

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' MASTERY LEVEL OF PROSPECTIVE OCCUPATIONAL ENGLISH SKILLS

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ABSTRACT: *The present study aimed at evaluating university students' mastery level of their prospective EOP skills. The study developed and used a questionnaire of twenty-five items as main instrument to collect data. The descriptive analytical approach was used for data analysis. Results showed that students tended to exaggerate their mastery levels of some of their EOP skills whereas teachers' evaluation was more logical and reasonable. Students' inabilities to deliver successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally; using tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle customer's needs and questions; and chairing a meeting or actively take part in a business meeting were the least mastered EOP skills on which both participant groups agreed.*

KEYWORDS: EOP skills; ESP program; Saudi university students; English preparation program; Najran University

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, English has become the first universal language used for communication around the world. Communication and English are nowadays two connected terminologies at almost all available work ambience. Consequently, science; technology; business management; hotel industry; politics; international relations; culture and entertainment ...etc. require the proficient use of English to succeed in today's jobs, (Stapa, 2005). In addition, the global competition all over the world has motivated institutions of higher education to look for a place among English using countries as a means of communication, (Marginson 2006). Thus, they have begun to recruit international staff and offer English medium courses to their students of various specializations, (Saarinenand & Ursin, 2012). Nevertheless, the expansion in English use does not guarantee the quality of graduates in the use of English at prospective workplaces. A paper presented by World Economic Forum in January, (2014:10) states that employers usually face difficulties to recruit well-qualified persons and job candidates suffer from skill- shortage. Such shortage is due to a set of things among which is the knowledge of foreign languages. On the other hand, technological, commercial, scientific developments have created a generation of English learners who know specifically why they are learning English, (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). English is no longer learnt for mastery of pure listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learners need English because it is a means of communication. As poor communication can lead to tragic consequences, effective communication can lead to the many positive outcomes at one's workplace, (Jebunnesa & Ibrahim, 2013).

The level of many university graduates in English is not much convenient. Their current level does not seem to meet the international standards. This is because of the hazardous adoption of teaching General English that relies heavily on the linguistic features of English grammar

and the translation of some specialized key terms. To produce good English users along with good speakers, university in charge people are required to move the focus of teaching English from purely General English (GE) to ESP-based courses. A needs analysis that satisfies students' perspectives and the stakeholders' views will be fruitful in this case, Kennedy & Bolitho (1984).

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) applies to situations where a learner needs English in order to get by at work, or as a tool for acquiring a body of professional/vocational skills, or both, (Asadi, 1990). For example, a businessperson may need English to negotiate contracts with his customers, or to take part in conferences and read journals. An air traffic controller needs English to guide aircrafts into, out and between airports. A medical doctor may need English to carry out his profession in an English speaking country, and so forth. Thus, Keeping abreast of the latest in scientific and technological developments, especially for researchers, university teachers and students, requires efficient English knowledge of a more specialized nature, (Rehouma, 2013).

Saudi university students in general and Najran University students particularly are not an exception. Their mastery level of EOP skills, as well as other university students all over the world who study English as a foreign language, does not seem to be convincing for both faculty members and later on job-owners. Therefore, it is worth to shed light on their mastery level and test to what degree English courses offered at the university fulfill their EOP needs and skills that can prepare them for the workforce atmospheres after graduation.

Statement of the Problem

Most, if not all, private sectors all over non-English speaking countries have agreed that public universities are responsible for the large number of unemployed graduates. Therefore, it is essential for higher education institutions to change if they like to continue surviving in and remain relevant to what happen outside their walls, Tajuddin (2015). Saudi students, as well as students of other non-English speaking countries, face today a fast changing job market and high competition with the advancement of e-commerce and e-knowledge. This contemporary reality forces many students to open their eyes on what they need to achieve in English language classroom. Universities in Saudi Arabia, among which is Najran University, have realized the importance of English use in the lives of Saudis because a set of reasons among which is the presence of millions of people of various nationalities and hundreds of foreign companies. That is, Saudis need to be proficient users of English if they wish to be employed by one of these companies. Apart from speaking English fluently and accurately, mastery of communication skills is necessary.

Therefore, the main aim of the present study is to evaluate the mastery level of ESP students at Najran University in a set of occupational English skills. It also seeks to explore learners and teachers' satisfaction levels of the content of English language courses offered at the university.

Significance of the Problem

Literature review in the field of ESP mainly and EOP in particular has revealed that a very limited research has been carried out on English language communication practices and competencies for employability in English language context. Review of previous studies has shown that many studies have been conducted about work owners and employers' expectations of their potential employees capabilities. The skill to communicate intelligibly was the most interesting finding. Private sectors, as mentioned before, have used to blame public universities

for the increasing number of unemployed graduates. Keeping such a blame in mind, stakeholders at higher education institutions have to change their plans for teaching English. They have to think seriously of the benefits of ESP courses of its main subcategories EAP and EOP in order to keep pace with the tremendous changes of different forms all over the world.

The present study hopes to provide important data that can help design an appropriate curriculum with the involvement of current students and EFL teachers. Enhancement and improvement of English language learners' employability can be achieved as soon as learners' most important EOP skills are identified. Furthermore, findings can shed light on the effectiveness of English preparation programs in developing learners' communication skills at prospective work environments

Aims of the Study

Depending on the idea that needs-based course that accounts for the perspectives of students, teachers, and stakeholders is usually fruitful, the present study' aimed to address the perceptions of faculty members and students at Najran University with regard to students' mastery level in their prospective occupational English skills (EOP) needed for potential careers. Mainly, the present study aims to:

- Find out to what extent English courses offered by the preparatory year fulfill the students' prospective occupational skills from the viewpoint of students themselves.
- Find out to what extent English courses offered by the preparatory year fulfill the students' prospective occupational skills from the viewpoint of their faculty members.
- Whether there is a significant difference between the perceptions of students and faculty members regarding students' mastery level of prospective occupational English skills.

Questions of the Study

The study seeks to answer these questions:

1. To what extent do ESP courses provided by Najran University fulfill the students' prospective occupational English needs from the viewpoint of students?
2. To what extent can ESP courses provided by Najran University fulfill the students' prospective occupational English needs from the perspective of faculty members?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference between the perceptions of students and faculty members with regard to students' mastery level of their prospective occupational skills?

RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical considerations about ESP and EOP

The question "why do people need to learn a target language?" is enough to urge different kinds of people to think deeply and try to find a reasonable answer. Rationale people like teachers, students, parents, employers, ...etc. should mention that target languages are taught and learnt for the sake of using them in different contexts. A language is not learnt for its prestige or

power. When teaching English, or any language, there are specific purposes in mind, Belcher (2009). These purposes are not limited to learners, but involve those of other people. For learners, language teaching may be for no purpose. Only mature and experienced ones might be able to determine their purposes. Language should empower learners to meet purposes of others like for instance, employers, job-owners or even national entities. Otherwise, employers will complain from these university graduates' employability skills and imperfect language competence, (Tajuddin (2015).

Learners should realize that learning a foreign language should enable them to understand the culture of its people and internalize their ways of communication in various aspects of life. Accordingly, learning English is for the sake of achieving special or specific purposes. That is why ESP is the form of teaching English for a utilitarian purpose. ESP is defined and connected to some occupational requirements. ESP helps telephone operators, civil airline pilots to perform their tasks better. ESP can also give a hand to vocational training programs like hotel and catering staff training. ESP is beneficial in the field of technical trades. It is also for some academic or professional study, such as engineering, medicine, or law, (Mackay & Mountford, 1978). The specific effect of target situation context on which ESP focuses characterizes the way by which ESP courses are implemented, (Brumfit, 1984 & Widdowson, 1983). Strevens (1988) asserts the fact that that ESP courses are designed to meet the learner's specific needs related to particular context, discipline, occupation and activity. Language focus is on syntactic, lexical, discourse and semantic activities that best fit each situation. EOP more specifically, can be defined as that curriculum portion that prepares students for occupational gainful employment ranging from low skilled to sophisticated jobs in technical fields. Hutchinson & Waters (1987) believe that ESP is the response for new brave world demands, revolution in linguistics and focus on the learner. No clear-cut distinction can be drawn between EAP and EOP as people can work and study simultaneously. A piece of language that has been learnt for immediate use in study environment can be used later when joining a job. Nevertheless, Cummins (1979) differentiates between these two concepts in terms of the focus. EAP concentrates on the cognitive academic proficiency of the learner. EOP, on the opposite cares about learner's basic interpersonal skills.

Haghighi (2012: 1) mentions that until fairly recently, most syllabus designers main focus was on grammar, phonology and vocabulary items arranged according to difficulty and usefulness. Nunan (1994: 11) refers the inclusion of language communicative views into syllabus design to 1970s when functional skills based curricula began to appear along with grammar-based syllabi. EOP instructors have been familiar with the fact that Learners need exposition to workplace skills necessary to enter, maintain, succeed and improve in the world of work, (Bukhar, 1996: 43) and (Stapa & Jais, 2005). Authentic materials, purpose-related orientation, and self-direction are all features that distinguish ESP courses, (Carver, 1983). Fairway & Hellekjær (2015) stress the importance for universities to compete against each other to get a place in English-speaking countries. Apart from offering English-medium courses to their foreign or domestic learners, they should systematically address these learners' needs for advanced occupational English skills. Bojović (2006: 487) mentions that ESP and GE agree on the necessity of developing learners' linguistic abilities and the adoption of teaching theories. Both find themselves challenged by new technologies to improve their methodology. However, understanding learners' requirements is the main point that makes the difference. The main difference between both teachers is the need to understand the requirements. ESP teaching aims to teach English according to specific aims for specific profession.

Bessaid (2013) argues that TEFL teachers should be aware of what non-native students need to do with English, which skills and how well they need to master, and which functions to be used socially and economically. Thilaka, et. al. (2015) asserts the idea that EOP provides the learner with the opportunity to acquire English concerning his prospective profession like doctors, lawyers, engineers etc. Therefore, learners should be provided with certain linguistic skills like group discussions; debates; presentations; and report writing. Stakeholders' dissatisfaction with the existing ELT programs and the need to train students to use English to accomplish various communicative goals in their academic or professional worlds are the reasons for the need to restructure ELT programs, (Kucherenko, 2013). Therefore, EOP teaching should be of two main roles. University commissions should keep conducting needs analysis to identify learners' objectives and course key components. Teachers, on the other part should be responsible for the choice and design of the teaching materials. Rodriguez (2006: 34-35) asserts the opinion about job-specific needs that are considered the cornerstone of EOP teaching. These needs should be teacher or learner-generated, but not anyone else. Students of specialties other than English should be provided with EOP courses because such courses:

1. *allow learners to use real tasks, regardless variations in language proficiency,*
2. *are authentic that engage, motivate learners and direct task applications to jobs,*
3. *help organize the teaching-learning process, and*
4. *stimulate learning via interesting activities that rely on the learner's background knowledge.*

Empirical Studies Addressing EOP Needs and Skills

Many studies have been conducted to find out the most important issues related to EOP needs and skills that university students need to succeed at work. For example, Murphy and Brown (1998) revealed that English learners should be provided at the beginning of teaching with tangible evidence that the courses will help them to obtain employment and would facilitate their job readiness and employability skills. Stapa & Jais (2005) found that performing job-related tasks such as reports, memos, and letters were among the skills that learners expected to be trained to perform their duties at workplaces. Therefore, a recommendation was made to have a balance between EOP and GE proficiency to ensure maximum effectiveness when transiting students from learning into working atmosphere. Furthermore, it was found that EOP courses make students more motivated especially when they perform tasks related to their needs. Hamed (2007) revealed that EOP teaching materials were somehow satisfactory in terms of course objectives. Nevertheless, spoken communication skills required more practice and time to accomplish. Course topics were general and not specific to any particular engineering program. In general, EOP materials were helpful for students to identify and apply the various mechanisms of producing business letters, memos, resumes and technical information. Results of Jebunnesa & Ibrahim (2013) showed that nurses' proficiency in English was not satisfactory. They were suffering from their inability to communicate at work contexts, which was seen as a barrier to patients' safety.

Students' motivation and perception of ESP course were found positive by Germizaj and Hoxha (2014). Learners were satisfied with the teaching content and its structure, sequencing, suitability to their needs, and informative and educational value. Students mentioned that the ESP course could improve their vocabulary leaning and enable them to identify their points of strength and weakness. Sarudin, et al. (2013), surveyed the course's points of strength and

weakness. The study found that internal stakeholders, students, instructors and academic administrators were almost satisfied with provided EOP course. However, there were shortcomings related to methods of teaching, in addition to oral and written communication skills related to job application. Twenty skills were revealed by Leslie (2009:4) as critical for English learners leadership at prospective work where there employees are of various nationalities, culture, and backgrounds. These skills include:

- (1) *quickly learning new technical or business knowledge,*
- (2) *responding to co-workers and external parties diplomatically,*
- (3) *coaching and encouraging employees to develop in their career,*
- (4) *directing and motivating people,*
- (5) *involving others (such as listening, communicating, informing) in critical initiatives,*
- (6) *displaying warmth and using humor appropriately, and*
- (7) *effectively working with and treating people of varying backgrounds (culture, gender, age, and educational background) and perspectives fairly.*

Rodriguez (2006) is another study that discussed the impact of intensive EOP program. Communication problems like communicating by phone with counterparts were critical for participants. In addition, participants could not report on production schedules and procedures and explain a line breakdown on similar production problem because of vocabulary limitations and absence of clarity when reporting the exact nature of a problem. Yilmaz (2009) showed students' identification of the importance of English when looking for a job. All language skills were necessary but grammar and speaking were the most important ones. The most significant EOP need was to communicate in the target language and be prepared for future careers. On the other hand, Pudyastuti, et. al. (2014) revealed that Informatics Engineering students' shortage of good competence in English caused difficulties when handling or solving problems related to computer program creation. Fairway and Hellekjær (2015) concluded the need to integrate language-learning goals into English medium courses and to supplement these with occupational English and communication courses. Tajuddin (2015) concluded the necessity to develop learners' interpersonal and non-verbal skills. EOP syllabus should provide learners with many opportunities to try out and practice worth spreading ideas in a dynamic way. Learners' fluency in English should receive more attention than accuracy Albakrawi and Almutairi (2013) found out that and ESP program could enhance learners' classroom communication, practice in content oral skills, and develop their reading and writing skills.

In brief, review of literature related to the field of EOP courses at universities has revealed some studies aimed to survey the perceptions of different beneficiaries regarding the importance of adopting such programs at university. Some studies aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in empowering learners for workplace. Others tried identify exactly what needs and skills should be gained and mastered through these programs. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that all kinds of research have contributed much to better understanding the effectiveness of these programs to develop English language learners' communication practices and competencies for employability in workplace atmospheres.

Population and Sample

All students and faculty members enrolled in deanship of the preparatory year at Najran University in the second semester of the academic year 2014/2015 represented the study population. Out of this population (90) students distributed to three classes of a course called technical writing in addition to (27) faculty members were randomly chosen by the head of English department to fill in the study questionnaire.

Instruments

Two questionnaire of twenty-five items each were used to survey the views of currently enrolled students and content course teachers in this study. Oppenheim (1993) points out that questionnaires are used as tools for data gathering because they require little time but do not need extended writing from the participants. Questionnaires are easier to analyze and help making group comparisons. In accordance to the present study, the questionnaires were adapted from a previous study that tackled the occupational needs of Jordanian university students that were validated, verified, and used by Masadeh (2006). A translated version into Arabic was used to survey students' perceptions to ensure that every participant was conscious of the content of every item or statement.

Reliability of the questionnaires

In order to determine the reliability of the questionnaires for the new study population, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated. Reliability coefficient for students' questionnaire was (0.793) whereas it was (0.879) for the content teachers' questionnaire.

Data Collection

After piloting the questionnaires on (20) students and (8) faculty members, a permission to conduct the questionnaires at Najran University was obtained. Then, the actual questionnaires for currently enrolled students and their content course teachers were distributed to participants at Najran University by the researcher himself. All distributed questionnaires were brought back. All were filled in appropriately and so data included were analyzed.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, SPSS program was used. Statistical calculations were made after data entry. Data were analyzed using t-test for the difference between the means of two heterogeneous samples. All means of multiple-response questions were calculated to get a general view about the perceptions of both participant groups in the study.

FINDINGS

Findings Related to the First Question

The first question of the present study aimed at identifying to what level ESP courses provided by Preparatory Year Deanship at Najran University help students master their prospective occupational English skills from students' viewpoint. Means of participant students' responses were calculated and compared. Results are appearing in table (1).

Table (1): Mean scores of students' responses to their mastery level of their prospective occupational English skills

Students' perceptions of their EOP skill mastery level	M	Mastery level	Rank
1. Setting your goals and aims to improve your English skills.	3.60	Good	1
2. Distinguishing the various kinds of business letters.	3.60	Good	1
3. Reading reports related to your prospective work.	3.56	Good	2
4. Writing reports related to your prospective work.	3.53	Good	3
5. Reading a piece of writing to find the specific information, you look for.	3.53	Good	3
6. Writing a report describing the steps and the results of an experiment.	3.49	Good	4
7. Writing letters, faxes, and E-mails related to you prospective work.	3.49	Good	4
8. Communicating with foreigners inside and outside work areas.	3.49	Good	4
9. Using a variety of information sources in English for a variety of tasks.	3.47	Good	5
10. Reading letters, faxes, and E-mails related to your prospective work.	3.44	Good	6
11. Taking notes related to your prospective work during a workshop in English.	3.44	Good	6
12. Working as a team member with a group of colleagues.	3.42	Good	7
13. Organizing presentation materials related to prospective work effectively.	3.42	Good	7
14. Answering others' questions regarding your prospective work.	3.40	Good	8
15. Understanding the basic principles in business correspondence.	3.40	Good	8
16. Using tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle customer's needs and questions.	3.38	Good	9
17. Chairing a meeting or actively taking part in a business meeting.	3.33	Good	10
18. Writing a summary of an article.	3.27	Good	11
19. Designing a questionnaire to gather information for an assignment.	3.27	Good	11
20. Making telephone calls related to your prospective work.	3.24	Good	12

21. Taking part in internal meetings regarding your prospective work.	3.24	Good	12
22. Expressing your opinion and/ or convincing employers of this opinion.	3.24	Good	12
23. Delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally.	3.22	Good	13
24. Summarizing a piece of writing orally or in a written form to transfer knowledge to other colleagues.	3.13	Good	14
25. Giving presentations related to your prospective work.	3.11	Good	15
General mean of all means	3.39	Good	

Table (1) shows that participant students' overall mastery level of their prospective occupational English skills was (3.94) indicating a good level. Considering each language skill separately, the table shows that all skills were of good levels. Means were ranging between (M=3.61) and (M=3.11). The table shows that the highly mastered skills were: setting goals and aims to improve their English skills (M=3.60) and distinguishing the various kinds of business letters (M=3.60). Reading reports related to prospective work (M=3.56) was in the second rank. Writing reports related to prospective work and reading a piece of writing to find the specific information being looked for (M= 3.53) were in the third rank. Writing a report describing the steps and the results of an experiment; writing letters, faxes, and E-mails related to prospective work; and reading a piece of writing to find the specific information being looked for (M=3.49) were in the fourth rank. Mastery levels of the other skills were good but of lower mastery levels. However, giving presentations related to prospective work (M=3.11), summarizing a piece of writing orally or in a written form to transfer knowledge to other colleagues (M=3.13), and delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally (M=3.22) were at the bottom regarding their mastery levels.

Findings related to the second question

The second question of the present study aimed at understanding to what level ESP courses provided by Preparatory Year Deanship at Najran University help students master their prospective occupational English skills from faculty members' viewpoint. Means of participant teachers' responses were calculated and compared. Table (2) illustrates the results.

Table (2): Mean scores of faculty members' responses to students' mastery level of their prospective occupational English skills

Faculty members' perceptions of students EOP skills mastery level	M	Mastery level	Rank
1. Working as a team member with a group of colleagues.	3.89	Good	1
2. Reading letters, faxes, and E-mails related to student's prospective work.	3.89	Good	1
3. Writing letters, faxes, and E-mails related to student's prospective work.	3.78	Good	2
4. Reading reports related to student's prospective work.	3.70	Good	3
5. Writing a summary of an article.	3.63	Good	4

6. Taking part in internal meetings regarding student's prospective work.	3.63	Good	4
7. Expressing one's opinion and/ or convincing employers of this opinion.	3.63	Good	4
8. Reading a piece of writing to find the specific information, you look for	3.63	Good	4
9. Answering others' questions regarding student's work.	3.59	Good	5
10. Taking notes related to student's prospective work during a workshop given in English.	3.59	Good	5
11. Using a variety of information sources in English for a variety of tasks.	3.56	Good	6
12. Making telephone calls related to student's prospective work.	3.56	Good	6
13. Setting one's goals and aims to improve student's prospective English skills.	3.52	Good	7
14. Designing a questionnaire to gather information for an assignment.	3.44	Good	8
15. Writing reports related to student's prospective work.	3.44	Good	8
16. Summarizing a piece of writing orally or in a written form to transfer knowledge to other colleagues	3.44	Good	8
17. Communicating with foreigners inside and outside work areas.	3.41	Good	9
18. Distinguishing the various kinds of business letters.	3.41	Good	9
19. Writing a report describing the steps and the results of an experiment.	3.33	Good	10
20. Giving presentations related to student's prospective work.	3.33	Good	10
21. Understanding the basic principles in business correspondence.	3.30	Good	10
22. Organizing presentation materials related to student's prospective work effectively.	3.30	Good	10
23. Delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally.	3.30	Good	10
24. Using tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle customer's needs and questions.	3.19	Good	11
25. Chairing a meeting or actively taking part in a business meeting.	3.11	Good	12
General mean of all means	3.50	Good	

Table (2) shows that overall evaluation of participant teachers regarding students' mastery levels of prospective occupational English skills was (3.50) indicating a good level. Considering each language skill separately, the table shows that all skills were of good levels. Means were ranging between (M=3.89) and (M=3.11). The table shows that the highly mastered skills were: working as a team member with a group of colleagues (M=3.89) and reading letters, faxes, and E-mails related to student's prospective work (M=3.89). Writing letters, faxes, and E-mails related to student's prospective work (M=3.56) was in the second rank. Reading reports related to student's prospective work (M=3.70) was in the third rank. Writing a report describing the steps and the results of an experiment; writing letters, faxes,

and E-mails related to prospective work; and reading a piece of writing to find the specific information being looked for (M=3.49) were in the fourth rank. Writing a summary of an article, taking part in internal meetings regarding student's prospective work, expressing one's opinion and/ or convincing employers of this opinion, and reading a piece of writing to find the specific information, a student looks for (M=3.63) were in the fourth rank. Mastery levels of the other skills were good but of lower mastery levels.

However, chairing a meeting or actively taking part in a business meeting (M=3.11), using tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle customer's needs and questions (M=3.19), delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally, organizing presentation materials related to student's prospective work effectively, and understanding the basic principles in business correspondence, (M=3.30) were at the bottom regarding their mastery levels.

Although both participant groups evaluated the mastery level of students' EOP skills as good. A comparison between the means of every skill separately reveals a discrepancy in in both participant groups point of view. Table (3) illustrates the skills that should receive more focus and training by teachers and students as they got the lowest mastery levels.

Table 3: EOP skills and needs that should receive more attention

No	Students' perceptions of their highest EOP skills mastery levels	Mean	Faculty members' perception of students' EOP skills mastery levels	Mean
1.	Chairing a meeting or actively taking part in a business meeting.	3.33	Communicating with foreigners inside and outside work areas.	3.41
2.	Writing a summary of an article.	3.27	Distinguishing the various kinds of business letters.	3.41
3.	Designing a questionnaire to gather information for an assignment.	3.27	Writing a report describing the steps and the results of an experiment.	3.33
4.	Making telephone calls related to your prospective work.	3.24	Giving presentations related to student's prospective work.	3.33
5.	Taking part in internal meetings regarding your prospective work.	3.24	Understanding the basic principles in business correspondence.	3.30
6.	Expressing your opinion and/ or convincing employers of this opinion.	3.24	Organizing presentation materials related to student's prospective work effectively.	3.30
7.	Delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use	3.22	Delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals	3.30

8.	of visuals and handling questions professionally. Summarizing a piece of writing orally or in a written form to transfer knowledge to other colleagues.	3.13	and handling questions professionally. Using tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle customer's needs and questions.	3.19
9.	Giving presentations related to your prospective work.	3.11	Chairing a meeting or actively taking part in a business meeting.	3.11

As appears in table (3) there is an agreement between teachers and students on the fact that students' mastery levels in: giving presentations related to student's prospective work, delivering a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally, and chairing a meeting or actively taking part in a business meeting are not convenient. Therefore, more practice should be allotted to these skills. Another review of results in table (3) reveals that teachers' evaluation of students EOP skills was more reasonable than students' evaluation. Students' evaluation imposes many question marks on their EOP mastery level. For instance, how can a learner communicate in English with foreigners inside and outside presumed work atmosphere while he can not express his opinion? How can this learner use tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle needs and questions of customers while he/she is unable to talk on phone to someone else about certain work issues? How can someone chair a meeting or actively take part in that meeting if he is unable to summarize an article whether orally or written?

On the other hand, Teachers' evaluation of students' mastery levels of prospective EOP skills is more convenient and reliable. Their evaluation reveals a full understanding of these EOP skills. Their evaluation has reflected that what students need via learning English is the acquisition of interpersonal communication skills. Students seem good and somehow capable of working as a team member with a group of colleagues; reading and writing letters, faxes, and E-mails related to prospective work; and reading and writing reports related to student's prospective work. Meanwhile they seem suffering from their inabilities to deliver a successful presentation in an appealing way including making use of visuals and handling questions professionally; using tactful language and efficient communicative strategies to handle customer's needs and questions; and chairing a meeting or actively take part in a business meeting.

Findings related to the third question

The third question of the present study addressed whether there is statistically significant difference between the perceptions of students and faculty members with regard to students' mastery level of prospective occupational skills ($\alpha=0.05$). T. Test for participant groups' means (students and teachers) was used. Table (4) shows the results.

Table 4: T. test for the difference between students and faculty members' perceptions in accordance to the importance of EOP needs for university students

Study Variables	N	M	T. Value	Significance
Students' Perceptions of their EOP mastery skills	90	3.39	0.547	0.003
Teachers' Perceptions of students' EOP skills	27	3.50		

Table (4) above indicates that there was a statistically significant difference ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of both participant groups in favor of teachers' perceptions.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It has been obvious that English is used in every occupation all over the world. Interpersonal communication in English is important as well as English language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This communication, as defined by Dufrene & Lehman (2012), is a complex process between a sender and a receiver who exchange messages containing a mixture of ideas and feelings. Social skills and emotional intelligence that can be improved through effort and experiences are exhibited through this interchangeable social communication. Skills of interpersonal communication are becoming more and more important and crucial with globalization and open market. The lack or shortage of job applicants' communication skills and capabilities is the main reason for their failure to get a job. As English is not taught and understood in the right way for years at university or school, learners could not be successful interlocutors. Teaching materials should be authentic so that learners can be trained and empowered to communicate effectively as well as required by prospective job-owners of various work sectors. Findings of the present study emphasize this fact related to the importance of using English for occupational communication. Although students and teachers evaluate students' EOP skills' mastery level as good or high, there is a significant difference between their views. There is, somehow an ambivalence in their views regarding the mastery level of each skill. Evaluation of teachers seems to be more realistic and logical as most of EOP skills that need more practice and concentration belong to interpersonal communication skills more than main skills themselves. Students' evaluation is unconvincing revealing lack of awareness and big exaggeration of their EOP skills' mastery. According to faculty members, most interpersonal communication skills need more training and concentration. Whereas, students' responses show that language main skills require more modification and improvement. Nothing can explain this result except students' unconsciousness of these EOP skills' nature. Such unawareness might be due to students' ignorance of learning English real reasons. This conclusion corroborates the viewpoint of Murphy & Brown (1998) and Rosser (2008) about the necessity of providing learners with tangible evidence for learning English at the beginning of each teaching course. It should be made clear for students that the teaching English course is expected to help them be easily employed by facilitating their job readiness and employability skills. Meanwhile, this result is in agreement with Yilmaz (2009) that

showed students' awareness of English language necessity for getting a job, the importance of communication skills rather than language skills, and preparation for future careers.

Students and teachers' evaluations not only reflect their disagreement regarding students' mastery level of prospective occupational English skills, but also reflects a moderate satisfaction with the content of the teaching programs offered at university. Participants' responses indicate that none of these EOP skills is highly mastered. All skills' means are of good mastery levels that need more development and practice. In other words, there is a need to revise the teaching contents and strategies of preparation programs and courses offered at Najran University. Interpersonal communicative skills should be fostered within these programs. Training students to communicate effectively can be implemented at real, semi real or virtual work contexts. Findings of Tajuddin (2015), Kim (2008), Hamed (2007), Jebunnesa & Ibrahim (2013), Rodriguez (2006) and Sarudin, et. al. (2013) corroborate this conclusion regarding further investigation, verification and improvement of the current structure of EOP courses and assert the importance of developing learners' communicative skills whether oral or written. On the other hand, this result confirms the conclusions of Albakrawi & Almutairi (2013) and Pudyastuti, et.al (2014) in accordance to the effectiveness of ESP programs in developing students' oral, reading and written skills in classroom. Nevertheless, this finding disagrees with Germizaj and Hoxha (2014) in terms of the contents suitability, structure, sequencing, and educational value of ESP programs.

With regard to the skills that students in the present study need more training and practice to improve their abilities, findings showed a set of these needs. Students need to gain knowledge of work technical terms to be able to understand and write emails, faxes, and reports. They need to understand work atmosphere in order to communicate properly with their job-owners, customers, and colleagues. They also need to be trained to make presentations and telephone calls about their prospective work. This finding is congruent with findings of Stapa & Jais (2005), Leslie (2009), Rodriguez (2006) and Pudyastuti, et.al (2014) in accordance to the most important EOP skills that English language learners should master in order to be proficient employees.

In conclusion, a set of factors can explain why there was a significant difference between participant groups' viewpoints regarding students' EOP mastery levels in favor of teachers. The fact that most of teachers at the preparatory year are foreigners and unfamiliar of the context of teaching English in Saudi Arabia is one of these factors. Furthermore, their Masters or Bachelor's degrees and little teaching experience could not help them assess exactly their students mastery levels. Students' grades in exams that only focus on testing main language skills might have affected such evaluation. Their evaluation of students' communication skills reveals that such skills have not received the desired in the teaching programs offered at preparatory year. Hence, their evaluation was more realistic than students' evaluation of their own skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above findings, the researcher of the present recommends university in charge people to:

1. choose and employ well prepared and highly qualified teachers to hold the responsibility of teaching students at preparatory year.

2. keep modifying and improving English language teaching syllabuses and curricula in accordance to the regenerating communicative needs of work atmospheres surrounding students.
3. create and encourage teaching environments where students can simulate and use English in real work contexts.
4. ask for the teachers' help when choosing teaching English textbooks and materials. Teachers should be regarded as partners in the success or failure of any English language teaching course.

In addition, researchers are recommended to conduct studies to:

1. assess the effectiveness of teaching strategies on the development of English language learners' interpersonal and communicative skills at various prospective work places.
2. assess the effectiveness of teachers' preparation, qualification and experience on empowering learners to be effective users not just speakers of English.
3. compare and contrast between English language learners' communication skills for prospective workplaces across countries, not just their learners of their own countries. For example, a study can be conducted to compare and contrast between Saudi university students and students of other countries who learn English as a foreign language.

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