

EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION: A CASE IN PT. MELADY GARMENT INTERNATIONAL

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ABSTRACT

This study explores employees' perceptions of their English language proficiency at PT. Melady Garment International and its impact on workplace communication and career development. Employee competence levels vary, according to the findings: 25% show high proficiency, 45% moderate proficiency, and 30% low proficiency. Speaking and listening continue to be significant obstacles, even though reading and writing abilities are comparatively stronger. The main obstacles include limited verbal practice in the workplace, worry over grammar and pronunciation, and fear of making mistakes. English is primarily used in written communication, with minimal verbal interactions, leading to reduced confidence and engagement. Employees with higher English proficiency show better job efficiency, career advancement opportunities, and cross-cultural collaboration. To address these issues, the study recommends targeted language training, a supportive workplace environment, and increased speaking opportunities. Strengthening employees' English skills will enhance global communication, boost workplace productivity, and improve career growth.

Keywords: English Language Proficiency, Employees' Perception, Language development, Global Communication.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises of background of the study followed by reasons for choosing the topic, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of key terms, and outline of the research.

1.1. Background of the study

In the era of globalization, English has become the dominant language of international communication, serving as a bridge between people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is widely used in business, trade, diplomacy, technology, and education, making it a vital tool for professional success in the global marketplace. As companies expand their operations across borders, the demand for employees with English language proficiency has significantly increased. Multinational companies, including those in the garment and textile industry, require their workforce to communicate effectively in English to engage with international clients, suppliers, and stakeholders. This necessity highlights the importance of employees' English proficiency in ensuring smooth communication, efficiency, and competitiveness in the global business environment. PT. Melady Garment International, a manufacturing company specializing in garment production for international markets, operates

in an industry where global communication plays a crucial role. As a company engaged in export activities, PT. Melady Garment International interacts with overseas clients, negotiates with foreign suppliers, and follows international quality standards. Employees across different levels ranging from factory workers and supervisors to administrative staff and management must often deal with English-language documents, instructions, and correspondence. However, their level of English proficiency varies, affecting their ability to perform job-related tasks that require language skills.

Understanding how employees perceive their English language proficiency is critical for identifying communication barriers and improving workplace efficiency. Employees' self-assessment of their language skills can impact their confidence, job performance, and willingness to engage in global communication. Some employees may feel competent in reading and writing English but struggle with speaking and listening in professional settings. Others may experience anxiety or hesitation when communicating with foreign clients due to a lack of confidence in their English abilities. These challenges can affect productivity, teamwork, and overall business operations. Research has shown that English language proficiency is a key factor in career development and professional growth. Employees with strong English skills often have better opportunities for promotions, salary increases, and international assignments. Conversely, employees who struggle with English may face limitations in career advancement and professional interactions. Therefore, companies must assess employees' perceptions of their English proficiency to develop effective training programs that enhance their language skills and empower them in the workplace.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is consisted of the literature review and the theoretical framework of the research. In the literature review, the researcher provides the essential and fundamental theories to underlie the analysis as well as the definitions of the related terms from some experts to support the process in conducting this research.

2.1 Review of the Previous Studies

2.1.1 English proficiency

English speaking proficiency is very important to be able to participate in the wider world of work. Being able to communicate in English is crucial for participation in the larger workforce. Speaking competency is evaluated based on the ability to have a conversation in the target language. Developing one's English-speaking skills should not only be done in the classroom; it is also an essential component of the language learning process outside of it, since students desire additional exposure, interaction, and support for their research. It is necessary for the pupils to get used to using English. To enhance and grow their English, particularly their speaking ability, they require environmental support (Fitriani, R. L. (2022).

2.1.2 English global communication

English is acknowledged passport to better education and employment opportunities. English language plays a crucial role to weave the world into a single thread. English has a status of a second language in almost all the countries where it is not the first language.

To acquire simple language for day-to-day communication is main aim of learning any language. In turn, today's workforce is expected to be highly competent to continually improve skills and engage in lifelong learning. Language is a skill, like any other skill until and unless we practice the skill mastery is highly impossible (Ahmad, S. R. (2016). The importance of functional English in facilitating cross-cultural communication in international companies has been extensively studied. Research indicates that English serves as a lingua franca in international business settings, enabling communication among professionals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. For instance, a study on European business organizations highlighted that English is frequently adopted as the common language in international business meetings, despite the linguistic and cultural challenges it may present (Rogerson-Revell, P. (2007). Moreover, the importance of cultural awareness and inclusive communication practices is highlighted as essential for overcoming (Sahadevan, P., & Sumangala, M. (2021).

2.2 Review of Theoretical Study

The theoretical underpinnings of using English for cross-cultural communication in international companies are grounded in the concepts of lingua franca and intercultural communication. English as a lingua franca (ELF) is not merely a neutral medium but a dynamic tool that shapes and is shaped by the cultural contexts in which it is used. Theories of business communication emphasize the need for language management strategies to navigate the complexities of multilingual environments (Martinaj, F. (2023).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This chapter conveys the methodology of the research. It describes the form of the research, research population, data collection, as well as the technique of data analysis.

3.1 Research Assumptions

According to this study, Employees' Perception of English Language Proficiency in Global Communication: A Case in PT. Melady Garment International. It is assumed that using English as a lingua franca can improve communication and cooperation between workers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds by bridging linguistic and cultural divides.

3.2 Research Design

The study uses a qualitative method. To obtain thorough information about Employees' Perception of English Language Proficiency in Global Communication: A Case in PT. Melady Garment International, this includes surveys, interviews, and case studies. The purpose of the design is to examine the advantages and difficulties of using English in multicultural contexts.

3.3 Subject and Object of the Research

The subjects of this research are office staff, leader production, and manager working in international companies where English is used as a functional language. The object of the research is the impact of functional English on cross-cultural communication within these organizations.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings based on data collected from employees at PT. Melady Garment International. The findings are analyzed in relation to the study objectives and theoretical framework. Employee perceptions of their English competence, communication difficulties at work, and the influence of English proficiency on job performance and global corporate success are some of the major subjects. Recommendations for raising English competence inside the organization are also included in the conversation.

4.1 Employees' Perceptions of English Proficiency

4.1.1 General Overview

Employees at PT. Melady Garment International had mixed perceptions of their English proficiency. The self-assessment results categorized employees into three groups:

High Proficiency (25%): Mostly managers and senior staff who frequently use English in work-related tasks. They felt confident in reading, writing, and speaking.

Moderate Proficiency (45%): Mid-level employees, including supervisors, who were comfortable reading and writing but lacked confidence in speaking and listening.

Low Proficiency (30%): Production staff with minimal English skills, relying on translations or colleagues for communication.

4.1.2 Language Proficiency Self-Evaluation

Four essential language skills reading, writing, speaking, and listening were used by PT. Melady Garment International staff members to assess their level of English proficiency. The following is a summary of the survey and interview results:

1. Proficiency in Reading

Seventy percent of workers said they felt comfortable reading English-language instructions, work documents, and emails. Because they regularly dealt with English-language reports, contracts, and business correspondence, employees in managerial and administrative responsibilities demonstrated the best skills. Due to their limited exposure to English-language reading materials, production workers and factory workers lacked confidence.

2. Writing skills

Although they had trouble with grammar and formal writing, 55% of workers felt comfortable producing brief messages like emails and reports. For individuals with moderate and low proficiency, writing official documents, proposals, and reports in English was a significant issue. Because they frequently spoke on business matters, employees in leadership positions had superior writing abilities.

3. Communication Skills

Just 35% of workers said they were confident in their ability to speak English well. Workers with a moderate level of skill were able to converse in formal situations but faltered in unplanned discussions. The main obstacles were a lack of speaking experience, a fear of making mistakes, and mispronunciations. Verbal communication with overseas clients and coworkers was difficult for factory workers and supervisors.

4. Listening Skills

50% of workers had trouble understanding spoken English, particularly in hurried discussions. Workers found it difficult to understand industry-specific words, specialized language, and various English accents. Due to their frequent participation in international conferences and virtual meetings, managers demonstrated superior listening abilities.

Low-skilled workers needed assistance from bilingual coworkers or translations.

Employees rated their English skills in four areas:

Skill	High Proficiency	Moderate Proficiency	Low Proficiency
Reading	70%	20%	10%
Writing	55%	30%	15%
Speaking	35%	40%	25%
Listening	50%	30%	20%

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study investigated employees' perceptions of their English language proficiency in global communication at PT. Melady Garment International. The research aimed to understand how employees evaluate their language skills, the challenges they face in workplace communication, and the impact of English proficiency on job performance and career growth.

The findings revealed that employees had varying levels of English proficiency, with higher proficiency among managers and staff, while supervisors/productions leader demonstrated lower confidence in their English abilities. The most common challenges identified were fear of making mistakes, lack of verbal practice, and anxiety over pronunciation and grammar. These challenges affected workplace communication, teamwork, and professional development opportunities.

The research also highlighted that English was primarily used for written communication (emails, reports, and documentation), whereas verbal communication in English was limited. Many employees felt that their work environment did not actively promote or encourage English-speaking practice, leading to low confidence and reluctance to engage in conversations.

Additionally, the study found that English proficiency had a direct impact on job performance. Employees with better English skills were more efficient, had better career advancement

opportunities, and contributed more effectively to international business operations. Conversely, employees who lacked English proficiency faced barriers in workplace collaboration and struggled with cross-cultural communication.

Based on these findings, the study concludes that improving employees' English proficiency is essential for enhancing workplace communication, increasing job efficiency, and strengthening PT. Melady Garment International's global competitiveness.

5.1 Suggestions

5.1.1 Recommendations for Employees

1. Active Participation in English Learning

Employees should take advantage of available English training programs and self-learning resources such as online courses, language apps, and business English books.

Practicing English daily, even in small ways (e.g., reading English articles, listening to English podcasts, or speaking with colleagues), can help build confidence.

2. Overcoming Fear and Anxiety

Employees should view mistakes as part of the learning process and not be afraid to practice speaking English.

Engaging in small group discussions or informal English conversation clubs can provide a low-pressure environment for practice.

3. Improving Speaking and Listening Skills

Employees can watch English-language videos and news to improve listening comprehension.

Practicing pronunciation with speech recognition apps or language exchange partners can help improve speaking fluency.

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