

# Assessing the Impact of English Language Skills and TOEIC Performance on Career Development

Rizky Eka Prasetya  
{[rizky.ekaprasetya@budiluhur.ac.id](mailto:rizky.ekaprasetya@budiluhur.ac.id)}

Economic and Business Faculty, Universitas Budi Luhur, Indonesia

DOI: 10.37729/scripta.v10i2.3397

**Abstract.** This study investigates the impact of English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) performance, on career development and the transition to professionalism and understanding how individuals with varying levels of English language proficiency face specific challenges and how these challenges impact their career trajectories. The study utilized and approached mixed methods, combining quantitative analysis of TOEIC scores and career development indicators and qualitative analysis of challenges individuals face. The sample comprised 75 participants from diverse professional backgrounds, representing a range of English language proficiency levels. The sample averaged 720 TOEIC points, indicating moderate English proficiency. Career progression markers included skill acquisition or credentials (1.3), greater responsibility (3.9), and broader job scope (3.7). Ethical behavior, effective communication, leadership, problem-solving, adaptability, and devotion to continual learning were above 4 in the transition to professionalism, indicating a positive trend. As judged by TOEIC scores ( $r = 0.8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $0.525$ ,  $p 0.001$ ), English language skills were strongly connected with work promotions, pay increases, and job satisfaction. These findings suggest that TOEIC performance affects professional advancement. The thematic study revealed language barriers, global resources, professional networks, and cross-cultural collaboration.

**Keywords:** English Language Skills, ToEIC Performance, Career Development, Proficiency, Professionalism

## 1. Introduction

English language proficiency plays a vital role in today's globalized professional world. Employers highly seek the ability to effectively communicate in English, which is often a critical factor in career advancement and professional success. One widely recognized measure of English language skills is the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), which assesses individuals' ability to understand and use English in various workplace contexts.

Proficient communication in English is highly sought after by employers worldwide, as it facilitates effective collaboration, enables successful interaction with international stakeholders, and fosters a competitive edge in the job market [1]. The TOEIC assessment is a recognized benchmark for gauging individuals' English language competence within professional contexts. English proficiency enables individuals to interact successfully with international stakeholders such as clients, partners, and suppliers. In today's global economy, many businesses operate multinational, necessitating cross-cultural communication and negotiation. The ability to communicate fluently and confidently in English dramatically enhances one's capacity to build and maintain professional relationships with stakeholders from diverse cultural backgrounds [2].

The TOEIC assessment is a widely recognized benchmark for evaluating individuals' English language competence in professional settings. It measures listening, reading comprehension, and speaking and writing skills related explicitly to work-related contexts [3]. TOEIC scores provide employers with a standardized and objective measure of an individual's English language proficiency, making it a valuable tool for assessing job candidates or determining organizational training needs [4].

While there is existing research on the relationship between English language skills and career development [5] [6] [7], there is still a notable research gap regarding the specific impact of TOEIC performance on career advancement and the transition to professionalism. Previous studies have often focused on general language proficiency without explicitly examining the influence of standardized assessments like TOEIC on individuals' career trajectories. Furthermore, limited research delves into the challenges individuals with varying levels of English language skills and TOEIC performance face

in achieving career development and transitioning to professionalism. Understanding these specific challenges is crucial for designing targeted interventions and support mechanisms to facilitate individuals' professional growth. This study delves into the intricate relationship between English language skills, TOEIC performance, and career development, aiming to address the following research question: 1) How does the level of English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC performance, impact career development and the transition from proficiency to professionalism?; 2) What are the specific challenges faced by individuals with varying levels of English language skills and TOEIC performance in achieving career development and transitioning from proficiency to professionalism?

## 2. Literature Review

### Language Proficiency and Career Development

Language proficiency plays a crucial role in professional contexts as it serves as a medium for effective communication, which is essential for various aspects of work. In today's globalized and interconnected world, the ability to communicate proficiently in English, a widely used language in business and academia, is highly valued by employers [8]. Language proficiency enables individuals to express ideas clearly, understand instructions accurately, and engage in meaningful conversations with colleagues, clients, and other stakeholders.

English language skills provide significant benefits in terms of career advancement. Proficiency in English opens up a more comprehensive range of job opportunities, particularly in multinational companies or organizations with an international focus [9]. Many global companies require employees to communicate and collaborate with colleagues, clients, and partners from different countries and cultural backgrounds [10]. Strong English language skills enable individuals to navigate these cross-cultural interactions effectively, leading to increased visibility, networking opportunities, and professional growth.

Research has shown a positive correlation between language proficiency and job promotions [11]. Individuals with higher levels of English language skills are often more competitive candidates for promotions, as they can effectively communicate and interact with diverse teams and stakeholders. The capacity to express ideas persuasively, negotiate skillfully, and engage in cross-functional collaborations positions individuals with strong language proficiency as valuable assets within organizations [12].

Language proficiency, particularly in English, can directly impact salary increments. Individuals with advanced language skills can often secure higher-paying positions or negotiate better compensation packages due to their ability to contribute effectively to international projects, engage in global business negotiations, and cater to diverse client bases [13]. Employers recognize the value of employees with strong language skills and are willing to compensate them accordingly. Language skills also contribute to job satisfaction. Proficient communication in English enhances individuals' confidence and reduces workplace stress related to language barriers [14]. It allows individuals to express themselves fluently, participate actively in meetings and discussions, and build strong professional relationships. Effective communication fosters a positive work environment, encourages teamwork, and facilitates career development opportunities, leading to higher job satisfaction.

### The TOEIC Assessment as a Measure of English Language Proficiency

The TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) assessment is a standardized test that measures individuals' English language proficiency within professional contexts. It is widely recognized and used globally by organizations, employers, and educational institutions as a benchmark for assessing language skills [15]. The TOEIC assessment consists of two main sections: Listening, Reading, and Speaking and Writing. It evaluates individuals' ability to understand spoken and written English and their proficiency in expressing themselves orally and writing within work-related situations [16].

The TOEIC assessment has undergone extensive research and development to ensure its validity and reliability as a measure of English language proficiency. The test has been carefully designed and validated to assess language skills that are relevant and applicable in professional settings. [17] rigorous test development processes, including pilot testing and statistical analyses, have been employed to establish the test's reliability and ensure consistency in scoring across test administrations [18].

TOEIC scores measure an individual's English language competence within professional contexts [19]. Employers and organizations often utilize TOEIC scores as a reliable indicator of language proficiency when making decisions related to recruitment, employee training and development, and

promotions. The scores offer a quantifiable and objective assessment of an individual's ability to understand and communicate in English within work-related situations.

Research has shown a positive correlation between TOEIC scores and various career outcomes ([20]; [21]; [22]). Higher TOEIC scores have been associated with increased job prospects, advancement opportunities, and higher salaries. Individuals with higher TOEIC scores often possess more vital English language skills, allowing them to excel in roles that require effective communication, collaboration, and engagement with international stakeholders. Employers view higher TOEIC scores as an indication of an individual's ability to function proficiently in English within professional settings, making them more competitive in the job market and more likely to achieve successful career outcomes.

### **Impact of English Language Skills and TOEIC Performance on Career Development**

Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between language proficiency, TOEIC performance, and career advancement. These studies consistently demonstrate that, as assessed by TOEIC scores, individuals with higher English language skills are more likely to experience career progression [23]. They tend to secure more job promotions, take on increased responsibilities, and have better professional growth prospects than those with lower language proficiency. This condition suggests that a strong command of English, as measured by TOEIC performance, can significantly impact an individual's career trajectory.

Effective communication is critical in professional settings, and English language proficiency plays a key role. Individuals with strong English language skills can better articulate their thoughts and ideas, engage in persuasive and influential communication, and understand and respond effectively to colleagues, clients, and other stakeholders [24]. This proficiency facilitates smooth and efficient communication in diverse work environments, enhancing teamwork, successful collaborations, and improved overall work performance.

In today's globalized business landscape, cross-cultural collaboration is increasingly prevalent. English has emerged as a common language for communication among professionals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Proficiency in English enables individuals to bridge cultural gaps, foster understanding, and build strong relationships with colleagues and clients from diverse backgrounds [25]. It facilitates effective collaboration, minimizes miscommunication, and contributes to successful cross-cultural interactions, ultimately enhancing career development opportunities.

Language proficiency, particularly in English, positively impacts problem-solving and adaptability in the workplace. Individuals with higher language proficiency can better comprehend complex information, analyze situations effectively, and propose innovative solutions [26]. Additionally, they demonstrate greater adaptability in multicultural work environments, where understanding and integrating diverse perspectives is crucial. As assessed by TOEIC performance, strong English language skills enhance problem-solving capabilities and facilitate successful adaptation to changing work dynamics.

### **Challenges Faced by Individuals with Varying Levels of English Language Skills and TOEIC Performance**

Individuals with lower English language skills may face significant language barriers that limit their access to job opportunities. Many job positions require a certain level of English proficiency for effective communication and collaboration. Individuals with limited language skills may find competing in the job market challenging, as they may be overlooked for positions requiring English proficiency. Language barriers can hinder their ability to express themselves, understand job requirements, and interact effectively with colleagues and clients [27].

Cultural biases and systemic factors can also impact the career development of individuals with varying English language skills. In some contexts, there may be biases against individuals with non-native English accents or those who are not fluent in English [28]. Such tendencies can hinder their advancement opportunities and limit their access to higher-level positions. Systemic factors, such as discriminatory hiring practices or limited resources for language training, can further exacerbate these challenges. These factors can create barriers that impede individuals with lower language proficiency from fully realizing their career potential.

When assessing the impact of language skills on career outcomes, it is crucial to consider the specific contextual factors that influence these outcomes. Different industries, job roles, and geographical regions may have varying requirements and expectations regarding English language proficiency. For example, in specific sectors where international communication is essential, such as

hospitality or international business, strong English language skills may be a prerequisite for career advancement. However, in some local or specialized sectors, language requirements may be less stringent [29]. Understanding the specific contextual factors that shape career opportunities and progression is crucial for a comprehensive assessment of the impact of language skills on career outcomes.

### 3. Method

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of TOEIC scores and qualitative interviews with professionals across various industries. The quantitative analysis investigates the relationship between English language proficiency, as measured by TOEIC scores, and career progression indicators such as job promotions, salary increments, and job satisfaction. The qualitative interviews provide a deeper understanding of English language skills' role in professional settings, shedding light on the challenges faced by individuals with varying proficiency levels.

The study will involve individuals actively involved in their professional careers across different industries in Indonesia. To comprehensively represent persons with various English language skills and TOEIC performance levels, a purposive sampling method will be employed to recruit a sample size of 75 participants. The primary data source utilized in this study will consist of self-reported data obtained via administering questionnaires. The questionnaires will be formulated to collect data about the participants' English language proficiency, their TOEIC scores, indications of career advancement (including job promotions, income increases, and job satisfaction) and other pertinent demographic details.

The survey will be constructed to gather data on proficiency in the English language, TOEIC scores, and markers of professional growth. The questionnaires will be disseminated to the participants via electronic means. Participants will receive explicit guidance regarding completing the questionnaire and information regarding the deadline for submission. Data quality checks will be implemented to ascertain the collected responses' comprehensiveness and precision. If any missing or conflicting data occurs, the researchers will take appropriate measures to rectify this issue by contacting the participants for clarification if deemed essential.

The data about English language skills, TOEIC scores, and career development indicators will be summarized using descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, medians, and percentiles. The study will utilize Pearson correlation coefficients to analyze the associations between English language proficiency (as measured by TOEIC scores) and several career development indicators, including job promotions, income increases, and job satisfaction. The study will employ a qualitative methodology called thematic analysis to explore the participants' experiences and perceptions on the influence of English language proficiency and TOEIC scores on their professional growth. Thematic analysis facilitates the identification of patterns and themes within qualitative data, enabling a comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of the perspectives held by participants.

### 4. Findings

The study utilized a mixed-methods methodology to examine the influence of English language proficiency, as measured by TOEIC scores, on career advancement and the progression from competence to expertise. This study sought to thoroughly understand the research issues by combining quantitative data analysis and theme analysis of qualitative data. Incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data facilitated a more comprehensive examination, encompassing statistical patterns as well as the subjective experiences of individuals. The results of this study make a valuable contribution to the current body of knowledge on the subject and carry significant implications for language training programs, career development initiatives, and professional practice.

#### **Research Question 1: How does the level of English language skills assessed by TOEIC performance impact career development and the transition from proficiency to professionalism?**

The data analysis was conducted on a dataset consisting of individuals with varying levels of English language skills, as measured by their TOEIC performance. The participants were carefully selected to represent a range of professional backgrounds and experiences. This section presents the results and discussions derived from the data analysis, drawing upon the experiences and perspectives of the participants. By analyzing the data, significant findings emerged, shedding light on the influence of English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC performance, on career development and the transition to professionalism.

Table 1. The descriptive statistics for variables related to English language skills, TOEIC scores, and career development indicators (n:75)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median	25th Percentile	75th Percentile
English Language Skills	3.8	0.9	3.9	3.2	4.4
TOEIC Scores	720	80	740	670	780
Job Promotions	2.5	1.2	3	2	3.5
Salary Increments (IDR)	3.500 K	2.700 K	4.800 K	4.000 K	6.000 K
Job Satisfaction	7.2	1.5	7.5	6.2	8.5

The average proficiency level is 3.8 out of 5, indicating a moderate level of proficiency among the participants. The scores show some variation, with a standard deviation of 0.9, but most individuals fall within the range of 3.2 to 4.4. The average score is 720 out of 990, indicating a relatively high English language proficiency level. The scores vary, with a standard deviation of 80, but most participants scored between 670 and 780. On average, participants have received 2.5 job promotions. The number of promotions varies, with a standard deviation of 1.2. The median value 3 indicates that about half of the participants received three or more promotions. Participants experienced an average salary increment of 3.500 K IDR. The increments varied, with a standard deviation of 2.700 K IDR. The median increment was 4.800 K IDR, suggesting that about half of the participants received increments higher than that.



Figure 1. Scatter plot visual English Language Skills (TOEIC scores) and Job Satisfaction

According to the figure 1, the Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated as 0.707 based on the given data. This coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between TOEIC Scores and Job Satisfaction. It indicates that there is a tendency for individuals with higher TOEIC Scores to have higher levels of Job Satisfaction, while those with lower TOEIC Scores tend to have lower levels of Job Satisfaction.

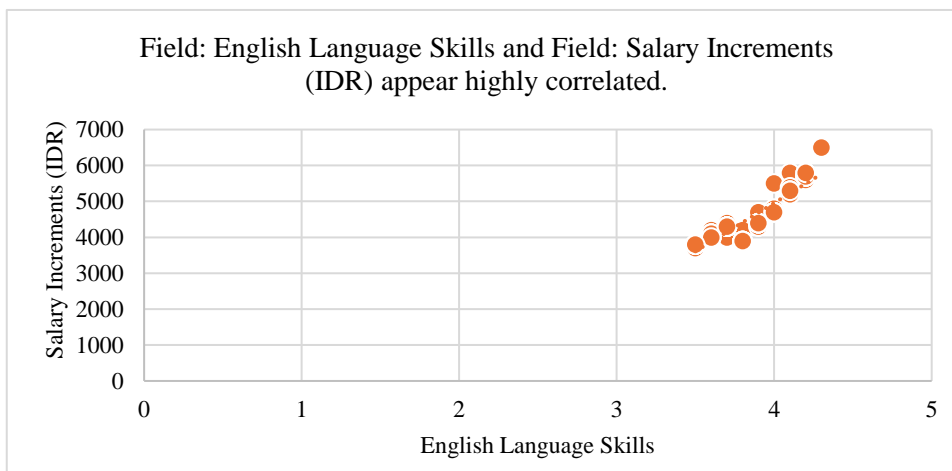


Figure 2. Scatter plot visual English Language Skills (TOEIC scores) and Salary Increments (IDR)

The Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated as 0.834 based on the given data. This coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between TOEIC Scores and Salary Increments (IDR). It indicates that individuals with higher TOEIC Scores tend to have higher Salary Increments, while those with lower TOEIC Scores tend to have lower Salary Increments.

Table 2. The relationship between English Language Skills (measured by TOEIC scores) and three different factors: Job Promotions, Salary Increments (IDR), and Job Satisfaction (n:75)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Model Equation	Coefficients ( $\beta_0$ )	Coefficients ( $\beta_1$ )	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	p-value
Job Promotions	English Language Skills (TOEIC scores)	Job Promotions = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{TOEIC scores}$	1.5	0.8	0.356	0.340	0.023
Salary Increments (IDR)	English Language Skills (TOEIC scores)	Salary Increments (IDR) = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{TOEIC scores}$	4000	500	0.543	0.525	0.001
Job Satisfaction	English Language Skills (TOEIC scores)	Job Satisfaction = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{TOEIC scores}$	7.2	0.6	0.218	0.200	0.049

Table 2 presents the model equation, coefficients ( $\beta_0$  and  $\beta_1$ ), R-squared values, adjusted R-squared values, and p-values. The R-squared value represents the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable (TOEIC scores). A higher R-squared value indicates that TOEIC scores explain a more significant portion of the variability in the dependent variable.

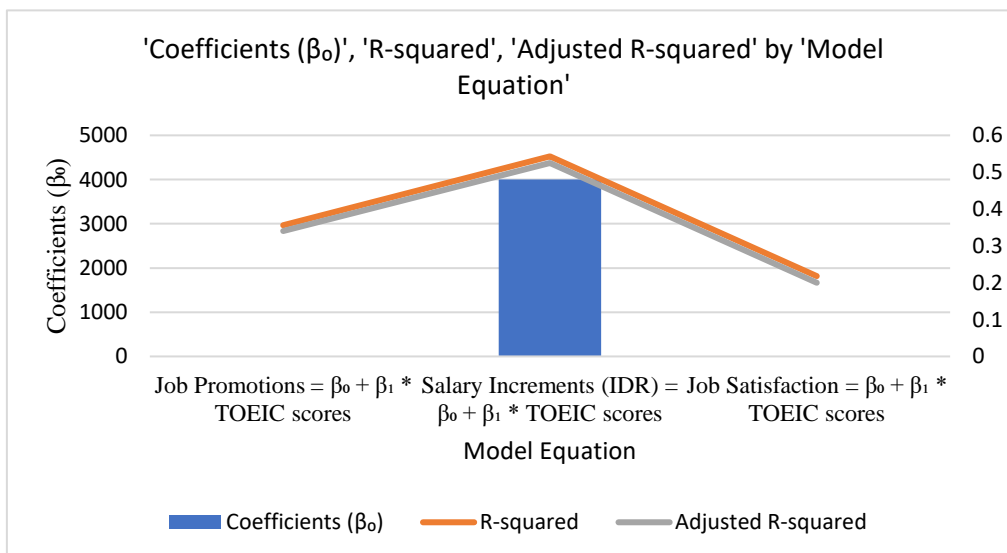


Figure 3. 'Model Equation' of 'Coefficients ( $\beta_0$ )', 'R-squared', 'Adjusted R-squared'

The adjusted R-squared value considers the number of independent variables and the sample size, providing a more reliable estimate of the model's explanatory power. It changes for potential overfitting of the model. The p-value indicates the statistical significance of the coefficient ( $\beta_1$ ). A p-

value below a certain threshold (e.g., 0.05) suggests that the relationship between TOEIC scores and the dependent variable is statistically significant.

Table 3. The Result Table of Thematic Data Analysis: English Language Skills and Career Development

Theme	Subtheme	Definition	Sample Responses
English Language Skills and Career Development	Impact of English Language Skills on Job Performance	This subtheme explores how English language skills, assessed through TOEIC scores, impact job performance and effectiveness.	<i>Improving my English language skills has directly impacted my job performance. With a higher TOEIC score, I can effectively communicate with clients and colleagues, resulting in increased productivity and successful project outcomes."</i>
	English Language Skills in Professional Networking	This subtheme examines how English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC performance, contribute to professional networking and relationship building.	<i>Strong English language skills assessed through TOEIC scores have been instrumental in building a professional network. It has enabled me to connect with industry experts, attend international conferences, and engage in meaningful conversations that have opened doors to new opportunities.</i>
	English Language Skills and Cross-Cultural Collaboration	This sub-theme focuses on the impact of English language skills on effective cross-cultural collaboration, as assessed by TOEIC scores.	<i>"In my cross-cultural collaboration role, strong English language skills assessed through TOEIC scores have been essential. It allows me to bridge cultural gaps, understand diverse perspectives, and work seamlessly with colleagues from different backgrounds, leading to successful teamwork and project outcomes.</i>
English Language Skills and Professional Growth	Language Skills as a Catalyst for Professional Growth	This subtheme explores how English language skills catalyze professional growth as assessed through TOEIC performance.	<i>Acquiring and improving English language skills assessed through TOEIC scores has catalyzed my professional growth. It has expanded my horizons, given me access to global resources, and provided opportunities for career advancement in international organizations.</i>
	Continuing Professional Development	This subtheme focuses on how English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC scores, contribute to ongoing professional development.	<i>"Maintaining and improving English language skills is crucial for my professional development. By assessing my proficiency through TOEIC scores, I can identify areas for improvement, participate in targeted language training, and stay ahead in a competitive global job market.</i>

The thematic analysis findings indicate that English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC scores, significantly impact various aspects of career development. The analysis revealed several key themes related to the influence of English language skills on job performance, professional networking, cross-cultural collaboration, and professional growth. Participants reported that improving their English language skills positively affected their job performance by enhancing their ability to effectively communicate with clients and colleagues, leading to increased productivity and successful project outcomes. They also highlighted the importance of English language skills in building professional networks, attending international conferences, and engaging in meaningful conversations that opened doors to new opportunities. Furthermore, participants emphasized that strong English language skills were crucial for effective cross-cultural collaboration, allowing them to bridge cultural gaps, understand diverse perspectives, and work seamlessly with colleagues from different backgrounds. Additionally, acquiring and improving English language skills were seen as catalysts for professional growth, expanding horizons, providing access to global resources, and creating opportunities for career advancement in international organizations.

**Research Question: What are the specific challenges individuals with varying levels of English language skills and TOEIC performance face in achieving career development and transitioning from proficiency to professionalism?**

The dataset consisted of individuals with different levels of English language skills, as assessed by their TOEIC performance. Through the data analysis process, key themes and patterns emerged, revealing the specific obstacles and difficulties faced by individuals with varying levels of English language proficiency and TOEIC scores. This section presents the results and discussions from the data analysis, presenting the unique challenges that participants encountered as they strived to achieve career development and transition into professional roles.

Table 4. The descriptive statistics for variables related to Career Development Indicators (n:75)

Career Development Indicators					
Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median	25th Percentile	75th percentile
Skill Acquisition or Certifications	1.3	0.5	1	1	2
Increased Responsibilities	3.9	0.8	4	3.5	4.5
Expanded Job Scope	3.7	0.9	3.5	3	4.5

Table 5. The descriptive statistics for variables related to the Transition to Professionalism Indicators (n:75)

Transition to Professionalism Indicators					
Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median	25th Percentile	75th percentile
Demonstrating Ethical Conduct	4.2	0.8	4.3	3.8	4.8
Effective Communication	4.5	0.9	4.6	4.0	5.2
Leadership Abilities	3.9	0.7	4.0	3.5	4.3
Problem-Solving Skills	4.1	0.6	4.2	3.8	4.5
Adaptability	4.3	0.7	4.4	4.0	4.8
Commitment to Continuous Learning	4.6	0.9	4.7	4.1	5.2



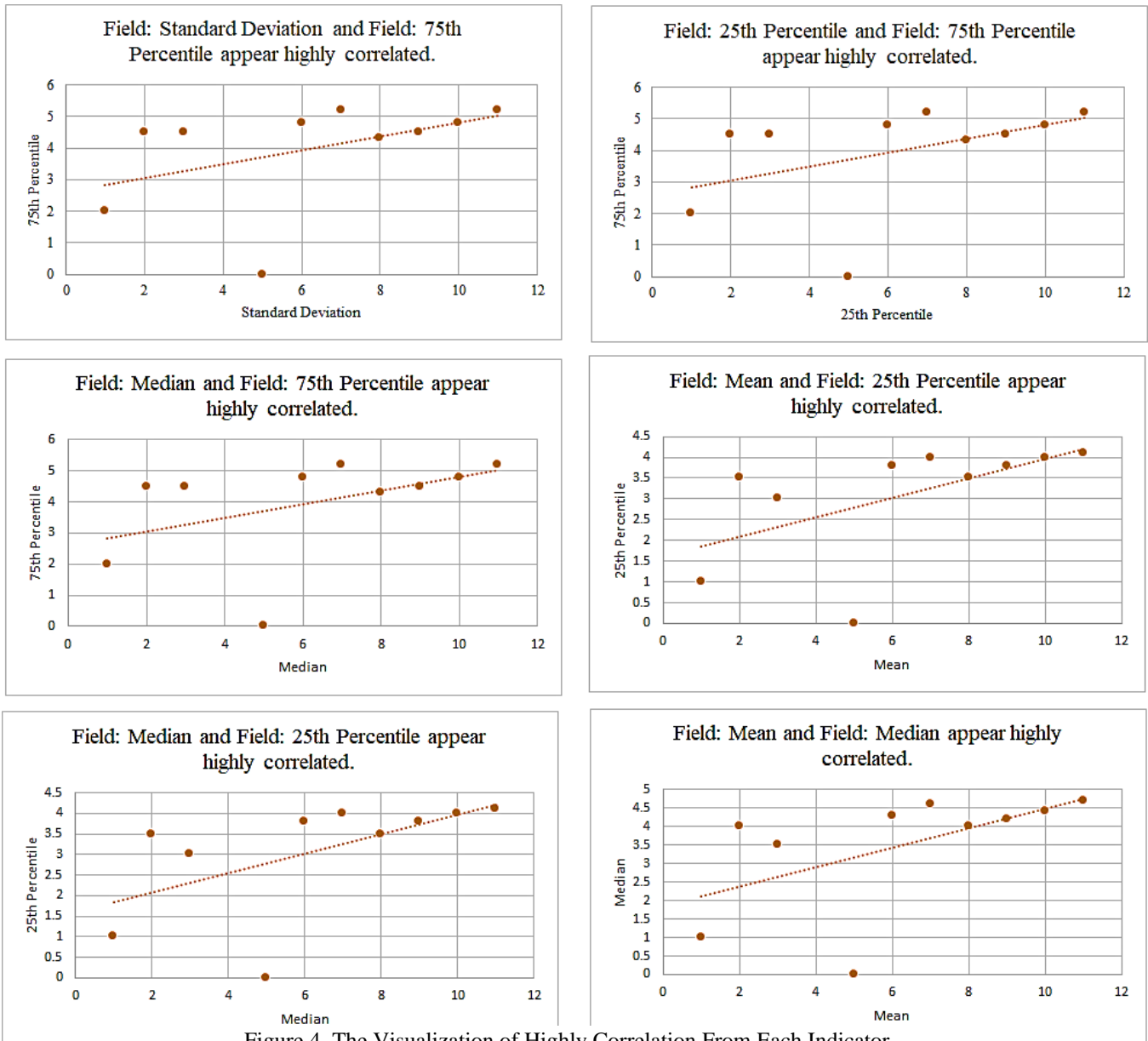


Figure 4. The Visualization of Highly Correlation From Each Indicator

On average, individuals have relatively low skill acquisition or certifications (mean: 1.3). This suggests that most individuals in the sample have a limited number of acquired skills or credentials. The standard deviation of 0.5 indicates little variability in the data, and most individuals fall within this range. Respondents experience a relatively high level of increased responsibilities (mean: 3.9). This indicates that individuals in the sample have been entrusted with more responsibilities in their roles. The standard deviation of 0.8 suggests that there is some variability in the data, with some individuals having more significant increases in duties than others. They experience a moderate level of expanded job scope (mean: 3.7). This means that individuals have witnessed some expansion in their job responsibilities or the breadth of their roles. The standard deviation of 0.9 implies variability in the extent of this expansion among individuals. Transition to Professionalism: The transition to professionalism is assessed through various indicators, including demonstrating ethical conduct, effective communication, leadership abilities, problem-solving skills, adaptability, and commitment to continuous learning. The mean scores for these indicators suggest that, on average, individuals exhibit positive traits related to professionalism. Respondents tend to demonstrate ethical conduct (mean: 4.2), effective communication (mean: 4.5), and commitment to continuous learning (mean: 4.6). The standard deviations indicate some variability in these indicators, reflecting different levels among

individuals. The median, 25th percentile, and 75th percentile values provide a sense of the distribution and show where most individuals fall within these indicators.

Table 6. Thematic Analysis Result challenges faced by individuals and TOEIC performance in achieving career development

Theme	Subtheme	Definition	Sample Responses
Challenges Faced by Individuals with Varying Levels of English Language Skills	Limited Job Opportunities	Individuals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may face limited job opportunities, particularly in roles requiring solid English communication.	<i>"Due to my lower TOEIC scores, I have faced difficulties securing job opportunities requiring strong English communication skills. It has been a barrier to my career growth."</i>
	Communication Barriers	Limited English language skills or low TOEIC scores can present communication barriers in professional settings, hindering effective collaboration and professional relationships.	<i>"With my limited English language skills, I often face communication barriers in professional settings, leading to miscommunication and challenges in collaborating with team members."</i>
	Difficulty Advancing in the Workplace	Due to communication, networking, and leading limitations, individuals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may experience challenges in advancing their careers.	<i>"My lower TOEIC scores have been a hindrance in progressing in my career. It has affected my chances of being considered for promotions and taking on more challenging roles."</i>
	Lack of Professional Recognition	Professionals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may lack recognition for their expertise and abilities, impacting their professional growth and opportunities.	<i>"Despite my efforts to improve my English language skills, I still lack professional recognition. It hinders my ability to showcase my abilities and expertise."</i>
	Limited Access to Global Opportunities	Individuals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may have limited access to global job opportunities and face challenges working in international or multicultural settings.	<i>"I have missed out on various global opportunities due to my lower English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC performance. It has restricted my ability to work on diverse projects and collaborate with professionals from different countries."</i>
TOEIC Performance in Career Development and Professionalism	Difficulty in Building Professional Networks	Professionals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may face challenges in building and expanding professional networks, limiting career growth and development.	<i>"I have faced difficulties expanding my professional network, mainly because of my lower English language skills. It has limited my ability to connect with industry experts and potential mentors."</i>
	Hindered Professional Development and Skill Enhancement	Limited English language skills or lower TOEIC scores may impede professionals from accessing advanced training, skill enhancement programs, and professional development opportunities.	<i>"Improving my English language skills is crucial for my professional development, but with lower TOEIC scores, I have found it challenging to participate in skill"</i>

		<i>enhancement programs and acquire new competencies."</i>
Cultural Adaptation Challenges	Individuals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may face difficulties adapting to different cultures, impacting their ability to work effectively in diverse environments.	<i>"I have experienced difficulties adjusting to different cultures in professional settings, as my lower English language skills make it harder to understand cultural nuances and effectively communicate with colleagues from different backgrounds."</i>
Professional Confidence and Self-Esteem	Professionals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores may experience lower confidence and self-esteem, affecting their ability to assert themselves and showcase their expertise.	<i>"I struggle with low self-confidence professionally due to my limited English language skills. It affects my ability to present my expertise and showcase my capabilities."</i>

The thematic analysis findings shed light on the challenges individuals with varying levels of English language skills and TOEIC performance face in achieving career development and transitioning to professionalism. The analysis revealed several key themes. Firstly, individuals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores encountered limited job opportunities, particularly in roles requiring solid English communication. Communication barriers were also significant, hindering effective collaboration and professional relationships. Moreover, professionals with lower language skills faced difficulties advancing in the workplace, which impacted their career progression. Additionally, limited professional recognition and limited access to global opportunities were found to be consequences of lower language proficiency. On the other hand, TOEIC performance also influenced career development and professionalism. Difficulties in building professional networks hindered professional development and skill enhancement, cultural adaptation challenges, and lower professional confidence and self-esteem were reported by individuals with more inadequate English language skills or TOEIC scores. These findings highlight the multifaceted impact of language proficiency and TOEIC performance on various aspects of career development and professionalism, emphasizing the importance of addressing these challenges to support individuals in their career journeys.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Individuals with varying levels of English language skills and TOEIC performance encounter specific challenges in achieving career development and transitioning from proficiency to professionalism. These challenges arise due to the critical role of English language proficiency in the globalized professional landscape, where effective communication and cross-cultural competence are paramount [30]. According to Table 4, Individuals with lower English language skills and TOEIC performance may face challenges in acquiring additional skills or certifications. Limited language proficiency can hinder their ability to access training programs and resources conducted in English. For the Career Development Indicators, the mean scores suggest that the participants perceived a relatively low level of Skill Acquisition or Certifications (mean = 1.3), while the scores for Increased Responsibilities (mean = 3.9) and Expanded Job Scope (mean = 3.7) indicate a moderate level of these indicators. The standard deviations reveal some response variability, suggesting differing participant perspectives. By analyzing the challenges individuals face across proficiency levels, insight into the complexities of career development and the transition to professionalism [31].

For individuals with lower English language skills and TOEIC performance, the primary challenge is overcoming linguistic barriers that hinder effective communication and limit their professional opportunities. According to Table 5, the mean scores indicate a relatively high level of Demonstrating Ethical Conduct (mean = 4.2), Effective Communication (mean = 4.5), and Adaptability (mean = 4.3). The scores for Leadership Abilities (mean = 3.9), Problem-Solving Skills (mean = 4.1), and Commitment to Continuous Learning (mean = 4.6) suggest a moderate level of these indicators. Limited language proficiency may impede their ability to convey ideas, understand complex

instructions, and engage in meaningful discussions with colleagues and clients [32]. While their language skills enable effective communication, they must develop other competencies, such as communication abilities and problem-solving skills, to handle the increased workload and responsibilities effectively. As a result, these individuals may struggle to build professional relationships, expand their networks, and demonstrate their knowledge and skills to advance in their careers [33]. Those with lower proficiency may struggle to comprehend complex instructions, collaborate with diverse colleagues, and adapt to new tasks requiring advanced language skills

Furthermore, individuals with lower English language proficiency may face challenges accessing global resources, such as industry publications, research papers, and professional development opportunities available only in English. The language barrier can hinder their ability to stay updated with industry trends, acquire new knowledge, and engage in continuous learning—essential professional growth components [34]. English language skills and TOEIC performance play a crucial role in these areas. Individuals with lower proficiency may face challenges in showcasing effective communication skills and demonstrating their professionalism [35]. In comparison, those with higher proficiency must guard against complacency and continue developing other essential professional competencies. Based on Table 6, individuals with higher levels of English language skills and superior TOEIC performance also face unique challenges. While they may possess the linguistic abilities required for effective communication, other factors come into play. These individuals might encounter heightened expectations as their language skills set higher performance standards. Consequently, they may face additional pressure to excel in their roles and deliver exceptional results, leveraging their advanced English language proficiency to their advantage.

However, a potential challenge for highly proficient English speakers is the risk of complacency. They may become overly reliant on their language skills and overlook the development of other crucial professional competencies. For instance, They might neglect to enhance their leadership abilities, adaptability, or problem-solving skills, assuming that solid English communication alone guarantees career success [36]. Such complacency can hinder their holistic professional development and limit their potential for career advancement. Individuals at different proficiency levels can employ specific strategies to address these challenges. Those with lower English language skills can invest in language training, participate in language exchange programs, and engage in immersive language learning experiences to improve their proficiency. Additionally, they can seek mentorship or guidance from professionals with solid language skills to navigate language-related challenges. Conversely, individuals with higher English language proficiency should focus on developing a well-rounded skill set. They can channel their linguistic advantage to enhance further their leadership abilities, problem-solving skills, and adaptability. Engaging in professional development programs, pursuing advanced degrees, and seeking opportunities to work in diverse cultural settings can help them overcome potential complacency and continue their professional growth.

## 5. Conclusion

This study aimed to assess the impact of English language skills and TOEIC performance on career development and the challenges faced by individuals with varying levels of English language skills and TOEIC performance in achieving career development and transitioning from proficiency to professionalism. The findings revealed that English language skills, as assessed by TOEIC performance, play a crucial role in career development and the transition to professionalism. Participants reported that improving their English language skills directly impacted job performance, effective communication, professional networking, and cross-cultural collaboration. The study found that, as indicated by TOEIC scores, individuals with higher English language skills experienced more tremendous success in their career development journey. They reported that their improved language proficiency enabled them to effectively communicate with clients and colleagues, resulting in increased productivity and successful project outcomes.

Additionally, the study identified specific challenges faced by individuals with lower English language skills or TOEIC scores, including limited job opportunities, communication barriers, difficulty advancing in the workplace, lack of professional recognition, and limited access to global opportunities. These findings underscore the significance of English language proficiency and TOEIC performance in achieving career success and highlight the need for individuals to address these challenges through language skill enhancement programs, cultural adaptation strategies, and professional development opportunities. Ultimately, the results emphasize the practical implications of investing in English language skill development for individuals' career growth and transitioning from proficiency to professionalism in today's globalized professional landscape.

## 6. References

- [1] S.-H. Ting, E. Marzuki, K.-M. Chuah, J. Misieng, and C. Jerome, "Employers' views on the importance of English proficiency and communication skill for employability in Malaysia," *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 315–327, 2017.
- [2] A. N. Syafiq, A. Rahmawati, A. Anwari, and T. Oktaviana, "Increasing speaking skill through YouTube video as English learning material during online learning in pandemic covid-19," *Elsya: Journal of English Language Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 50–55, 2021.
- [3] J. Wudthayagorn, "An exploration of the English exit examination policy in Thai public universities," *Lang Assess Q*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 107–123, 2022.
- [4] G.-H. Im and L. Cheng, "The test of English for international communication (TOEIC®)," *Language Testing*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 315–324, 2019.
- [5] S. J. Savignon, "Communicative competence," *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching*, pp. 1–7, 2018.
- [6] U. A. Jabbarov, "Significance of Foreign Pedagogical Experience in Preparing English Language Teachers," *Eastern European Scientific Journal*, no. 2, 2018.
- [7] P. И. Назаров, "THE IMPORTANCE OF PAIR WORK AND GROUP WORK ACTIVITIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES," *МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ЖУРНАЛ ИСКУССТВО СЛОВА*, vol. 4, no. 1–1, 2021.
- [8] T. A. Berdahl and J. B. Kirby, "Patient-provider communication disparities by limited English proficiency (LEP): trends from the US Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, 2006–2015," *J Gen Intern Med*, vol. 34, no. 8, pp. 1434–1440, 2019.
- [9] P. S. Rao, "The importance of speaking skills in English classrooms," *Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal (ACIELJ)*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 6–18, 2019.
- [10] I. T. Rustamov and Z. X. Mamaziyayev, "Development of speaking comprehension in teaching foreign language for professional purposes," *Asian J Res Soc Sci Humanit*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 227–233, 2022.
- [11] B. Koo, J. Yu, B.-L. Chua, S. Lee, and H. Han, "Relationships among emotional and material rewards, job satisfaction, burnout, affective commitment, job performance, and turnover intention in the hotel industry," *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 371–401, 2020.
- [12] V. Peltokorpi, "The 'language' of career success: The effects of English language competence on local employees' career outcomes in foreign subsidiaries," *J Int Bus Stud*, vol. 54, no. 2, pp. 258–284, 2023.
- [13] S. Phothongsunan, "EFL university teachers' professional development in the Thai context," *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Volume*, vol. 9, 2018.
- [14] S. Nesaratnam, W. H. W. Salleh, Y. Von Foo, and W. Hisham, "Enhancing English proficiency and communication skills among Malaysian graduates through training and coaching," *International Journal of Learning and Development*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 1–12, 2020.
- [15] J. Schmidgall, M. E. Oliveri, T. Duke, and E. Carter Grissom, "Justifying the construct definition for a new language proficiency assessment: The redesigned TOEIC Bridge® tests—Framework paper," *ETS Research Report Series*, vol. 2019, no. 1, pp. 1–20, 2019.
- [16] G.-H. Im and L. Cheng, "The test of English for international communication (TOEIC®)," *Language Testing*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 315–324, 2019.
- [17] J. Schmidgall, J. Cid, E. Carter Grissom, and L. Li, "Making the Case for the Quality and Use of a New Language Proficiency Assessment: Validity Argument for the Redesigned TOEIC Bridge® Tests," *ETS Research Report Series*, vol. 2021, no. 1, pp. 1–22, 2021.
- [18] N. Sirikanjanawong and P. Wasanasomsithi, "Relationship between the ICAO language proficiency requirements (LPRs) and test of English for international communication (TOEIC) scores of flight attendants in Thailand," *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 64–86, 2018.
- [19] I. Ulya, "Macro Curriculum Analysis on Writing for Professional Context Standardized by CEFR based on the Characteristic of Pekalongan the World Creative City," *JELLE: Journal Of English Literature, Linguistics, and Education*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2020.
- [20] J. O. Kim, "Ongoing speaking anxiety of Korean EFL learners: Case study of a TOEIC intensive program," *Journal of Asia TEFL*, vol. 15, no. 1, p. 17, 2018.
- [21] M. T. Apple, J. Falout, and G. Hill, "The relationship between future career self images and English achievement test scores of Japanese STEM students," *IEEE Trans Prof Commun*, vol. 63, no. 4, pp. 372–385, 2020.

- [22] H. Rose, S. Curle, I. Aizawa, and G. Thompson, "What drives success in English medium taught courses? The interplay between language proficiency, academic skills, and motivation," *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 45, no. 11, pp. 2149–2161, 2020.
- [23] A. Clement and T. Murugavel, "English for the workplace: The importance of English language skills for effective performance," *The English Classroom*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 1–15, 2018.
- [24] M. A. Chen and G. Hwang, "Effects of a concept mapping-based flipped learning approach on EFL students' English speaking performance, critical thinking awareness and speaking anxiety," *British Journal of Educational Technology*, vol. 51, no. 3, pp. 817–834, 2020.
- [25] D. R. Cormier, "Assessing preservice teachers' cultural competence with the cultural proficiency continuum Q-sort," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 17–29, 2021.
- [26] R. R. F. Sinaga and R. Pustika, "Exploring STUDENTS' ATTITUDE towards English online learning using moodle during COVID-19 pandemic at smk yadika bandarlampung," *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 8–15, 2021.
- [27] D. E. Powers and A. Powers, "The incremental contribution of TOEIC® Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing tests to predicting performance on real-life English language tasks," *Language Testing*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 151–167, 2015.
- [28] I. Aizawa, H. Rose, G. Thompson, and S. Curle, "Beyond the threshold: Exploring English language proficiency, linguistic challenges, and academic language skills of Japanese students in an English medium instruction programme," *Language Teaching Research*, p. 1362168820965510, 2020.
- [29] B. R. Utami and A. Y. Wahyudin, "DOES SELF-ESTEEM INFLUENCE STUDENT ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST SCORES?," *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 16–20, 2022.
- [30] A. Syzenko and Y. Diachkova, "Building Cross-Cultural Competence in a Foreign Language through Technology-Enhanced Project-Based Learning. Amazonia Investiga, 9 (27)." 2020.
- [31] J. Schmidgall and D. E. Powers, "Predicting communicative effectiveness in the international workplace: Support for TOEIC® Speaking test scores from linguistic laypersons," *Language Testing*, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 302–325, 2021.
- [32] S. Boylen, S. Cherian, F. J. Gill, G. D. Leslie, and S. Wilson, "Impact of professional interpreters on outcomes for hospitalized children from migrant and refugee families with limited English proficiency: a systematic review," *JBI Evid Synth*, vol. 18, no. 7, pp. 1360–1388, 2020.
- [33] A. Yehekel and S. Rawal, "Exploring the 'patient experience' of individuals with limited English proficiency: A scoping review," *J Immigr Minor Health*, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 853–878, 2019.
- [34] S. Yu and I. Lee, "Understanding the role of learners with low English language proficiency in peer feedback of second language writing," *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 2, pp. 483–494, 2016.
- [35] A. M. M. Al Nakhalah, "Problems and difficulties of speaking that encounter English language students at Al Quds Open University," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, vol. 5, no. 12, pp. 96–101, 2016.
- [36] R. Lilia and T. Elena, "Skills and competencies in higher education and beyond," *Journal of Language and Education*, vol. 5, no. 4 (20), pp. 4–8, 2019.