## **Applied Research on English Language**

V. 8 N. 2 2019 pp: 227-260 http://uijs.ui.ac.ir/are

DOI: 10.22108/are.2019.114847.1401

## A Triangulated Study of Professional English Needs of University Graduates in Business and Economics in Today's Iranian Business Sectors

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> Received: 2019/01/01 Accepted: 2019/03/02

Abstract: EAP courses for various disciplines are designed as a conduit between academic research and practical applications (Paltridge & Starfield, 2013, p. 175). On the other hand, one of the main missions of ESP practitioners is to prepare learners for realities of English on the job (Paltridge & Starfield, 2013, p. 185). This study aimed to provide a profile of target professional English needs of Iranian BA students of Business and Economics and to explore what real requirements are expected from them at work in future. To this end, perceptions of two groups of stakeholders, namely, human resource managers (N = 30) and employed graduated students (hereafter called "staff", N = 600) chosen through stratified sampling from various established business sectors were asked through triangulation of instruments using questionnaire, interview, and self and peer-assessment. The results suggested that while all four main English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) have been considered important in profession, the employers favored 'productive' English skills noticeably more. Moreover, the present professional English level of the staff, as evaluated by their managers, was turned out to have a long distance from the voiced expectations by themselves and the managers. The findings suggested the need for serious reconsideration of EAP courses in Business and Economics regarding the teaching methodology, content and practices in light of future occupational demands of the students and tying different dimensions of such courses to the requirements of corresponding workplaces. Implications of the study for improving the aforementioned EAP courses are also presented.

Keywords: English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), English for Business and Economics (EBE), Needs Analysis, Iran.

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