

Communication Competence or Language Proficiency for Employability: An Investigation on Malaysian Polytechnics ESL Engineering Students

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Abstract : In the Malaysian polytechnic, there are concerns about language proficiency, communicative competence, and employability among Malaysian polytechnic ESL engineering students. This study examined the relationships between communicative competence, language proficiency, and employability using descriptive analysis and inferential statistics. Next, 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 the communicative competence 'I can talk with a friend in English.' and employability skill ($r = 0.854$, $p = .031$), also, language proficiency 'I can understand the English songs I listen to' and employability skill ($r = 0.887$, $p = .038$). The result is consistent with the theories. The result revealed that for the 81 students, communication competence and language proficiency, and employability skills are firmly and significantly correlated. Thus, it concluded that both communicative competence and language proficiency equally essential to ensure a higher employability rate among Malaysian polytechnic ESL engineering students.

Keywords : communicative competence, employability, language proficiency, Malaysian polytechnic

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