# communicative short

*by* emilie chong

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# Communication Competence or Language Proficiency for Employability? An Investigation into Malaysian Polytechnics' ESL Engineering Students

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**Abstract.** There are issues concerning language proficiency, communicative competence, and employability at Malaysian polytechnic. This study examined the relationships between communicative competence, language proficiency, and employability using descriptive analysis and inferential statistics. Pearson's Correlation determines the correlation between communication competence, language proficiency, and employability skills of Malaysian Polytechnic ESL engineering students. The total number of participants was 81 final-year engineering students. The findings revealed high positive correlations between communicative competence - "I can talk with a friend in English.") and employability skills (r = 0.854, p =.031) and language proficiency ("I can understand the English songs I listen to") and employability skills (r = 0.887, p =.038). The result is consistent with the theories. The result revealed that for the 81 students, communication competence, language proficiency, and employability skills are firmly and significantly correlated. Thus, it concluded that communicative competence and language proficiency are equally essential to ensure higher employability among Malaysian polytechnic ESL engineering students.

**Keywords:** communicative competence; language proficiency; employability; Malaysian polytechnic; ESL

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## Introduction

Polytechnics have been introduced in Malaysia since 1969 and are part of the higher education system. There are 37 polytechnics across the country, split into three groups: premier, conversion, and metro. An additional 1.3 million TVET workers are expected to reach the job market by 2020.

## 1.1 Problem of Statement

Communicative ability is more important than language proficiency among university students. The English language syllabus for Malaysian education does not prepare students to speak English but focuses exclusively on outcomes and grades. When these students graduate from secondary school and enrol in higher education, they start to have trouble adjusting to more difficult assessments.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

There are three study goals focused on the context of the problem statement, which are:

i. To identify communication competence and language proficiency among Malaysian polytechnic students.

ii. To investigate if communicative competence is positively correlated with employability

iii. To investigate if language proficiency is positively correlated with employability.

## 1.3 Research Questions

In this regard, this study aims to discover the language and communication skills of Malaysian polytechnic students to provide further information on employability, in particular, some of whom are directly involved in curriculum design and planning. The following query focuses on this study:

(1) What are the students' perceptions of language proficiency and communicative competence among Malaysian polytechnic students?
(2) Is a positive correlation between communicative competence and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students?
(3) Is there a positive correlation between language proficiency and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students?

## Research Hypotheses

$HO_1$: There is no statistically significant correlation between communicative competence and employability skills among Malaysian polytechnic students.

$HA_1$: There is a statistically positive correlation between communicative competence and employability skills among Malaysian polytechnic students.

$HO_2$: There is no statistically significant correlation between language proficiency and employability skills among Malaysian polytechnic students.

$HA_2$: There is a statistically positive correlation between language proficiency and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students.

## 1.4 Significance of Study

i.     *English language educators*

For Malaysian polytechnic English language educators, the study's findings would be a parameter to emphasise the relevant teaching and learning pedagogy, methodologies, materials, and strategies to achieve the target employability skills that are sought after by all employers. It is vital for English language educators to learn, unlearn, and relearn the most recent updates on job-hunting skills.

ii.     *Department of Polytechnic Education Malaysia*

This study is a good platform for the Department of Polytechnics Education Malaysia to study the latest trends and better understand students' perceptions of their communication competence and language proficiency after completing three compulsory English subjects designed to improve their overall language ability and skills. Thus, with the findings and results, improvement and enhancement programs can be materialised to combat the issues of Malaysian polytechnic graduates' lack of communication skills to be employed in the related field of studies.

iii.     *Malaysian Higher Education Institutions*

Other higher education institutions in Malaysia struggling with a similar issue can benefit from this research. Malaysian college students are perceived as having poor communication skills, which is an essential factor in being unemployed despite good academic grades. Hence, the study findings could provide insights into similar issues and address them aptly.

iv.     *Stakeholders, Industry Collaborators, and Panels*

The study is helpful for stakeholders, industry collaborators, and panels working closely with Malaysian polytechnics. When the needs of the industry are met, it solves all the issues that come afterward. As Malaysia's workforce is going global, undeniably, the semi-skilled professionals of Malaysian polytechnics partake in a vital role. A strong command of English and communication skills is undeniably one of the determining factors for being hired by job firms and even for job promotions.

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## 2.0. Literature Review

## Introduction

Malaysian polytechnic students' poor grasp of English language proficiency despite the shift from English for Specific Purposes to Communicative English in 2011. What is hampering students' efforts to be more competent in English language users? Employers consider language proficiency and communication skills as distinct qualities in the Malaysian private sector.

## 2.1 Language Learning in ESL Classroom

The purpose of English language learning in polytechnics is to provide students with the skills needed in the academic and technical sense. Polytechnic students are exposed to multiple methods to establish contact and social interaction during classroom teaching and learning. The communicative method is derived from the linguistic theory of the communicative abilities of Dell Hymes. Communicative English was introduced in 2011 with the primary objective of meeting the increasing demands of sectors that require TVET graduates to communicate well. Strong communication skills undeniably assure a healthier social and community working climate. For polytechnic students, learning many languages uses and applications, particularly in the workplace setting, is therefore necessary.

## 2.2 TVET Graduates and Employability

The purpose of English language learning in polytechnics is to provide students with the skills needed in the academic and technical sense. Polytechnic students are exposed to multiple ways to establish contact and social interaction during classroom teaching and learning. The communicative method is derived from the linguistic theory of the communicative abilities of Dell Hymes (1972). Communicative English was introduced in 2011 with the primary objective of meeting the increasing demands of sectors that require TVET graduates to communicate well. Strong communication skills undeniably assure a healthier social and community working climate.

## 2.3 English Language Proficiency

The importance of the need to think critically and be fluent in English for university students is partially due to the issue of the country's high unemployment rate. Malaysian students have a moderate proficiency which is EF EPI score of 547, securing a number three position among all 24 Asian countries. A study by Sanmugam (2013) shows the lack of competence in English language skills as needed in the workplace. What is missing is a good understanding of what employers mean and require regarding employability. Unloading these words from employers' viewpoints would allow TVET to help train their students for the job market.

## 2.4 Theory of Communicative Competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)

Hymes (1972) pointed out Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence as the left object of concern, a significant gap in not coping with the problem of appropriateness: the understanding that a word is not well-formed but appropriately used in a particular context. Hymes put it this way: Communicative competence is an individual's ability to use and apply the target language effectively with other interlocutors in a social setting. According to Canale & Swain (1980), there

are four communicative competences: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence.

## 2.5. Theoretical Framework

The input theory implies that language learning happens when students receive input from the final semester related to mini project review, graphs and maps, terms and phrases to explain patterns and gestures that they can understand. The function of the lecturer is to encourage the student's learning activity from a Vygotsky perspective.

### 2.5.1. Classroom Learning (The Input Hypothesis by Stephen Krashen)

In Communicative English 1, 2 and 3, studying in the classroom, it is crucial to create a language condition by enabling the acquirer to recognise his or her present competence by listening or reading an input language. In another assessment, a job interview, learners turn from what they already know to what teachers will offer.

### 2.5.2. Theory of Communicative Competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)

Vygotsky's Proximal Development Zone (ZPD) is learning that happens when a child faces trouble managing his or her own learning. ZPD is based on cognitive growth, in which a learner transitions from the current level of competence to the future level of development.

### 2.5.3 Language Learning Strategies – (Cummin's Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP))

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) refers to how language is used in the school or work environment. CALP includes the ability to interpret, synthesise and assess or often called higher-order thinking skills. It takes at least five to seven years for a student to demonstrate CALP.

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**Theoretical framework**

1. Classroom Learning (The Input HClassroom Learning (The Input Hypothesis by Stephen Krashen) ( i + 1 )
2. Theory of Communicative Competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)
3. Language Learning Strategies
(Cummin's Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP))

Self-Perceived Communication Competence &
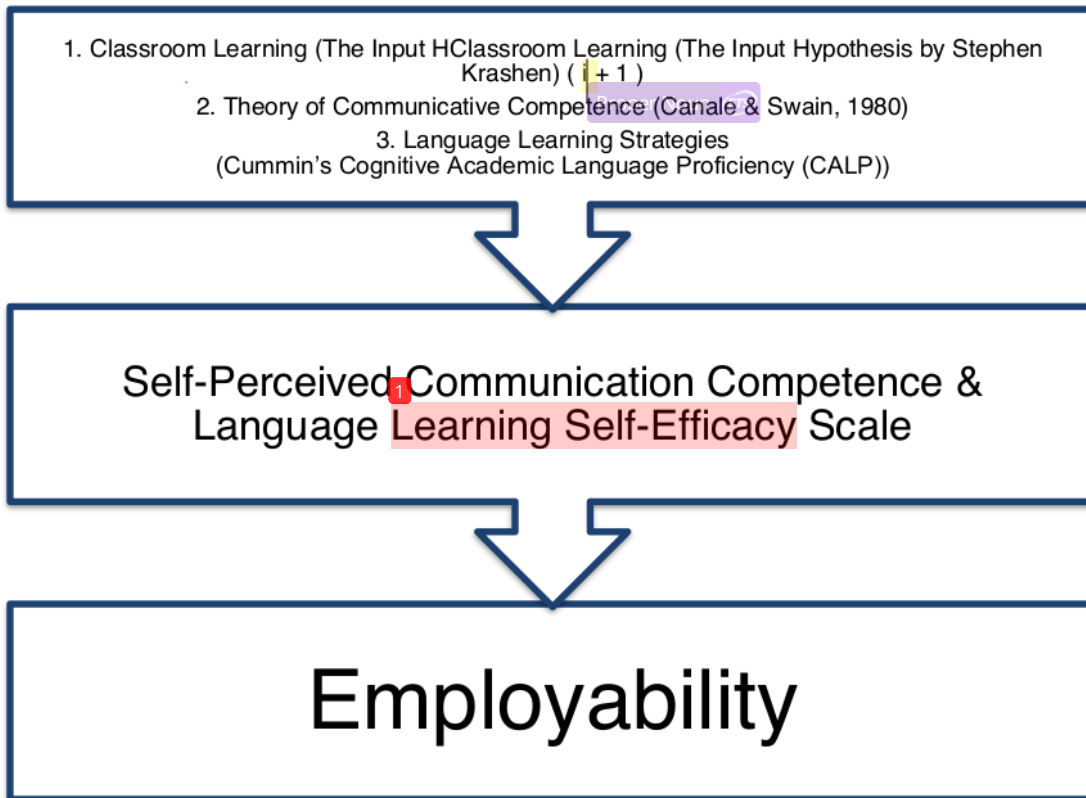Language Learning Self-Efficacy Scale

# Employability

*Figure 1 – A theoretical framework for investigating the relationship between Language Proficiency, Communication and Employability based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Theory of Communicative Competencies and Cummin's CALP*

# CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. Research Design

It is a report from a sample using the Google form, an online data collection form to resolve the research issue and research questions, the data from this non-experimental design study is collected.

## 3.2. Research Participants

The goal participant for this study is 80 students from mechanical and electrical engineering departments in a polytechnic for the final year. They would have taken Communicative English 1, 2, and 3 subjects in all of their studies. As this is a small-scale sample, the data must be collected from a medium number of respondents. Sampling using probability methods, however, is used to classify possible participants in the sample, allowing population characteristics (e.g., social demographics, attitudes, preferences, opinions, skills, interests and values) to be estimated without obtaining data from all members of the population.

## 3.3. Research Instrument

Students are invited to complete a questionnaire consisting of 12 Self-Perceived Communicative Competence (SPCC) items and 22 English Language Self-Efficacy Scale items. The Employability Skills (ES) Measurement Model was developed in order to research the employability skills acquired in Malaysian engineering students.

## 3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

This study investigates the perceptions of students on language proficiency and communicative competence towards employability skills. The survey will be disseminated to the final semester students using WhatsApp instant messaging application. The analysis will collect data from students who have taken Communicative English 1,2 and 3 subjects.

# Chapter 4: Findings and Results

## Introduction

In this chapter, the questionnaire collected via Google form will be transferred into Google Sheets for descriptive and inferential analysis. For this study, mean and standard deviation have been used for descriptive statistics, while Pearson Correlation is used to interpret the relationship between variables.

## 4.1. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is used in this research to analyse the demographic profile of respondents, including gender, age group and study department.

## 4.2 Respondents' Demographic Profile

This study collects basic demographic information of the respondents for the researchers to further investigate the statistical relationship and significant differences between the variables mentioned above.

### 4.2.1 Respondents' Gender
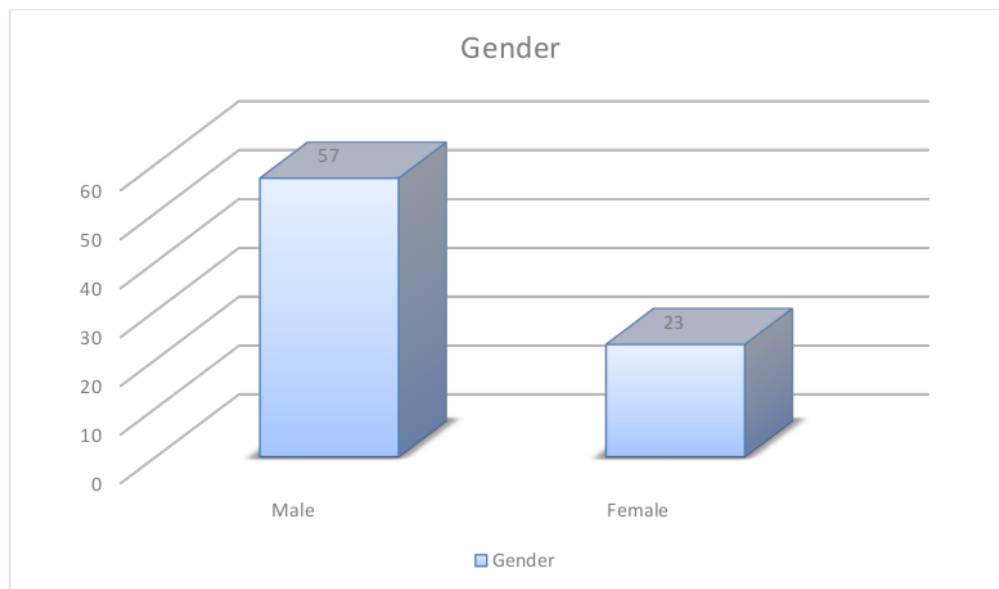


In this study, 57 male and 23 female university students responded to the volunteering-based questionnaire. In other words, 71.25% of male students answered the questionnaire while 28.75% of female participants replied to the questionnaire invitation.

### 4.2.2 Respondents' Age
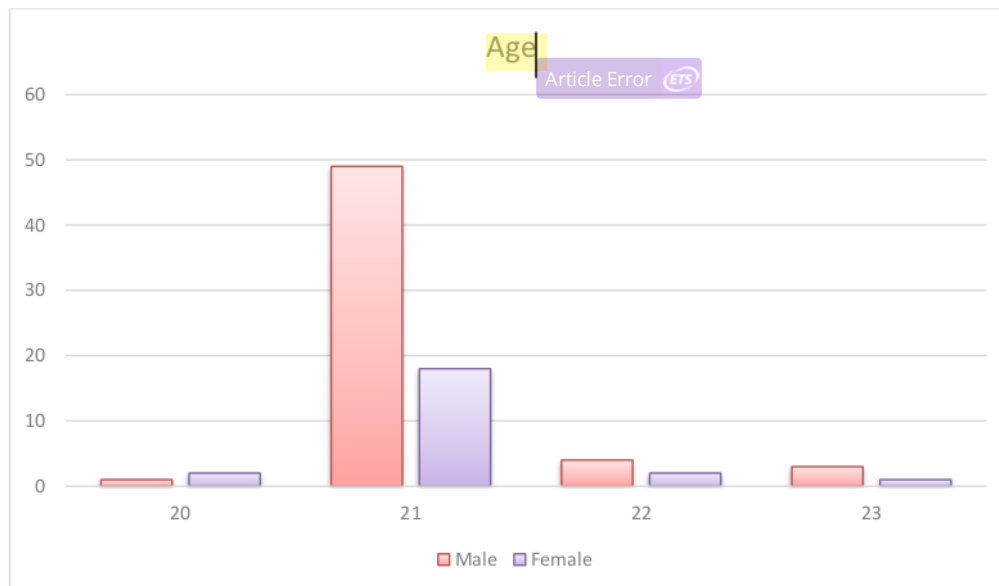


Another demographic background collected from the questionnaire was age. The highest age who responded to the questionnaire was 21, while the second-highest was 22, followed by the age 23. However, only three respondents were 20. In other words, 83.75% of respondents were 22 years old. It was because the respondents were final-year students from the September intake.

## 4.3. Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlations Among the Variables

### 4.3.1 The Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Pearson's Correlation (R) For Self-Perceived Communication Competence Scale (SPCC) and its Correlation with Employability Skills

Table 1. Mean, SD and Pearson's Correlation (r) for SPCC (n = 80)

| Variables | Mean | SD | Pearson'Correlation |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) I can present a talk to a group of strangers in English. | 3.032 | 0.722 | **0.655 |
| (2) I can talk with an acquaintance in English. | 4.089 | 0.544 | **0.835 |
| (3) I can talk in a large meeting of friends in English. | 3..945 | 0.731 | **0.805 |
| (4) I can talk in English with a small group of strangers. | 3.566 | 0.656 | **0.768 |
| (5) I can talk with a friend in English. | 4.235 | 0.884 | **0.854 |
| (6) I can talk in a large meeting of acquaintances in English. | 3.772 | 0.569 | **0.770 |
| (7) I can talk with a stranger in English. | 3.128 | 0.457 | **0.675 |
| (8) I can present a talk to a group of friends in English. | 3.567 | 0.642 | **0.701 |
| (9) I can talk in English with a small group of acquaintances. | 3.423 | 0.590 | **0.784 |
| (10) I can talk in a large meeting of strangers in English. | 2.980 | 0.569 | **0.509 |
| (11) I can talk to a small group of friends in English. | 4.115 | 0.776 | **0.812 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (12) I can present a talk to a group of acquaintances in English. | 3.776 | 0.459 | **0.776 |

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

Based on Table 1 refers to the mean score, standard deviation and Pearson's Correlation (r) for the overall sample (n = 80). The highest Self-Perceived Communication Competence variable is 'I can talk with a friend (mean = 4.235), next followed by 'I can talk in a small group of friends in English' (mean = 4.115), while the third-highest is 'I can talk with an acquaintance in English' (mean = 4.089). The lowest Self-Perceived Communicative Competence score is 'I can talk in a large meeting of strangers in English' (mean = 2.980), and the second-lowest is 'I can present a talk to a group of strangers in English' (mean = 3.032). It is understood that the polytechnic students are more comfortable talking with a friend, a small group of friends and acquaintances. The mean scores are above 4. Polytechnic students are not afraid to use English to communicate with a friend, group of friends or acquaintances. It also means that they trust their friends to use English. It can be shown in classroom activities like group discussions or role-plays where students must always apply the English language. In other words, polytechnic students enjoy being with friends or acquaintances to practice and use English.

On the other hand, the respondents are afraid to talk to a large group of strangers in English. It is followed by 'I can present a talk to a group of strangers in English'. These students are not confident to communicate outside of their circle of friends. They find it challenging to express their ideas or opinions with a group of strangers. It can refer to the fact that in second-language acquisition, the desire to communicate (WTC) is those language learners who can communicate in the second language are constantly searching for opportunities to communicate; in addition, in the second language, these learners communicate.

Moreover, the study showed a high positive correlation between "I can talk with a friend in English." and employability skills (r = 0.854). Next, "I can talk with an acquaintance in English." and employability skill (r = 0.835). Then, "I can talk to a small group of friends in English." and employability skill (r = 0.812). Lastly, "I can talk in a large meeting of friends in English." and employability skills (r = 0.805).

### 4.3.2 Self-Perceived Communication Competence Score

Table 2. Mean, SD and Pearson's Correlation (r) for Bachelor Degree sample (n = 80)

| SPCC | Sub-score | Pearson' Correlation |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Public | 3.458 | 0.537 |
| (2) Meeting | 3.565 | 0.547 |
| (3) Group | 3.698 | 0.523 |
| (4) Dyad | 3.807 | 0.712 |
| (5) Stranger | 3.174 | 0.507 |
| (6) Acquaintance | 3.765 | 0.723 |
| (7) Friend | 3.966 | 0.788 |
| (8) Total SPCC score | 3.635 | 0.754 |

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

Based on Table 2, Self-Perceived Communication Competency (SPCC) Score can be obtained by adding the categories of variables together; the highest SPCC is Friend (mean = 3.966), this is followed by Dyad (mean = 3.807), then acquaintance (mean = 3.765). However, the lowest SPCC score is stranger (mean = 3.174).

Higher SPCC scores (strangers, acquaintance, friend) indicate higher self-perceived communication skills with fundamental communication contexts (public, meeting, party, dyad) and receivers, according to McCroskey & McCroskey (2013). On the other hand, the SPCC also correlate with employability skills. Some of the strong correlations are friend (r = 0.788), acquaintance (r = 0.723) and dyad (r = 0.712). Therefore, it proves that communication skills are the secret to establishing relationships in an employment environment. The ability to interact effectively and adjust the style appropriately is essential throughout working relationships. One must get along with colleagues, listen to their directions and understand them.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted based on the findings and results.

$HO_1$: There is no statistically Correlation between communicative competency and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students.

$HA_1$: There is a significant relationship between communicative competency and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students.

### 4.3.3 The Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Pearson's Correlation (R) For English Language Self-Efficacy Scale (ELSES) and its Correlation with Employability Skills

Table 3. Mean, SD and Pearson's Correlation (r) for ELSES and Employability Skills (n = 80)

| Variables | Mean | SD | Pearson' Correlation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Reading Skills** | | | |
| (1) I can understand when I read a magazine article in English. | 3.032 | 0.722 | **0.672 |
| (2) I can understand when I read a newspaper in English. | 4.115 | 0.544 | **0.835 |
| (3) I can understand when I read a book in English. | 3..945 | 0.731 | **0.802 |
| (4) I can understand when I read a novel in English. | 3.800 | 0.656 | **0.743 |
| (5) I can understand when I read short stories in English. | 3.334 | 0.674 | **0.723 |
| **Writing Skills** | | | |
| (6) I can write an English text according to the spelling and punctuation rule | 4.112 | 0.884 | **0.640 |
| (7) I can write an English text that forms cohesion with parts of speech (conjunctions, etc.). | 3.772 | 0.569 | **0.693 |
| (8) I can notice my spelling mistakes when writing in English. | 3.128 | 0.457 | **0.592 |
| (9) I find myself sufficient in the writing parts of English exams. | 3.567 | 0.642 | **0.673 |
| **Speaking skills** | | | |
| (10) I can make dialogue in English. | 3.423 | 0.590 | **0.748 |
| (11) I can express myself easily in informal conversations. | 3.980 | 0.569 | **0.824 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (12) I can speak English fluently. | 4.089 | 0.776 | **0.768 |
| (13) I can speak English in a given subject without prior preparation. | 3.776 | 0.459 | **0.757 |
| (14) I can express my feelings and thoughts in different forms in English. | 3.445 | 0.563 | **0.660 |
| (15) I can speak English in educational interviews (Erasmus, Graduate etc.). | 3.212 | 0.477 | **0.588 |
| (16) I find myself sufficient in the speaking parts of English exams. | 3.332 | 0.512 | **0.624 |
| **Listening Skills** | | | |
| (17) I can understand conversations in English. | 3.563 | 0.578 | **0.705 |
| (18) I can understand the English songs I listen to. | 3.889 | 0.694 | **0.887 |
| (19) I can listen to and understand English videos (TV programs, series, etc.). | 3.482 | 0.612 | **0.677 |
| (20) I can do the activities while listening to English (filling in the blank, questioning, etc.). | 3.675 | 0.590 | **0.665 |
| (21) I can write what I hear while listening to English. | 3.342 | 0.625 | **0.734 |
| (22) I find myself sufficient in listening to English exams. | 3.444 | 0.663 | **0.782 |

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

Based on table 3, the highest English Language Self-Efficacy Scale (ELSES) for reading skills is "I can understand when I read a newspaper in English." (mean = 4.115), but the lowest is "I can understand when I read a magazine article in English." (mean = 3.032). It is surprising as polytechnic students in this study enjoy or prefer reading newspapers more than magazine articles in English. It can be due to many exercises in the classroom for Communicative English subjects based on current issues. In Communicative English 1 subject, students are required to carry out a group discussion on current issues happening around Malaysia and the world.

For writing skills, the highest score is "I can write an English text according to the spelling and punctuation rules" (mean = 4.112), and the lowest score is "When writing in English, I can notice my spelling mistakes." (mean = 3.128) The result is not surprising as polytechnic students are taught to write well and are always guided to apply all punctuation rules. Besides that, students are not aware of their spelling mistakes, but if peer evaluation or peer editing is done in the class, students can be more careful about their spelling errors.

For speaking skills, the highest score is "I can speak English fluently." (mean = 4.089), and the lowest is "I can speak English in educational interviews (Erasmus, Graduate etc.)." (means = 3.212) The findings show that the participants are confident with their productive language skills. They have trust in their ability to converse in the target language effectively. However, it is limited to casual occasions, classroom settings or among their friends. Students find it challenging to speak or answer interviews which are very formal and require good English skills. It could remind the institution's instructors to include more academic English lessons like TedTalk, educational podcasts and many more into the lessons.

Lastly, for listening skills, the highest score is "I can understand the English songs I listen to." (mean = 3.889), and the lowest is "I can write what I hear while listening to English." (mean = 3.342). It implies that the study participants have participated in learning English through songs; it is an excellent speaking and pronunciation practice. Students also can learn new vocabulary and

grammar. Most of all, it is a fun learning activity. On the other hand, students feel they cannot write what they hear or listen to in English. It goes back to receptive and productive skills. Not all good listeners are good writers.

For correlation aspects, it is found that "I can understand the English songs I listen to." (r = 0.887), "I can understand when I read a newspaper in English." (r = 0.835), "I can express myself easily in informal conversations." (r = 0.824) and "I can understand when I read a book in English." (r = 0.802) have strong Correlation. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted based on the findings and results.

HO$_2$: There is no statistical correlation between language proficiency and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students.

HA$_2$: There is a significant relationship between language proficiency and employability among Malaysian polytechnic students

### 4.3.4 The Mean Score, Standard Deviation for Employability Skills

Table 4. Mean and SD for Employability Skills (n = 80)

| Variables | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Communication | 3.600 | 0.537 |
| (2) Team work | 3.619 | 0.547 |
| (3) Leadership | 3.207 | 0.523 |
| (4) Long life learning and Information management | 3.408 | 0.540 |
| (5) Critical thinking and problem solving | 3.578 | 0.563 |
| (6) Entrepreneurship | 3.783 | 0.683 |
| (7) Ethic and moral | 3.543 | 0.509 |
| (8) Technology Utilizing Skills | 3.656 | 0.612 |
| (9) Social skills | 3.892 | 0.786 |

Based on table 4, the highest score is social skills (m = 3.892), then, it is followed by entrepreneurship (m = 3.783), teamwork (m = 3.619) and communication (m = 3.600). From the findings, polytechnic students perceive themselves have the highest social skills, entrepreneurship, teamwork and communication skills. These are essential for all future job seekers. Undeniably, students know employers are looking for employees who can manage interpersonal relationships among coworkers, superiors and clients. Next, social skills also mean cooperating with others and showing respect and mutual understanding in a working environment.

Entrepreneurship and teamwork are the following essential skills Entrepreneurship experience is vital in the hiring process because nowadays, employers value entrepreneurship skills such as risk-taking ability, creative thinking, persistence and self-discipline to be successful entrepreneurs. In the polytechnics syllabus, entrepreneurship is a compulsory subject. Students would need to pass the paper in order to graduate. It is how much the polytechnic education system value and appreciate the current industrial needs.

Besides that, a candidate with solid teamwork skills is sought out by employers for many reasons. A team player demonstrates leadership, collaboration, and good communication. Communication is the fourth highest mean score in these findings, and practical communication skills are always vital to interpreting what is being asked for, delivering the instructions, negotiating terms and conditions with clients and many more. Thus, in this study, polytechnic students are concerned and understand the much-needed employability skills based on their perceptions.

## 4.3 Conclusion

This chapter shows findings and results after running descriptive and inferent 12 statistical analysis using Google Sheets. In conclusion, all research questions are answered; there is a significant relationship between communication competence and employability skills and language proficiency and employability skills.

## Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1. Interpretations of the Study

The study demonstrates a strong correlation between communication competence and employability skills, as also language proficiency and employability skills. This analysis supports the theory that Cummin's Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), the input hypothesis by Stephen Krashen and the Theory of Communicative Competence by Canale & Swain (1980). Cummins (1998) asserted that as second language proficiency increased, linguistic proficiency in English increased. When they can read, hear and comprehend the language, students are deemed to have acquired a language (Krashen, 2003, 2011; Lesaux & Rangel, 2013). "In addition, language understanding is thought to have occurred when an individual can analyse and interpret the data that is taken in, often known as "input hypothesis" (Krashen, 2003, 2011); while learning to read, write, and speak in the second language is centred on "comprehensible input hypothesis (Krashen, 2003, 2011). Thus, reading and language comprehension has been completed by learning what one sees, learns and writes (Krashen, 2003, 2011; Lesaux & Rangel, 2013). Intentionally acquired knowledge creates the ability to edit and control language but does not necessarily experience the language with comprehensible input (Krashen, 2003, 2011). Language proficiency can be described as "the ability to use language effectively and appropriately across the range of social, personal, school, and work situations required in a given society for daily living" (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008, p.34). As Reid (2011) said, "To do right for students, we must allow the time it takes to move students to English proficiency and create valid and reliable evaluations for LEP students to report their level of accomplishment to the federal government properly" (p. 22)

Comparing the study of Azmi, Hashim & Yusoff (2018) reported that public universities scored higher on soft skills such as communication, coordination, problem-solving, decision-making, creative and innovative thinking and leadership. In this study, polytechnic students scored higher on social skills (m = 3.892), then, it is followed by entrepreneurship (m = 3.783), teamwork (m = 3.619) and communication (m = 3.600). The results contradict the claims of Esa, Selamat, Padil & Jamaludin (2014) claims that civil engineering diploma students did not apply the soft skills aspect, which are communication skills, lifelong learning, enterprise skills, and moral and professional ethics. In line with the hypothesis, it is important to note that both students' perceptions of communication competence and language proficiency are high and have a strong Correlation with employability skills.

### 5.2 The implication of the Study

A host of significant developments in higher education have been catalysed by the global emphasis on improving employability skills in Malay polytechnic graduates. The study provides insight into the relationship between Malaysian polytechnic ESL learners' perception of communication competency and language proficiency with employability skills. Communication skills are the secret to establishing relationships in an employment environment. The ability to interact effectively and adjust the style appropriately is essential throughout working relationships. It is important that potential staff get along with their peers and listen to and comprehend instructions. The study demonstrates, along with global patterns, that local employers strongly appreciate communication skills when hiring new graduates, and unique communication skills needed in the industry represent the content of the course.

### 5.2 Limitation of the Study

Firstly, the methodological choices were constrained by non-probability sampling as the researcher faced difficulties getting more respondents due to the Malaysian government's Covid-19 pandemic's movement restriction policy. Thus, bias may exist in this study. However, the researcher invites other scholars to contribute to the body of knowledge in this study in Malaysia as there are similar limited studies. Also, this was a small-scale study where the sample was only 80 though the researcher wanted to study a sample of 100-150 participants. There was little demotivating as the triangulation method could not be carried out as classroom observation, interviews, and library visiting are nearly impossible to be carried out. Also, the generalizability of the results is limited to only one polytechnic and engineering student from three departments.

## 5.3 Recommendation for Future Research

In order to set up and add to the body of information, more research is required. First, the same study can be conducted on a larger scale or choose a few polytechnics using probability sampling. Next, research comparing Malaysian polytechnic students' different departments such as engineering, commerce, hospitality and tourism. Researchers and scholars are also encouraged to use different self-perceived communication competency and English language self-efficacy scales to study and compare the same purpose as stated in this study.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the summary of all significant findings and results of the study by relating to the literature reviews and theoretical framework in chapter 2. Most notably, readers or writers are invited to develop a deeper understanding of the study's intent and recommendations for potential studies.

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(ETS) **Confused** You have used **a** in this sentence. You may need to use **an** instead.

(ETS) **Missing ","** You may need to place a comma after this word.

(ETS) **Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

(ETS) **Missing ","** You may need to place a comma after this word.

(ETS) **P/V** You have used the passive voice in this sentence. Depending upon what you wish to emphasize in the sentence, you may want to revise it using the active voice.

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(ETS) **P/V** You have used the passive voice in this sentence. Depending upon what you wish to emphasize in the sentence, you may want to revise it using the active voice.

(ETS) **Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

(ETS) **Possessive** You may need to use an apostrophe to show possession.

(ETS) **Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

(ETS) **Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

(ETS) **Wrong Form** You may have used the wrong form of this word.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word. Consider using the article **the**.

**Prep.** You may be using the wrong preposition.

**Proper Noun** If this word is a proper noun, you need to capitalize it.

**S/V** This subject and verb may not agree. Proofread the sentence to make sure the subject agrees with the verb.

**Missing ","** You may need to place a comma after this word.

**Prep.** You may be using the wrong preposition.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

**P/V** You have used the passive voice in this sentence. Depending upon what you wish to emphasize in the sentence, you may want to revise it using the active voice.

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**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Missing ","** You may need to place a comma after this word.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

**Missing ","** You may need to place a comma after this word.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Run-on** This sentence may be a run-on sentence. Proofread it to see if it contains too many independent clauses or contains independent clauses that have been combined without conjunctions or punctuation. Look at the "Writer's Handbook" for advice about correcting run-on sentences.

**P/V** You have used the passive voice in this sentence. Depending upon what you wish to emphasize in the sentence, you may want to revise it using the active voice.

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**S/V** This subject and verb may not agree. Proofread the sentence to make sure the subject agrees with the verb.

**P/V** You have used the passive voice in this sentence. Depending upon what you wish to emphasize in the sentence, you may want to revise it using the active voice.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word. Consider using the article **the**.

**Missing ","** You may need to place a comma after this word.

**Run-on** This sentence may be a run-on sentence. Proofread it to see if it contains too many independent clauses or contains independent clauses that have been combined without

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**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**P/V** You have used the passive voice in this sentence. Depending upon what you wish to emphasize in the sentence, you may want to revise it using the active voice.

**Confused** You have used **though** in this sentence. You may need to use **through** instead.

**Article Error** You may need to remove this article.

**Article Error** You may need to use an article before this word.