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Market-Oriented LSP Training in Higher Education: Towards Higher Communicative Skills

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century globalization accelerates the need for English communication skills as English is recognized as a lingua franca in the business world. A high priority of university educators involved in LSP (LSP – language for special purposes) training is to equip graduates with communicative LSP skills meeting the standards of huge and increasingly competitive job market. The study addresses the issue on how to close the current gap between prospective employers' expectations of English communication skills level and the existing LSP level of graduates. The study aims at, first, to reveal the effect of English globalization on employability from the perspective of university students; second, to identify factors leading to reticence in speaking; and third, to provide a solution to the problem of gap between graduates' oral skills and employers' expectations. The study uses two questionnaires as an instrument to collect data. The obtained quantitative data is used as an input for qualitative study. The study certifies that undergraduates are fully aware of the utmost importance of English language for employment. Also, the study identifies the main social and psycholinguistic reasons hindering to develop speaking skills in the university settings. Further, the research findings have been used to develop and integrate into university training curricula an intensive 3-module program meeting the real needs of students and business community. The goal of this program is to equip students with excellent English communication skills meeting the rapidly changing job market demands. The findings of the study suggest that LSP training offered at higher school should be improved to meet job market requirements. The study enabled to assess the instruction results and provide a solution to the problem of "competency gap". It points to where the real work of closing the gap between the need for workforce skilled in English communication and actual graduates' skill level needs to happen.

Keywords: English communication skills, employment, social and psycholinguistic causes, reticence

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State of the literature

- In the 21st century, graduates seeking employment must have not only the subject knowledge, but also English communication skills. Soft skills, in conjunction with the development of strong language skills, viewed as critical for the young people. No longer is it sufficient to educate students only in the professional fields, employers look for young specialists with excellent English communication abilities. Most graduates are insufficiently trained in oral English to meet job-related requirements.
- Numerous academic studies confirm that in today's fast-paced highly competitive world, English speaking skills play a crucial role for graduates. These skills help them secure an interesting gainful job, obtain promotion and recognition, build self-confidence.
- New teaching technologies as well as new job requirements make it necessary to constantly expand and improve the program, develop new instruction modes and options.

Contribution of this paper to the literature

- To address this competency gap, a survey has been conducted with the aim to locate problem areas in English training and assess the effectiveness of the existing curricula.
- A 3-module intensive program has been initiated to meet the real needs of students and business community. The first and second program modules are mandatory, the third one is elective; the program is an integral part of university training curricula. It enables to equip students majoring in economics and finance with good English speaking skills they will need when they enter the business world and have to compete with their peers. Modules are tailored to focus on the particular communication assignments within a specific job environment. The goal is to encompass all students and to offer more opportunities for mastering English communication skills.
- A steering committee whose members represent both business and academic communities defines the concepts for future program directions and survey the graduates to see how the program impacted on their job experiences. Feedback from former students significantly facilitates improvement as it shows the link between instruction amount and achieved results.
- Because not only our university faces the problem of graduates' low speaking skills, we believe that our solution would apply to many non-linguistic universities.

INTRODUCTION

The youth transition from education to the occupation is influenced by new factors such as economic structural changes and political environment (Chigisheva, 2011). To thrive in today's innovation-driven economy, employers look for a mix of different skills like subject knowledge, computer literacy, collaboration, team management, creativity and problem-solving ability, and personal qualities like persistence, curiosity and initiative. However, in the 21st century the most important 'soft skill' that every graduate should possess is Business English competency. In a global economy of exchange and trade, employees must effectively use English in formal and informal discussions, presentations and documents, in communication with foreign colleagues and customers. Highly effective communicators increase overall performance of the company.

Despite this global trend, there is a large gap between the need for workforce skilled in English and actual skill level of graduates upon completion of their university studies. This gap increasingly becomes an obstacle in finding a job as employers have certain standards of what employees should possess by way of language skills. Employees with excellent communication skills are a valuable asset to any company. To better bridge the gap, an effective and efficient market-oriented training that will help in shaping undergraduate into a work-ready professional should be provided (Prichinin, 2012).

Good communication skills in English can result in better job opportunities. Job interviews are mostly conducted in English. Interviewers quickly make assessment and give great weight to first impressions. Poor skills

in the language diminish chances of securing a gainful job. If applicant's English knowledge is poor, even though with perfect subject knowledge and superb business ideas, a graduate is unlikely to climb to the top of the corporate ladder. International business deals require effective skills in English as most business contracts are negotiated and written in English. Today's graduates should have a very good grasp of the English language in order to be successful in the professional world. Although views concerning English requirements are highly employer- and function-dependent, many companies mandate IELTS scores of 8 for speaking and listening, and 7.5 for writing and reading in terms of selection. Poor English heightens risk of career stagnation and ultimate dismissal.

It is worth to note that successfully implemented learner-centered training has promoted a good progress in teaching spoken English (Chubarova, 2016). Communicative Approach (Communicative Language Teaching - CLT) is widely used to foster the willingness to communicate with teacher intervention at minimum level during communicative activities and no materials control (Harmer, 2001).

However, among five language skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and translating, the graduates' ability in speaking is much lower than the ability in other skills. CEFR shifted the focus of language assessment: two-thirds of the information in the CEFR describes spoken language. This implies that spoken fluency is indeed the most important goal for all language learners. Nevertheless, many students are seen to receive rather low and even non-passing scores in speaking section in IELTS, BEC, etc. after a long learning process. The students cannot communicate in English confidently and fluently, although they have relatively good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. It does reflect students' alarmingly low level of spoken English. Therefore, there must be some factors that have inhibited or influenced students' development in spoken English.

Statement of the Problem

English proficiency ranks high at the university as we live in a world where English language acts as a lingua franca (Melnichuk & Osipova, 2016). Good communication skills in English enhance graduates' employment opportunities and their potential for career advancement. However, English learners at university settings feel stress and anxiety while exposed to speak. Horwitz and Young (1991: xiv) - two well-known researchers in the area of 'language anxiety' - declare that have been truly surprised at the number of students who experience anxiety and distress in their language classes (Horwitz & Young, 1991; Horwitz, 2001). Language anxiety among university students is estimated as a major factor hindering the development of communicative skills. Having identified the English proficiency problem, educators should undertake steps to find lasting solutions that will be beneficial for all concerned parties.

The first hypothesis of this paper is that the present university students are aware of the need to be communicatively competent in English since these skills are in great demand on the labor market.

The second hypothesis of this paper is that there must be some inhibitive factors reducing students' oral participation in LSP classroom.

The third hypothesis of this paper is that a solution could be found to bridge the existing gap between employers' requirements and graduates' low oral English level.

Research objectives

The objectives of present study are three-fold:

1. To reveal the effect of English globalization on employability as perceived by university students majoring in law and economics.
2. To identify factors contributing to students' reticence in speaking.
3. To suggest a solution to close the current gap between employers' expectations of English communication skills level and the existing LSP level of graduates.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the present study provide baseline information on the recent level of speaking abilities of non-linguistic majors who are planning to secure a substantial gainful employment in the near future. The study attempts to highlight the factors preventing development of communicative competence in English. It is intended to help higher school educators develop approaches and practices for working with LSP students in order to close the gap between the skills needed for 21st century jobs and skills that are actually possessed by university graduates.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature that is considered to be of particular relevance for this study provides with certain tools, concepts and definitions that have been developed and used within the research on the need of English communication skills for employability as well as on reticence in oral communication in LSP classroom settings.

English is considered as an international language and it plays an important role of a vehicle of communication. English is a lingua franca of business, commerce, science of the whole world (Boguslavskii & Neborskii, 2016). Proficiency in English language is crucial for employability (Solovyova, 2010; Vozdvizhenskaia, 2016). It is mandatory that today's university graduates be well-grounded in English in order to acquire a gainful job, and thereby open up fundamentally new horizons, enlarge their knowledge and capabilities, strengthen their social status and bring empowerment to their lives. Proficiency in English increases employability by boosting basic skills that allow getting, keeping and doing well in a job (Richardson, 2015).

In the context of higher education, the need to enhance graduates' employability through higher English communication skills has been a particular concern for language educators and theorists in recent decades. There is a view that teacher language proficiency standards should be defined in relation to the particular context of instruction and in light of what is realistic given available training resources in order to deliver lesson content appropriately and effectively. Teacher language tests aim at assessing the teacher in the actual classroom situation (Korenev et al., 2016).

The low levels in English proficiency among university students are nowadays a hot issue among academic thinkers. This is because the students' English language skills are not being properly developed during their higher education experience, and this fact negatively affects the quality of higher education of graduates.

Many research works investigate into students' reticence in English speaking and causes that prevent students' development in speaking ability and suggest strategies to improve performance in communicative situations (Khotinets & Korobeinikova, 2016). Leonov (2013) analyzes the role of instructor's psychological traits. Negative lecturer traits (impatience, intolerance, excessive strictness, etc.) affect students' involvement (Tanveer, 2007). There are a number of opinions and studies which mention the difficulty of speaking skill in language learning context. The common point in them is that speaking is thought to be the most difficult of all four skills (Fulcher, 2003).

For the purposes of this paper, the language reticence is regarded as unwillingness to speak when a learner is expected to perform in LSP. Researchers point out that reticence to speak is connected with many factors. These factors may not act in isolation, and, they are often interlaced (van Worde, 2003). Julie Landsman (2008) affirms that when there are reluctant students, there are no doubt reluctant teachers who do not pay attention to non-participating students and view them as special cases when there are not so many possibilities for successful learning. Learners are reluctant to speak in front of groupmates; they would like to participate in a small and comfortable class environment allowing them to concentrate on speaking (Prichinin, 2014). Many theorists agree that fear of mistake becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English (Robby, 2010). J. C. Richards (2010) insists that the effectiveness of English course is assessed on the basis of how much the students have improved their speaking proficiency. Therefore, to overcome speaking difficulties and improve the oral production, proper strategies should be used. Educational methodology, policy and practice are being reexamined under the influence of globalization (Chigisheva, 2015). Some authors argue that positive attitude towards language

make students who may be experiencing language anxiety participate more actively in learning tasks (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010).

METHODS

The study used two questionnaires as an instrument to collect data pertaining to research objectives. The target group included 96 LSP students engaged in bachelor's programme in law and economics. The participants responded to the items of two questionnaires. Quantitative data were used as an empirical support for qualitative study.

The questionnaire 1 focuses on the importance of the English language for employment opportunities. It reveals students' perception of the application of English to the world of employment.

The questionnaire 2 reflects authors' special interest in identifying the reasons of students' reticence to speak in LSP classroom settings. For this purpose, the questionnaire 2 aimed at the factors leading to unwillingness to speak has been devised. To obtain the information relevant to this study, the questionnaire 2 includes items falling into one of three categories:

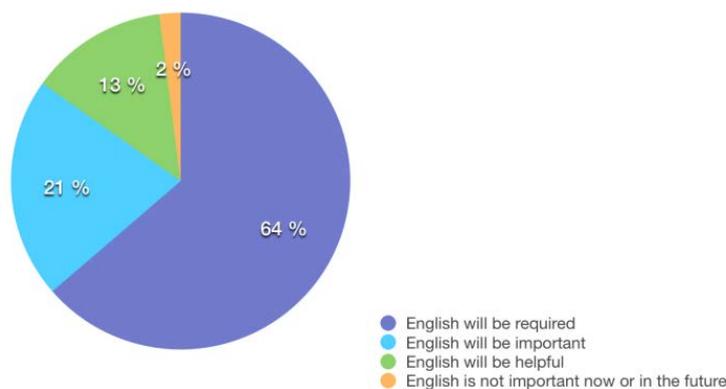
- 1) Ideas and beliefs about the English language - students' concepts and intentions which influence their attitudes towards the English language.
- 2) Intrapersonal relations originating internally or from within an individual - the knowledge, feelings and expectations that students have of themselves and of their personal significance.
- 3) Interpersonal relations describing the interaction between an individual and others or the environment - the mode in which students interact with their groupmates and the lecturer in the LSP classroom - competitiveness, comparison, communication, etc.

These categories appeared to be a useful tool in detecting language anxiety in the learning process. The principle behind the method of data gathering was that of obtaining direct answers. 96 university students majoring in law and economics replied in writing to 29 questions. Both questionnaires were prepared in English. The researchers distributed the questionnaires and read aloud the items in front of the students to see if there were unclear items. The participants filled in the questionnaires on a two-point Likert scale with two being yes and one being no (1=Disagree; 2=Agree). The questions covered by the questionnaire 1 are shown in Figure 1. The factors included in questionnaire 2 are listed below:

1. **Lack of practice** is a serious cause of students' reluctance to speak. LSP learners do not have many opportunities to practice and develop their oral English communication skills in class due to the limited class time: the students are not given sufficient time to process the question, find proper words and formulate the idea. In addition, the students have little opportunities to speak English outside the classroom. It seriously complicates the development of communicative competency, and LSP learners become stressed when they are required to speak.
2. **Grammatical difficulties** are experienced by many learners; they are afraid of making obvious grammatical errors. Tanveer (2007) reports that grammatical problems can make the impression that those learners cannot communicate in the foreign language.
3. **Lack of fluency or inadequate conceptual fluency in English** is a major obstacle for LSP learners. Learners are reluctant to join discussion because they cannot respond quickly, fluently and correctly.
4. **Comparison with other groupmates:** many learners strongly and probably correctly suggest that there is a great distance in English ability between them and their groupmates (Baranov & Zhuchenko, 2015). This leads to the awareness of their incompetence and deficiency, and consequently, to reticence to exhibit their language knowledge.
5. **Low English proficiency** is the major reason that leads to reticence in LSP classes.

6. **Speaking self-rating** is a factor impacting on learners' reticence to speak spontaneously. The lower self-rating relative to peers makes students less confident in their ability to communicate well.
7. **Lack of preparation** often causes students' reticence to participate in the discussion. Some students feel nervous when speaking English with little or no preparation.
8. **Low self-confidence** is another factor that deters students from participating in the discussion: they tend to believe that they have a low spoken English level.
9. **Insufficient vocabulary** is one of key problems underpinning learners' reticence in oral English. It causes a lot of discomfort while communicating in English. Students' deficient vocabulary is one of the reasons why they are not active participants in the LSP classroom; students find it difficult to find right words when they are required to speak.
10. **Fear to volunteer in asking and answering questions** (Tanveer, 2007) arises because most students are not used to say or suggest something without being asked because they are simply afraid of making errors.
11. **Oral test anxiety** is the degree of worry during oral test as the students feel anxious about negative social evaluation by groupmates or their lecturer in addition to low grade.
12. **Speaking in front of others** proves to be an anxiety provoking activity. Public speaking is risky: one could go blank, fail to engage the audience, or forget a line.
13. **Shyness (also called diffidence)** makes learners nervous and uncomfortable; they are afraid to talk because of a lack of confidence. Such behavior may be the result of any one or a combination of the following factors: social introversion, unfamiliarity with academic discourse, low confidence in subject matter, and/or communication apprehension.
14. **Sense of perfection** is quite natural, it is related to certain aspects of learners' culture, such as the desire to be right and perfect and fear of losing face (Jones, 2004; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002).
15. **Poor pronunciation** is an important aspect in language learning as it has an immediate effect on communication, especially with native speakers. It is stressful when the interlocutor has a hard time understanding the speaker because of his or her inaccurate pronunciation.
16. **Fear of bad end-of-course grades** is caused by the university education system with emphasis on the final grade. The learners experience more fear because they tend to expect that their mistakes will have a negative impact on their results. They would be more motivated to participate without assessment.
17. **Evaluation by peers** is one of the causes of learners' limited participation in discussions. Most students are over-concerned that their groupmates will judge their English speaking skills.
18. **Fear of being criticized and embarrassed** is manifested as the struggle to avoid being hurt by lecturer's criticism. Tanveer (2007) argues that students who are well aware of their limitation in English language prefer to remain silent and to protect themselves from embarrassing situations. At the same time, many students announce that they feel comfortable and relaxed when the lecturer speaks in an encouraging and positive way.
19. **Fear of losing face** publicly may lead to a loss of cooperation (Liu & Littlewood, 1997).
20. **Fear of instructor's correction** or fear of being humiliated, or at least, embarrassed by the lecturer, can impact learners' performance; if they are repeatedly corrected while speaking, it provokes feelings of anxiety and can have severe consequences on learners' cognition and their willingness to communicate in the class (Horwitz & Young, 1991; Tanveer, 2007).
21. **Calling on students' procedure** used by the lecturer is one of sources of anxiety.

How important is for you to know English to get an interesting well-paid job after graduation?



Source: Compiled by the authors

Figure 1. University students' look at the effect of English competency on their future careers

22. **Lack of interest in discussed topics** might trigger boredom, which hampers students' involvement in classroom activities.
23. **Lecturer's attitude** may potentially provoke anxiety and discourage students from participating in the classroom discussions.
24. **Incomprehensible input** means that students are unable to participate because they do not know what to say. The situation occurs when the students cannot clearly understand the English message (Han & Peverly, 2007).
25. **Classroom arrangement** also plays a role in learners' participation: students who willingly contribute to whole-class discussions usually sit at the front of the class whereas those who usually act as observant prefer to sit at the back.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Comments

To analyze the obtained data, the figures were converted into percentage and represented in the form of diagram and table.

Figure 1 illustrates that there is a clear recognition of the importance of English in today's world on behalf of students. In terms of motivation and attitude, the students generally demonstrate positive ideas and feelings towards English.

In terms of the impact of English skills on employability, there is clear evidence that students are well aware of the importance of English language for their future professional lives. LSP (as the respondents understood it) is considered as very important skill for obtaining employment. As a whole, the students are positive towards English language. University's undergraduates recognize the value of English communication skills in today's world as well as the crucial need of English to augment their employability – 75% of them understand that their knowledge of English is required or important for their future professional career (Figure 1). 13% said that English would be helpful and only 2% of students announced that it was not needed at all.

The replies to the questionnaire 2 revealing the factors contributing to reticence in oral English are displayed in the **Table 1**; they are arranged in descending order from the highest to the lowest percentage obtained for each of the items:

Table 1. Factors Impacting Reticence in Speaking English

	Factors leading to reticence in speaking English	Number of students			
		Agree	%	Disagree	%
1.	Lack of practice	76	79.2	20	19.8
2.	Grammatical difficulties	73	76	23	24
3.	Lack of fluency	71	74	25	26
4.	Comparison with other groupmates	67	69.8	29	29.2
5.	Low English proficiency	66	68.8	30	31.2
6.	Speaking self-rating	64	66.7	32	33.3
7.	Unready to speak English with little or no preparation	60	62.5	36	37.5
8.	Low self-confidence	54	56.3	42	43.7
9.	Insufficient vocabulary	53	55.2	43	45.8
10.	Fear to volunteer in asking and answering questions	52	54	44	46
11.	Oral test anxiety	49	51	47	51
12.	Fear of speaking in front of others in class	48	50	48	52
13.	Shyness	44	45	52	55
14.	Sense of perfection (Fear of making errors)	41	42.7	55	57.3
15.	Poor pronunciation	39	40.7	57	59.3
16.	Fear of impact on the end-of-course results	38	39.6	58	60.4
17.	Peers' evaluation	36	37.5	60	62.5
18.	Fear of being criticized	31	32.3	65	67.7
19.	Fear of losing face	27	28.1	69	71.9
20.	Fear of being corrected while speaking	26	27.1	70	72.9
21.	The procedure of calling on students	24	25	72	75
22.	Lack of interest in discussed topics	23	24	73	76
23.	Lecturer's attitude	16	16.7	80	83.3
24.	Incomprehensible input	14	14.6	82	85.4
25.	Classroom arrangement	10	10.4	86	89.6

Source: Compiled by the authors

However, despite the evidence of strong motivation, the answers to the questionnaire indicate that there are inhibitive factors that contribute to reluctance in speaking.

Participants (79.2%) state that they are unwilling speakers because they do not have enough opportunity to practice English. Limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom are a crucial reason impeding speaking activities. The students tend to believe that "immersion" would give them a big push for learning. Learners (76%) consider that poor command of grammar rules is a critical cause restraining the willingness to participate in discussion. According to 74% of respondents, the lack of fluency can cause confusion due to mishearing or misunderstanding, and thus, is an important cause blocking the desire to speak. Excellence (i.e., fluency) is not easy or quick to achieve with a twice a week effort. The fear of comparison seems to be influential for oral contributions. Comparison with other groupmates makes 69.8% of students feel uncomfortable, uneasy, nervous and envious because of the perceived difference. Low English proficiency indicated by 68.8% of students is another decisive factor as English proficiency (or excellence) is a true measure that takes into account all of the skills. 66.7% of students announce that speaking self-rating negatively affects their participation in discussion; self-assessment is not a very reliable tool being a rough estimate, but it shows students' perceptions of their proficiency in speaking. 62.5% of learners get worried and intimidated when they have to respond to questions which they have not prepared in oral or written form in advance. 56.3% of students don't feel confident in their English speaking abilities; low confidence is a character trait or a consequence of lack of spoken practice. 55.2% of our

learners believe that insufficient vocabulary creates a serious oral barrier. 49% of undergraduates do not volunteer to place questions or answers for fear of being wrong, and thus, they miss out on a potentially rewarding experience. Oral English test anxiety including communicative apprehension, oral test fear, and negative assessment dread makes 49% of students feel helpless and anxious about oral English tests. 50% of students would prefer to avoid situations when they have to face the whole class; the classroom is regarded as a place where they are being monitored, evaluated, and judged. 45% of learners reckon that shyness hampers from being creative and joining the discussion; shy silent learners feel more comfortable to share their ideas in a smaller group. A sense of perfection is a degree of completeness and harmony when one is not satisfied with peaceful mediocrity; it marks 42.7% of our respondents who believe that if they make mistakes, they may be judged incompetent, and this may provoke jokes and harm their images. 40.7% of students argue that poor pronunciation is a problem; although this aspect of spoken English can be mastered without too much effort. The items from 16 to 20 in the Table 1 describe fears related to final grades, evaluation by groupmates, criticism and losing face; all these fears are products of the environment; their percentages range from 39.6% to 27.1%. 25% of students are uncomfortable with the student calling procedure used by the instructor; the students would rather prefer to answer voluntarily than randomly called. 24% of learners mention the lack of interest in discussed topics as a reason of non-participation; they are dissatisfied with topics being studied. The role of lecturer seems not be influential; only 16.7% of students regard the lecturer's traits as an impacting factor; they view the lecturer more as a facilitator needed to show the way to go: the learners are intended to move ahead by their own willpower. Only 14.6% of students indicate the incomprehensive input as a hindering factor that makes it impossible to process the task in an optimal way. In contrast to other studies, only 10.4% of our respondents indicate that classroom arrangement is a critical factor. This can be explained by the fact that the number of students in the group does not exceed 8 persons.

The main objectives of the present study were: 1) to demonstrate the undergraduates' opinions regarding the importance of English language for employment opportunities; 2) to explore the factors that inhibit students' performance in speaking in the academic settings; 3) to suggest a solution to close the existing competency gap. Two questionnaires were offered to the students with the purpose of eliciting their attitudes to proficiency in English as well as to reveal and evaluate factors hampering acquisition of good communicative skills. 96 undergraduates studying for a bachelor's degree at a non-linguistic Moscow university were asked to respond questions pertaining to the study. The findings of this research include the following:

- the students indicate a high value of English skills for their future professional career;
- there are a lot of psycholinguistic and social factors that cause students' reticence to use English in classroom discussions; among them the lack of practice, grammatical difficulties, lack of fluency, low English proficiency, insufficient vocabulary, to list just five examples. As a result, the factors mentioned above may bring implications on students' performance;
- in order to lessen the degree of reticence, educators should first identify the factors leading to reticence and then take steps to diminish their influence to the extent possible.

Practical Implications

The research findings have been used to take stock of existing LSP training curricula and evaluate them against obtained results in order to develop a stand-alone program to meet the real needs of graduates and business community. Implementing this plan required collaboration among faculty, business advisers, and administration since development and incorporation of a new program into already intense university curricula is an extremely challenging task.

The 3-module program developed by the linguistic training department members with dedicated support of steering committee is intended to close the gap between low graduates' speaking performance and employers' requirements. Today, the program reaches almost 75 percent of our undergraduates via modules integrated into the university training curricula. The modules focus on the main types of job-related activities that necessitate developed English communication skills. The communication program features are summarized in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. 3-Module Communication Program Features

Module type	Focus	Instruction Hours	Comments
1 st Module (mandatory)	Formal communication	16	Phone communication and e-mail "office etiquette", oral presentations
2 nd Module (mandatory)	Informal oral communication	32	Learning to listen and ask the right questions, participation in discussion, oral presentations with feedback, persuasive speaking
3 rd Module (elective)	Communication in teamwork conditions	32	Participation in team meetings, holding team discussion, conducting meetings

Source: Compiled by the authors

The first 1-credit module focuses on training students for real world communication demands, mainly on formal oral communication. Job-related communication must be quick, short, yet correct. Despite the small amount of time spent on this activity, in real job environment the importance of oral presentations is crucial: a strong presentation is an efficient tool to introduce conceptual products to upper management or customers.

The second 2-credit module pays particular attention to informal communication skills. The importance of informal communication should not be underestimated: it is needed to convey concepts, ideas and information clearly. It helps to prove to colleagues, co-workers and senior staff the grasp and understanding of the scope of the projects the contributor is involved in. This inadequate competency may hinder specialist's recognition, promotion and confidence.

The third 2-credit module is elective. It is designed to offer students the chance to practice their English communication skills and apply professional knowledge while participating in team discussion, holding team discussion, conducting meetings. It is designed for highly motivated students with aspirations to work at high management positions.

The program may be further extended to include workshops for former university students who need to improve their English communication skills.

CONCLUSION

To some extent, the results can be applied at other non-linguistic universities with proper amendments because all the students are different from each other in their backgrounds, environments and goals. Identifying problematic areas will help LSP instructors better understand the behavior of students and choose proper strategies of interaction. English language training within 3-module program takes into account demands for graduates from employers. The launched training program helps our students to acquire the skills they will need in a highly competitive environment. The students on their part have to try their best to cope with this problem before they start seeking for jobs.

This study is limited in some respects; therefore, there is a need for further research in this subject to examine other possible solutions to enhance English oral communication with innovative pedagogical strategies. Future studies may explore other areas that greatly contribute to improve proficiency in English such as reading, writing and listening.

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