An Investigation into the Target Needs of Engineers in Selected Employment Sectors

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Abstract

This article aims to investigate and analyze the perceived English language needs of engineers who want to develop their job position through English Language in their workplaces such as public relations, technical and operational, engineering support of production, planning and development, financial, general accounting, and legal affairs. In today's competitive world, the economy needs more people with higher level skills in the workplace. Taking into consideration the specializations mentioned above, the article focuses on the perceived needs of engineers concerning Business English, not general English. Due to the business and economic development of the last decades in Iran, English has rapidly become the language used all over the world. Developing an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course in their workplaces is another purpose of this study. Questionnaire, interviews, and observations were used to gather information in this research. Engineers' expectations, managers' demands, economy's needs ask for more reliable methods to provide a better learning in workplace situation. Finally, based on the findings obtained from this study, it can be concluded that workplace courses have lots of effect on the engineers' job and development and by passing the time they ask for more variable ESP courses relating to their job.

Introduction

In recent years, an increasing number of English language programs in Iran have adopted an ESP approach in their English language courses. As Albakrawi and Almutairi (2013) believed, English is regarded as a vehicle that facilitates progress in other subjects. The purpose of these programs is to provide students with an English language knowledge that enables them to join the workforce. But the lack of the English language ability prevents many employees from conducting their jobs effectively. This causes many companies and work facilities to avoid hiring young Iranian graduates in different fields of work. To overcome this problem, some ESP courses should pass at the college level from different specialties to conduct their future careers effectively.

The original idea of focusing on learners' needs was first presented in the 1970s which resulted in designing language courses with the aim of satisfying the social and individual needs of the learners (Palacios Martinez, 1992). This idea in education priorities has led to explore how English teachers respond to changing priorities in terms of their professional development (Campion, 2016). The evidence from empirical studies indicated that teacher identity is a central factor in adapting to changing courses environments, both for novice and experienced teachers (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016). When shifts in education priorities occur, teachers should have new knowledge which is related to the needs of learners, but even more important is the need for teachers to build or rebuild their identities (Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Xu, 2014). There are some situations that the teachers cannot get enough knowledge which is related to the needs of the course. In this situation, teachers may confront embarrassment when working with learners who have more knowledge of the related subjects (Tsou & Chen, 2014; Tao & Gao, 2017). Learners who attend in English courses in their workplaces and request to have ESP courses expect their teachers to have more knowledge of English which is related to their needs. To meet these expectations, English teachers should become increasingly involved in teaching a range of ESP subjects, even though this may require some skills beyond the teachers' primary English language teaching (ELT) expertise. These teachers must deal with important challenges such as overcoming subject-matter knowledge gaps (Wu & Badger, 2009) to get more satisfying knowledge which is essential for teaching ESP courses.

At present, instructors introduce the ESP program for the English language courses simply by selecting materials from available texts for teaching English for special purposes along with materials designed for teaching English for general use or collecting different materials in a handout. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of different English language needs of engineers in order to provide empirical data to develop their professional skills in their workplaces.

There have been many studies concerning the importance of learners in second and foreign language learning which have led language teaching toward more learner-centered methods (Nunan, 1988; Wright, 1990; Brown, 2001). Consequently, learners' wants and needs have gained great importance in recent years.

In many countries, the English language plays a special role in their communities. Some of them give English the status of an official language. Other countries assign a priority role to English where it is thought as a second or a foreign language. According to this issue, "a quarter of the world's population is fluent or competent in English and no other language in the world today can match the steadily growing spread of the English language" (Graddol, Leith & Swann, 1996, p. 6).

Furthermore, "Three-quarter of the world's emails are currently in English and 90% of the materials on the internet are in English and English has developed in different varieties representing different linguistic contributes from different language representing different ethnic groups" (Crystal, 2003, p. 236). The phenomenon of world English is described as a second language acquisition by speech communities according to Brutt-Griffler (2002), that "the world English situation has enabled the English language to become a lingua franca of the world" (p. 177).

As Makarova (1997) states, in a curriculum, based on learner-centered approaches, a greater role is defined for the leaner's in the process of learning and teaching; which will cause students greater interest and motivation toward language learning.

Engineers play an important role in company's development. A broad overview of their profession revealed that English was the primary lingua franca in the higher learning institutions and workplace sector. Language skills are crucial to meet the employment requirements. The growing number of university graduates does not satisfy the demands of skilled workers in regards to English language use in their workplaces. The employees may feel misplaced, under qualified and lack of necessary English skills to adapt to a changing labor market. They are stranded as they do not know where to turn for help. In the new millennium, engineers have to face new challenges whereby they are expected to be more versatile and equip themselves with language skills.

The other important issue is that engineers do not have enough time to study language from the beginning. As students in ESP classes often have restricted time to learn English, it makes sense to teach them only the bits of English they need. In this sense, time constraints for ESP courses are crucial, and time must be effectively utilized. On the other hand, as Dudley-Evans & St John (1998) noted:

> First, needs analysis aims to know learners as people, as language users, and as language learners. Second, needs analysis study also aims to know how language learning and skills learning can be maximized for a given learner group. Third, needs analysis study aims to know the target situations and learning environment so that data can appropriately be interpreted. (p. 126)

For most of them it is hard to study while working or they cannot find a suitable source to improve their exact problem. Engineers did not have special and

effective courses which were related to their needs in workplaces. The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of the different skills based on what is expected of engineers in their workplaces. According to Cook (2002), there are two goals for language teaching, external and internal. External goals can be related to the uses of language outside the classroom – being able to get things done in the real world, such as being able to buy groceries or provide medical information. Internal goals relate to the educational aims of the classroom – improving attitudes of the learners, promoting thinking skills such as analysis, and memorizing and social goals. ESP teaching is generally considered to be very largely concerned with external goals.

This study focused on the English tasks in the different sectors of the workplace that managers expect their employees to perform. Regarding this issue, some skills were essential for different job positions, which were significant for having better results by the courses. On the other hand, there were some job positions for which they need a specific level of some skills. Among four different English skills, some of them were essential for some activities in different departments.

Managers want their employees to be able to follow some instructions in English. Some of the essential and initial abilities which managers expected from the employees are the ability to welcome visitors of the factory, writing and responding to the letters or answering the telephones, being convincing, making business arrangements, attending the meetings in a foreign language, responding to questions, and informing others in the target language based on the different departments which they are working in. Based on Isarji and Zainab (2013), some empirical evidence suggested the value of oral communication skills such as the ability to welcome visitors, be persuasive, make business arrangements, respond to questions, and inform others.

According to Rostami and Zafarghandi (2014), needs analysis is a significant factor that should be discovered and negotiated in language teaching programs. Based on this issue, an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program ought to be set for both checking students' purposes and assessing their needs as well.

Robinson's (1991, p. 3) definition of ESP is based on two criteria. Firstly, ESP is normally *goal-directed*. Secondly, ESP courses develop from a needs analysis which aims to specify what exactly it is that students have to go through the medium of English, and a number of characteristics which explain that ESP courses are generally constrained by a *limited time period* in which their objectives have to be achieved and are taught to *adults* in *similar classes* in terms of the work or specialist studies that the students are involved in.

English for General Purposes (EGP) refers to contexts such as the school where needs cannot be readily specified. It is more useful to consider EGP providing a broad foundation rather than a detailed and selective specification of goals like ESP (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, pp. 53–54).

The term need is the learners' requirements aiming at communicating effectively in the target situation. "An ESP course will not only involve these requirements but will also consider the different levels of language knowledge of the learners in order to specify the conditions of their learning situation" (Benyelles, 2009, p. 26).

According to Vinuesa (2015), there are a number of skills that cannot be properly learned unless a more academic attitude is located in the language programs. If so, an adjustment of the language teaching courses towards a more precise academic scope is offered as a possible answer for supplying learners with a specialized structure related to demands, necessities, and objectives of their field of studies. Based on Otilia (2015), the results of the needs analysis support instructors to define the students' professional needs in terms of language skills, as well as their deficiencies in the area of language skills. Upon examining the students' needs and specifying the language course objectives, materials meeting the needs of the students might be chosen for instance. Therefore, needs analysis is the base on which curriculum content, teaching materials, and methods are constructed. This gives way to enhancing the students' motivation and achievement as a result. As Iwai et al. (1999) have stated, "It forms a rational basis for all the other components of a systematic language curriculum" (p. 7). Richterich (1972) was the first person who proposed a model of needs analysis in language education in the 1970s. Johns (1991) also considered needs analysis as the first part of the course design which provides relevancy and validity for the following activities which should be done in each course.

Methodology

Participants

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. The participants were all employees and employers in the Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO). Generally, there is about 16,000 staff in ESCO, 2,400 of whom are engineers including managers, assistants, administrators, supervisors, and experts. One hundred and ten engineers from ten different departments completed the questionnaire for this study. The sample from different departments was chosen by their managers. The managers were the best choice to guide the researcher to identify the engineers whose jobs were related to English. 95% of all the participants were men and 5% women. Table 1 represents all the background information of the participants generally.

Table 1. Demographic background of participants

Age	29-55
Gender	Male and female
Level of education	At least a bachelor's degree
Native language	Persian
Job position	Managers, assistants, administrators, experts

The ages of the participants ranged from 29 to 55, and the most of the participants were around 42 years old. Figure 1. represents the distribution of the participants based on their gender.
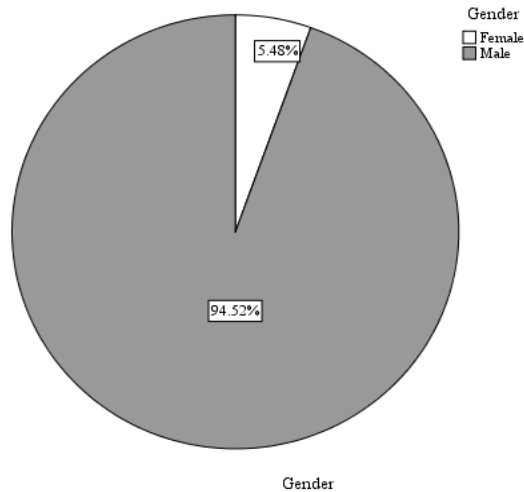
Figure 1. Distribution of Participants Based on Their Gender

Procedure and instrumentation

In this research, a questionnaire, an interview, and observation were used as the data collection instruments with the purpose of finding out which areas of the English language needed more attention and predict the most necessary subject matters to be included in the syllabus of ESP courses. The participants were asked to indicate the appropriate frequency for each task on a Likert scale. Questionnaire (See Appendix A), was used as an efficient way to collect data in terms of costs and time. In this study, the questionnaire design was close-ended questions to have more reliability rather than the open-ended questionnaire. Moreover, close-ended form leads to answer that can be easily quantified and analyzed.

The questionnaire was written in English. The participants chose their answers from multiple options each question set. However, in a few questions, the respondents could pick more than one option if they liked. There were 110 questionnaires which were given to the engineers randomly including, managers, assistants, experts, and supervisors.

The interview was made to achieve reliable and valid results in order to have triangulation. In other words, the intention of combining several data gathering methods such as interview, observation, and questionnaire, was increasing the reliability and validity of the data. In this research, nine engineers as the managers of different departments were interviewed to know their needs in the workplace. Their

voices were recorded to not to forget any tiny points which could influence the results of this research. Five different questions (See Appendix B) were asked from the engineers about the role of English in their jobs, or their participation in the workplace courses. They were asked to explain their suggestions about the courses in the workplace. Additionally, they mentioned the essential skills for their job. All of the interviewees answered the questions with details which helped the gathering information easier.

The class observation was made to be sure of reliability and validity of the study. It helped the researcher to see the process of changing over the passage of time. The researcher did the observations of the classes. The observations took part in four different classes which were attending in the company. The most important issue which was controlled in the observations of the classes were the attitudes of the engineers during the courses. During the observations, the time of the classes, materials of the courses, methods of teaching for different classes, and essential skills for different learners in different job positions were observed.

The length of the study was four months. After distributing the questionnaires, in order to administer the questionnaires in ten different departments, one manager or assistant from each department was contacted by the researcher. The researcher explained the purpose of the survey as well as the process of distributing, completing, and collecting the questionnaires. The managers or assistants administered the questionnaire to their colleagues in the department and sent back the completed questionnaires to the researcher. As the researcher was working there, the collection of the questionnaires was not so hard.

To carry out the statistical analyses, the latest version of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), frequency, and chi-square test were used to answer the first and second research questions. After the required data were collected, the appropriate statistical methods were used. The frequency was performed to analyze the questionnaire as well as to answer the research questions.

The questionnaire was designed in English. It consisted of four pages and was designed to be answered within twenty minutes. Dornyei (2003) indicates that the optimal length of a questionnaire in second language research is three to four pages. It should not exceed a 30-minute completion limit. While designing the questionnaire, the researcher paid special attention to the layout of the questionnaire in terms of fonts, spacing, and paper quality. Oppenheim (1992) argues that the professional quality of the layout can give a good impression about the questionnaire, which in turn affects the quality of the responses.

Dornyei (2003) indicates that respondents can be reluctant to give honest answers about opinions and perceptions. However, respondent confidentiality can encourage honesty and willingness to disclose. Therefore, the questionnaire was designed to avoid individually identifiable information. The respondents were not required to write their names. Moreover, the cover page (See Appendix A) told participants that the data was to be used for research and academic publication purposes only and that all responses would be held confidential.

All the respondents were adults and participation in this study was voluntary. The questionnaire did not ask about sensitive data. Therefore, the information elicited from the data reflected minimal risk to the respondents.

Next, the questionnaire was piloted to check its validity, reliability, and applicability. Piloting ensured that: first, the questions were related to the respondents' field of work. Second, the questions were clear and easy to read. Third, the activities were related to their workplace activities. Fourth, the time taken to answer the questionnaire was reasonable. Fifth, all items were easy to understand.

Table 2. represents the questions of the evaluative page which was constructed by Alharby (2005). It was designed to ensure that the questions were related to their field of work, they were clear and easy to understand, the activities were relevant to engineers' activities in their workplace, and the needed time for answering the questions was less than 30 minutes.

Table 2. Evaluation page of the questionnaire

N	Evaluation questions	Professionals' answers to the evaluative questions				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Do you think all the questions are related to your field of work?	es	es	es	es	es
2	Are the questions clear and easy to understand?	es	es	es	o	es
3	Do you believe the activities were related to your workplace?	es	es	es	es	es
4	How long did it take to answer the questionnaire?	5 min	5 min	0 min	0 min	5 min
	Do you have any suggestions about the questionnaire?	o	o	o	o	o

Results of the study

The present research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of engineers' English workplace courses in different sectors of ESCO. For this purpose, the findings based on the respondents' answers to the questionnaires, interviews, and the observation results are presented in the following section. Based on different departments and the jobs they do, the needs of English language and its effectiveness on their job can be different. This part presents the information about the important skills in the different workplace sectors. These questions were designed based on the Likert-type scale which provides five choices. Based on different departments and the jobs which they do, the needs of English language can be different. Figure 2. indicates that different levels of English skills (from unnecessary to absolutely necessary), had different importance in different departments.
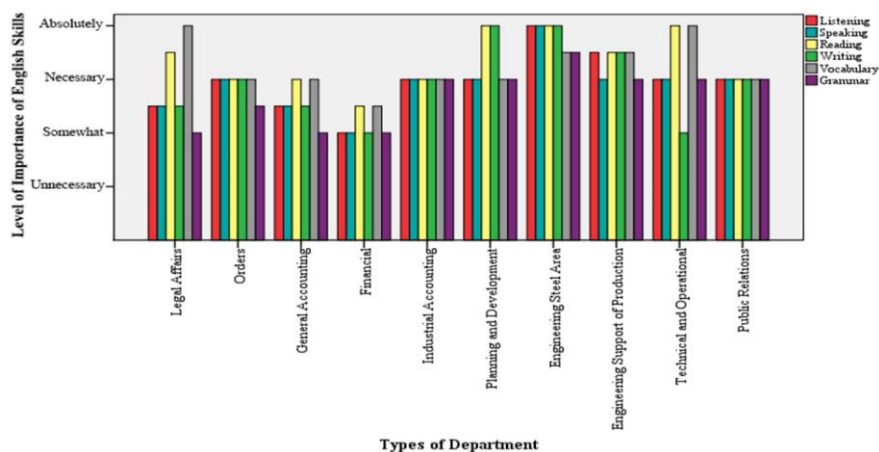
Figure 2. Level of Importance of the English Skills in Different Departments

There is a necessary level for each respondent to perform his/her job more effectively. In Figure 3, the necessary level of English language for each department to perform their job effectively is shown. Most of the departments needed the good level of English to do their job effectively.
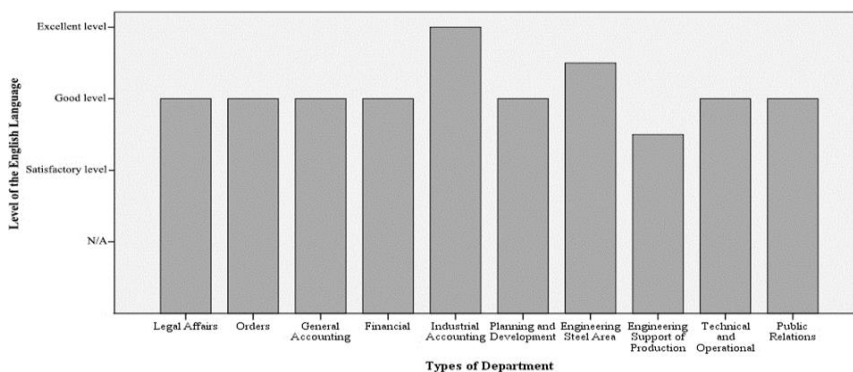
Figure 3. The Level of English Language to Perform the Job Effectively

Based on Figure 4, there is a necessary level of each skill for the respondent to perform their jobs more effectively. These levels of skills were more crucial for the respondents based on their point of view. In this figure, the necessary level of English skills for each department to perform their job effectively is shown.
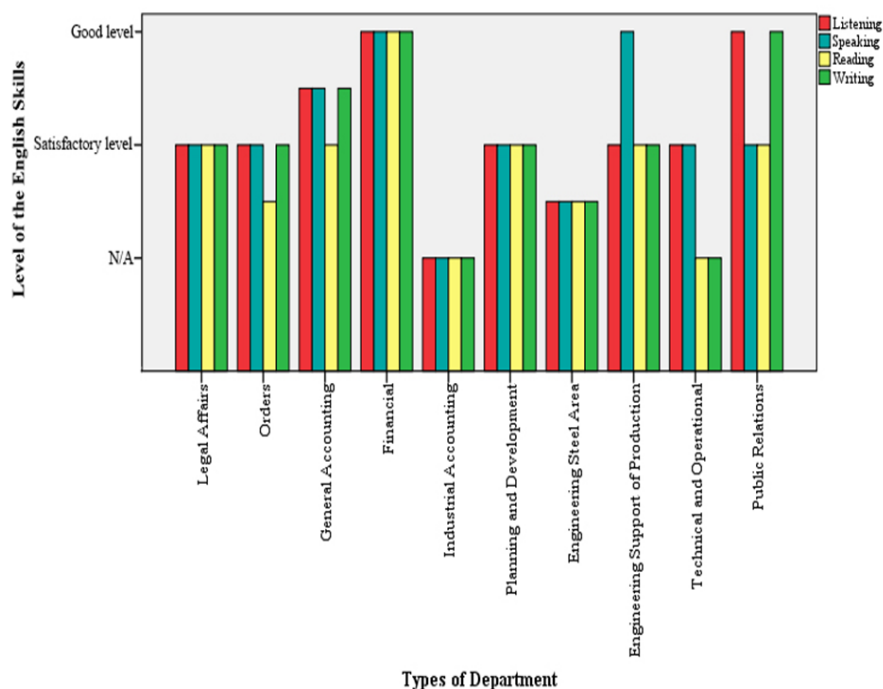
Figure 4. The Level of Different English Skills to Perform the Job Effectively

Among correspondence tasks for different departments in ESCO, email correspondence was the most frequently used task in the different departments. At the same time, it was the most frequently performed task among all the tasks included in the questionnaire. The needs are different from one department to the other. As an example, the *Industrial Accounting* never used any of the items of correspondence. On the other hand, half of the respondents of the *Engineering Steel Area* mentioned Email often and every day. They mentioned phone call and fax sometimes and often. By the last part, they often write a business letter.

In some job positions, engineers and experts should travel to different countries as a mission. The respondents claimed how much they used the English language for this purpose in different situations. The other parameter which was asked the correspondents was English language usage in communication with foreign guests who are visiting the ESCO for different purposes. Based on their job position, they should be able to communicate with foreign guests. So, this is important for some of them to know the English language well in order to communicate better and have the impression.

According to Table 3., more than half of all of the respondents answered that they want to learn the English language for their jobs and travel professions. About half of all the respondents mentioned that they would like to study English for their general purpose, then less than half of them claimed that they would use English for

social purposes, and finally about one-third of all of them mentioned that they want to learn English language for the research purposes.

Table 3. Descriptive results of English course and English learning for general purposes

Purposes	Percent
Study	55.4 out of 100
Research	39.2 out of 100
Social Purposes	41.9 out of 100
Travel Profession/Job	66.2 out of 100
Study abroad	6.8 out of 100

According to Table 4, business correspondence writing was the most important and first rated skill which most of the respondents believed that they are weak in. The other skills which they believed they need to work on more, included doing contracts, presentation at a meeting, and telephoning respectively.

Table 4. Descriptive results of lack of skills in order to learn English language

Skills	Percent
Telephoning	32.4 out of 100
Doing contracts	37.8 out of 100
Presentation in a meeting	35.1 out of 100
Business correspondence writing	39.2 out of 100

Based on the results, with regard to their previous experiences of taking English courses, more than half of the participants answered that they had taken such courses in their workplaces in the past. Only less than one-fifth of all the participants answered that they had not taken English courses in the past in their workplaces. Moreover, there were three respondents who did not answer the questions.

Based on Table 5, with regard to their previous experiences of taking English courses, most of the participants answered that they had taken such courses in their workplaces in the past. Only a few of the participants answered that they had not taken English courses in the past in their workplaces. Moreover, there were three respondents who did not answer the questions.

Table 5. Respondents' distribution in terms of participation in English classes in the workplace in the past

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	58	78.4
	No	13	17.6
	Total	71	95.9
Missing	System	3	4.1
Total		74	100.0

According to Table 6, in the following, most of the respondents' attitudes toward the participation in English courses in future in the workplace were positive. More than half of the participants answered positively which shows they agreed to participate in English courses in future in their workplaces. On the other hand, about one-tenth of the participants answered negatively, which represents they did not agree to participate in the classes in their workplaces.

Table 6. Respondents' distribution in terms of attitudes toward the participation in English courses in future in the workplace

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	62	83.8
	No	9	12.2
	Total	71	95.9
Missing	System	3	4.1
Total		74	100.0

Most of the interviewees emphasized that the English language plays a crucial role in their profession. They claimed that at least a good level of English proficiency is needed to perform their job effectively. The interviewees argued that the previous courses which employees took to prepare for their job generally were insufficient and needed to be improved. Interviewees mentioned that the difficulty which they face through attending the courses is that they do not have enough time to practice or even to attend the classes because their job should be their priority.

The lack of time is one of the major problems which they are dealing with. The other problem was also the pauses between each semester. They were eager to have the classes in each semester only by a pause as long as a week not anymore.

To set a special time every day for learning English because it will be so useful in their workplaces, to learn English continuously, and try to attend the classes to not to forget the previous knowledge, were the important advice which they could give to a person who is preparing him/herself for a job regarding learning English.

The observer took part in four classes. Fortunately, the results from observation were similar to questionnaire analysis. During the repeated class observations, it was found that the attitudes of the employees toward the classes were positive and they were eager to continue the courses.

The only problem was their time managing: they could not do their homework and practices while in the working time. In some cases, they could not attend the classes because of their meetings or missions. The other problem which was important for them was the pauses between the courses. They all agreed that it will be better if it could be reduced to not to forget the previous knowledge.

Discussion

This study aimed at gathering information about the effectiveness of English courses for engineers in their workplaces, who are working at different departments connected with each other in English language. The study was started by distributing the questionnaires among the participants. After filling the questionnaires, the respondents' ideas were analyzed to find solutions for the research questions.

Based on the present study and the related studies such as Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009), Moiinvaziri (2014), Nezamabadi (2014), and Barkhordari and Chalak (2017), it should be mentioned that an ESP course curriculum should adjust learners' demands through preparing meaningful experience with language and emphasize tasks and activities that will ease the process of learning. Another result based on these studies was that not all the activities need a high proficiency of the English language in the workplaces.

In all the studies, the findings showed that different fields of work needed different skills to perform job effectively. The English language courses should be designed in a way to adjust the employees' needs in the workplace.

The findings of this study could be applied to the ESP practitioners and specialists who design courses for specific learners. It could be helpful to develop a curriculum in companies like ESCO which covers most of the English language needs of employees. Besides, the findings could be useful for syllabus designers, material developers, and policymakers to modify their present courses in a positive way and improve them according to requirements of the learners in any special field. On the other hand, the results could be beneficial for ESP teachers and learners, too. Teachers could focus on the needs of the engineers and parts that they usually have to deal with. Learners might be able to become familiar with the difficulties in their job and find different ways to overcome the problems.

The findings indicated that the students have certain reasons for learning the language and hold significant attitudes toward the use of English language that should be considered by English instructors and syllabus designers in preparing their materials, curriculum, and teaching methods.

Another result based on these studies was that not all the activities need a high proficiency in the English language in the workplaces. In all the studies, the findings showed that different fields of work needed different skills. The English language courses should be designed in a way to adjust the employees' needs in the workplace.

Moreover, analysts in other fields of study may benefit from the findings of this research, especially for those who are working in the same technical fields of the other companies. It can assist them in designing courses which mostly focus on using different skills of English language.

Though this study suggests that receptive skills are perceived as more important than productive skills in a wide range of activities in the technical field, it is hard to recommend that English courses for technical purposes should emphasize reading and listening skills over writing and speaking skills because the differences in percentages between receptive and productive skills were very close. Further research in this regard is needed to support such claim.

The following recommendations may facilitate further recommended areas of research in order to obtain a more comprehensive view of the wide spectrum of the ESP and needs analysis field. This study identified the effectiveness of English courses as perceived by a certain group of learners at the workplace. However, it is important to investigate the same needs as perceived by current learners and their instructors to see how these perceptions reconcile with the findings of this study.

Conclusion

The results showed that there was a considerable agreement among the respondents about the relative importance of proficiency in English reading, writing, speaking, and listening. For each of the four skills, *good level* and *excellent level* received the majority of the responses. This indicated that a high command was needed in all skills. However, reading skills were most often viewed as requiring an excellent and good level to perform the job. Listening skills were the next one. Speaking and writing skills were marginally lower. Thus, receptive skills were perceived as a bit more important than the productive skills to perform the job effectively.

Reading and listening were ranked more highly across items; it could be concluded that proficiency in English receptive skills (reading and listening) were perceived as more important than productive skills (speaking and writing). Dealing with different foreign companies all around the world or to develop the technical skills require a great level of understanding regarding different technical conditions, procedures, instructions, and the nature of technical knowledge. This information tends to be presented and published internationally in English. What strengthens this claim is that the English language is used as the tool of instruction at the college level and in the special departments of the companies. The study also looked at the English skill level needed to perform specific activities in the workplace.

The results suggested that the respondents considered reading skills to be more important than writing skills. This was consistent with the earlier discussion of placing a higher value on receptive skills than productive skills. Though this would suggest that English programs designed to prepare engineers need to intensify the focus on receptive skills, the differences in percentages between receptive and productive skills were so close that it was hard to make a strong judgment in this regard.

The results of the different activities which the employees do in their workplaces were different in each department. If all of the respondents' results were taken into consideration, it should be mentioned that the most important activities that had the highest rank were *correspondence*, *business meetings*, and *business trips*. They needed English more for these activities. The next activities which were in the next level are *placing an order/purchasing*, *receiving an order*, and *dealing with claims*. The last part was the activities which had a lower rank such as *interpretation*, *translation*, *gathering information*, and *reading article*.

In conclusion, respondents considered all English language skills to be important to conduct their jobs effectively. Though receptive skills were viewed as more important than productive skills, the percentages were so close that it was hard to prioritize any skill area over others. Not all activities required a high knowledge of the English language, however.

Depending on their field of work, the respondents prioritized their needs for each of these skills. Every time there are some missions for engineers justifying the need to communicate in English. Traveling to foreign countries need some skills that are included in general needs of the learners. It is crucial for the teachers to take care of these skills in the EGP courses. The most important general skill mentioned by more than half of the respondents in their situation was *traveling*. The second general activity which was important to them was *studying*. In the technical fields and also most of the other sciences, people need to be updated and improve themselves by the world knowledge, which can be obtained by studying. The other general needs were *social purposes* and *research* based on the answers of the respondents.

There should be some specialized courses for engineers in these special fields to not to be dependent on the translator all the time. Using a translator in all the situations could cause some serious problems. Considering an important contract or letter which is so specialized to the industrial and technical field that only needs the engineers' ideas and knowledge, the translator could be wrong and cause some serious problems. The best solution for such kind of issues is to prepare the engineers themselves for these special needs. In the next level of special needs, the least important items to the engineers which were the *presentation in a meeting* and *telephoning* should be considered.

There were some difficulties that employees face in their jobs, which were related to lack of knowledge and proficiency in the English language. It could be concluded that a great number of respondents believed that lack of English

knowledge could result in problems at the workplace. Furthermore, more than half of the respondents reported that the number of English courses in their professional training courses must be increased.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of an academic research. Your cooperation will aid the research. Please answer all questions as accurately as you can. Instructions are provided for each question. Please note that you do not have to write your name. The information that you provide will be used for research and publication purposes only and it is very important for identifying English language needs and to develop the courses based on the results. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering. The researcher promises to maintain strict confidentiality of your information.

I am grateful for your time and effort in completing the questionnaire.

Thank you

PART ONE

1. Department where you work:

………….…………………………………………............

2. Job title:

………….……………………………………..

3. Specialty:

………..…………………...

4. How long have you been working in

ESCO?...

5. Gender: F   M

6. Age:

…………………………………………..…………………………..……........

7. Name of University you graduated from:

…………….……………………….…….......

8. Name of major:

…………………..…………...

9. Year you graduated from college:

………………………………………...........................

a) Level of proficiency in English: Weak   Average   Good Very good

Excellent

b) Any other language known:

………………………………….…..……………........

c) Level of proficiency in third language: Weak   Average   Good   Very good

Excellent

10. For what immediate purposes do you need to learn Business/Advanced English Communication?   Study   Research   Social purpose   Travel Profession/Job   Study abroad   Others (specify):

11. Which level of the English language enables you to perform your job effectively? Excellent level   Good level   Satisfactory level   N/A

12. Which key job skills do you lack?
a) Telephoning   c) Presentation in a meeting   e) Others (specify):
b) Doing contracts   d) Business correspondence writing

13. What is your current level of English in different skills?
a) Writing: Weak   Average   Good   Very good   Excellent
b) Speaking: Weak   Average   Good   Very good   Excellent
c) Listening: Weak   Average   Good   Very good   Excellent
d) Reading: Weak   Average   Good   Very good   Excellent

PART TWO

14. Which level of the **listening** English language skill enables you to perform your job effectively? Please circle one answer.
Excellent level   Good level   Satisfactory level   N/A

15. Which level of the **speaking** English language skill enables you to perform your job effectively? Please circle one answer.

Excellent level   Good level   Satisfactory level   N/A

16. Which level of the **reading** English language skill enables you to perform your job effectively? Please circle one answer.
Excellent level   Good level   Satisfactory level   N/A

17. Which level of the **writing** English language skill enables you to perform your job effectively? Please circle one answer.
Excellent level   Good level   Satisfactory level   N/A

18. What percentage of your work is conducted in English? Please write down a percentage in the space below.
……………………………………………………………………………..

19. Do your coworkers include people who communicate in English only? Please circle one answer.   Yes   No

20. If you answered yes, how often does your job require you to communicate with them? Please circle one answer.
A lot   Somewhat   A little   Never

PART THREE

21. How often do you perform the following tasks in English at work? (Please circle the number)

	Never 0	Rarely 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3	Everyday 4
A. Correspondence					
a. Email	0	1	2	3	4
b. Phone call	0	1	2	3	4
c. Fax	0	1	2	3	4
d. Writing a business letter	0	1	2	3	4
e. Others (specify):	0	1	2	3	4
B. Writing a document					
a. Writing a memo/note	0	1	2	3	4
b. Writing a proposal (e.g., project, plan, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4
c. Writing a report (e.g., sales, meeting, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4
d. Writing a contract/ agreement	0	1	2	3	4
e. Others (specify):	0	1	2	3	4
C. Order/ Customer satisfaction					
a. Placing an order/ Purchasing	0	1	2	3	4
b. Receiving an order	0	1	2	3	4
c. Dealing with claims	0	1	2	3	4
d. Others (specify):	0	1	2	3	4
D. Business meeting					
a. Briefing	0	1	2	3	4
b. Presentation	0	1	2	3	4
c. Negotiation	0	1	2	3	4
d. Conference	0	1	2	3	4
e. Seminar	0	1	2	3	4
f. Social meeting (e.g., party, dining, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4
g. Others (specify):	0	1	2	3	4
E. Business trip					
a. Business trip to foreign countries	0	1	2	3	4
b. Making a reservation (e.g., hotel, flight, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4
c. Visiting other companies/factories	0	1	2	3	4
d. Sightseeing	0	1	2	3	4
e. Others (specify):	0	1	2	3	4
F. Attending to foreign guests					
a. Interpretation (e.g., meeting, conference, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4
b. Translation (e.g., document, booklet, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4
c. Gathering information on the market or other companies	0	1	2	3	4
d. Reading articles, magazines, and books related to your job	0	1	2	3	4
e. Others (specify):	0	1	2	3	4

PART FOUR

22. Have you ever taken an English class in your workplace?   Yes   No

23. If yes, what was the name of the class?..

24. Would you like to take an English class in your workplace now or in the near future?   Yes   No

25. What is the level of importance of the following English skills in your job? (circle level)

Skills Levels:	unnecessary	somewhat	necessary	absolutely
Reading	1	2	3	4
Writing	1	2	3	4
Listening	1	2	3	4
Speaking	1	2	3	4
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4
Grammar	1	2	3	4

Appendix B

Questions of Interviews

1. How do you define the role of English language in your job?

2. Have you ever participated in English courses in your workplace in ESCO?

3. What is your suggestion for the English courses in your workplace?

4. Would you like to take an English class in your workplace now or in the near future? If your answer is No, what is the reason?

5. What language skills do you need to develop?

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