

Soft Skills Development in Higher Education

Karimova Nilufar Ummatqul Qizi

Ph.D Student, Uzbekistan State World Languages University, Uzbekistan

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Abstract Nowadays, as a result of economic changes, employers are eager to look for employees with applied skills rather than cognitive skills. Diplomas are not being considered as a definitive indicator of students' professional intelligence as it used to be before. Fourth Industry Revolution has dramatically changed labor market and knowledge is now acknowledged as strength of productivity and economic growth, and information technology has acquired great importance. In such a situation, whether employees start their career or change a job, they can show successful performance, if they can change and update themselves continuously, build positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace, learn and win in the unpredictable challenges of the work place. Accordingly, today the graduates of Higher Education need to master not only professional skills of their job, but also various soft skills, including the ability to communicate, coordinate, work under pressure, and solve problems. The purpose of this article is to provide literature on the connection of soft skills with employability and world labour market, the role of soft skills in career success for future professionals. The article also examines the definition and selection of the most demanding soft skills from the perspective of different literature. The role of Higher Education in forming and developing soft skills will then be discussed. The article illustrates the results of survey carried out with the aim to analyze the degree of integration of soft skills in Study Skills program that is taught for bachelor students in Uzbek State World Languages University and academic curricula.

Keywords Soft Skills, Higher Education Graduates, Professional Development, Lifelong Learning

1. Introduction

With the altering educational tendencies, flexibility in educational courses, attainability of masses of qualified personnel, the competition for job acquisition and job

sustainability is becoming more and more challenging. For today's labor market where workplaces are resizing and decreasing positions it has been evident that professional skills alone are not sufficient to keep individuals employed. In order to get an advantage over the competitors, applicants are left with no choice but to add merits to their hard skills to expand their potential, that are called soft skills. As Klaus P. asserts the lack of soft skills can sink the promising career of someone who has professional expertise but no interpersonal qualities (Klaus, P. 2010).

The actuality of the study is based on the fact that today, the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan is paying special attention to reorganize the educational system radically with an aim to raise it to the level of modern standards. The laws on Youth Policy accentuate the organization of a complex system of learning and teaching foreign languages in the country, concentrated on the upbringing of harmoniously developed, educated and intellectual young generation of people, who can meet the requirements of the modern work labor. In order to achieve the aims and objectives introduced by the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" (1997) and the "National Program of Personnel Training" (1997) the compounded system of reorganizing the structure and the content of personnel training are being developed in the country, that are grounded on perspectives of the social, economic development of the society, contemporary achievements of science, culture, technique and technology. It has been revealed that in order to achieve above mentioned goals and improve the degree of employability of Higher Education graduates requires educators to develop students' not only academic knowledge or "hard skills", but also transversal or "soft" skills in order to make them worthy to the demands of modern work labor. In its turn, it requires to revise curriculum and syllabuses in Higher Education.

The aim of the article is to discuss the significance of soft skills development in Higher Education system and study different approaches dedicated to the current problem. Relying on the aim the article sets the following objectives:

- To define, describe and discuss relevant studies towards taxonomy of soft skills;
- To investigate suggested definitions of soft skills as a term and work out general characteristics;
- To identify the most demanding soft skills that enable students to respond to the ever changing and complex needs of the contemporary workplace.

The scientific novelty of the article can be explained with the following statements:

1. To classify different suggested terms to the notion of soft skills;
2. To justify the prominence of Higher Education in developing soft skills as it is the level where advanced professional skills are developed;
3. To review diverse classification of soft skills in different sources.
4. To analyze curriculum for bachelor's degree on specialization of philologist- English language teacher and syllabus on Study Skills from the point of soft skill consolidation;

The object of the research is educational process at Uzbekistan State World Languages University. To evaluate the educational process from the perspective of soft skills development the curriculum of bachelor's degree for the specialization of philologist- English language teacher and the syllabus of the course "Study skills" were analyzed.

The methodology of the study included descriptive research design and correspondingly a survey was organized. For the theoretical basis of the study the data was collected, first from an initial review of literature related to development of soft skills. For this purpose, various documents, reports, research papers and articles were scanned. Next, the second and the vital source of information was gained through primary research which constitutes the analysis of curriculum for bachelor's degree on specialization of philologist- English language teacher assigned by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of Uzbekistan and syllabus on the course "Study Skills". The tabulated data was analyzed and inferences drawn to interpret the meaning. Simple statistical tools like percentages, averages etc. were used for the analysis of data.

In the 21st century soft skills that are also called "applied" skills or "21st-century skills" are considered an important differentiating factor for achieving job position and success in life. The findings of numerous surveys conducted in the current field have discovered that the role of soft competencies should never be neglected. Including, a study administered by the Harvard University notes that 80% of achievements in career is influenced by soft skills and only 20% by hard skills. While, results from another study conducted by Stanford Research Institute jointly with the Carnegie Mellon Foundation among the Fortune 500 CEOs

confirm that their durable and stable success in work 75% is caused by soft skills and only 25% - hard. Correspondingly, a survey on "Technological Innovation, Ageing Labor Forces and Effective use of Human Resource" conducted in Japan emphasizes that a worker will be required not only to perform a complex job compounding several tasks - programming, maintenance, monitoring and operation, he or she is required, in addition, to possess logical mental power, problem solving ability and adaptability to go through the changes. Such an "all round worker" would be equipped with widely varied skills and professional knowledge in such a way that he understands every action in the performance of skills in relation to the relevant technical knowledge. Another survey conducted in 16 European countries, concludes that 93% employers find soft skills equally important to the quality of the employee, like his professional skills. In 2016, Bonnie Urciuoli hypothesized "skills" with occupational demands of neo-liberal economies, workers are required to "own their skills" and successfully market them to employers. The winner of the "Nobel prize 2000" for Economics James Heckman, describing the role of soft skills, affirms "Soft Skills predict success in life" (Cinque, 2015). He identifies a cause-effect relation between soft skills and personal and professional achievements of people. Carl Rogers (Roger C. 1983), analyzing the goal of educational process more profoundly claims that significant learning combines the logical and the intuitive, the intellect and the feeling, the concept and the experience, the idea and the meaning. "When we learn in that way, we are whole". This statement clearly illustrates the idea that in order to occur absolute learning it should involve more than just acquiring static knowledge. Deloitte Access Economic, an organization that offers a full suite of economic advisory services including economic forecasting, modeling, analysis and advisory services in Australia, assessing the importance of obtaining soft skills, forecasts that soft skill intensive occupations will account for two-thirds of all jobs by 2030, compared to half of all jobs in 2000 (DeakinCo, 2017). It is expected that the number of jobs that are concentrated in soft-skill will grow at 2.5 times the rate of jobs in other occupations. Undoubtedly, this trend is expected to be mirrored globally. Besides, there exist assumptions that claim considerable influence of soft skills on the development of hard skills. According to them, successful implementation of hard skills requires the advanced degree of soft skills to some extent. For instance, Costin G. (Costin, 2002) asserts the appropriate and skillful application of hard skills is soft skills dependent. He categories hard skills as being those related to "product" and the "individual", while soft skills are those of "process" and "community": reminding to be prepared to separate the two, he proposes a soft skill- hard skill continuum. Such a model makes it easier to perceive the domain in which soft and hard skills blur, mend and work together.

Therefore, it becomes more crucial that education institutions shouldn't only aim to prepare qualified professionals but also improve their personal attributes that is critical for productive performance in today's workplace which clearly states the rationale behind the investigation.

Despite the findings on the significance of soft competencies in professional and career growth doesn't exist universal definition of the term "soft skills" and numerous variations can be observed in different sources. In a literal translation from English, the concept "soft skills" means skills, possession of which does not belong to a professional group. According to the Oxford Dictionary, "soft skills" are personal qualities that enable one to cooperate effectively and harmoniously with other people. Soft skills provide hard skills with the needed flexibility to gain progress and stay newfangled in fluctuating work places. Soft skills are firmly connected to plastic, sensible, elaborating abilities, formed in the prefrontal layer, developed by Man in the last 50.000 years. If hard skills allow man to be what he is: an engineer, a physicist, a philosopher, soft skills operate in a direction that is rather separate from the role of the individual and go beyond the strict demands of the profession (Grisi, 2014).

In other sources, the term meant unified skills and personal qualities that increase the efficiency of work and

interaction with other people. In psychology, the term traditionally refers to number of social skills such as persuasion skills, leading skills, communication skills, negotiation skills, teamwork skills, personal development, time management, erudition, creativity, etc. Furthermore, it is worth highlighting the approach that interprets "soft skills" as abstract, hard-to-calculate and assessed skills of an individual, "cut off" from the traditional classification of human abilities. Besides, among definitions can be met those that interpret correlation between soft skills and emotional intelligence. According to Paajanen (Paajanen, 1992), soft skills is a sociological term related to a person's "EQ" (Emotional Quotient), the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that characterize relationships with other people. Roselina (Roselina, 2009), a researcher in the Malaysian Institute of Higher Learning interprets "soft skills" as incorporating aspects of generic skills. While, Nieragden (Nieragden, 2000) in his article "The Soft Skills of Business English," defines soft skills, as "those personal values and interpersonal skills that determine a person's ability to fit into a particular structure, such as a project team, a rock group, or a company". Below we can see proposed names to the term "soft skills" given in chronological order.

Life skills (WHO 1993)
Transversal skills (ISFOL, 1998)
Generic competences (Tuning project, 2000)
Key competencies for a successful life and a well-functioning society (OECD, 2003; 2012)
Key competences for lifelong learning (UE, 2006)
21st century skills (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009)
Future work skills (IFTE, 2010)
Transferable skills (RPIC-ViP, 2011)
Soft Skills for Talent (Manpower Group, 2014)
Skills for Social Progress (OECD, 2015)

Figure 1. Proposed names to the term "soft skills" given in chronological order (Cinque, 2016)

Analyzing the proposed definitions, we can infer that despite being divergent outwardly there are basic characteristics which unite all suggested variations for the term and they can be defined in the following ways:

- soft skills are important aspects of both obtaining employment and succeeding in the workplace;
- soft skills are important not only for the labor market but for a complete human being, in order to achieve happiness in life;
- soft skills are primarily cognitive in nature and are influenced by a person's intelligence quotient source;
- soft skills classification and assessment are complex processes that don't belong to traditional approach;
- the application of these skills is not limited to one's profession. Differently from hard skills, which represent a person's group of skills and abilities that allow to complete a certain type of task or activity, soft skills include mainly interpersonal skills that can be applied to different fields that make them transversal.

What we actually think about when we talk about soft skills is also disputable issue. Paying attention to the diversity of what is understood when talking about soft skills in different nations and cultures and considering that there seems to be a common perception of what soft skills are in many cultural areas, it becomes more comprehensible, why a clear ascertainment of the meaning of this term appears to be challenging. A survey conducted in New Zealand on the perception of employers about the most important skills and knowledge among employees concluded with the emphasis on communication skills, supervision skills, diagnostic skills and design ability that cannot be developed through hard skills. While an Australian study by Stevenson and McKavanagh (Stevenson & McKavanagh, 1992) argues for a more comprehensive view of skills and asserts the need for "the less obvious but important transferable skills" such as learning how to learn, discovery, analysis, problem solving, experimentation, linking new concepts with existing knowledge, relating verbal and non-verbal representations and concrete objects, analyzing and interpreting. K. Prasad (Prasad, 2011) as soft skills lists ten qualities like humility and self-confidence, emotional intelligence (EQ), building on strengths and minding your core incompetence, sensitivity to context, managing perceptions, appreciation for others' roles, focus on outcomes and process, continuous learning. According to the Malaysian Institute of Higher Learning soft skills include non-academic skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication, and lifelong learning. Furthermore, one needs to consider the difference between soft skills and competences. In the European Qualification Framework, the TUNING-Project as well as in the European Adult Learning Glossary the term competence is widely used. In general, competence is described as a synergy of knowledge, personal attitudes and abilities, skills. Such skills are for example the capacity

to read and understand the content of a text, but also the ability to continually adapt to new situations.

Experts note that soft skills training should commence for specialists when they are students as it contributes their successful performance in their academic environment, and, later, in their future work place. The universities' mission of spreading knowledge among the younger generations implies that, in today's world, they must also serve society as a whole; and that the cultural, social and economic future of society requires, in particular, a considerable investment in continuing education. This famous statement illustrated in Magna Charta Universitatum, signed in Bologna in 1988, puts forward the idea that Education Institutions don't have only the responsibility of forming young generations providing them with hard skills to become capable professionals, but must first of all create citizens able to actively and positively participate in society, then they also have to support them for the development of their soft skills (Morandin, 2015).

Numerous studies (King 2003; Mourshed 2012, Yunus & Li 2005) have raised remarkable apprehension about the extending gap between students' skills and capabilities, and the requirements of the work environment in an progressively mobile and globalized society. Lately, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training has revealed the assumptions of many employers and policy-makers, who affirm that these challenges emerge because of the insufficient preparation of students and other workers. They assert that the skills mismatch that is occurring locally, gradually will result in high unemployment in world economies (Cedefop, 2010). Graduates of Higher Education are often deficient the ability to arrange, adapt and strategically apply their specific skills to new situations and circumstances (Bridgstock, 2009). The skills that are pivotal to employability and career success are not only the hard skills as cognitive and technical, job-specific and discipline-specific abilities, but also the so-called soft skills.

Likewise, asserting his position on the connection soft skills development and Higher Education Rogers (Roger, 1983) marks that the goal of higher education is the facilitation of change and learning. According to him, the only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned how to adapt and change; the man who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security. He notes that changingness, reliance on process rather than upon static knowledge, is the only thing that makes any sense as a goal for education in the modern world. Though the statement was said almost 40years ago it is still actual for the current educational context and, from our point of view, it is one of the earliest claims that tries to prove that cognitive knowledge alone is not enough to stay wanted in state of unstable world economy.

On the other hand, studies show that students of Higher Education generally don't meet employers' expectations. In the USA hiring employers consider that only 16% of that hired students are well equipped with the knowledge and skills they are demanded for their new jobs. In United Kingdom over 70% of employers suppose that students should acquire more to be prepared for the workplace. In Middle East many hired students lack soft skills, including workplace etiquette, communication skills and time management. Discrepancy between skills and jobs, gaps in the workplace, deficiency of adequately skilled professionals for certain positions or the plethora of candidates in sectors where there are not sufficient appropriate vacancies need to be amended. Effectively foreseeing which skills will be in demand by organizations in years to come is significant in order to provide future workers with the proper competencies.

ModEs is a project focusing on the consolidation of a common European program on soft skills across the various academic curricula (that enhances students' capabilities with new employment-oriented skills) and the diploma supplement already granted by some higher education institutions. The project has formed a list of skills depending on the questionnaire that have been held with 246 companies operating in different sectors of enterprise in five countries. Data collection was held with the collaboration of people working in the field of human resources of organizations, and figures responsible for staff professional development were from various sectors. The results of the investigation have discovered the 21 skills as soft skills that most required in modern work places. Soft skills are grouped into three branches according to their common features, they are personal, social and methodological skills [9]. With an aim to integrate these skills into existent curriculum and syllabuses in Higher Education learning outcomes for each soft skill have been developed.

2. Results and Discussion

Personal	Social	Methodological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Skills • Professional Ethics • Self-awareness • Tolerance to stress • Commitment • Life balance • Creativity/Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Teamwork • Contact Network • Negotiation • Conflict Management • Leadership • Culture Adaptability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer/User Orientation • Continuous Improvement • Adaptability to Changes • Results orientation • Analysis Skills • Decision Making • Management Skills • Research and information management skills

Figure 2. According to ModEs the most required soft skills in modern work places (Grisi, 2014)

As a result of globalization and integration of Uzbekistan with the world economy the requirements for future specialists have passed to a new stage. Today's Youth Policy in the country aims at preparing not only professionally competent, but also harmoniously developed generation with creative and independent thinking potential, independent position who can meet the requirements of the 21st century. In order to reach this goal drawbacks of educational system are being revealed, curriculums are being renewed, innovative methods and approaches of teaching are being integrated. In our research we have decided to analyze to what extend soft skills development is reflected in the curriculum and syllabuses of Higher Education in Uzbekistan. Specifically, we have focused on the bachelor's degree for the specialization of philologist- English language teacher. As a basis for our survey we have relied on the list of soft skills developed by ModEs, as from our point of view, it provides selected set of all soft skills that are essential for future professionals of all field in labor market.

Being confirmed by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of Uzbekistan the curriculum is divided into language and methodology courses. The aim of the curriculum states "...to prepare teachers of English who are competent in language and methodology referred to international standards." Objectives are presented in the form of abilities students are expected to demonstrate as the graduates of the program. Examining the objectives of the curriculum, we have been able to find the following statements that to some extend imply soft skills reflection in the curriculum:

- an objective states "...ability to evaluate and reflect upon their own learning and teaching" [1]. The objective intends to develop self-awareness of students in terms of learning and teaching. It enables us to consider that one of the soft skills of our focus that is self-awareness is reflected in the curriculum.
- "...intercultural competence with its implications for teaching English." The current objective can be considered to contribute cultural adaptability of students that is one of the selected soft skills of our research.

As it can be examined, the curriculum rarely focuses on the development of soft skills. Any additions or extra recommendations are not provided concerning soft skills development.

Having scanned all the courses in the curriculum and questioning teachers' staff at the University in searching the most non-academic course included in the curriculum we decided to analyze the course Independent study skills. The course is dedicated to develop students' study skills. The significance of the course lies on the fact that being neither complete language nor methodological course it deals most with the development of non-academic skills compared to other courses in the curriculum. According to the course syllabus, the independent study skills (ISS) course introduces students with the study and transferable

skills required in higher educational environment. It covers many transversal skills such as reflection, ability to make independent decisions, self-awareness, becoming autonomous, managing university life and studies and many others.

The course intends to get students aware of the practical implications of the concept of learner autonomy at higher educational institutions. Below, we have analyzed the course objectives:

- "...be aware of the concept of learner autonomy and its importance in higher education.
- "...raise their own self-awareness of their learning styles and preferences."
- "...raise their awareness of the importance of reflection in learning." In this objectives self-awareness skill is reflected as it implies to develop students' ability to grasp their real weaknesses and strengths, as well as the motivations and values behind their behavior.
- "...be able to self-assess, set goals and plan further actions for improvement." In the current objective one of the soft skills- management skills are depicted which deals with setting goals and priorities by the selection and distribution of the tasks and resources, follow-up of the evolution in the execution of those objectives and act on the deviations from the initially planned that may occur. Moreover, decision making ability is considered in this objective which means to make the decisions needed to achieve the objectives quickly and proactively. Decision making uses the relevant information to make the choice of the best alternative easier (by consulting the most appropriate sources, checking and implementing that alternative) and involves considering the assumption of some risks in conditions of uncertainty
- "...be able to adapt to higher educational environment by managing their time and stress effectively, learning how to deal with tasks and prepare for exams." In this objective several soft skills are reflected. 1. Tolerance to stress that expresses the ability to show endurance in complicated or stressful situations, when facing barriers, such as being overloaded with huge amount of tasks which are common for freshman students that have recently entered academic environment. 2. Time management that is characterized by ability to plan and exercise conscious control of time spent on specific activities to increase effectiveness, efficiency and productivity.
- "...have an understanding of developing skills needed not only for learning but also for future work." The given objective also displays the aim of developing students' nonacademic skills to have students prepared for their future professions.

As the objectives evince the course is rather devoted to develop students' personal qualities differently from the courses in language and methodological strand. The course

is intended to be taught for freshman students to ease their adaptation in academic environment.

Although the objectives of the course to some extent mean development of soft skills it is not reflected in the outcomes of the course. Outcomes are confined with two statements that are entirely allocated to study skills.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students should have:

- developed an awareness of the concept of autonomous learning
- developed an ability to apply different autonomous learning strategies in their study (Curriculum for bachelor’s degree specialization. Uzbekistan State World Languages University, 2012).

Below we can see intended topics for the course. Subtopics to be covered in each topic is provided.

Becoming more autonomous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference between studying at a school and at University • Moving from teacher dependency to learner autonomy • The importance of being autonomous
Learning styles and preferences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensory learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) • Honey and Mumford Learning styles (theorist, activist, reflector, pragmatist) • Introverts and Extraverts • Making best use of the learning styles to study better
Self-assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing your language skills using CEFR
Setting goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMART goals • Setting your goal in learning English
Becoming more reflective
Managing time at a University and beyond
Managing stress
Working on tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and personalizing the task • Making the most of the library • Making the most of Internet • Avoiding plagiarism
Improving memory
Preparing for exams and tests
Planning further actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study skills achievements • Transferable skills • Planning towards becoming more autonomous



Topics



Subtopics

Figure 3. Content of Study Skills

The course syllabus presents approaches to teaching and learning. They are the followings:

- Task-based practical work
- Self-study
- Mini-lectures in key areas
- Shared critical discussion of texts/articles/video materials
- Reflection on learning experience
- Learner Portfolio.

In order to deeper analyze the coverage of soft skills by the course we directed our attention to the assessment specifications of the syllabus. Assessment profile consists of learner portfolio, library research, a case study including continuous assessment. Learner portfolio is a collection of entries (reflective written bits) that students will produce over the semester. Each entry has a task that is described below. Below we are going to analyze them more precisely.

Entry 1 is dedicated to self-assessment. Criteria for assessment focuses on students’

- ability to self-assess using the CEFR;
- ability to set realistic goals. It is visible that the entry intends to develop students’ self-awareness and time management skills which, in our opinion, are the most important soft skills for future teacher.

Entry 2 is named “What kind of learner I am” and inquires what a student has discovered about himself as a learner (e.g. his learning style) and how he is going to make best use of it. Criteria for assessment evaluates students’

- awareness of own preferences as a learner;
 - ability to make use of the strengths and weaknesses.
- The current task can be considered very valuable from the perspective of developing students’ soft skills as it aims to improve students’ several “applied” skills that are learning skills, self-awareness and analysis skills.

Entry 3 is committed to reveal students’ understanding about characteristics of a good student. The task is assessed according to the following criteria: students’

- awareness of the importance of learner autonomy in a University setting;
- ability to make comparisons. The task enables us to regard soft skills development is included in the objective of the task as it can contribute to developing students’ analysis skill as it requires students to compare two situations on the basis of similarities and differences.

Entry 4 consecrates students’ evaluation of own learning. It checks students’

- ability to reflect on own learning bringing in relevant examples;
- ability to evaluate the learning outcomes of the course;
- ability to plan own study. As it can be observed the task can serve to develop two of soft skills. They are self-assessment and analysis skills.

Library research inquires students to research information on one of the recommended topics and assesses them according to their

- ability to search for sources (in libraries and the internet);
- ability to narrow down the topic 10%;
- ability to give short description of a source. The task is advantageous from the point of soft skill development as it intends to develop students’ research and information management skills which is included in the list of the most required soft skills in modern labor market.

At the end of the course, students are given a case study to improve the situation suggesting specific actions. Assessment is held according to students’

- ability to identify the learning problems (e.g. poor time management, lack of setting goals, inability to use memory techniques, no planning and note taking strategies);
- ability to recommend specific learning strategies;
- ability to relate the case to own learning experience.

From our point of view, the task is efficient from the perspective of developing students’ management skills, learning skills.

The following table illustrates coverage of soft skills by course Study skills.

Social	
Communication	
Customer/user orientation	
Teamwork	
Leadership	
Negotiation	
Conflict management	
Contact network	
Methodological	
Creativity / innovation	
Decision making	
Analysis skills	
Management skills	
Adaptability to changes	
Results orientation	
Continuous improvement	
Personal	
Learning skills	
Commitment	
Professional ethics	
Tolerance to stress	
Self-awareness	
Life balance	
Culture adaptability	
Research and information management skills	

Figure 4. Coverage of soft skills by course Study skills

Our conducted survey shows that out of twenty-one soft skills only seven skills have been covered by the syllabus of Independent study skills. Among them four skills, with the most percentage, belong to personal soft skills, while the rest conform methodological skills. Social skills as communication, customer/user orientation, teamwork, leadership, negotiation, conflict management, contact network are not reflected in the course syllabus.

In the figure 5, we depicted the proportion of covered soft skills by the course.

As it can be observed from the pie-chart, self-awareness skills take paramount place according to the frequency

distribution. Learning skills, management skill and analysis skills take the second place in equal proportions. Tolerance to stress, adaptability to changes, research and information management skills are in the last place with the least percentages in equal proportions.

The results of the research are significant as they give general picture of educational process in Uzbekistan from the perspective of soft skills integration. Though the role of soft skills in personal and professional development is recognized and measures are taken in order to include these skills into the language learning process, coverage of soft skills is rather low and it constitutes only a few ones.

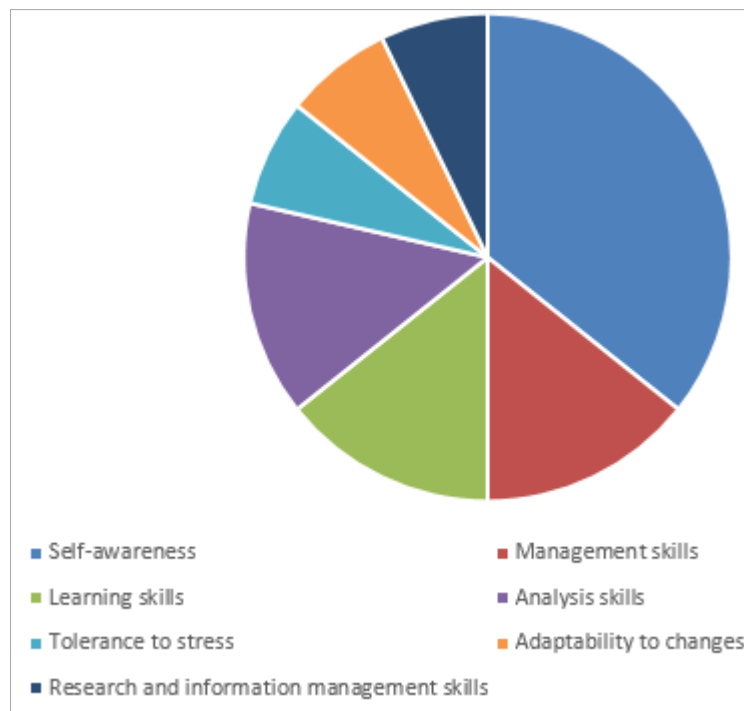


Figure 5. Proportion of covered soft skills by the course

3. Conclusions

Based on the review of literature, data collected and discussions and observations made during the study, the following conclusions can be made:

- The results of the studied surveys and researches have proven that there is a growing awareness that hard skills alone are insufficient for success of professionals, especially, in the present day's dynamic, distributed and complex workplace. Employers and employees have begun to realize the value of soft skills which affected on the requirements by employers.
- Recent changes in the production system and labor market have placed higher education under increasing pressure to train employable graduates. In order to achieve this purpose, universities must transmit not only knowledge and abilities that are specific to each discipline or occupation, but must also develop dispositions and attributes that are transferable to many occupational situations and areas.
- Despite the importance of soft skills development for the growth and development of an individual, society and country in general, most curriculum of Higher Education in Uzbekistan don't meet these objectives. Including, the analyzed curriculum on the bachelor's degree for the specialization of philologist- English language teacher almost (only self-awareness and partially cultural adaptability skills are included) doesn't intend to improve soft skills;
- Similarly, inclusion and integration of cognitive knowledge with soft skills leading to a proper linkage between theory and practice for developing soft skills in students is rather low;
- Even special courses (that don't appear in most curriculum) being non-academic that aim to improve transferable skills cover small proportion of the most demanding soft skills in modern workplaces;
- Consequently, one can come to the assumption that in Higher Education, graduates' level of soft skills development is unsatisfactory and most bachelor students are passed to labor market without acquiring the skills that remarkably contribute to possessing individual competitiveness not only at job market but also in their career development.

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