Perceptions on Using English as the Medium of Instruction at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yarmouk University

By

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Master of Education (TEFL) at Yarmouk University

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Summer 2001
Abstract

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This study aims at identifying the potential difficulties students of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yarmouk University (FEAS) face as a result of using English as the medium of instruction. Besides, it aims at finding out whether there are any difficulties in understanding the major courses taught in English due to the lack of English for business purposes (EBP) courses. The study also attempts to find out whether or not the English language skills courses and the major courses taught in English are sufficient to provide students with both the language and communication skills needed to meet the demands of the labor market. Furthermore, this study is an attempt to find out whether or not Jordanian business graduates can meet the Jordanian workplace English language requirements.

The sample of this study consists of 326 student, 50 faculty members, 8 professors of the administrative body and the academic staff of the Deanship and different departments of FEAS and the Language Center at Yarmouk University as well as 57 employees and 6 employers working at the banking sector. The instruments of this study consist of a three-version questionnaire and four interview forms. The validity of the instruments has been insured through having it judged by a jury of 8 experts. Reliability has been checked using "Cronbach Alpha" formula where alpha was found to be 76%.

The study attempts to answer seven questions related to (1) the difficulties encountered by the students of FEAS as a result of using English as the medium of instruction at the faculty; (2) the impact of using English as the medium of instruction on the students' academic achievement; (3) the impact of using English as the medium of instruction on the students' future job performance in the labor market; (4) the aspects of oral and written business communication; (5) the ability of Jordanian business graduates meet the Jordanian workplace English language requirements; (6)
the need for teaching EBP courses for first-year students and (7) the advantage(s) of offering EBP course(s). One-Way ANOVA, Newman-Keuls Test and t-Test have been used to answer the questions of the study, which has revealed the following findings:

1- There are statistically significant differences (at α=0.05) in the students' answers to the first, second and fifth questions, which could be attributed to these students respective fields of study.

2- There is a statistically significant difference (at α=0.05) in the students' answers to the first question, which could be attributed to these students respective academic levels.

3- There are statistically significant differences (at α=0.05) in the students' answers to the first and second questions, which could be attributed to these students respective accumulative averages.

4- There are statistically significant differences (at α=0.05) in GROUP (1) employees' answers to the second and fifth questions, which could be attributed to these employees' respective language(s) of study.

5- There are statistically significant differences (at α=0.05) in GROUP (2) employees' answers to the third, fourth and seventh questions, which could be attributed to these employees' respective language(s) of study.

6- There is a statistically significant difference (at α=0.05) in GROUP (1) employees' answers to the fourth question, which could be attributed to these employees' respective accumulative averages.

7- There are statistically significant differences (at α=0.05) in GROUP (2) employees' answers to the sixth and seventh questions, which could be attributed to these employees' respective accumulative averages.

8- There is a statistically significant difference (at α=0.05) in the faculty members' answers to the fifth question, which could be attributed to these faculty members respective qualifications.

9- An EBP course(s) is a concern for students of FEAS to help them understand the major course taught in English, gain better academic achievement and, thus, perform better in the labor market.

In light of the findings, several recommendations are made to alleviate some of the difficulties faced by the subjects of the study. These recommendations focus on the possibility of offering EBP course(s) and providing students with technical translation of the major business concepts.