

## **Iraqi EFL Pre-service Teachers' Awareness of Using Soft Skills for Their Career Development**

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### **Abstract**

The current study makes a survey of the significance of soft skills in students' lives both at and after college. It discusses how soft skills complement professional's skills, which are the requirements of a job the student is prepared to do. The study urges instructors to assume extraordinary liability with respect to soft-skills, because during the students' university time , instructors have major impact on improving their students' soft skills. Soft skills satisfy an essential part in shaping the students' personality.

The study is an attempt to assess the Iraqi EFL pre-service teachers' awareness of using soft skills in developing their career, thus the study aims at :

1-Assessing Iraqi EFL pre-service teachers' awareness of using soft skills in developing their career.

2-Finding out the differences among the domains of soft skills.

Two hypotheses have been tested as follows:

1-Iraqi EFL pre-service teachers , have an awareness of using soft skills in developing their career.

2-There are no significant differences among the domains of soft skills.

The random sample of the study consists of 132 students from the four academic stages of the Department of English at the college of Education for Humanities / University of Diyala for the academic year (2014-2015).

Four domains of soft skills, namely ; interpersonal skills; personal skills; self-management skills and communication skills are concerned.

In order to achieve the aims of the study and to test its hypotheses , a questionnaire is constructed to measure the EFL college students' awareness of using soft skills. The questionnaire covers eight scales that contain (36) items which are measured using a five \_points Likert - type scale anchored by 1=Never to 5= Always measure the following four domains ; interpersonal skills(7) items, personal skills (8) items. Communication skills (14) items, and self-management skills (7) items.

The questionnaire is exposed to a jury of experts for the purpose of ascertaining its validity. Two methods are applied to calculate the questionnaire reliability coefficient.

The results of the study have revealed that :

1. Iraqi EFL pre-service teachers have an awareness for their career development .
2. Based on the four domains in the questionnaire , students share the same opinions which is the domain "personal skill" which is received the first interest according to others. While the domain of" self-management skill" is received the lowest one as the following ; personal skill is received (W.M. =3.68 , W.P.=73.6%). While , self-management is received (W.M.=3.55 ,W.P.=71.17%)
3. In the light of the students' responses, the results of the study showed that dissatisfaction in some soft skills competency indicates that students communicate with people whose intellectual level is lower than them, also students' decisions are affected by others' social appearance.

In the light of the results obtained, a number of recommendations are put forward.

## وعي طلبة الجامعة العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية لاستعمال مهاراتهم الشخصية في تطوير حياتهم المهنية

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### المستخلص

تقوم الدراسة الحالية بإجراء دراسة استقصائية لأهمية المهارات الشخصية في حياة الطلاب اثناء وبعد الدراسة الجامعية والتي هي من ضرورات عمل الطالب الجامعي للقيام بالعمل المعد له. يحث البحث المدرسين على تحمل مسؤولية غير عادية فيما يتعلق بالمهارات الشخصية ، لما للمدرسين من تأثير كبير على النهوض بالمهارات الشخصية للطلاب. والمهارات الشخصية تلبي جزءا اساسيا في تشكيل شخصية الطلاب.

هذا البحث هو محاوله لتقييم وعي طلبة الجامعة العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مرحلة ما قبل الخدمة باستخدام المهارات الشخصية في تطوير حياتهم المهنية ، وبالتالي تهدف الدراسة إلى:

١-تقييم وعي طلبة الجامعة العراقيين متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية باستخدام المهارات الشخصية في تطوير حياتهم المهنية.

٢ - معرفة الاختلافات بين مجالات المهارات الشخصية.

تم اختبار فرضيتين على النحو التالي:

١-طلبة الجامعة العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية ، ليسوا على وعي بالمهارات الشخصية في تطوير حياتهم المهنية.

٢-لا توجد فروقات مهمة بين مجالات المهارات الشخصية.

شملت العينة العشوائية للبحث ١٣٢ طالبًا من المراحل الأكاديمية الأربعة لقسم اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية / جامعة ديالى للعام الدراسي (٢٠١٤-٢٠١٥).

أربعة مجالات من المهارات الشخصية ، اي : مهارات التعامل مع الآخرين ، مهارات شخصية، مهارات الإدارة الذاتية ومهارات التواصل. هي المعنية .

من أجل تحقيق أهداف الدراسة واختبار فرضياتها ، تم تصميم استبيان لقياس وعي طلبة الجامعة العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الإنجليزية لغة اجنبية. حيث يغطي الاستبيان ثمانية مجالات تحتوي على (٣٦) عنصراً تم قياسها باستخدام مقياس ليكرت الخماسي والذي يبدأ =١ ابدأ وينتهي ب =٥ دائما لقياس المجالات الأربعة التالية: المهارات الشخصية (٧) عناصر ، المهارات الشخصية (٨) عناصر. مهارات الاتصال (١٤) مادة ، ومهارات الإدارة الذاتية (٧) عناصر.

وقد تم عرض الاستبيان الى لجنة تحكيم من الخبراء لغرض التأكد من صلاحيتها من خلال الصدق الظاهري. وقد استعملت طريقتين لحساب معامل ثبات الاستبيان. وقد كشفت نتائج الدراسة ان:

١- طلبة الجامعة العراقيين الدارسين اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية لديهم وعي بالمهارات الشخصية في تطوير حياتهم المهنية .

٢- واستناداً إلى المجالات الأربعة في الاستبيان ، يشارك الطلاب نفس الآراء حول مجال "المهارة الشخصية" حصل على المرتبة الأولى وفقاً لباقي المجالات. في حين أن "مهارة الإدارة الذاتية" حصل على ادنى تقدير على النحو التالي ؛ حصل مجال المهارات الشخصية على وسط حسابي مرجح قدره (٣،٦٨) ، وعلى وزن منوي قدره (٧٣،٦ %). في حين حصل مجال الإدارة الذاتية على وسط حسابي مرجح قدره (٣،٥٥) وعلى وزن منوي قدره (٧١،١٧ %).

٣- أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن عدم الرضا في بعض كفاءات المهارات الشخصية يشير إلى أن الطلاب يتواصلون مع الأشخاص الذين يكون مستوى تفكيرهم أقل منهم ، كما أن قرارات الطلاب تتأثر بالمظهر الاجتماعي للآخرين. وفي ضوء تحليل النتائج المستخلصة من خلال اجراءات هذه الدراسة عدة توصيات ذات العلاقة قدمت

## Introduction

### 1.1 The Problem and its significance

For quite a long time instructors often complain about the lack of soft skills among students graduates from tertiary education institutions. often, the missed skills are communication skill ,but additional knowledge in business or project management is also ranking highly on the list of missing skills attractive for graduates entering the business world. The problem is in no way limited to developing different nations. A late objection in such manner originated from the British Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR), which lately announced that "Employers say that many graduates lack 'soft skills' such as 'team working' and 'They go on to explain that candidates are normally academically proficient but lacking in soft skills such as communication as well as verbal and numerical reasoning ." (NAWA Journal of Language and Communication, 2007:146).

Ihsen (2003:80) states that obvious reasons are that non-scientific academic programs in general put more emphasis onto soft skills, or they are themselves by nature very soft skills

related. Thus, the researchers believe that, by teaching these soft skills, educators have the opportunity to add significant value to their students' learning.

To the best of researcher's knowledge, this topic has not been investigated before ,thus, the need arises to carry out a scientific study of this problem to arrive at conclusions and suggestions for this problem.

## **1.2 The Aims**

The study aims at:

- 1- Assessing EFL pre-service teachers' awareness of using soft skills in developing their career.
- 2- Finding out the differences among the domains of soft skills.

## **1.3 The Hypothesis**

It is hypothesized that:

- 1- EFL pre-service teachers are not aware of using soft skills in developing their career.
- 2- There are no significant differences among the domain of soft skills.

## **1.4 Limits of the Study**

The current study is limited to:

- 1- The sample study is limited to EFL college students' of the fourth stage at the College of Education for Humanities, University of Diyala for the academic year (2014-2015).
- 2- Four domains of soft skills, namely ;interpersonal skills , personal skills , self-management skills and communication skills are concerned.

## **1.5 Definition of Basic Terms**

### **1.5.1 Awareness**

Johnson (2001:243) defines awareness as the deliberate attempts to draw the teacher or the learner attention specifically to the formal properties of the target language.

“Awareness is the state or ability to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects or sensory patterns.” (Hayes 2002:1)

### **1.5.2 Soft skills**

They are desirable qualities for certain forms of communications that do not depend on acquired knowledge: they include common sense, the ability to deal with people, and positive flexible attitude . (Collins English Dictionary, 2012)

#### **Operational definition:**

It means checking the interpersonal skills, personal skills , self-management skills and communication skills that marks to varying degrees for EFL college students.

### **2.1 Defining soft skills**

According to Ezhilan and Renuga (2013:34) “Soft skills are those critical to an employee’s ability to work smarter and deal with people at the emotional level”.

A wide meaning of life skills is: aptitudes or capacities people need keeping in mind the end goal to mark progress in life, inside the connection of their socio-social environment . (Binkley et al.,2005:51)

Ones characterize soft skills as intra-and inter-personal (socio-emotional) abilities, crucial for self-improvement, social support and working environment achievement. They incorporate aptitudes, for example, correspondence, capacity to deal multidisciplinary groups, flexibility and so on. These aptitudes should be recognized from specialized, or “hard skills”. Ones describe them as “skills” with a specific end goal to accentuate the way that they can be learned/created by reasonable preparing endeavors, and the can likewise be joined, towards the accomplishment of complex results. (Kechagias,2011: 33).

Soft skills are sometimes broken down into the following;

**1-Personal attributes**, can be divided into: communication skills, project management skills, presentation skills, creativity, problem-solving skills, team work skills, optimism, common sense, responsibility, A sense of humor, Integrity, Time-management and Motivation.

**2-Inerpersonal abilities**, can be divided into: Empathy, Leadership, Communication, Good manners, Sociability, The ability to teach, Willingness to learn, Teamwork and cooperation, Passion and optimism, Time management, Self-motivation and self-direction, Decision-making, Problem-solving, Leadership, Critical thinking skills, and Small groups discussions.(ibid:35)

## **2.2 The Importance of Soft Skills**

A suitable soft skills play an important role in a successful career as well as during social interactions in the society. Due to an assortment of factors, nowadays business environment is becoming more complex, uncertain and competitive. Most employers are likely to hire, retain, having effective communication, self-directed, willing to work and learn, and having positive attitude. Employers usually prefer to see a fine blend of competencies in their staff and, in addition to discipline-based knowledge and skills, adequate levels of soft skills are considered desirable for moving forward in the career. (Majid et al., 2012:1)

## **2.3 Soft Skills Versus Hard Skills**

Hard skills are tangible skills that are easy to teach, identify, and measure. Some examples of hard skills are occupational skills such as technical and administrative; Hard skills also include your degrees, certifications, job titles.

Whereas, soft skills are intangible interpersonal skills that are associated with an individual's ability to effectively interact with others. These skills are not easy to measure but they can be observed in individuals who possess the ability to interact with people well. (<https://ar.wikipedia.org>.)

## **2.4 Aspects of Soft Skills**

### **2.4.1 Personal Skills**

The personal skills drive and persuade understudies, they rouse understudies to succeed and keep them inspired until the employment is finished. Personal skills are key aptitudes for achievement and must be comprehended and practiced for a positive improvement in a work and social life. (Kechagias,2011:2-54)

Moreover, the personal skills help in arrange instructive or self-awareness encounters that will help with creating or improving one of a kind potential as a person and in addition a contributing individual from association. Personal skills are variable and are fit for long lasting learning and positive development. (Ibid)

### **2.4.2 Communication Skills**

Communication is the workmanship and procedure of making and sharing thoughts. Successful communication relies on upon the abundance of those thoughts . In this way communication is not unimportant talking or listening, it goes beyond that.

However the level of expertise required for viable communication to happen, contradict the straightforwardness of this definition. In the wake of the analyzing studies including many substantial associations, (Goleman, 1997), inferred that high level of individual accomplishment at work was described by ‘emotional intelligence’, or abilities of social awareness and communication. ([www.practicedbasedlearning.org](http://www.practicedbasedlearning.org)).

Owen (1997:11) mentions that communication skills variable and learnable, so it must be learned and examined on a persistent premise. A portion of the approaches to enhance communication skills, control scare, put consider the message, increment one’s vocabulary, request criticism, make eye contact, plan to pay attention, communication on the speaker and use mind mapping.



### **2.4.3 Interpersonal Skills**

Interpersonal skills are also known as people skills or communication skills. They are significant for good communications and for constructive associations with partners. Interpersonal aptitudes help understudies in viable communication. So they can be interface effortlessly with individuals; in listening, talking and positive non-verbal communication. Students can effectively take an interest in gathering and care group choices. Interpersonal aptitudes help understudies to have a general inspirational which one need keeping in mind the end goal to discuss adequately with someone else or a group of individuals. (Rungapadiachy,1999:193)

Anderson and Lynch (1988:64) propose that procedures of dynamic understanding are required in powerful listening. The fruitful audience must elicit meaning for the message they have received with a specific end goal to deliver an intelligent translation of what has been said. So as to accomplish this level of comprehension, it is expected that audience members must have an eagerness and capacity to understand the speaker. (Rost,2002:89)

### **2.4.4 Self-management Skills**

Linman (2011:34) claims that self-management skills are the capacities which permit an understudy to feel more beneficial while doing day by day routine paying little heed to the workplace. A portion of the key-administration abilities are expressed below, for example;

1. Stress-resistance :The principal aptitude of self-management has a place with an individual capacity to oppose any distressing conditions. By building up this self-management aptitude, the mix-ups that individuals for the most part makes while being worried are being .
2. Problem solving : The self-management skills required utilizing mind as the hardest assignments and difficulties can be proficiently taken care of if the mental procedure in the head is

dependably in advancement. Problem solving requires operating facts and make right assumptions to analyze the situation, reviewing problems, and finding effective solution.

3. Time management: The time administration is a colossally imperative self-management which makes progress for understudies. Most understudies are confounded of time when they have abundant homework or troublesome ones, by learning them time management procedures they will have the capacity to beat these challenges.

([www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com))

## **The Procedures and Methodology**

### **3.1 The Population of the Study**

The population of the study consists of Iraqi EFL college students at English department , via College of Education-Ibn Rushid for Human Sciences/University of Baghdad , College of Education / University of Al-Mustansirya and College of Education- for Human Sciences / University of Diyala.

### **3.2 The Sample of the Study**

The selected sample of this study is stratified randomly chosen from English Department at College of Education for Humanities / University of Diyala, in which the total number at the four stages 610 of both sexes for the academic year (2014-2015). According to the purpose of the sample of this study. The sample is selected according to the percentage of each stage to the total number of the students. Therefore, the sample of the fourth stage includes 23 students. Nine students have been selected randomly as a pilot study for the sake of participation in the pilot administration of the questionnaire.(see table 1)

**Table (1)**  
**The Sample of the Study**

<b>Total number of students</b>	<b>610</b>
<b>Number of students at fourth stage</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Sample</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Pilot study</b>	<b>9</b>

### **3.3 Description of the Questionnaire**

In order to achieve the aims of this study and to assess its hypotheses, a questionnaire has been constructed for data gathering. The initial form of the questionnaire is divided into two parts, the first part involves a letter submitted to the group of English methodologists and Linguistics specialist asking them to give their notes and opinions about the items that are offered in the questionnaire by choosing one of two subscales that are (Agree or Disagree). While the second part of the questionnaire covers eight scales that contain (36) items which are measured using a five \_points Likert - type scale anchored by 1=Never to 5= Always measure. The following four domains are : interpersonal skills(7) items, personal skills (8) skills, communication skills (14) items and self-management skills (7) items.

### **3.4 The Validity of the Questionnaire**

Al-Juboury (2000:61) defines validity that is “a truth or degree to which a test measure that it claims to measure. When we give a test two questions must always be considered, what precisely does the test measure? And how well does the test measure?” The meaning of validity may be made clear by describing an invalid test.

Face validity is proved by exposing, i.e. the questionnaire to a jury of specialists. The jury of this research consists of number of instructors in the field language teaching methodology and linguistics at the University of Diyala /

College of Education for Humanities and College of Basic Education, College of Education- Ibn Rushed, University of Baghdad .(See Appendix 2)

In the light of the jury members' views and recommendations, some printing mistakes are avoided in the final form of the questionnaire.

To ensure the face validity of the items of the questionnaire the percentage of agreement is used. Thus, the jurors agreed on the items of the questionnaire as being appropriate for the aims of the study with a percentage of 91.80%.

### **3.5 The Pilot Administration of the Questionnaire**

This pilot administration has been conducted in order to:

- 1- Check the clarity of the instrument instruction,
- 2- Estimate the time allotted for answering the instruments, and,
- 3- Compute the reliability coefficient of the instrument, they are as following:
  - 1- A group of (9) students has been selected for the pilot administration of the questionnaire. (see table 2). This was on Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> , April, 2015.
  - 2- The student are asked to read the directions of the questionnaire by themselves.
  - 3- The time required for the participants to work out the questionnaire by computing the average length of the time is needed by participants for responding to the questionnaire, is found out to range between 25 to 35 minutes. So the average length of the time needed for answering the items of the questionnaire is 30 minutes.
  - 4- The same procedure has been followed to same group of students after week in order to respond to the questionnaire, so that every participant has to score on the serious ambiguity concerning the instruction of the instrument.

### **3.6 The Reliability of the Questionnaire**

Heaton (1975:155) believes that this kind of reliability method indicates the extent to which the same marks or scores are obtained if the same test sheets are marked or corrected by two or more different examiners or by the same examiner on different occasions.

Two methods are applied compute the reliability of the questionnaire:

- 1-Inter-rater reliability,
- 2-Test-retest reliability,

Inter-rater reliability coefficient has been assessed by using the person correlation Coefficient formula where it was found to be 0.81; which indicates acceptable reliability in educational research .(Hedges, 1966: 22)

In addition, test- retest reliability coefficient of the first and second administration of the questionnaire indicates 0.82 which is considered acceptable as well (ibid).

### **3.7 The Final Administration of the Questionnaire**

After achieving the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it has been administered at different days to the selected sample, starting from Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> , April. The researcher has explained the aim behind the instrument for the participants. Then, the participants answering sheets are collected by the researcher and then scored and tabulated in order to find out the final results.

### **3.8 The Questionnaire**

At the beginning of the final form of the questionnaire, students are asked to respond to all questions concerning. The first part contains the demographic questions which is focused on University, College, Department, Stage, gender, signature, and date.

While the second part of the questionnaire covers four domains that contain (36) items which are measured using a five

–point Like –type scale anchored by 1=Never Rarely= 2, Sometimes = 3, Usually=4 and 5=Always (See appendix 1).

## **Findings and Discussions**

### **4.1 Findings Related to the First Aim and the Verification of the first Null Hypothesis**

In order to check **Iraq EFL pre-service teacher’s awareness of using soft skills for their career development**, descriptive statistic are used to present data gathering above the current aim and its hypothesis, a questionnaire has been constructed and administered to the sample of the study as mentioned 'Section Three'.

These results will be presented according to the aforementioned aim of the present study by applying two statistical means that are weighted mean and weighted percentile to find out the awareness of pre-service teachers' in using soft skills for their career development.

So, the theoretical mean (3) in weighted mean, while the percentage in weighted percentile is (60%) i.e. the items is achieved at level (3) and percentage (60%) and above. So, it is found that weighted mean and weighted percentile for all the items of the questionnaire are received (W.M= 3.62) and (W.P=72.45)

Whereas, the most frequent soft skills which is known by the students at college level and has gain the highest rating item is number (13), which is “I can recognize that noisy environment makes communication difficult.” (WW. M.=.434, W.P. =86.8%). The lowest rating items is number (31), which says “ I can work with someone I don’t like” (W. M.= 2.21, W.P. =44.2%), which is ranked (36) in questionnaire. See table (2).

**Table (2)**

#### **Weighted Mean and Weighted Percentile for Soft Skills**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Weighted Percentile</b>
12	I can recognize that noisy environment makes	1	4.34	86.8%

	Communication difficult.			
9	While communicating with other person,I can figure Out that the absence of mind of the receiver could be a barrier in effective communication.	2	4.30	86%
30	I can admit my mistakes .	3	4.21	84.2%
26	I can avoid complaining .	4	4.17	83.4%
11	I can use different vocabularies which make communication effective.	5.5	4.08	81.6%
20	I can actively participate in groups without Dominating the discussion.	5.5	4.08	81.6%
12	I can identify that compatibility of environment,(temperature, seating , arrangement, surrounding audience) is a significant factor in communication .	8	4	80%
15	I can connect easily with people .	8	4	80%
17	I can make eye contact and have positive body language with those I am talking to .	8	4	80%
25	I can generally look on the bright side of things .	8	4	80%
7	I believe that negative attitude (rudeness, arrogance) of communicator is a big hurdle in effective communication .	11	3.95	79%
36	I can negotiate without emotions getting in the way .	12	3.91	78.2%
10	I think using proverbs & phrases for proofing	13	3.86	77.2%

	effective communication skills .			
3	I can recognize that non-verbal expressions also contribute in effective communication .	15	3.82	76.4%
28	I can drive by the sense of achievement /accomplishment .	15	3.82	76.4%
32	I can feel happy to follow instructions .	15	3.82	76.4%
18	I am generally optimistic, open-minded and have an overall positive attitude .	17	3.78	75.6%
34	I can disagree without being disagreeable .	18	3.73	74.6%
4	I can value that the level of education is a prominent factor in effective communication .	20	3.69	73.8%
22	I can know weaknesses and try to improve them .	20	3.69	73.8%
33	I can accept constructive criticism easily .	20	3.69	73.8%
16	I can take time to listen and show others that I am listening and understand their perspective .	22	3.60	72%
24	I can look for opportunities and take initiative .	23	3.56	71.2%
2	I can figure out that verbal expression (tone, pitch) of other person effect my decision of continuing the communication .	25	3.47	69.4%
27	I can usually speak well of others .	25	3.47	69.4%
29	I can adapt easily to new and unexpected situation .	25	3.47	69.4%
8	I can identify that the people are so overload	27.5	3.34	66.8%



	within formation, they cannot respond effectively to message .			
35	I can debate without arguing .	27.5	3.34	66.8%
23	I am and avoid asking questions in public .	29	3.26	65.2%
14	I can figure out receiver's gender is an important factor in communicating with .	11	3.17	63.4%
19	I can communicate clearly, concisely and with good grammar by email or letter .	31	3.13	62.6%
6	I feel uncomfortable while communicating with a person whose intellectual level is higher than mine .	32	3.04	60.8%
5	I feel uncomfortable while communicating with a person whose intellectual level is lower than mine .	33.5	2.95	59%
21	I am willing to support a group decision, even if I don't think it's the best .	33.5	2.95	59%
1	I figure out the physical appearance effects my decision when communicating with other persons .	35	2.56	51.2%
31	I can work with someone I don't like .	36	2.21	44.2%
<b>Total</b>			<b>3.62</b>	<b>72.45%</b>

#### **4.2 Results Related to the Second Aim and the Verification of the Second Null Hypothesis:**

In order to find out the differences among the four domains, which are mentioned in earlier, also weighted mean and weighted percentile are used. Based on four aspects in the

questionnaire, it terms of the first domain, “Personal Skills” is received (W. M. = 3.6, W.P.= 73.6%). While the lowest domain Self-management skills” is received (W.M.=3.55 , W.P. 71.17 %). See table (3)

**Table(3)**  
**Weighted Mean , Weighted Percentile and Rank Order for theAspects of Soft Skills Questionnaire**

No.	Domains	Rank	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentile
2	Personal Skills	1	3.68	73.6%
3	Interpersonal Skills	2	3.64	72.79%
1	Communications Skills	3	3.61	72.24%
4	Self-Management Skills	4	3.55	71.17%

The following pages present detailed discussions of results toward each aspect of the questionnaire according to the obtained results.

**1- Personal Skills**

These skills are transferable skills, so they can be used in any different types of jobs. The results show that majority of students points view agree that this aspect of a questionnaire have been achieved by the students in terms that their personal qualities and attitudes that can help them to work well with others and make a positive contribution to organizations whom they work for. See table (4).

**Table(4)**  
**Weighted Mean , Weighted Percentile and Rank Order of Personal Skills**

No.	Item	Rank	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentile
25	I can generally look on the bright side of things	8	4	80%
26	I can avoid complaining .	4	4.17	83.4%
28	I can drive by the sense of	15	3.82	76.4

	achievement / accomplishment .			
22	I can know weaknesses and try to improve them .	20	3.69	73.8%
24	I can look for opportunities and take initiative .	23	3.56	71.2%
27	I can usually speak well of others .	25	3.47	69.4%
29	I can adapt easily to new and unexpected situations .	25	3.47	69.4%
23	I am shy and avoid asking questions in public .	29	3.26	65.2%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>3.68</b>	<b>73.6%</b>

## 2- Interpersonal Skills

This aspect measure the student's interpersonal skills which are used every day to communicate and interact with others, both individually and in groups. The results show that majority of students points of view agree that this aspect of a questionnaire have been achieved by the students in terms that students have strong interpersonal in both their professional and personal lives. So the majority of students have good interpersonal skills, they are usually perceived as optimistic, calm, confident and charismatic- qualities that are often endearing or appealing to others. See table (5).

**Table(5)**  
**Weighted Mean , Weighted Percentile and Rank Order of**  
**Interpersonal Skills**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Weighted Percentile</b>
20	I can actively participate in groups without dominating the discussions .	5.5	4.08	81.6%
15	I can connect easily with people .	8	4	80%
17	I can make eye contact and leave positive body language with those I am talking to .	8	4	80%
18	I am generally optimistic, open-minded and have an overall positive attitude .	17	3.78	75.6%
16	I can take time to listen and show others that I am listening and understand their perspective .	22	3.60	72%
19	I can communicate clearly , concisely and with good grammar by email or letter .	31	3.13	62.6%
21	I am willing to support a group decision , even if I don't think it 's the best .	33.5	2.95	59%
<b>Total</b>			<b>3.64</b>	<b>72.79%</b>

### **1- Communication Skills**

This aspect measures the student's ability to convey questionnaire information to others effectively and efficiently. The results show that majority of students points of view agree that this aspect of a questionnaire have been achieved by the students in terms that students have effective communication which combines a set of skills including verbal and nonverbal communication, attentive listening, managing stress in the

moment, the ability to communication assertively, and the capacity to recognize and understand one’s own emotion and those of the persons she/he is communicating with. See table (6).

**Table(6)**  
**Weighted Mean , Weighted Percentile and Rank Order of Communication Skills**

No.	Item	Rank	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentile
13	I can recognize that noisy environment makes communication difficult .	1	4.34	86.8%
9	While communicating with other person , I can figure out that the absence of mind of the receiver could be a barrier in effective communication .	2	4.30	86%
11	I can use different vocabularies which make communication effective .	5.5	4.08	81.6%
12	I can identify that compatibility of environment ,(temperature, seating, arrangement, surrounding audience)is a significant factor in communication .	8	4	80%
7	I believe that negative attitude (rudeness, arrogance) of communicator is a big hurdle in effective communication	11	3.95	79%
10	I can recognize that non-verbal expressions also contribute in effective communication .	13	3.86	77.2%
3	I can recognize that non-verbal expressions also contribute in effective communication .	15	3.82	76.4%
4	I can value that the level of education is a prominent factor	20	3.69	73.8%

	in effective communication .			
2	I can figure out that verbal expression (tone, pitch) of other person effect my decision of continuing the communication .	25	3.47	69.4%
8	I can identify that people are so overloaded within formation, they cannot respond effectively to message.	27.5	3.34	66.8%
14	I can figure out that receiver's gender is an important factor in communicating with .	30	3,17	63.4%
6	I feel uncomfortable while communicating with a person whose intellectual level is higher than mine .	32	3.04	60.8%
5	I feel uncomfortable while communicating with a person whose intellectual level is lower than mine.	33.5	2.95	56%
1	I figure out that physical appearance effects my decision when communicating with other persons.	35	2.56	51.2%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>3.61</b>	<b>72.24%</b>

## 2- Self-Management Skills

This aspect measures the student's skills which help students to manage self-perception and reactions to adverse situations. The results show that majority of students points of view agree that this aspect of a questionnaire have been achieved by the students in terms that students manage their

emotions, self-perception, and reactions to unexpected situations. See table (7).

**Table(7)**  
**Weighted Mean , Weighted Percentile and Rank Order of Self-Management Skills**

No.	Item	Rank	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentile
30	I can admit my mistakes.	3	4.21	84.2%
36	I can negotiate without emotions getting in the way.	12	3.91	78.2%
32	I can feel happy to follow the instructions .	15	3.82	76.4%
34	I can disagree without being disagreeable .	18	3.73	74.6%
33	I can accept constructive criticism easily .	20	3.69	73.8%
35	I can debate without arguing .	27.5	3.34	66.8%
31	I can work with someone I do not like .	36	2.21	44.2%
	<b>Total</b>		3.55	71.17%

### 4.3 Conclusions

1-The findings show that, EFL pre-service teachers have an awareness for their career development. Overall ,respondents identified team work, time management, learning and interpersonal skills, as well as communication skill as skills that are better developed in the work place context.

2- Based on the four domains in the questionnaire , students share the same opinions about "personal skill" which is received the first interest according to others. While the" self-management skill" is received the lowest one as the following ;

personal skill is received (W.M. =3.68 , W.P.=73.6%). While , self-management is received (W.M.=3.55.W.P. =71.17%).

3-In the light of the students' responses, the results of the study showed that dissatisfaction in some soft skills competency indicates that students communicate with people whose intellectual level is lower than them, also students' decisions are affected by others' social appearance.

#### **4.4 Recommendations**

In the light of findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1- Engaging students' communications skills by making people of a "lower" level feel at ease and feel right to promote effective communication.
- 2- Raising self-efficacious students by watching a peer succeed at a task. Peers may be drawn from groups as defined by gender, ethnicity, social circles, interests, achievement level, clothing, or age.
- 3- Engaging students in setting classroom rules, explaining attendance policies and ground rules for class interaction, making decisions, and setting differences which in turn the classroom into a cooperative team, and reduce antagonism.
- 4- Providing students with opportunities to select the textbook; make real choices about the activities, tasks, and topics they are going to cover in the course.

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**Appendix (1)**  
**Students Soft Skills Questionnaire**  
**Iraqi EFL Pre-Service Teacher's Awareness of**  
**Using Soft Skills for Career Development**

No.	Item	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	I figure out the physical appearance effect my decision when communicating with other persons.					
2	I can figure out that verbal expression (tone, pitch) of other person effect my decision of continuing the communication .					
3	I can recognize that non-verbal expressions also contribute in effective communication .					
4	I can value that the level of education is a					

	prominent factor in effective communication .					
5	I feel uncomfortable while communicating with a person whose intellectual level is lower than mine .					
6	I feel uncomfortable while communicating with a person whose intellectual level is higher than mine .					
7	I believe that negative attitude (rudeness and arrogance) of a communicator is a big hurdle in effective communication .					
8	I can identify that then people are so overloaded within formation ,they cannot respond effectively to messages .					
9	While communicating with other person ,I can figure out that the absence of					

	mind of the receiver could be a barrier in effective communication .					
10	I think that using proverbs and phrases for proofing effective communication skills .					
11	I can use different vocabularies which make communication effective .					
12	I can identify that compatibility of environment (temperature, arrangement, surrounding audience) is a significant factor in communication .					
13	I can recognize that noisy environment makes communication difficult .					
14	I can figure out that receiver's gender is an important factor while communicating with .					
15	I can connect easily with people					

	.					
16	I can take time to listen and show others that I am listening and understanding their perspective .					
17	I can make eye contact and have positive body language with those I am talking to .					
18	I am generally optimistic, open-minded, and have an overall positive attitude .					
19	I can communicate clearly, concisely, and with good grammar by email or letter .					
20	I can actively participate in groups without dominating the discussions .					
21	I am willing to support a group decision, even if I think it is the best idea .					
22	I can know weaknesses and try to improve them .					
23	I am shy and avoid asking questions in					

	public.					
24	I can look for opportunities and take initiative.					
25	I can generally look on the bright side of things .					
26	I can avoid complaining .					
27	I can usually speak well of others .					
28	I can drive by the sense of achievement / accomplishment .					
29	I can adapt easily to new and unexpected situation .					
30	I can admit my mistakes .					
31	I can work with someone I don't like .					
32	I can feel happy to follow instructions .					
33	I can accept constructive criticism easily .					
34	I can disagree without being disagreeable .					
35	I can debate without arguing .					
36	I can negotiate without emotions in the way .					

**Appendix (2)**  
**Jury of Specialists**

- 1- Professor Al-Rifa'I, Fatin Khairi Ph. D. in ELT / College of Education/ Ibn Rushed/ University of Baghdad.
- 2- Professor Rijia, Khalil I. Ph. D. in Linguistic / College of Education for Humanities / University of Diyala.
- 3- Assistant Professo Al-Ma'mory, Sami Ph. D. in ELT /College of Basic Education /University of Diyala.
- 4- Assistant Professor Abbas, Amthal Muhammed Ph. D. in Translation / College of Education for Humanities / University Of Diyala.
- 5- Assistant Professor Abbas, Zainab Ph. D. in ELT / College of Education for Humanities /University of Diyala.
- 6- Instructor Habib, Liqa'a, Ph. D. in ELT / College of Education for Humanities / University of Diyala.
- 7- Instructor Hussain, Nizar, M.A. in ELT / College of Basic Education/ University of Diyala.