother tongue (L1), an official language of the country, language of instruction, length and quality of previous English training. Since the language component, which seems the most worrisome, constitutes the main thrust of this paper, it is devoted significant and due attention.

There is an interesting corpus of research containing varied and even sometimes contradictory findings which are indicative of a heavily inter-

twined mix of different issues concerning the relationship between students' English proficiency and their educational attainments. According to a study carried out at Physics Department, University of Constantine I [8], there is a causal relationship between students' general English proficiency and their reading comprehension problems. The participants of the study, Arabic-speaking master students, encounter the problems owing to a lack of knowledge in general English, and mainly in the fields of vocabulary and grammar. The study's results indicate that the linguistic hurdle is a main obstacle in the way to an adequate level of their reading comprehension. The difficulties in the latter, leading "invariably . . . to academic failure" [1, p. 356], will thus be mitigated given that the students possess a sufficient level in general English. It is worth mentioning that the lack of general English language competence and its negative impact on learners' academic achievements can serve as a breeding ground for creating a serious problem that they face upon graduating from higher education institutions (HEI). The problem is touched upon in the study conducted at the Islamic Azad University [18] and linked to the inability of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Iran to communicate in the language and handle it after finishing HEI. The study endeavoured to ascertain the degree of strength of the relationship between the students' language proficiency and their academic performance. The results of the study's data analysis reveal a positive nature of the correlation between the former and successful academic performance. In addition, the results show that their English language proficiency positively correlates with attainments in English writing and speaking subjects [18]. Another interesting outcome of the study, related to the subjects, lies in the fact that the EFL students, who have a higher proficiency level, "perform much better in writing subjects" [18, p. 94]. The authors associate the insufficient academic performance in speaking subjects with the lack of standardized "university entrance screening tests" [18, p. 94] and are supportive of a careful change in the selection process, which needs to be aimed at initially choosing a more proficient applicant.

In this regard, the idea of adopting a gate-keeping policy pertaining to students' four language skills provides a wide room for manoeuvre on the part of HEI in both Anglophone and non-Anglophone countries. The implementation of the type of procedure is viewed as a substantial factor in upholding the highest standards of their higher education systems, especially when English is used as a medium of instruction. In their bid to escape possible consequences arising out of learners'

poor command of English, policy makers establish certain levels of the language proficiency for learners whose L1 is other than English. To be admitted into an institution of higher education, they are required to demonstrate an adequate level of competence in English prior to being accepted in the institution and embarking upon any academic studying. Among various tools employed to assess the language skills of potential students and sift out those of them, who do not meet minimum English language skills requirements, are the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), the Test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) and language tests developed by universities [17]. Research findings of the study conducted at the British University in Egypt (BUE), where a precondition for admission is to achieve a passing score on the OPT, points towards “moderate positive relation” [11, p. 91] between students’ English literacy before entering the institution and their academic achievements in an English-medium instruction (EMI) setting. The aspect of adequate competence in English on the part of students, majoring “in Engineering, Business . . . and Informatics and Computer Science” [11, p. 96], is deemed pivotal to their academic success. The research concludes that the higher students’ level of proficiency in English on entry to the higher education institution, the better their academic achievements in courses related to learners’ degree will be.

Despite the seemingly positive perceptions of the gate-keeping strategy, the latter is not always consistent with academic literacy requirements that are essential for learners’ academic performance. According to Murray [19], the strategy does not meet the requirements imposed on newly enrolled students with both English and non-English speaking backgrounds [19] owing to the fact that they still encounter language difficulties in Australian universities after successfully passing English language tests. This brings into question “the suitability” [19, p. 61] of such tests as IELTS, as well as acknowledging it as a solid predictor of positive academic achievements. The study carried out at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia [9] shows that the acknowledgment is fraught with controversy. In accordance with the findings of the study conducted among students having various non-English speaking backgrounds in the fields of business, science and engineering, there is “little evidence for the validity of IELTS as a predictor of academic success” [9, p. 36]. Drawing on the study’s findings, there is a good likelihood of having the potential on the part of international students to be successful in their academic performance regardless of their IELTS scores.

The relationship between earlier mentioned tools to measure language skills of potential students and their academic achievements was also explored in the study conducted by Tweedie and Chu [23]. The researchers explored the extent to which the choice of varied assessment mechanisms of English proficiency such as IELTS, TOEFL and a post-secondary institution academic English program (EAP) may have an influence on academic success of the international students. Based on one of the findings of the study, a higher percentage of the participants admitted to the institution via TOEFL finished ten first-year obligatory engineering courses in comparison to the participants admitted using the EAP. Interestingly enough, the influence of the assessment tools manifested itself in learners’ grade point averages (GPAs) and the type of the courses. Among other things, there were marked differences in the statistics related to three courses. According to the investigators, the most unexpected finding was the one associated with outperformance of admitted through TOEFL students in the Design and Communication course. The students’ outperformance learners admitted by means of EAP. The peculiarity of the finding revolves around the fact that the aim of EAP courses laid in providing learners “with more opportunities to practice communication-based activities such as presentations – the main assessments used during Design and Communication” [23, p. 692]. With that being said, interestingly, the students still had more success in the course.

Another English literacy test is mentioned in a study conducted among 100 undergraduate engineering students in Mehran university Jamshoro [21]. The purpose of the study was to explore the connection between the level of English competence on the part of the students and their academic achievements. The learners’ language proficiency was measured by “adapted from ESOL Cambridge” [21, p. 518] test, whereas CGPA (cumulative grade point average) was used to evaluate the participants’ academic results. Drawing on the obtained results, there is a strong relationship between a good proficiency level in English (the language of instruction) and a “good academic CGPA” [21, p. 522]. In view of the results, a proficient knowledge of English has a positive impact on the Pakistani academic institution of science and technology. Along similar lines, a significant relationship between students’ English language proficiency skills and their GPA achievements were discovered by dint of the correlation coefficient analysis in the study carried out at a private university in Thailand [22].

Among the diversity of existing gate-keeping mechanisms, a number of which have been

described above, there is yet another noteworthy mechanism being widely used in Israel's higher education system. The gate-keeping tool, called the English Proficiency Test (AMIR), or its computerized version-AMIRAM, has gained a prominent role in the arena of higher education of the country. Both AMIR and AMIRAM tests are supervised by the National Institute for Testing and Evaluation (NITE). The tests are designed to assess students' level of proficiency in academic English with the view of either sorting them into various mandatory levels depending on their language competence or giving them exemption from studying English. The classification is performed in concordance with the decision of the Council for Higher Education, a supervisory body for HEI in Israel, according to which all students need to be sorted into different levels on the basis of AMIRAM test results. It is worth mentioning, however, that in contrast to the aforesaid gate-keeping tools such as IELTS and TOEFL, the AMIRAM test only evaluates applicants' reading skills, their "passive command of English at the level required to read and understand academic texts" [20]. The evaluation of listening, writing and speaking skills is outside its scope.

3. Aims of the Study

In consideration of the diversity of the findings of various studies revolving around the issue of students' English proficiency level prior to beginning their academic studies and its impact on their subsequent academic performance, there is a need for further in-depth research into the extent to which the command of the language at the initial stage is influential on their success in the studies. With this need in mind, the overarching aim of the study was to examine whether there exists a relationship between the initial level of English proficiency among newly enrolled students before they embark upon academic courses delivered in a language other than English and their academic achievements. As to the students' academic achievements, they were measured via grade point average (GPA). The relationship was investigated within the system of higher education in Israel, namely at Shamoon College of Engineering (SCE). Although the main medium of instruction at the institution of higher education is Hebrew, English is widely used in different types of supporting materials in various academic courses containing, among other things, a diverse range of international scientific terminology.

Another point of the study's interest was to clarify whether there is a connection between students' initial English level and their cumulative

grade point average (cumulative GPA) during the first and second years of academic studies. In addition, the results obtained over the course of the two years were analysed in terms of commonalities and differences.

4. Methodology

4.1 The English Proficiency Test (AMIRAM)

As previously mentioned, students of Israeli HEI are sorted into five different mandatory levels after taking the AMIRAM English proficiency test. Table 1 shows the five levels, the range of students' AMIRAM test scores necessary for the sorting and the number of weekly English class hours prescribed for students of each level during a semester. Students who were assigned to the lowest level (Pre-Basic A) are required to study twice the amount of hours compared with the students registered for the higher levels (Advanced A and Advanced B).

All newly enrolled students of SCE have been obliged to take the AMIRAM test with the aim of further sorting since 2015. Up to 1000 students of the college are enrolled at the five levels annually after being tested by means of the gate-keeping tool within the institution.

Prior to the computerized test, examinees are given the opportunity to practice with various types of multiple choice questions such as Sentence Completions, Restatements and Reading Comprehension. The practice tests are very helpful in making sure that all the instructions are clear. The time allocated for the test varies depending on examinees' personal pace and includes the time spent on both reading the instructions and practice. The average allocated test time is about 60 minutes.

4.2 Procedure and Data Collection

The ethics committee of the college granted permission for the researchers to conduct the study. The research data was collected from the academic administration system of the college encompassing data about 1973 students who started their academic studies in the 2015 and 2016 academic years at SCE and took the AMIRAM test. The number of newly enrolled students who were sorted into the five levels in accordance with the results of the

Table 1. AMIRAM Test Score Levels

Range of Scores	Assigned Level	Weekly Hours
50–69	Pre-Basic A	8
70–84	Pre-Basic B	6
85–99	Basic	6
100–119	Advanced A	4
120–133	Advanced B	4
134	Exemption	

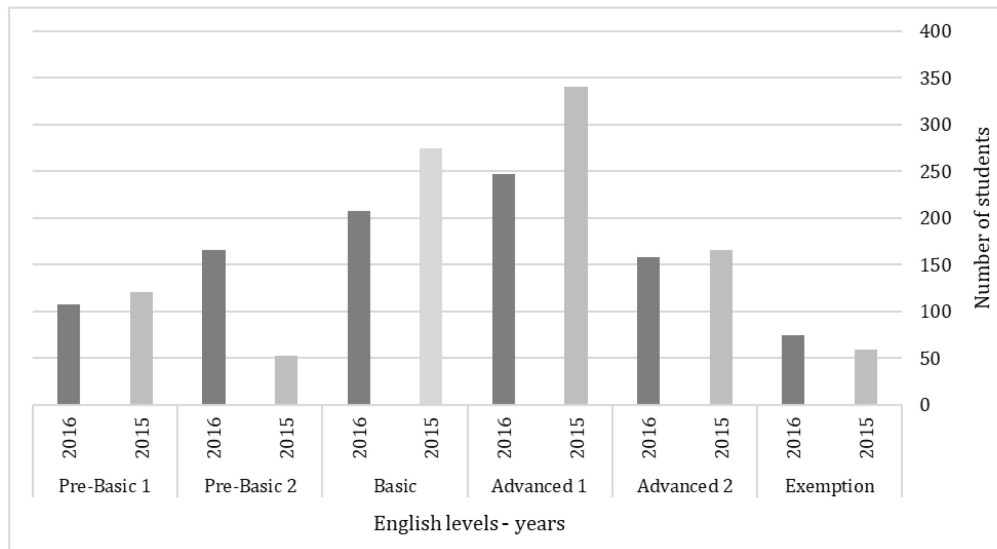


Fig. 1. The number of newly enrolled students classified into five English levels in the years 2015–2016.

AMIRAM test over the 2-year period is illustrated in Fig. 1.

The data also contained students' identification information, their GPA at the end of the first year and their cumulative GPA at the end of the first two years of the academic studies.

Table 2 presents the average GPA for each English level for the years 2015–2016 (GPA) of those students who embarked upon their academic courses in those years and were classified into the five English levels after taking the AMIRAM test in the beginning of each year. In addition, the average students' cumulative GPA for each English level at the end of the first two academic years (Cumulative GPA) were calculated, as shown in Table 2.

4.3 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the academic administration system was statistically analysed via SPSS®

Table 2. Students' Initial Level of English Proficiency and their GPA

Start Year	English Level	GPA	Cumulative GPA
2015	Pre-Basic A	65.93	65.89
	Pre-Basic B	69.00	70.25
	Basic	69.96	70.29
	Advanced A	71.92	72.61
	Advanced B	74.07	73.76
	Exemption	75.12	74.39
2016	Pre-Basic A	68.04	68.04
	Pre-Basic B	73.96	73.96
	Basic	71.77	71.77
	Advanced A	73.43	73.43
	Advanced B	76.41	76.41
	Exemption	77.59	77.59

(Statistical Package for Social Sciences) in two stages. In the first stage, the researchers performed a correlation analysis of students' overall initial level of English language proficiency and the GPA at the end of the first academic year taking into account those who started their academic studies in 2015 and 2016.

As to the second stage of the correlation analysis, it was focused on first-year learners' beginning level of English language proficiency and their cumulative GPA at the end of the first two academic years. The second stage of the analysis included only students enrolled for the year 2015.

5. Research Findings

According to the data provided by the academic administration system, more than 80 percent of the students are placed in four mid-levels in English based on the results of the AMIRAM test. In respect to the lowest level, Pre-Basic A, or the highest one, Exemption, only less than 20 percent of the students were classified into those levels. Drawing on the analysis of the students' achievements, those of them who embarked upon their academic studies in the college in the 2015 academic year, and took the AMIRAM test, it emerges unambiguously that there is a significant relationship between learners' beginning level of English language proficiency and their academic achievements over the course of the first academic year, $r = 0.99$ (see Table 3). These findings are in line with the ones from Table 4 concerning correlations between English Proficiency Level and GPA of those students who started their academic studies in 2016 ($r = 0.889$).

Table 3. Correlations between English Proficiency Level and GPA (2015)

		NO.LEVEL	GPA_2015
NO.LEVEL	Pearson Correlation	1	0.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	6	6
GPA_2015	Pearson Correlation	0.990**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	6	6

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Correlations between English Proficiency Level and GPA (2016)

		NO.LEVEL	GPA_2016
NO.LEVEL	Pearson Correlation	1	0.889*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.018
	N	6	6
GPA_2016	Pearson Correlation	0.889*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.018	
	N	6	6

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Correlations between English Proficiency Level and Cumulative GPA

		NO.LEVEL	GPA_COMMULATIVE
NO.LEVEL	Pearson Correlation	1	0.949**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.004
	N	6	6
GPA_COMMULATIVE	Pearson Correlation	0.949**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004	
	N	6	6

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The finding resonates with the one that emerges from examining the relationship between students' initial level of English language proficiency and their cumulative GPA over the course of the first two academic years of those students who started their academic studies in 2015 (see Table 5). The results reported in Table 3 and Table 5 indicate that the strength of the relationship changes marginally, from $r = 0.990$ to $r = 0.949$, remaining strong and significant. The slight decline in the strength shows that the influence of the students' initial level of competence in the language decreases during their academic studies. The marginal change may be related to the fact that students placed into low levels are allocated a higher number of academic hours throughout the first year (see Table 1). As a consequence of this, the gap between learners with a

sound grasp of English at the beginning of the academic studies and the ones with limited English language skills at the same time narrowed a little over the course of the year 4.

With regard to ascertaining the strength of the relationship among variables, the pertinent information is demonstrated in Table 6.

6. Discussion

Based on an in-depth analysis of the data obtained from the academic administration system of SCE and processed by SPSS[®], it seems reasonable to conclude that learners' English language proficiency is a substantial factor strongly affecting their subsequent academic performance. In accordance with the findings of the research, the better their reading comprehension skills in English are on entry to the college, the better they are in various academic courses related to their degree programs throughout first academic years. The study also concludes that students' initial language incompetence, and its ensuing negative impact on their academic achievements, can be tackled by providing a certain amount of teaching hours which are

Table 6. Determining the Strength of the Relationship between Variables

r	Strength of the Relationship
$r = 0.10$ to 0.29 or $r = -0.10$ to -0.29	low
$r = 0.30$ to 0.49 or $r = -0.30$ to -0.49	medium
$r = 0.50$ to 1.0 or $r = -0.50$ to -1.0	high

distributed over five levels of English proficiency. The distribution of the hours depends on learners' level: the lower it is, the more hours they are provided with.

These findings echo those of previous studies conducted in various academic patterns highlighting the increasing awareness of the importance of English in the sphere of higher education. It is worth emphasizing, however, that the English language proficiency test, used in the college with the aim of classifying applicants into the levels, examines only their reading comprehension skills. The test leaves beyond its scope such core language skills as listening, speaking and writing. In addition, unlike the cohorts of a number of earlier studies conducted within EMI format, the study was carried out at the institution where a primary medium of instruction is Hebrew. Also of importance is that there may be additional factors, other than the aspect of learners' beginning level of English language competency, such as their nationality, religion, competitive, cooperative and individualistic forms of instruction [10] that may cause adverse, positive or even no effects upon the whole process of academic learning. The factors suggest a need for further research into a relationship between them and the initial level of the language on the part of the learners. The researchers will investigate whether the English language background of newly-rolled Israeli Arab students differs from that of non-Arab students owing to the fact that for the former cohort of students English is the third language, in addition to Arabic and Hebrew.

Another noteworthy aspect that needs to be explored is presumable differences in academic achievements between students who are native speakers of English and those having a robustly proficient knowledge of the language acquired over the course of their lives.

The researchers will continue to monitor academic achievements of 1973 students who embarked upon their academic studies in the 2015 and 2016 academic years at SCE with the aim of looking in more detail at the relationship between the students' beginning level of the language and their academic achievements in advanced engineering studies along with their progress in finding employment.

The results obtained from the research may provide a fertile ground for change in policy within similar academic settings. The policy change can manifest itself in a number of ways, among them pre-university preparatory English courses and a gradual transition towards teaching an ever-increasing number of content subjects through English (EMI). The implementation of the latter policy, taking into consideration its var-

ious pitfalls [2, 15], is an effective tool used by HEI in sharpening their profiles with the view of attracting a large number of international students.

Another valuable aspect associated with the necessity to develop knowledge and skills in the English language revolves around international student exchange programs between various academic institutions worldwide. The programs offer a challenging and a worthwhile learning experience to students who travel to study in varied courses, recognized by their original institutions, at an overseas academic institution for an entire semester. Among the benefits deriving from the exchange programs is a unique opportunity for the students to become aware of new research methods, different cultures and create academic and social relationships with students and lecturers from around the world. Coming from this angle, to capture the breadth and depth of the new educational environment a considerable significance needs to be attributed to learners' adequate command of the English language. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that the latter aspect is one of the conditions for entering student exchange programs. Additionally, the vital role of the high level of English proficiency on the part of the students manifests itself in notable advantages the students have over low-proficiency learners. The advantages can be translated into far higher chances of admission to the programs and successfully completing the educational process together with other international students. Apart from these benefits, a robustly proficient knowledge of the language of instruction is of a paramount importance in creating social connections with both local and international stakeholders. With emerging and mushrooming demand for specialists who are equipped with an array of skills to establish and effectively promote trade relations with companies and organizations from all over the world, the earlier gained experience with novel learning environments and a wide variety of cultures confer a great advantage to the participants of the programs.

The current literature review attempted at providing a glimpse into some of the aspects pertaining to the connection between the level of students' competence in English and their academic performance. The researchers believe that further studies are needed to explore the relationship owing to the multi-faceted nature of the subject. Among the facets are low to medium socio-economic status of about 70 percent of the settlements, situated in close proximity to the college, where the students live. Therefore, it seems plausible to assume that different results might have been obtained if the characteristics of the study population were different both in the fields of study (the Humanities or Social Sciences) and in the area of residence. In addition,

the researchers have yet to thoroughly look into an aspect associated with a relationship between resorting to various research strategies with the view of specifically stimulating self-regulating learning and academic attainments [3].

7. Conclusion

The ever-growing global demand for the English language, against the backdrop of globalization, exerts significant influence on various facets of societies of many NESC. The language has become deeply entrenched within different sectors of the societies and its profound impact is yet to be thoroughly examined. The arena of higher education is one of the sectors where the adoption of English has been gathering momentum for several decades. It seems plausible to assume that in an endeavour to be quick and seize upon this world-

wide shift in the role of English in academic settings, policy makers have overlooked its potential downsides. Among them is students' insufficient command of the language, imposing a serious barrier to knowledge acquisition process. In the striving to effectively address the challenge, decision makers resort to a broad range of different means, one of which is gate-keeping policy. The latter is widely used in HEI of Israel where newly enrolled students and applicants are required to take a test (AMIRAM, AMIR or The Psychometric Entrance Test with the English language subsection) prior to embarking upon their academic studies.

The results and conclusions of the research may also serve as a catalyst for building a wide range of well-thought-out strategies aimed at improving learners' English proficiency level in order to foster their academic success.

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As part of his role as a key partner in the assimilation and implementation of the College's vision of promoting knowledge and fostering excellence among different populations, thus bringing about the prosperity of the society.

Among other tasks, he promotes and fosters disadvantaged populations in order to study and succeed in college education in order to advance in the society and shatter the frameworks in which they were born. Among the other populations it cultivates are the ultra-Orthodox, Ethiopian and Bedouin communities. In recent years a researcher in the field of higher education policy.

Roman Michaelan, PhD, is a full-time lecturer in the unit of English for Academic Purposes, Shamon College of Engineering, Israel. He has gained his professional experience by teaching English within different educational settings for more than twenty-five years. His major research interests lie in the field of EMI, language teaching and learning.

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Neta Kela-Madar, PhD, has more than 15 years of experience in global business development and innovation and entrepreneurship education in advanced healthcare technologies. Dr. Kela has extensive experience in developing innovation and disruptive technologies in life science industry with proven clinical background in immunology, immunotherapy and drug development from the Stanford University (CA, USA) Dr. Kela holds a PhD in immunology from the Weizmann Institute of Science and won The McCormick Award from the Stanford University and serves as the CEO of the Innovation accelerator and the head of Innovation and entrepreneurship program and senior faculty in SCE (engineering College) . Dr. Kela is the author and inventor of academic papers and serves as scientific adviser in the ScienceAbroad and ISPIM science and innovation organizations. Dr. Kela invited as an innovation expert in the media (YNET, GLOBES, MAARIV, CHANNEL 10 and more) organizations (National Cyber Institute, Science Abroad, Blender) and academic institute (Tel-Aviv Academic institute, McGill University).