

Empowering Israel's Workforce: The Strategic Importance of English Proficiency

Preface: The Economic Necessity of English Mastery

Despite its modest size and population, Israel is a member of the OECD and possesses a highly developed economy. In 2023, it was ranked 25th on the United Nations Human Development Index¹. Fueling this success is an economy renowned for its cutting-edge innovation and extensive international collaboration. To maintain its competitive edge on the global stage, Israel requires a workforce that is proficient in English, the lingua franca of the modern business world. In this context, proficient English language skills serve multiple purposes, including but not limited to:

Innovation and Collaboration:

As a global leader in research and development, Israel relies on strong English communication skills for effective international partnerships and its dynamic startup ecosystem. The International Collaboration Division creates a competitive advantage for Israeli companies and entities by coordinating innovative R&D collaborations internationally. Programs include bilateral collaborations with dozens of countries and facilitating access to the EU Horizon 2020 Program for both industry and academia in Israel. In 2018, 7 new agreements for R&D collaboration were signed with various countries, bringing the total of active agreements to approximately 70. Additionally, 90 Israeli companies received grants averaging approximately 500,000 NIS to conduct joint R&D projects with foreign entities. Furthermore, 92 Israeli companies secured around 40 million Euros in total financing through the prestigious European SME Instrument Program, and 9 companies received about 11 million Euros from the European Ecsel R&D Program. These activities highlight the importance of proficient English in accessing global knowledge and exchanging ideas efficiently.²

Attracting Foreign Investment:

The caliber of a country's English-speaking workforce is a critical determinant for international investors. The 2023 World Investment Report indicated that foreign direct investment (FDI) in Israel hit an all-time high of \$27.7 billion in 2022³, underscoring the economic benefits of nurturing a highly proficient English-speaking workforce. Despite the challenges facing the hi-tech sector in 2023 due to global macroeconomic contraction as well as Israel's war against Hamas, the 2023 Start-Up Nation Central Annual Report indicated that foreign investors are still showing an interest with 83.3% of Israeli startups receiving funds from private foreign investors⁴.

Global Marketing and Sales:

¹ HDR23-24_Statistical_Annex_HDI_Table: See Israel Row

² Israel Innovation Authority: See page 13.

³ World Investment Report 2023: See pages 30, 31 and 218.

⁴ Startup Nation Central Annual Report 2023: See Screen shot 1.

With Israeli businesses increasingly seeking to expand exports, competent English communication skills are essential. The 2023 World Trade Statistical Review ranked Israel 33 out of 50 in world merchandise trade exports⁵ and 22 out of 40 in exporting commercial services⁶, highlighting the importance of effective communication in promoting products and services to a broader international audience.

These findings demonstrate the demand for a skilled workforce with strong English language proficiency. In response to this growing need, the Ministry of Education implemented the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in 2019. The CEFR offers a transparent and objective metric for assessing English language skills and categorizes proficiency levels of foreign language learning skills from A1 (Beginner) to C2 (Mastery). It is an important tool which is often used to help align educational outcomes with industry requirements.

However, the Israeli education system faces significant challenges, particularly within high schools. The numerous matriculation exams and preliminary tests strains schools' abilities to prioritize and allocate resources towards essential skills training, including English proficiency and 21st-century communication skills. This imbalance in educational priorities and assessment structures contributes to the gap identified by The State Comptroller's 2021 report regarding the mismatch between current EFL programs and the communication skills required in the 21st century workplace in Israel.

This book seeks to address and bridge this gap by proposing a tailored framework for English language acquisition that aligns closely with the distinct needs of various industries within the Israeli economy. As such, this initiative not only aids job seekers in clearly comprehending the English skills needed for their career aspirations but also assists employers in creating targeted recruitment strategies. This will help employers select candidates whose English proficiency aligns with the company's operational and strategic needs, thereby enhancing overall productivity and competitiveness. This will also help narrow the divide between job seekers and employers, fostering a more skilled, English-proficient, and globally competitive Israeli workforce.

The book is divided into four sections.

Section 1 provides an explanation of the CEFR as well as our rationale for using the CEFR and EF EPI 2023 as our benchmarks.

Section 2 provides a detailed analysis of the industries which employ over 100,000 individuals in Israel. These industries include **manufacturing; construction; wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles; transportation, storage, and postal and courier services; accommodation and food services; information and communications; financial and insurance activities; professional, scientific, and technical services; administrative and support services; local and public administration and health and welfare services.**

⁵ World Trade Statistical Review: See page 61.

⁶ World Trade Statistical Review: See page 62

Section 3 summarizes our key findings and their implications for the Israeli workforce as well as our recommendations for the Ministry of Labor.

Section 4 provides appendixes and references for articles and websites referred to in this publication.

Section 1

What is the CEFR?

The Common European Framework for Language scale (CEFR) is a comprehensive research-based guideline developed by the Council of Europe to standardize the levels of language ability and proficiency across different languages. It is based on six levels (A1 through C2) that describe real-world usage of language skills (e.g. a student's ability to speak about herself/himself, or to participate in a professional discussion on a well-known topic). Its purpose is to measure the language skills of each person and above all to identify what each person can do in a language, what their next steps are, and what real actions can they achieve with their language skills.

The six levels describe the competencies of the second-language learner in five areas: listening, speaking, mediating and translating, reading and writing. In addition, they are described in terms of "can-do" statements that make it easy for anyone including students, companies, colleges, etc. to be able to know what that learner knows how to do in that particular language. Some practical applications of the CEFR are described in **Table 1**, which details the capabilities and characteristics associated with each level.

Table 1: Capabilities And Characteristics Associated with the Six CEFR Levels.

רמה	מה אני יכול לעשות עם הרמה שלי?	מי נמצא ברמה הזאת?
משתמש בסיסי		
A1	יכול/ה להבין ביטויים יומיומיים ומוכרים ומשפטים בסיסיים ביותר ולהשתמש בהם למטרת סיפוק צרכים קונקרטיים. יכול/ה להציג את עצמו/ה ואחרים ויכול/ה לשאול שאלות ולענות עליהן בנוגע לפרטים אישיים כגון מקום המגורים, אנשים שהוא/היא מכיר/ה ודברים בבעלותו/ה. יכול/ה לקיים אינטראקציה בצורה פשוטה בתנאי שהצד השני מדבר לאט וברור ומוכן לעזור.	כל מי שידע כמה משפטים ופונה לתרגום בכל פעם שהוא צריך להשתמש באנגלית
A2	יכול/ה להבין משפטים וביטויים המופיעים בתדירות רבה וקשורים לתחומים רלוונטיים ומידיים (למשל מידע אישי או משפחתי בסיסי ביותר, קניות, גיאוגרפיה של האזור, תעסוקה). יכול/ה לתקשר במשימות פשוטות ושגרתיות הדורשות חילופי מידע פשוטים וישירים בנושאים מוכרים ושגרתיים. יכול/ה לתאר במונחים פשוטים היבטים של הרקע שלו/ה, של הסביבה המידית ושל עניינים בתחום הצורך המיידי.	מי שצריך להסתדר ברמה הכי בסיסית בסביבה דוברת אנגלית- למשל לבקש הכוונה באנגליה או להזמין ארוחת בוקר בארצות הברית.
משתמש עצמאי		
B1	יכול/ה להבין את הנקודות העיקריות של קלט תקני וברור בנושאים מוכרים השייכים באופן שגרתי לעבודה, ללימודים, לשעות הפנאי וכו'. יכול/ה להתמודד עם רוב הסיטואציות שסביר כי יתעוררו בזמן טיול באזור שבו השפה מדוברת. יכול/ה לייצר טקסט פשוט ורציף בנושאים מוכרים או קשורים לתחומי העניין האישיים. יכול/ה לתאר חוויות ואירועים, חלומות, תקוות ושאיפות, ולפרט בקצרה סיבות והסברים לדעות ולתכניות.	כל מי שצריך לנהל שיחה שוטפת בסיסית וידידותית על נושאים מוכרים עם מכרים או חברים
B2	יכול/ה להבין את הרעיונות העיקריים של טקסט מורכב הן בנושאים מוחשיים והן בנושאים מופשטים, לרבות דיונים טכניים בתחום המומחיות שלו/ה. יכול/ה לקיים אינטראקציה בדרגה של שטף וספונטניות ההופכת אינטראקציה רגילה עם דוברים ילידיים לאפשרית ללא מאמץ של מי מהצדדים. יכול/ה לייצר טקסט ברור ומפורט על טווח רחב של נושאים ולהסביר נקודת מבט על נושאים עכשוויים תוך ציון היתרונות והחסרונות של אפשרויות שונות.	הרמה הנדרשת ברוב המקומות שבהם סביבת העבודה דוברת אנגלית ברמה טובה
משתמש מיומן		
C1	יכול/ה להבין טווח רחב של טקסטים ארוכים ותובעניים, ולזהות את המשתמע מן הדברים. יכול/ה להתבטא בשטף ובספונטניות ללא חיפוש ניכר לעין של דרכי ביטוי. יכול/ה להשתמש בשפה בגמישות וביעילות למטרות חברתיות, אקדמיות ומקצועיות. יכול/ה לייצר טקסט ברור, מפורט ומובנה היטב על נושאים מסובכים, תוך הפגנת שימוש מבוקר בדפוסי ארגון ובאמצעים ליצירת לכידות.	רמה מקצועית גבוהה ושוטפת באנגלית
C2	יכול/ה להבין בקלות למעשה את כל מה שהוא/היא שומע/ת או קורא/ת. יכול/ה לסכם מידע ממקורות דבורים וכתובים שונים, תוך שחזור הטיעונים והדיווחים והצגתם בצורה קוהרנטית. יכול/ה להתבטא באופן ספונטני בשטף רב ובדיוק רב, תוך יצירת בידול בין גוונים דקים של משמעות אף בסיטואציות מסובכות יותר.	

The standard is particularly applicable to global companies, of which there are many across Israel's business sector. For employees to move up the corporate ladder, interact with clients, or work with international companies, they often require professional English capabilities that usually translate to a level above B1 on the CEFR scale.

The relevance of CEFR to Israel is multifaceted. By aligning with CEFR standards, Israel positions its English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education within a globally recognized framework, facilitating academic and professional mobility for its citizens. This adherence to a well-regarded benchmark ensures comparability and consistency in English language proficiency levels, enabling Israelis to pursue opportunities more seamlessly on the international stage. The CEFR's comprehensive approach to language teaching, learning, and assessment encourages a uniform methodology that can significantly enhance the quality and effectiveness of language education in Israel. Moreover, this alignment supports Israel in maintaining strong cultural and economic ties with Europe, as proficient English communication is critical for these interactions. Therefore, by adopting CEFR standards, Israel not only elevates its language education system but also fosters a more globally competitive workforce, adept at navigating the challenges and opportunities of international relations, collaborations, and markets.

In the next section, we will delve into the specific CEFR levels of English necessitated by various sectors within the Israeli economy, employing the 2023 EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) as a foundational reference point. The EF EPI, through its annual assessment of English proficiency across 113 countries and regions—based on the test data from approximately 2.2 million adults—serves as a rigorous benchmark to measure the efficacy of national EFL policies and practices. Despite Israel's leading EF EPI position within the Middle East in 2023 (Israel ranked 54 out of 113), its performance notably lags behind that of numerous European nations. This disparity underscores the critical value of the EF EPI's insights for Israel, enabling a systematic benchmarking of its English proficiency against both global and European standards and can be used to identify strengths and areas in need of improvement. In addition, the comparative nature of the EF EPI allows Israel to set targeted goals for enhancing English proficiency amongst its adult population, drawing on the successful strategies of higher-scoring nations. High placement on the EF EPI signifies not just effective English education but also the potential for greater international engagement, competitiveness, and opportunities for its citizens. The emphasis on adult English proficiency underscores its significance in fostering continuous learning, pivotal for success in global commerce, international collaborations, and the assimilation of Israel's diverse societal fabric. Consequently, the EF EPI provides valuable benchmarks that reflect European standards of English proficiency, guiding Israel in shaping its EFL education to meet and exceed these international benchmarks.⁷

⁷ EF-EPI 2023: See pages 3 -6.

Section 2

2.1 The Manufacturing Industry in Israel

Introduction

The Manufacturing Industry in Israel is a crucial sector driving the nation's economic growth, significantly influencing GDP, employment, and technological advancement. As Israel continues to evolve in the global market, the manufacturing industry stands at the forefront of innovation and industrial development. This chapter will explore the current state of the manufacturing industry in Israel, examine the importance of skilled labor and advanced technologies, and analyze the impact of these factors on the industry's overall productivity and global competitiveness.

Overview

Israel's manufacturing industry is diverse and multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of sectors such as diamonds, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, food and drink processing, electronics, defense, and machinery.⁸ This diversity not only contributes to economic stability but also enriches the country's export profile. It is a key component in the growth of the Israeli economy, enhancing production capabilities and enabling the business sector to compete on an international level. The industry creates a foundation for new job opportunities, increases output, and offers suitable solutions for the unique needs of the national economy.

As of 2020, the manufacturing industry contributed approximately 17% to Israel's GDP.⁹ By 2023, it accounted for about 40% of the nation's exports, highlighting its substantial economic impact. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, Israeli manufacturing exports reached over \$50 billion.¹⁰ The industry provides a broad spectrum of employment opportunities, from low-skill labor to highly specialized engineering and research positions.

In 2023, data from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics showed that the manufacturing sector employed over 355,000 people, representing close to 9% of Israel's workforce.¹¹ This employment helps to minimize unemployment rates and nurtures a skilled workforce capable of sustaining industrial growth and innovation. Furthermore, the manufacturing sector is deeply integrated with research and development (R&D) activities, often collaborating with academic institutions and investing heavily in cutting-edge technologies.

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

Historically, Israel has prioritized English education, recognizing its importance in a globalized world. English is widely taught in schools and universities, and many Israelis attain a functional level of proficiency. Nonetheless, according to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions¹², indicating a moderate proficiency level in English.

⁸ <https://www.gov.il/he/pages/guide-to-israeli-industries>

⁹ CBS: see document titled end of 2023, page 327.

¹⁰ התאחדות התעשייתיים: see sum info for 2023, page 5.

¹¹ CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023

¹² EF-EPI: See document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 4.

The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the manufacturing industry corresponds to the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)¹³, which entails an intermediate understanding and use of English. This benchmark underscores the level of proficiency needed to engage effectively in international contexts within the industry.

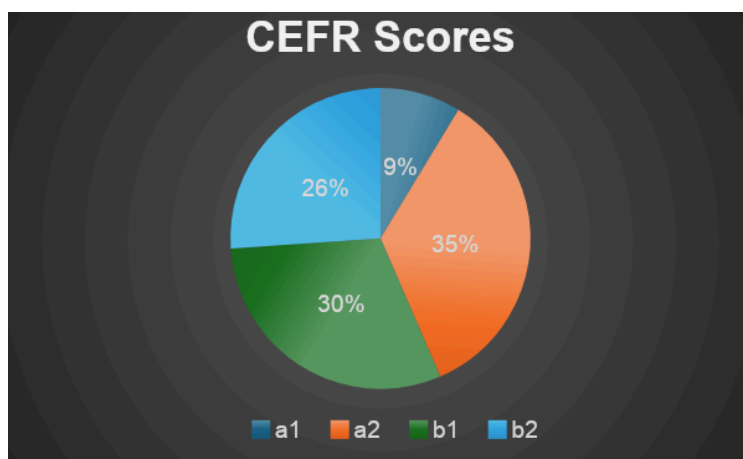
However, the level of English proficiency can vary significantly across different segments of the manufacturing industry. Among engineers, researchers, and managerial staff, English proficiency tends to be relatively high. This is partly due to the need to engage with international research, technology platforms, and global market demands. Conversely, lower-skilled positions within the industry may not require extensive use of English, leading to a lower average proficiency in these roles.

After administering SpeakNow CEFR tests to 23 mechanical engineering students at the Technological College in Beersheba, the results revealed the following distribution of CEFR levels:

A1 Level: 2 students
A2 Level: 8 students
B1 Level: 7 students
B2 Level: 6 students

These findings are depicted in **Figure 1** and underscore the range of English proficiency levels among mechanical engineering students and emphasize the importance of language skills in their academic and professional development.

Figure 1: CEFR Scores for 23 Mechanical Engineers at TCB



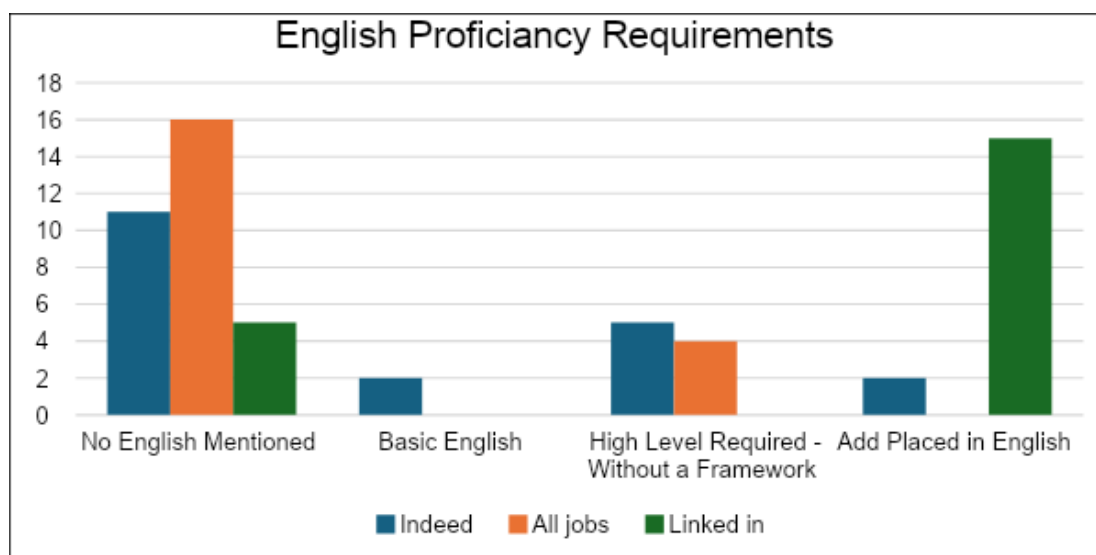
¹³ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website.
<https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/about-epi/>

Job Listing Analysis

According to the EF-EPI in 2023, English proficiency levels have become more consistent across different seniority levels over the past decade. This trend may result from the closing proficiency gap among adults of different ages and the internationalization of higher education and career paths. Executives in regions like Asia, Europe, and Latin America are often sourced from a global talent pool with similar proficiency levels. Countries prioritizing the hiring and training of local talent are also expected to experience a decrease in proficiency disparities between seniority levels. However, this trend has not been observed in the Middle East.¹⁴

A search for jobs in the Israeli manufacturing industry revealed varying requirements for English proficiency. On the Indeed website, there were 338 job listings. After reviewing 20 of these, 2 required basic English, 5 required a high level of English, 2 were posted in English and 11 didn't mention English at all. On the AllJobs website, there were 2747 job listings. Out of 20 reviewed, 4 required a high level of English and 16 did not mention English. On LinkedIn's website, there were 947 listings. Of the 20 reviewed, 15 were written in English and 5 didn't mention English. This analysis highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across different segments and job levels within the industry. In total 60 job listings were reviewed. This analysis is illustrated in **Figure 2**, which highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across these three digital platforms.¹⁵

Figure 2: English Proficiency Requirements in Manufacturing Job Listings Across Different Platforms



This data points to varied requirements for English proficiency across different platforms. On the Indeed website, 10% of the jobs listed required basic English, 25% required a high level of English, 10% were posted in English, and 55% didn't mention

¹⁴ EF-EPI See document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8.

¹⁵ For links to the websites listed, data and tables: see sheet titled Job Listings for each industry based on website data.

English at all. On the AllJobs website, 20% required a high level of English, while 80% did not mention English at all. On the LinkedIn website, 75% of the jobs listed were written in English, and 25% did not mention English.

While the EF-EPI indicates a B1 (intermediate) level of English proficiency as a requirement for the manufacturing industry, many Israeli job listings either do not mention English proficiency or require higher levels. This suggests that while basic English skills might be implicitly assumed for many roles, there is a significant demand for more advanced English capabilities in certain positions, especially those needing higher responsibility or international interaction. Therefore, the data aligns partially with the CEFR B1 requirements but indicates a broader range of English proficiency expectations within the industry.

These findings align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this specific industry.¹⁶

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry. Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's manufacturing industry has several profound impacts on its success:

1. **Global Trade and Communications:** High English proficiency among professionals enables smoother and more effective communication with international clients, suppliers, and partners. This ease of communication fosters stronger business relationships and facilitates successful negotiations, crucial for navigating and expanding in global markets.
2. **Access to Knowledge and Innovation:** Proficiency in English allows industry professionals to access the latest global research, technical literature, and innovation resources.
3. **Training and Development:** The global nature of the high-tech industry means that many advanced training programs, professional development courses, and technical manuals are available primarily in English. Proficiency in English can, therefore, enhance opportunities for skill enhancement and career progression, contributing to increased productivity and innovation within the industry.
4. **Marketing and Sales:** Effective marketing strategies often require a strong command of English, especially for targeting international markets. High English proficiency enables Israeli companies to craft compelling marketing materials, product descriptions, and sales pitches, helping to expand their global reach and market share. For instance, Israeli companies like Teva

¹⁶ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8.

Pharmaceuticals and Check Point Software Technologies leverage English marketing materials to reach a broader audience.

5. **Collaboration and Networking:** International conferences, trade shows, and networking events commonly use English as the primary language. Higher English proficiency allows Israeli manufacturing professionals to participate more fully in these events, fostering collaboration, sharing ideas, and forming valuable international partnerships. Events like the DLD Tel Aviv Innovation Festival attract thousands of international attendees, where English is the primary language of communication.
6. **Customer Support:** For companies that serve a global customer base, providing customer support in English is critical. High-quality customer support in English can lead to better customer satisfaction and loyalty, offering a competitive edge. Many Israeli tech companies maintain global customer support operations where English proficiency is essential.
7. **Regulatory Compliance and Documentation:** Many international standards and regulations require documentation in English. Proficiency in English helps ensure that companies can prepare and maintain necessary documentation, meeting regulatory requirements and avoiding potential legal issues. Compliance with regulations such as FDA guidelines for medical devices is crucial for Israeli manufacturers aiming to enter the US market.
8. **Attracting Investment:** English proficiency can make Israeli companies more attractive to foreign investors and venture capitalists. Clear and effective communication in English during pitches and negotiations can inspire confidence and facilitate investment deals.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's manufacturing industry provides a solid foundation, there are opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training, particularly for lower-skilled positions, could further boost the industry's competitiveness and global reach. Additionally, industries can invest in language training programs to ensure that all employees, regardless of their role, have a functional level of English proficiency.

Conclusion

The manufacturing industry in Israel is a pivotal component of the nation's economy, driven by innovation, high-tech expertise, and a skilled workforce. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing global trade, access to knowledge, training opportunities, marketing, collaboration, customer support, regulatory compliance, and investment attraction. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further cement its position as a global leader in manufacturing and innovation.

2.2 The Construction Industry in Israel

Introduction

The construction industry in Israel is another vital sector contributing to the national economy, significantly impacting GDP, employment, and infrastructure development. As Israel continues to grow and urbanize, the construction industry plays a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of the country. This chapter will discuss the current state of the construction industry in Israel, the role of English proficiency within this industry, and the impact that the current level of English proficiency has on its success.

Overview

Israel's construction industry is broad and dynamic, encompassing residential, commercial, industrial, and infrastructure projects. This industry is instrumental in meeting the housing needs of a growing population, as well as developing the infrastructure necessary for economic activities. The construction industry not only drives economic growth but also enhances the quality of life by creating modern and efficient living and working environments.

As of 2020, the construction industry contributed about 5% to Israel's GDP.¹⁷ The sector is also a significant employer, providing jobs for a substantial portion of the population. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2023, the construction industry employed approximately 211,000 people, representing around 5.29% of Israel's workforce.¹⁸

Despite its critical role in the economy, the construction industry faces several challenges, including labor shortages, regulatory issues, and the need for technological advancements. To overcome these challenges and remain competitive, the industry needs to invest in skilled labor and adopt advanced technologies.

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

English proficiency in the construction industry varies widely, often depending on the role and the level of interaction with international stakeholders. For many construction workers, basic English proficiency is sufficient, as the primary language of instruction and communication on-site is Hebrew or Arabic. However, for engineers, project managers, and other professionals involved in planning, design, and procurement, English proficiency is more critical.

According to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions, indicating a moderate proficiency level in English. The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the construction industry corresponds to the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which entails an intermediate understanding and use of English.¹⁹

¹⁷ See Excel Sheet CBS GDP.

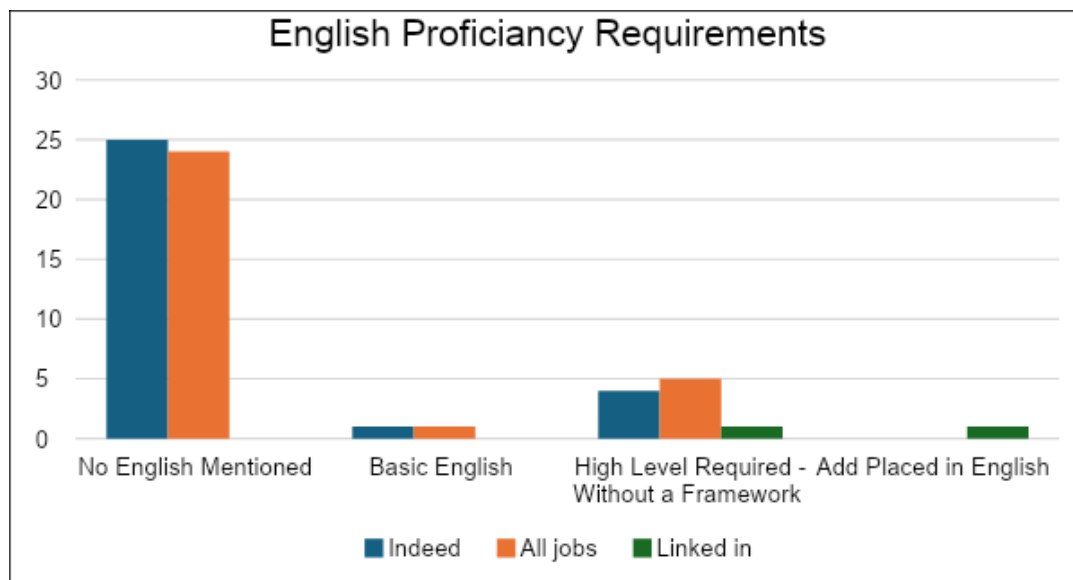
¹⁸ CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023.

¹⁹ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website. <https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/about-epi/>

Job Listing Analysis

A search for jobs in the Israeli construction industry revealed varying requirements for English proficiency. On the Indeed website, there were 307 job listings. After reviewing 30 of these, 25 didn't mention English, 1 mentioned basic English skills and 4 required a high level of English proficiency. On the AllJobs website, there were 1536 job listings; out of 30 reviewed, 24 didn't mention English, 1 mentioned basic English skills and 5 required a high level of English proficiency. On LinkedIn, only 2 jobs were listed, and both were reviewed; 1 required a high level of English, while the other was listed in Hebrew. In total 62 job listings were reviewed. This analysis is illustrated in **Figure 3**, which highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across different segments and job levels within the construction industry.²⁰

Figure 3: English Proficiency Requirements in Construction Job Listings Across Different Platforms



The data suggests that the importance of English language skills varies depending on the platform used for job searching and the specific segment and job level within the construction industry. While English may not be a crucial requirement for all construction jobs, it appears to be essential for certain positions, particularly those advertised on LinkedIn and higher-level positions within the industry. Similar to the findings for the manufacturing industry, these findings show significant variation and inconsistent emphasis on English proficiency across job listings. They align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no

²⁰ For links to the websites listed, data and tables: see sheet titled Job Listings for each industry based on website data.

significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this specific industry.²¹

This data also demonstrates that a significant majority of job listings do not specify English proficiency requirements, aligning with the global B1 (intermediate) CEFR standard. On Indeed, 83.3% of the reviewed listings did not mention English, 3.3% required basic English skills, and only 13.3% required a high level of proficiency. Similarly, on AllJobs, 80% of the listings did not mention English, 3.3% required basic skills, and only 16.7% required a high level of proficiency. On LinkedIn, out of 2 listings, one required a high level of English proficiency, while the other was listed in Hebrew. This suggests that while foundational English proficiency is generally sufficient in the Israeli construction industry, a notable segment of roles demands higher proficiency, particularly in positions involving international collaboration or higher responsibility.

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry. Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's construction industry has several important impacts on its success:

1. **Global Collaboration and Procurement:** High English proficiency among engineers, architects, and project managers facilitates smoother communication with international suppliers, contractors, and partners. This is essential for sourcing high-quality materials, adopting best practices, and integrating advanced technologies from around the world.
2. **Access to Knowledge and Innovation:** English proficiency enables professionals to access the latest research, technical literature, and innovation resources. Staying updated with global advancements in construction technologies and methodologies can significantly improve project efficiency and quality.
3. **Training and Professional Development:** Many advanced training programs, professional development courses, and technical manuals are available primarily in English. Proficiency in English can enhance opportunities for skill enhancement and career progression, contributing to increased productivity and innovation within the industry.
4. **Safety and Compliance:** Construction projects often require adherence to international safety standards and regulations, many of which are documented in English. Proficiency in English ensures that safety protocols are correctly understood and implemented, reducing the risk of accidents and improving overall site safety.
5. **Attracting International Investment:** English proficiency can make Israeli construction companies more attractive to foreign investors and partners.

²¹ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8.

Clear and effective communication in English during pitches and negotiations can inspire confidence and facilitate investment deals.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's construction industry provides a solid foundation, there are opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training, particularly for lower-skilled positions, could further boost the industry's efficiency and global competitiveness. Additionally, investing in language training programs for all employees can ensure that they possess at least a functional level of English proficiency, which is critical for safety, compliance, and effective project execution.

Conclusion

The construction industry in Israel is a vital component of the nation's economy, driven by a need for infrastructure development, modernization, and urban growth. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing global collaboration, access to knowledge, training opportunities, safety, project management, and investment attraction. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further enhance the efficiency, safety, and global competitiveness of its construction industry.

2.3 The Wholesale and Retail Trade and Repair of Motor Vehicles Industry in Israel

Introduction

The wholesale and retail trade, along with the repair of motor vehicles, constitutes a significant segment of Israel's economy. This industry encompasses a wide range of activities, from the importation and sale of new and used vehicles to their maintenance and repair. Given the globalized nature of the automotive industry, English proficiency plays a crucial role in influencing the success of businesses operating within this sector. This chapter will explore the current state of the industry in Israel, the role of English proficiency, and the impact it has on business operations and growth.

Overview

The automotive industry in Israel includes both the wholesale and retail trade of motor vehicles, as well as their maintenance and repair services. This sector is essential for meeting the transportation needs of individuals and businesses across the country, facilitating mobility, and supporting economic activities.

As of 2020, the wholesale and retail trade, including the repair of motor vehicles, contributed approximately 8.8% to Israel's GDP²². The industry also provides employment to a significant portion of the population. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2023, this sector employed around 508,000 people, representing about 12.7% of Israel's workforce²³.

²² CBS: See document titled PDF Stats GDP 2020.

²³ CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023.

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

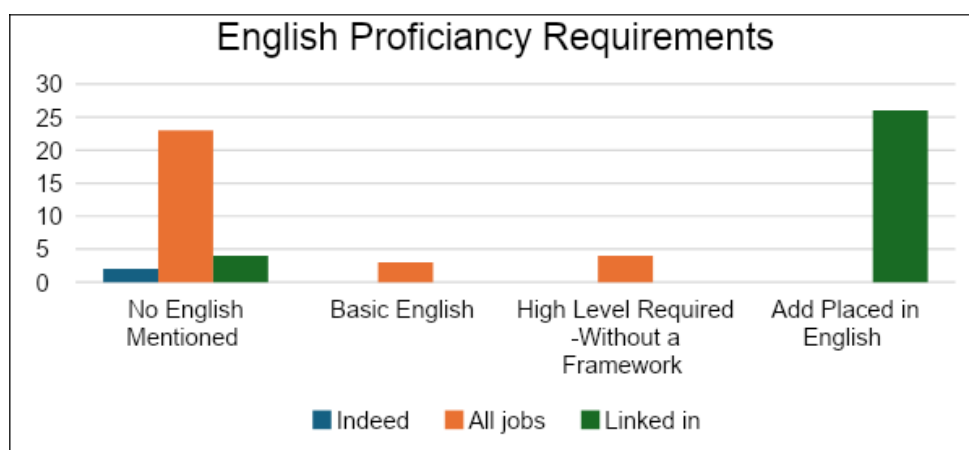
English proficiency within the wholesale and retail automotive industry varies depending on the role and level of customer interaction. For sales personnel, mechanics, and administrative staff, basic to intermediate English proficiency is generally sufficient. However, roles involving international trade, technical support, and higher-level management require a higher proficiency in English.

According to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions, indicating a moderate proficiency level in English. The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the automotive industry corresponds to the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which entails a moderate understanding and use of English.²⁴

Job Listing Analysis

A search for jobs in the Israeli wholesale and retail automotive industry revealed varying requirements for English proficiency. On the Indeed website, only 2 job listings came up, and neither mentioned English. On the AllJobs website, there were 545 job listings; out of 30 reviewed, 23 didn't mention English, 3 mentioned basic English and 4 required a high level of English. On LinkedIn, there were 316 job listings; of the 30 reviewed, 26 were posted in English and 4 didn't mention English. In total, 62 job listings were reviewed across these platforms. This analysis is illustrated in Figure 3, which highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across different segments and job levels within the automotive industry.²⁵

Figure 4: English Proficiency Requirements in the Israeli Wholesale and Retail Automotive Industry Job Listings Across Different Platforms



²⁴ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website. <https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/about-epi/>

²⁵ For links to the websites listed, data and tables: see sheet titled Job Listings for each industry based on website data.

The data suggests that the importance of English language skills varies depending on the platform used for job searching and the specific segment and job level within the wholesale and retail automotive industry. While English may not be a crucial requirement for all jobs, it appears to be essential for certain positions, particularly those advertised on LinkedIn and higher-level positions within the industry. Similar to the findings for the previous industries, these findings show significant variation and inconsistent emphasis on English proficiency across job listings. They align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this specific industry.²⁶

While LinkedIn reflects a closer alignment to the global B2 standard, both of the jobs listed on the Indeed website (100%) and 76.7 % of the jobs listed on the AllJobs website did not mention English. This might imply an underlying assumption that candidates already possess a basic or moderate level of English, aligning with Israel's moderate proficiency ranking in the EF-EPI, or it might indicate that the job requirements in this industry don't align with the global requirements for workers in the wholesale and retail automotive industry.

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry. Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's wholesale and retail automotive industry has several important impacts on its success:

1. **Global Trade and Importation:** High English proficiency among importers and wholesalers facilitates effective communication with international suppliers and manufacturers. This ability is crucial for negotiating contracts, understanding technical specifications, and ensuring the timely and accurate importation of vehicles and parts.
2. **Customer Service and Sales:** English proficiency is important for dealing with expatriates, tourists, and international clients, who may be potential customers. Providing high-quality customer service in English can enhance customer satisfaction and expand the market reach of automotive businesses.
3. **Access to Technical Information and Training:** Much of the technical literature, manuals, and training materials in the automotive industry are available in English. Proficiency in English is essential for mechanics and technicians to stay updated with the latest repair techniques and technological advancements, ensuring high standards of vehicle maintenance and repair.
4. **Marketing and Promotional Activities:** Effective marketing strategies often require a strong command of English, especially for online and international campaigns. High English proficiency enables businesses to create compelling

²⁶ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8.

marketing materials, engage with a broader audience, and improve their brand presence globally.

5. **Regulatory Compliance and Documentation:** Many international standards and regulations governing the automotive industry are documented in English. Proficiency in English helps businesses to understand and comply with these regulations, avoiding legal issues and ensuring the smooth operation of their activities.
6. **Networking and Partnerships:** Participating in international automotive trade fairs, conferences, and networking events often requires English proficiency. Engaging in these events allows businesses to form valuable partnerships, gain insights into industry trends, and explore new opportunities for growth.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's wholesale and retail automotive industry provides a solid foundation, there are opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training, particularly for sales personnel, mechanics, and administrative staff, could further boost the industry's operational efficiency and global competitiveness. Additionally, investing in language training programs for all employees can ensure that they possess at least a functional level of English proficiency, which is critical for customer service, technical understanding, and effective communication with international partners.

Conclusion

The wholesale and retail trade, along with the repair of motor vehicles, is a vital component of Israel's economy, supporting transportation needs and facilitating economic activities. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing global trade, customer service, access to technical information, marketing, regulatory compliance, and networking. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further enhance the efficiency, customer satisfaction, and global competitiveness of its automotive industry.

2.4 The Transportation, storage, postal and courier services in Israel

Introduction

The transportation, storage, and postal and courier services is a crucial industry in Israel, providing the backbone for domestic and international logistics, public transport, and communication. This industry encompasses various activities, including freight handling, warehousing, postal services, and passenger transportation. Given the globalized nature of logistics and communication, English proficiency plays a significant role in influencing the success and efficiency of businesses operating within this sector. This chapter will explore the current state of the transportation, storage, and mail services industry in Israel, the role of English proficiency, and the impact it has on business operations and growth.

Overview

Israel's transportation, storage, and postal and courier services industry is diverse and dynamic, encompassing a wide range of activities essential for the functioning of the national economy. The sector includes public transportation (buses, trains, and taxis), freight transportation (trucking, maritime, and air cargo), warehousing and storage facilities, and postal and courier services.

As of 2020, the transportation, storage, and postal and courier services industry contributed a modest 2.7% to Israel's GDP, highlighting its supportive role in economic activities and growth.²⁷ Despite the relatively small contribution to GDP, the sector provides notable employment opportunities. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2023, this industry employed around 148,000 people, making up close to 4% of Israel's workforce.²⁸

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

English proficiency within the transportation, storage, and postal and courier services industry varies widely depending on the role and level of interaction with international stakeholders. For front-line employees such as bus drivers, warehouse workers, and postal carriers, basic English proficiency is generally sufficient. However, roles involving logistics coordination, international trade, and higher-level management require a higher proficiency in English.

According to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions, indicating a moderate proficiency level in English. The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the logistics and transportation sectors corresponds to the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which entails a moderate understanding and use of English.²⁹

Job Listing Analysis

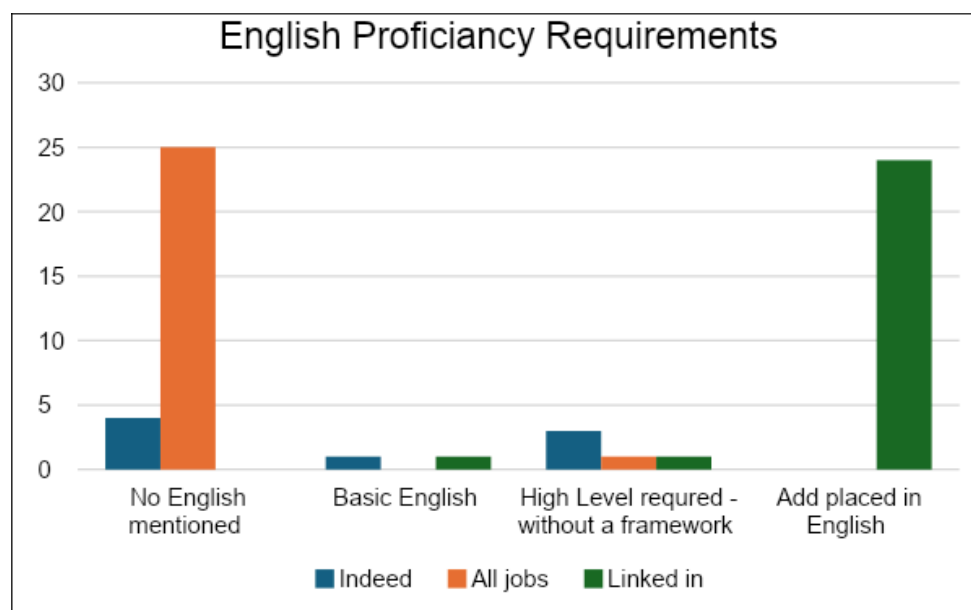
An analysis of job listings in the transportation, storage, postal, and courier services industry highlighted diverse English proficiency requirements. On Indeed, out of 8 positions listed, all were reviewed; 4 didn't mention English, 1 required basic skills and 3 required high proficiency. AllJobs had 1250 listings. Of the 26 reviewed; 25 didn't mention English and 1 required a high level of English. LinkedIn listed 2190 jobs. Of the 26 reviewed; 24 were written in English, 1 required high proficiency and 1 required basic skills. In total, 60 job listings were reviewed across these platforms. This variation in English requirements is depicted in **Figure 5**, which highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across different segments and job levels within the industry.

²⁷ CBS: See excel sheet titled CBS GDP.

²⁸ CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023.

²⁹ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website.

Figure 5: English Proficiency Requirements in the Transportation, Storage, Postal and Courier Service Industry Across Different Platforms



The data suggests that the importance of English language skills varies depending on the platform used for job searching and the specific segment and job level within the transportation, storage, postal, and courier services industry. While English may not be a crucial requirement for all jobs, it appears to be essential for certain positions, particularly those advertised on LinkedIn and higher-level positions within the industry. Similar to the findings for the previous industries, these findings show significant variation and inconsistent emphasis on English proficiency across job listings. They align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this specific industry.³⁰

While LinkedIn reflects a closer alignment to the global B2 standard, 50% of the jobs listed on the Indeed website and 96.2 % of the jobs listed on the AllJobs website did not mention English. This might imply an underlying assumption that candidates already possess a basic or moderate level of English, aligning with Israel's moderate proficiency ranking in the EF-EPI, or it might indicate that the job requirements in this industry don't align with the global requirements for workers in the transportation, storage, postal, and courier services industry.

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry.

³⁰ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8.

Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's transportation, storage, and postal and courier services has several important impacts on its success:

1. **Global Logistics and Coordination:** High English proficiency among logistics coordinators and managers facilitates effective communication with international partners, suppliers, and customers. This ability is crucial for coordinating global supply chains, negotiating contracts, and ensuring the timely delivery of goods and services.
2. **Customer Service and Passenger Relations:** English proficiency is important for dealing with tourists, expatriates, and international clients. Providing high-quality customer service in English can enhance customer satisfaction, improve passenger experience, and expand the market reach of transportation services.
3. **Access to Technical Information and Training:** Much of the technical literature, manuals, and training materials in the logistics and transportation sectors are available in English. Proficiency in English is essential for employees to stay updated with the latest technologies, best practices, and safety protocols, ensuring high standards of service and operation.
4. **Marketing and Promotional Activities:** Effective marketing strategies often require a strong command of English, especially for online and international campaigns. High English proficiency enables businesses to create compelling marketing materials, engage with a broader audience, and improve their brand presence globally.
5. **Regulatory Compliance and Documentation:** Many international standards and regulations governing the transportation and logistics sectors are documented in English. Proficiency in English helps businesses to understand and comply with these regulations, avoiding legal issues and ensuring the smooth operation of their activities.
6. **Networking and Partnerships:** Participating in international logistics and transportation trade fairs, conferences, and networking events often requires English proficiency. Engaging in these events allows businesses to form valuable partnerships, gain insights into industry trends, and explore new opportunities for growth.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's transportation, storage, and mail services industry provides a solid foundation, there are opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training, particularly for front-line employees, could further boost the industry's operational efficiency and global competitiveness. Additionally, investing in language training programs for all employees can ensure that they possess at least a functional level of English proficiency, which is critical for customer service, technical understanding, and effective communication with international partners.

Conclusion

The transportation, storage, and transportation, storage, and postal and courier services industry is a vital component of Israel's economy, supporting logistics, public transport, and communication needs. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing global logistics coordination, customer service, access to technical information, marketing, regulatory compliance, and networking. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further enhance the efficiency, customer satisfaction, and global competitiveness of its transportation, storage, and mail services industry.

2.5 The Accommodation and Food Services Industry in Israel

Introduction

The accommodation & food services industry is a vital sector in Israel, playing a significant role in the country's tourism economy and contributing to the overall GDP. This industry encompasses various activities, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, bars, and catering services. Given the influx of international tourists and the global nature of hospitality, English proficiency is crucial for the success of businesses operating within this sector. This chapter will explore the current state of the accommodation and food services industry in Israel, the role of English proficiency, and the impact it has on business operations and growth.

Overview

The accommodation & food services industry is a cornerstone of Israel's tourism sector, providing essential services to both international and domestic visitors. This industry encompasses a variety of establishments, including hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns, restaurants, cafes, bars, and catering businesses. Despite its relatively small direct contribution, the industry plays a crucial role in promoting tourism and hospitality, which are key drivers of Israel's economy.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent Gaza conflict have had profound impacts on this industry. The pandemic led to prolonged periods of lockdown, travel restrictions, and social distancing measures, dramatically reducing the number of visitors and causing many businesses to close temporarily or permanently. The Gaza conflict further strained the industry by affecting tourist perceptions of safety and stability in the region, resulting in cancellations and reduced bookings. Both these crises have underscored the vulnerability of the accommodation and food services sector to external shocks, emphasizing the need for robust recovery and support measures to sustain its vital role in Israel's economy.

As of 2020, the accommodation and food services industry contributed approximately 1.1% to Israel's GDP.³¹ Nonetheless, the sector offers significant employment opportunities. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2023, this industry employed around 231,500 people, accounting for about 5.8% of Israel's workforce.³²

³¹ CBS: See document titled PDF Stats GDP 2020.

³² CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023.

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

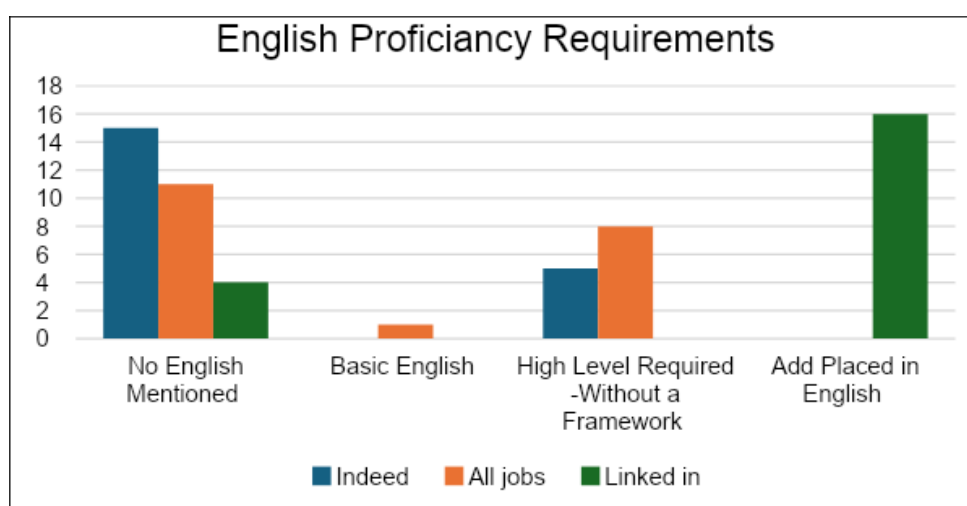
English proficiency within the accommodation & food services industry varies significantly depending on the role and level of interaction with international tourists. For front-line employees such as hotel receptionists, waitstaff, and tour guides, a high level of English proficiency is generally expected. In contrast, back-of-house roles such as kitchen staff and housekeeping may require only basic English skills. Management and administrative roles within this industry also typically demand advanced English proficiency.

According to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions, indicating a moderate proficiency level in English. The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the food and beverage sector corresponds to the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which entails a moderate understanding and use of English.³³

Job Listing Analysis

An examination of job listings in the accommodation & food services industry revealed a range of English proficiency expectations. On Indeed, out of 129 listings, 20 were reviewed. Of these, 15 did not specify English proficiency, while 5 required a high level of English proficiency. AllJobs presented 255 job listings, out of 20 reviewed, 11 did not mention English proficiency, 1 required basic English skills and 8 demanded a high level. On LinkedIn 21 jobs were listed. Of the 20 reviewed, 4 job listings did not mention English proficiency, while 16 were exclusively advertised in English. In total, 60 job listings were reviewed across these platforms. This data illustrates the diverse English proficiency requirements within this industry.

Figure 6: English Proficiency Requirements in the Accommodation and Food Services Industry Across Different Platforms



The data suggests that the importance of English language skills varies depending on the platform used for job searching and the specific segment and job level within the accommodation & food services industry. While English may not be a crucial

³³ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website.

requirement for all jobs, it appears to be essential for certain positions, particularly those advertised on LinkedIn and higher-level positions within the industry. Similar to the findings for the previous industries, these findings show significant variation and inconsistent emphasis on English proficiency across job listings. They align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this specific industry.³⁴

While LinkedIn reflects a closer alignment to the global B2 standard, 75% of the jobs listed on the Indeed website and 55 % of the jobs listed on the AllJobs website did not mention English. This might imply an underlying assumption that candidates already possess a basic or moderate level of English, aligning with Israel's moderate proficiency ranking in the EF-EPI or it might indicate that the job requirements in this industry don't align with the global requirements for workers in the accommodation & food services industry.

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry. Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's accommodation and food services industry has several important impacts on its success:

1. **Customer Service and Guest Relations:** High English proficiency among front-line employees is crucial for interacting with international tourists. Providing exceptional customer service in English enhances guest satisfaction, improves their experience, and encourages repeat visits and positive reviews.
2. **Global Marketing and Online Presence:** Effective marketing strategies often require a strong command of English, especially for online and international campaigns. High English proficiency enables businesses to create compelling marketing materials, manage social media, and engage with a broader audience, thereby attracting more tourists.
3. **Access to Industry Standards and Training:** Much of the technical literature, training materials, and industry standards in the hospitality sector are available in English. Proficiency in English ensures that employees stay updated with global best practices, enhancing the quality of service and operational efficiency.
4. **Communication with International Partners:** Hospitality establishments often collaborate with international travel agencies, booking platforms, and suppliers. Proficiency in English facilitates seamless communication, ensuring smooth coordination and fostering strong business relationships.

³⁴ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8.

5. **Regulatory Compliance and Documentation:** Many international standards and regulations governing the hospitality industry are documented in English. Proficiency in English helps businesses to understand and comply with these regulations, avoiding legal issues and ensuring the smooth operation of their activities.
6. **Staff Training and Development:** Advanced training programs and professional development courses in the hospitality industry are frequently offered in English. High English proficiency enables employees to access these opportunities, leading to skill enhancement and career progression.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's accommodation and food services industry provides a solid foundation, there are opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training, particularly for front-line employees, could further boost the industry's customer satisfaction and global competitiveness. Additionally, investing in language training programs for all employees can ensure that they possess at least a functional level of English proficiency, which is critical for customer service, marketing, and effective communication with international partners.

Conclusion

accommodation & food services industry is a vital component of Israel's economy, supporting tourism and providing essential services to both international and domestic visitors. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing customer service, global marketing, access to industry standards, communication with international partners, regulatory compliance, and staff training. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further enhance the efficiency, customer satisfaction, and global competitiveness of its accommodation and food services industry.

2.6 The Information and Communication Industry in Israel

Introduction

The information and communication industry is dynamic and rapidly growing in Israel's economy, driving innovation, connectivity, and technological advancement. This industry includes activities related to telecommunications, IT services, software development, media, and broadcasting. Given the global nature of information and communication technology (ICT), English proficiency plays a crucial role in the success of businesses and professionals operating within this field. This chapter will explore the current state of the information and communication industry in Israel, the role of English proficiency, and the impact it has on business operations and growth.

Overview

Israel's information and communication industry is known for its high level of innovation and technological prowess. The sector encompasses a wide range of

activities, including telecommunications services, IT consulting, software development, media production, and broadcasting.

As of 2020, the Information and Communication Industry contributed approximately 6.7% to Israel's GDP.³⁵ The sector is also a significant employer, providing jobs for a substantial portion of the population. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2023, this industry employed around 250,000 people, representing about 6.3% of Israel's workforce.³⁶ The industry's strong performance is attributed to Israel's robust infrastructure, skilled workforce, and a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

English proficiency within the information and communication industry is generally high, given the international nature of the field and the need for global collaboration. For ICT professionals, including software developers, IT consultants, and telecommunications specialists, advanced English proficiency is often required. This is particularly true for roles that involve interacting with international clients, developing software for a global market, or consuming and producing technical documentation.

According to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions, indicating a moderate proficiency level in English (EF English Proficiency Index). The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the ICT industry corresponds to the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which entails a moderate understanding and use of English.³⁷

Job Listing Analysis

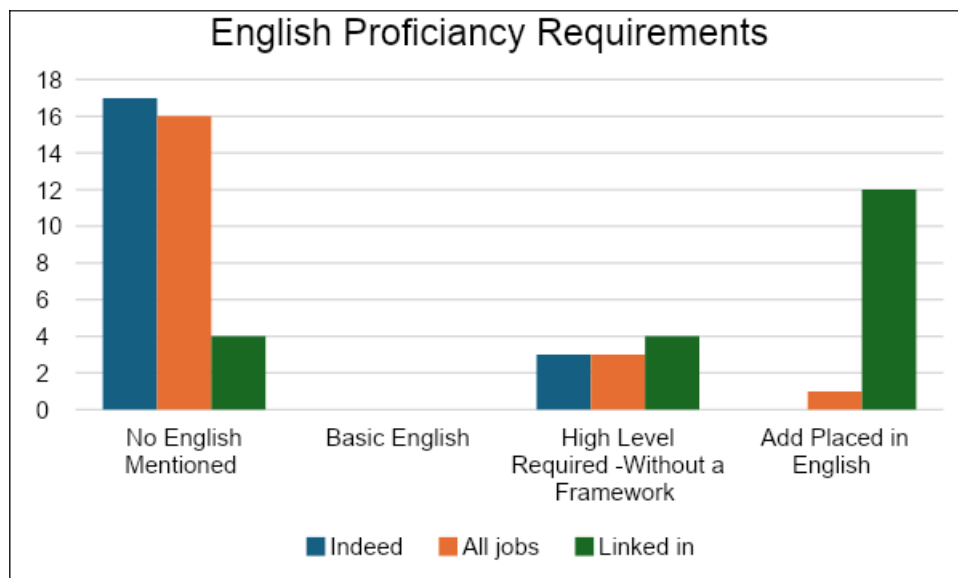
A search for jobs in the Israeli Information and Communication Industry revealed varying requirements for English proficiency. On the Indeed website, there were 87 job listings. Of the 20 reviewed, 17 didn't mention English and 3 required high-level skills. On the AllJobs website, there were 1,008 job listings. Out of 20 reviewed, 16 didn't mention English, 3 required a high level of English proficiency and 1 add was posted in English. On LinkedIn, there were 2019 job listings; of the 20 reviewed, 12 were posted in English, 4 didn't mention English and 4 required a high level of English proficiency. In total, 60 job listings were reviewed across these platforms. This analysis is illustrated in **Figure 7**, which highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across different segments and job levels within the industry.

Figure 7: English Proficiency Requirements in the Information and Communication Industry Across Different Platforms

³⁵ CBS: See document titled PDF Stats GDP 2020.

³⁶ CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023.

³⁷ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website.



The data suggests that the importance of English language skills varies depending on the platform used for job searching and the specific segment and job level within the information and communication industry. While English may not be a crucial requirement for all jobs, it appears to be essential for certain positions, particularly those advertised on LinkedIn and higher-level positions within the industry. Similar to the findings for the previous industries, these findings show significant variation and inconsistent emphasis on English proficiency across job listings. They align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this specific industry.³⁸

While LinkedIn reflects a closer alignment to the global B2 standard, 85% of the jobs listed on the Indeed website and 80 % of the jobs listed on the AllJobs website did not mention English. This might imply an underlying assumption that candidates already possess a basic or moderate level of English, aligning with Israel's moderate proficiency ranking in the EF-EPI or it might indicate that the job requirements in this industry don't align with the global requirements for workers in the ICT industry.

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry. Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's Information and Communication Industry has several important impacts on its success:

³⁸ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8

1. **Global Collaboration and Partnerships:** High English proficiency among ICT professionals facilitates effective communication with international partners, clients, and colleagues. This ability is crucial for establishing and maintaining global business relationships, participating in worldwide projects, and collaborating on research and development initiatives.
2. **Access to Technical Information and Innovation:** English proficiency enables professionals to access the latest research, technical literature, and innovation resources. Staying updated with global advancements in technology is essential for maintaining a competitive edge and driving innovation within the industry.
3. **Customer Service and Support:** Providing high-quality customer service and technical support in English is important for engaging with a global customer base. Proficiency in English helps ensure clear and effective communication, leading to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.
4. **Marketing and International Sales:** Effective marketing strategies often require a strong command of English, especially for online and international campaigns. High English proficiency enables businesses to create compelling marketing materials, engage with a broader audience, and expand their global market reach.
5. **Regulatory Compliance and Documentation:** Many international standards and regulations governing the ICT sector are documented in English. Proficiency in English helps businesses to understand and comply with these regulations, avoiding legal issues and ensuring smooth operations.
6. **Networking and Professional Development:** Participating in international conferences, trade shows, and networking events often requires English proficiency. Engaging in these events allows professionals to form valuable connections, gain insights into industry trends, and explore new opportunities for career growth and business development.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's information and communication industry is generally robust, there are still opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training for ICT professionals can further boost the industry's global competitiveness and innovation capacity. Additionally, investing in continuous language training programs for all employees can ensure they maintain a high level of proficiency, which is critical for effective communication, customer engagement, and compliance with international standards.

Conclusion

The Information and Communication Industry is a vital component of Israel's economy, driving innovation, connectivity, and technological advancement. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing global

collaboration, access to technical information, customer service, marketing, regulatory compliance, and professional development. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further enhance the efficiency, innovation, and global competitiveness of its Information and Communication Industry.

2.7 The Financial and Insurance Activities Industry in Israel

Introduction

The financial and insurance activities industry is a critical sector in Israel, contributing significantly to the country's GDP and economic stability. This industry includes banking, finance, investment, and insurance services, all of which are essential for the economy's smooth functioning and growth. Given the globalized nature of financial markets and the necessity for international communication, English proficiency is crucial for professionals working within this sector. This chapter will examine the current state of the financial and insurance activities industry in Israel, the role of English proficiency, and the impact it has on business operations and growth.

The Financial and Insurance Activities Industry in Israel: An Overview

Israel's financial and insurance activities industry is broad and sophisticated, encompassing a wide range of services such as commercial and investment banking, asset management, insurance, real estate finance, and fintech services. The sector is integral to economic development, providing essential capital, risk management, and financial planning services.

As of 2020, the financial and insurance activities industry contributed approximately 4.4% to Israel's GDP.³⁹ The sector also provides significant employment opportunities. According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2023, this industry employed around 112,400 people, representing about 2.8% of Israel's workforce.⁴⁰ The industry's resilience and innovation capacity are crucial for Israel's economic stability and growth, especially given the country's strong presence in the international financial market.

Current Level of English Proficiency in the Industry

English proficiency within the financial and insurance activities industry is typically high, reflecting the sector's international engagement and the necessity for clear communication with global partners. For financial analysts, bankers, insurance agents, and industry regulators, advanced English proficiency is often a prerequisite. This need is especially pronounced in roles that involve international finance, cross-border transactions, regulatory compliance, and global market analysis.

According to the EF English Proficiency Index for 2023, Israel ranked 54th out of 113 countries and regions, indicating a moderate proficiency level in English. The EF-EPI also noted that the global required score for workers in the financial and insurance

³⁹ See document titled PDF Stats GDP 2020.

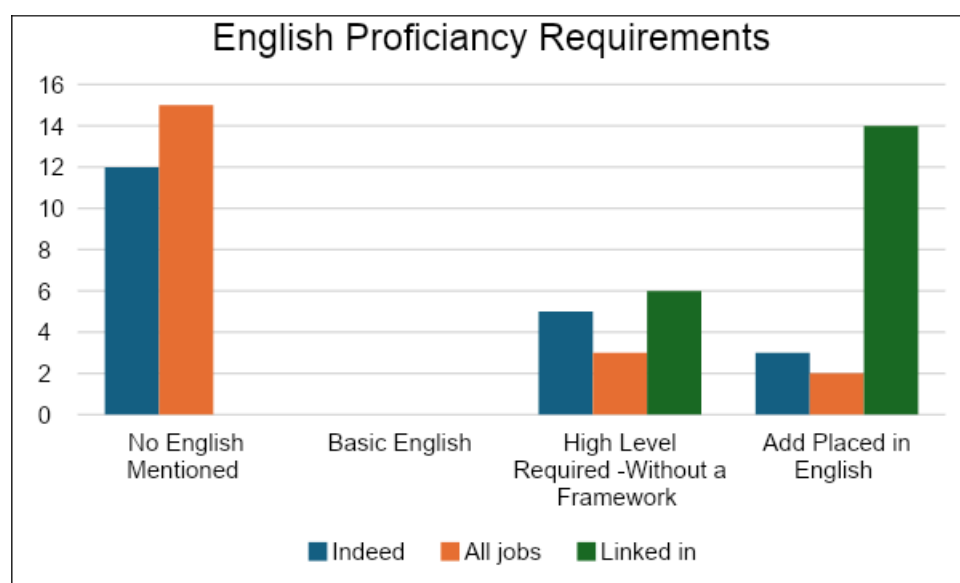
⁴⁰ CBS: see Excel Sheet titled Employee jobs -2023.

services sector corresponds to the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which entails an intermediate understanding and use of English.⁴¹

Job Listing Analysis

A search for jobs in the Israeli financial and insurance activities industry revealed varying requirements for English proficiency. On the Indeed website, there were 715 job listings. Out of the 20 listings reviewed, 12 didn't mention English, 5 required a high-level of English proficiency and 3 were posted in English. On the AllJobs website, there were 3538 job listings. Out of 20 listings reviewed, 15 didn't mention English, 3 required a high level of English proficiency and 2 were posted in English. On LinkedIn, there were 249 job listings. Of the 20 reviewed, 14 were posted in English and 6 required a high level of English proficiency. In total, 60 job listings were reviewed across these platforms. This analysis is illustrated in **Figure 8**, which highlights the varied importance of English proficiency across different segments and job levels within the industry.

Figure 8: English Proficiency Requirements in The Financial and Insurance Activities Industry Across Different Platforms



Similar to the findings in other industries, these findings show significant variation and inconsistent emphasis on English proficiency across job listings. They align with the EF-EPI prediction, which suggested that in the Middle East, English proficiency is not uniformly required or prioritized across different job postings, which could indicate no significant trend towards homogeneity or closing of proficiency gaps within this industry.⁴²

⁴¹ Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8: see score calculation section on this website. Note that while banking and insurance are listed separately and have some differences, they both are B1.

⁴² Ef-EPI: see document titled EF-EPI 2023, page 8

An analysis of job listings in the Israeli financial and insurance activities industry reveals a varied landscape of English proficiency requirements across platforms. On Indeed, 60% of reviewed listings did not mention English proficiency, while 25% required a high level of proficiency and 15% were posted in English. AllJobs showed that 75% of listings did not specify English proficiency, while 15% required high proficiency and 10% of the jobs listed were posted in English. LinkedIn, on the other hand, displayed a higher emphasis on English, with 70% of listings in English and 30% requiring a high level of proficiency. These findings suggest a mixed demand for English skills in the industry, with a significant need for advanced proficiency, especially in roles that involve international communication or dealings.

The data also suggests that the importance of English language skills varies depending on the platform used for job searching and the specific segment and job level within the financial and insurance activities industry. While English may not be a crucial requirement for all positions in the financial and insurance activities industry, it appears to be essential for certain positions, particularly those advertised on LinkedIn and higher-level positions within the industry.

It's important to note that this analysis is based on a limited sample size of job listings. A more comprehensive analysis would need to consider a larger sample of listings across different companies, job levels, and segments within the industry. Additionally, it's important to consider the specific requirements of each individual job posting, as these may vary even within the same platform.

Impact of English Proficiency on the Industry's Success

The current level of English proficiency in Israel's financial and insurance activities industry has several important impacts on its success:

1. **Global Trade and Investment:** High English proficiency facilitates effective communication with international investors, clients, and partners. This ability is crucial for attracting foreign investment, managing global portfolios, and negotiating international contracts.
2. **Access to International Markets:** Proficiency in English enables professionals to access and analyze global financial markets, understand international financial instruments, and stay updated with global economic trends. This access is essential for making informed investment decisions and managing risks.
3. **Customer Service and Client Relations:** Providing high-quality customer service in English is important for engaging with multinational clients and expatriates. English proficiency ensures clear and effective communication, leading to higher customer satisfaction and retention.
4. **Marketing and International Business Development:** Effective marketing strategies in the financial services industry often require a strong command of English, especially for targeting international clients. High English proficiency enables businesses to create compelling marketing materials and expand their global reach.

5. **Regulatory Compliance and Documentation:** Many international financial regulations and standards are documented in English. Proficiency in English helps firms understand and comply with these regulations, ensuring legal compliance and smooth operations.
6. **Networking and Professional Development:** Participating in international conferences, trade shows, and networking events often requires English proficiency. Engaging in these events allows professionals to form valuable connections, gain insights into industry trends, and explore new opportunities for career growth and business development.

Challenges and Opportunities

While the current level of English proficiency in Israel's financial and insurance activities industry is generally high, there are still opportunities for improvement. Enhancing English education and training for financial professionals can further boost the industry's global competitiveness and efficiency. Additionally, investing in continuous language training programs for all employees can ensure they maintain a high level of proficiency, which is critical for effective communication, regulatory compliance, and customer engagement.

Conclusion

The financial and insurance activities industry is a vital component of Israel's economy, supporting economic stability and growth through essential financial services. English proficiency within this industry plays a critical role in its success, influencing global trade and investment, access to international markets, customer service, marketing, regulatory compliance, and professional development. By continuing to prioritize and improve English education and training, Israel can further enhance the efficiency, innovation, and global competitiveness of its financial and insurance activities industry.