

INCORPORATING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN THE EOP COURSE

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Abstract

Employers, universities and professional bodies agree that Malaysia needs to develop professionals who are highly skilled and ready to face the challenges of increased competition. More than ever we need professionals who are responsive to economic, social, cultural, technical and environmental change and can work flexibly and intelligently across business contexts. The Malaysian industry requires new graduates who understand the part they play in building their organisations, and have the practical skills to work effectively in their roles. In line with this, a survey conducted by the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM, 2007) among its members revealed that the top five difficulties in recruiting fresh graduates were; (1) lack of industrial training, (2) communication problems/weak command of English, (3) weak problem solving skills, (4) job hopping and (5) lack of self confidence. This paper investigates to see if the field trip activity, which is one of the components in the English for Specific Purpose (EOP) syllabus for Economics, Engineering and ICT final year students, can help graduates meet the requirements of the incumbent employment market. The main objective of this study is to show that it is imperative for all higher learning institutions to prepare students with strong communicative, interpersonal and problem solving skills before they go into the workplace. The methodology used in this study consists of pre and post survey questionnaires to investigate students' preparation emotionally and physically before the field trip and their experience after the field trip. Findings from the research do not only indicate that students were more prepared and confident to face people in the workplace, but also made them realize the importance of mastering the English language to secure a place for themselves in employment.

Keywords: FMM`s report, English for Specific Purposes (EOP), Employment Market

Biodata of Presenters:

Zarina Jan Yusof Khan holds a B.Ed from Nottingham University UK, and Master of English language (MESL) from University Malaya. Prior to lecturing at IIUM, she was working with an International System Engineering company based in Shah Alam. Her 5 years working experience in the corporate world has helped her EOP Business Management, Accountancy, ICT and Engineering students comprehend the essential needs demanded by the respective job markets. She has over 6 years teaching experience in the areas of EOP, EAP and Language Skills at the International Islamic University Malaysia.

Khairiah Othman has a B.A. in Business Administration, an M.A. in English as a Second Language and a Ph.D. in Education. Her areas of interest include English for Specific Purposes, teacher education, literature in second language classroom and Islamization of knowledge in the teaching of English. She has more than 20 years of experience in education, particularly in the teaching of English to Malaysian students.

Zalika Adam holds a B.A. in Arabic Language and Literature from Yarmouk University, Jordan, an M.A. in Arabic as a Second Language from International Islamic University, and is currently working on her Ph.D. in Applied Linguistic on Arabic for Specific Purposes at IIUM. She has over six years of ASL / AFL teaching experience in Malaysia.

STRANDS

Teaching/Teacher Training

FORMAT

Parallel Papers

LANGUAGE

English

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

Projector & screen