PERCEIVED CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH LEARNING: A CASE STUDY AT UNIVERSITAS CATUR INSAN CENDEKIA

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on how fourth-semester students in the Faculty of Economics and Business at UCIC perceive the English for Business course and its relevance to their academic and professional development. Employing a qualitative descriptive method supported by both closed-ended and open-ended survey responses, the research aims to explore students' levels of understanding, the challenges they encounter, the benefits they experience, and their expectations for course improvement. Findings indicate that the qualitative analysis of 95 fourth-semester students revealed key challenges and benefits. Major difficulties included limited business vocabulary, insufficient practice, moderate confidence, speaking anxiety, and challenges in presentations, business writing, and role-plays. Despite these obstacles, students reported significant gains, such as improved speaking skills, preparedness for business contexts, enhanced communication, increased confidence, and application of skills in real-life situations. Students suggested curriculum improvements, emphasizing real-world practice, better vocabulary instruction, innovative learning media, career-focused topics, and interactive teaching methods. Students faced challenges including limited vocabulary, speaking anxiety, and insufficient practice. Despite this, they gained improved speaking skills, confidence, and professional readiness. This study highlights the importance of adaptive, needs-based pedagogy, task authenticity, and learner agency, offering actionable insights for ESP curriculum development.

INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly interconnected global economy, mastery of English has become more than just an academic requirement, it is widely recognized as a fundamental professional competency that determines one's ability to participate meaningfully in international communication. The role of English has expanded far beyond its function as a second language taught in schools; it has evolved into

a strategic tool for accessing global knowledge, negotiating across cultural boundaries, and competing in the international job market. In various sectors such as economics, business, technology, finance, and entrepreneurship, English serves as the primary medium through which information flows, business transactions are conducted, and partnerships are established. The rapid growth of international trade agreements, multinational corporations, and global supply chain systems demonstrates how closely interconnected economies around the world have become. These developments influence not only professionals in the workforce but also universities and students who will soon play active roles within the global business ecosystem.

The significant rise of digital-based business operations further emphasizes the urgency of English proficiency. Communication today is no longer limited by geographical barriers; professional discussions, virtual meetings, market research, and cross-country collaborations can occur in real time through digital platforms. Whether engaging in email correspondence, presenting business proposals, or participating in online conferences, English is often the default language used to connect diverse stakeholders. This trend aligns with the increasing presence of global e-commerce markets, startup networks, and remote international work opportunities, which require graduates to not only possess technical knowledge in business but also the linguistic capability to convey ideas clearly and professionally. In this regard, English becomes more than a linguistic tool, it becomes an operational skill that determines productivity, credibility, and influence within professional environments.

The influence of this linguistic shift is especially visible in higher education. Universities in many non-English speaking countries actively integrate English into academic programs, research activities, and professional training modules to ensure graduates are globally ready. Students are no longer expected to learn English solely for passing examinations; they are expected to apply it authentically within context, debating case studies, delivering presentations, drafting proposals, making financial reports, or discussing market analysis in a language understood by the international community. For undergraduates majoring in economics and business, this expectation is particularly pronounced. Their future careers may involve dealing with foreign clients, analyzing global market trends, creating export-import documentation, or promoting local products on international platforms. Without adequate English skills, these professional tasks can become significantly challenging.

Therefore, English is not merely a subject taught for linguistic purposes, but rather a gateway to broader opportunities, economic mobility, and global competitiveness. The ability to use English confidently enhances students' employability by allowing them to engage in wider professional networks, access international training programs, and compete for jobs beyond national borders. In essence, mastering English means gaining access not only to a global language but also to global participation. It is this relevance that underlines why English proficiency is increasingly treated as a vital academic and professional foundation for students of economics and business today.

English for Business, as one of the important components within the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) framework, plays a crucial role in equipping learners with the communicative skills necessary for participating in professional environments. ESP is designed to provide target-oriented language instruction, meaning that learning activities, materials, and competencies are adjusted to the real needs of learners based on their academic and occupational fields. Solihah et al. (2023) note that ESP allows students to apply English differently depending on their discipline, focusing on practical language competencies such as business writing, oral presentations, email correspondence, report drafting, negotiations, and interactions with international partners. In other words, ESP particularly trains students not only to understand English grammatically, but also to apply it functionally in real professional contexts.

However, even with its importance, mastering English for Business has never been without challenges. Many students, particularly those who are not majoring in English, often enter the course with varying levels of proficiency. While some possess basic communication skills, others may struggle with vocabulary limitations, pronunciation difficulties, or unfamiliarity with business discourse. These issues create learning gaps and can hinder the development of confidence in using English actively. Evans (2018) reinforces this by stating that students frequently find it difficult to transfer general English knowledge to business specific interactions, which require particular pragmatic awareness, lexical precision, and contextual judgment. In practice, this means that being able to speak English conversationally does not automatically guarantee success in presenting business proposals, negotiating with clients, or writing formal reports. This distinction highlights the importance of tailored learning, an approach that many students feel still lacks in current instructional environments.

Along with linguistic challenges, psychological factors also influence students' learning experiences. Fear of making mistakes, anxiety when speaking publicly, and low self-confidence are commonly reported barriers. These emotional constraints often reduce participation and discourage students from practicing English actively. As a result, many students may understand business concepts theoretically but hesitate to express them verbally, especially in front of their peers or instructors. Limited exposure to authentic business situations further intensifies this gap, as many classroom activities still rely on textbook-based exercises rather than experiential learning approaches. Without real-life application, students may struggle to connect classroom content with workplace expectations, leading to reduced motivation and perceived irrelevance of the course.

On the positive side, extensive research in ESP highlights several benefits experienced by students who engage actively in English for Business learning. Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2022) state that students typically gain increased self-confidence, improved communicative competence, and stronger employability outcomes when they are exposed to meaningful ESP instruction. When learners feel that the material aligns with their career aspirations, motivation tends to increase significantly. This leads to a more proactive learning attitude—students become more willing to present ideas, collaborate in discussions, and complete

communication-based tasks. Many also develop transferable skills such as critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and intercultural competence, all of which are highly valued in modern workplaces. Thus, understanding student perceptions is vital because their attitudes toward learning directly influence engagement, performance, and long-term skill acquisition.

In the context of Universitas Catur Insan Cendekia (UCIC), English for Business has been integrated into the curriculum for fourth-semester students in the Faculty of Economics and Business. UCIC aims to prepare graduates who are professionally competent and ready for the demands of modern industry, including the ability to communicate effectively in English. Despite this curricular emphasis, there remains limited research examining how students perceive the course whether they consider it beneficial, relevant, challenging, or in need of improvement. Student feedback is an essential aspect of course evaluation, since it reflects real classroom experience from the learner's perspective. Without such feedback, instructors and curriculum designers may not fully understand the obstacles students face or the types of activities that best support learning.

Previous research in ESP contexts has emphasized the importance of aligning course design with learner needs. Basturkmen (2020) argues that ESP instruction should be grounded in real-world communication demands to ensure both relevance and effectiveness. This means that English for Business should not be taught solely as a theoretical subject, but rather as a practical skill set that mirrors authentic workplace communication. For instance, instead of generic role-plays, students may benefit more from simulation-based activities such as pitching a business product, writing business proposals, or participating in mock negotiation sessions. Technology integration, such as video-based presentations, digital correspondence platforms, or AI-supported proofreading tools, can also enhance learning engagement. According to Ullah and Anwar (2020), technology integration, such as video-based presentations, digital correspondence platforms, and AI-supported tools, has been shown to enhance learner engagement and motivation in educational settings. When students are exposed to realistic tasks that reflect global business trends, they are more likely to perceive the course as meaningful.

Furthermore, the increasing influence of digitalization in business environments demands updated ESP learning approaches. Many modern companies rely on cross-cultural virtual meetings, online collaboration tools, and digital marketing strategies that require English literacy. Therefore, business English is not only about grammar and vocabulary, but also about digital communication etiquette, professional tone, intercultural sensitivity, and persuasive speaking. Students who lack experience with such skills may struggle post-graduation, even if they possess strong academic knowledge. By investigating student perceptions, this study intends to explore whether current learning practices at UCIC adequately address these needs, or whether modifications in teaching methods, material development, or assessment strategies are required.

To ensure comprehensive insight, this research not only identifies challenges but also explores perceived benefits. Some students may feel more

confident in public speaking after taking the course, while others may develop better fluency through classroom discussions. A number of students may appreciate the relevance of business English in their future careers, particularly those interested in entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, or international trade. Positive perceptions like these are indicators of what aspects of the course currently work well and should be maintained. Meanwhile, negative perceptions or recurring difficulties signal areas that need pedagogical attention.

Understanding both sides of perception, obstacles and advantages, enables instructors to redesign learning in a more learner-cantered way. If students indicate that vocabulary is a major challenge, for example, instructors might incorporate targeted lexical training, contextual reading activities, or vocabulary-based speaking tasks. If anxiety is a primary issue, support could be provided through group-based presentations, peer feedback sessions, or communication games designed to reduce pressure. If students express a need for more real-world exposure, collaboration with industry partners, internship-based projects, or business case studies could be introduced. With this approach, teaching becomes responsive, and learning becomes practical.

Therefore, this study serves as an important step in improving the quality of English for Business instruction at UCIC. By exploring student perceptions, specifically the challenges they encounter and the benefits they experience, valuable recommendations can be formulated for curriculum enhancement. Such insights are expected to support the development of a more adaptive ESP model that fosters student readiness for professional environments.

Based on the background above, this study aims to explore students' experiences in learning English for Business by identifying the major difficulties they encounter during the course, including linguistic obstacles, psychological barriers, and contextual limitations that may affect their learning process. In addition, this study seeks to describe the benefits perceived by students after completing the course, such as improved communication abilities, increased motivation, and heightened professional awareness. Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to provide constructive input for course developers and instructors in order to support curriculum refinement, encourage teaching innovation, and promote more effective and meaningful learning implementation in the future.

Understanding how learners see the course is not merely an academic objective, it is a foundation for building more impactful educational programs. When instruction aligns with student needs, the learning process becomes meaningful, engaging, and practically useful. Jabbarifar & Elhambakhsh (2025) state that analysing learners' perceptions toward learning, teaching, and assessment processes is crucial in curriculum design because when instructional activities align with how students view and experience learning, educational achievement is more likely and the process becomes more relevant and meaningful ultimately, by evaluating student perceptions, this study intends to strengthen the role of English for Business as a strategic course that prepares UCIC students for global career challenges.

RESEARCH METHOD
This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to explore students' perceived challenges and benefits in learning *English for Business*. The participants were selected purposively from fourth-semester students in the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Catur Insan Cendekia (UCIC), all of whom had completed the *English for Business* course. A total of 95 students from three study programs, Business Management, Accounting, and Management, were involved in this research. Data were collected through open-ended questionnaires, allowing students to express their perceptions, difficulties, and reflections in their own words. This method was chosen to gain rich, detailed insights into students' learning experiences, which are essential in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The questions focused on key areas such as major difficulties that students encounter during the course, the benefits students perceive after taking the course, and constructive input for curriculum developers and educators to enhance the course delivery. The responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2021), which involves coding, categorizing, and interpreting patterns across the data. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and data confidentiality. This methodological approach is particularly suitable for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) research, where learner perceptions are central to understanding the effectiveness of instructional practices (Basturkmen, 2020; Hyland & Wong, 2023).
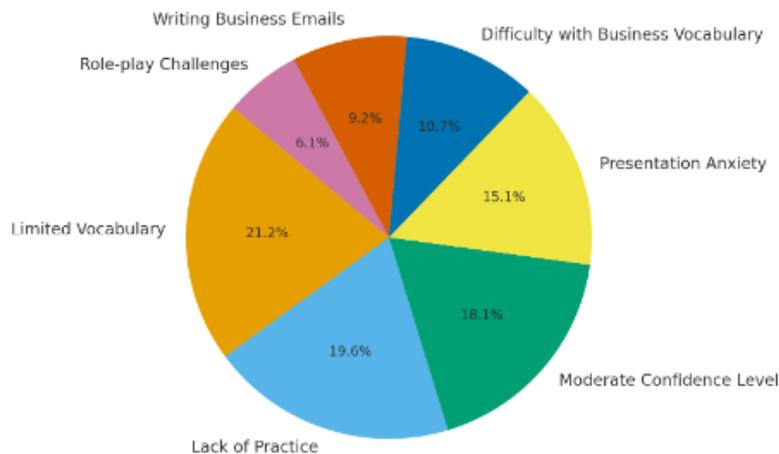
FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Findings
This section presents the findings from the qualitative analysis of students' experiences in the English for Business course. Data were collected through open-ended questionnaire responses from 95 fourth-semester students of the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Catur Insan Cendekia. The analysis provides insights into students' perceived challenges, benefits, and suggestions for course improvement. Overall, the findings highlight key linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical factors that influence students' learning experiences and offer valuable implications for improving English for Business instruction.
Major Difficulties Students Encounter During the Course
      The qualitative analysis reveals several recurring challenges experienced by students while participating in the English for Business course. These challenges are categorized thematically and supported by selected student responses to enhance authenticity. As noted by Hyland and Wong (2023), ESP learners often face difficulties when applying language knowledge to professional contexts, particularly in tasks such as presentations, reports, and negotiations. The findings of this study reflect similar patterns.

Students' Perceived Challenges in the English for Business Course (N = 95)

Writing Business Emails

Role-play Challenges

9.2% 10.7% Difficulty with Business Vocabulary

6.1%

15.1% Presentation Anxiety

Limited Vocabulary 21.2%

18.1% Moderate Confidence Level

19.6%

Lack of Practice

Graph 1. Challenges in the English for Business Course

a. Limited Vocabulary

Limited vocabulary emerged as the most frequently reported difficulty, particularly related to formal and technical business terms. Many students expressed difficulty understanding instructions and expressing ideas during discussions, role-plays, and writing tasks.

"There were some situations where I felt unprepared or confused, especially during group discussions or role-play activities." (Student 10)

"It's very difficult because business English is different from general English." (Student 16)

This finding aligns with Basturkmen (2020), who states that ESP learners often struggle with domain-specific vocabulary due to limited exposure and contextualized practice. Although students may be familiar with general English, business communication requires specialized lexical knowledge that many are still developing.

b. Lack of Practice

Another major challenge reported by students was the lack of sufficient practice, particularly in realistic business communication scenarios. Some students felt that while learning materials were useful, they did not provide enough explanation regarding pragmatic choices such as tone and appropriateness.

"The templates were helpful, but they didn't always explain why one phrase was better than another." (Student 3)

Gollin-Kies et al. (2021) emphasize that consistent practice and immediate feedback are crucial for developing confidence in professional communication. Without adequate opportunities for application, students tend to retain passive knowledge that is difficult to transfer to real-world contexts. This finding is also supported by Lestari (2021), who highlights the importance of meaningful speaking practice in improving students' performance.

c. Moderate Confidence and Speaking Anxiety

Many students reported moderate confidence levels, especially during tasks requiring spontaneous oral communication such as presentations and role-plays.

Speaking anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and concern about grammar were commonly mentioned.

"I still need more practice to speak fluently and respond quickly." (Student 5)
"I get nervous during presentations because I'm afraid of making mistakes."
(Student 10)

These affective factors significantly limited students' participation. This finding supports Lestari's (2021) study, which indicates that speaking anxiety is a common issue among Indonesian EFL learners and often reduces engagement in oral tasks.

d. Presentation Anxiety

Presentation tasks were identified as particularly challenging due to the combination of language use, public speaking, and content organization.

"Delivering a presentation in English requires language skills, confidence, and the ability to answer questions, which is very difficult." (Student 15)

Although presentations are pedagogically valuable, the findings suggest the need for better scaffolding, preparation stages, and supportive feedback to reduce anxiety and enhance performance.

e. Other Challenges: Business Writing and Role-Play

Students also reported difficulties in writing formal business emails and participating in role-plays, which require immediate responses and pragmatic awareness.
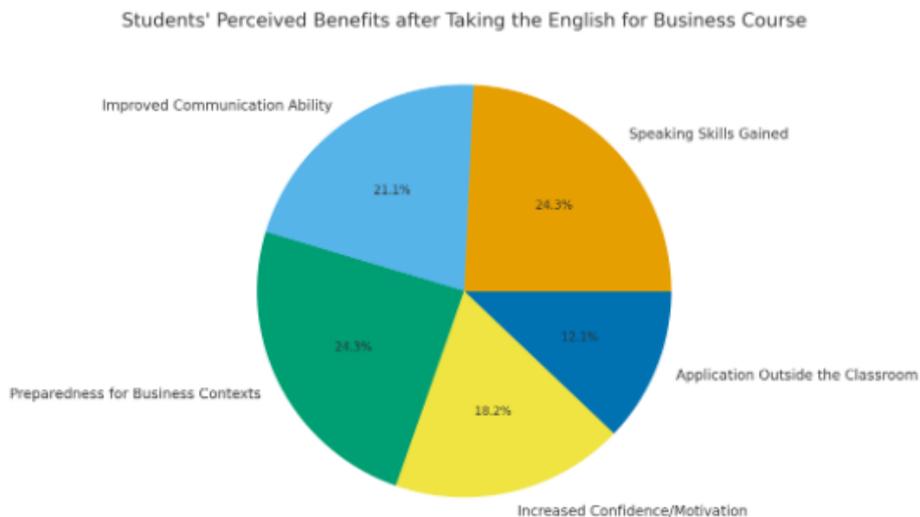
"I'm not sure about the correct tone in business emails." (Student 20)

"In role-play, I must respond quickly with the right vocabulary." (Student 8)

Hyland (2019) explains that pragmatic competence—such as adjusting tone and politeness—is a complex skill that requires guided exposure. These challenges indicate the need for more structured practice in professional communication contexts.

Benefits Students Perceive After Taking the Course

Despite the challenges, students reported numerous benefits from completing the English for Business course. These benefits reflect both linguistic improvement and personal development. As argued by Hyland (2019), ESP courses should enhance communicative competence relevant to learners' professional fields, which was evident in students' responses.

Students' Perceived Benefits after Taking the English for Business Course

Improved Communication Ability 21.1%

Speaking Skills Gained 24.3%

Application Outside the Classroom 12.1%

Increased Confidence/Motivation 18.2%

Preparedness for Business Contexts 24.3%

Graph 2. Benefit after Taking the English for Business Course

a. Speaking Skills Gained

Improved speaking skills were the most frequently reported benefit, with 76 students highlighting greater fluency and confidence.

"I am more confident speaking during discussions and presentations." (Student 10)

This supports Gollin-Kies et al. (2021), who note that oral performance tasks help learners develop real-world communication skills.

b. Preparedness for Business Contexts

An equal number of students (76) reported increased preparedness for professional environments. They felt more familiar with formal expressions, business etiquette, and workplace communication.

"I feel more ready to communicate with clients or colleagues." (Student 7)

This finding aligns with Basturkmen (2020), who emphasizes the importance of contextualized instruction that mirrors workplace discourse.

c. Improved Communication Ability

Sixty-six students reported improvements in their overall communication skills, including expressing opinions, making requests, and responding appropriately.

"I learned how to communicate more naturally and politely." (Student 6)

Hyland and Wong (2023) argue that ESP communication involves functional fluency rather than grammatical accuracy alone, supporting this result.

d. Increased Confidence and Motivation

Fifty-seven students experienced increased confidence and motivation, which positively influenced their willingness to use English beyond the classroom.

"I'm no longer afraid to apply for internships that require English." (Student 2)

This finding supports Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), which suggests that reduced anxiety and increased confidence enhance language acquisition.

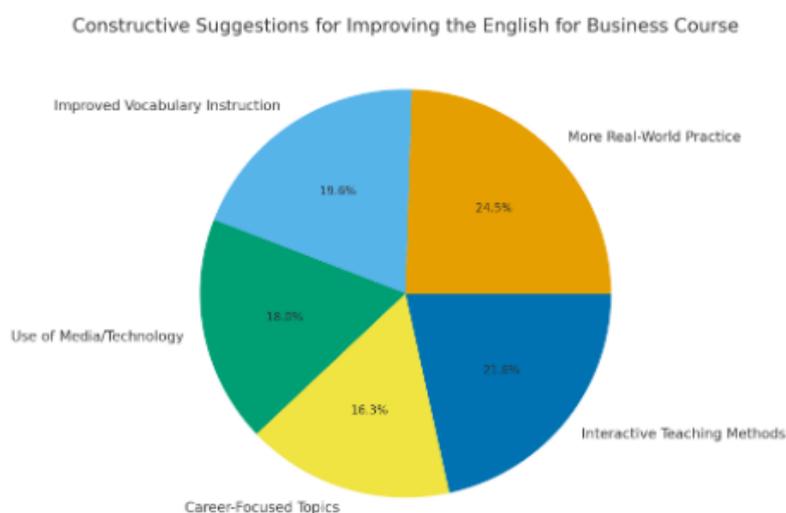*e. Application Outside the Classroom*

Thirty-eight students reported applying their English skills in real-life situations, such as writing emails or participating in webinars.

"I used English to write a business email during an online workshop." (Student 10)

This demonstrates that students recognized the practical value of the course, which enhances learning retention (Hyland, 2019).

Constructive Input for Curriculum Developers and Educators

Students provided valuable suggestions for improving the English for Business course, particularly regarding teaching methods, materials, and relevance. Consistent with Solihah (2023), effective ESP instruction requires well-designed resources and appropriate pedagogical strategies.

Constructive Suggestions for Improving the English for Business Course

More Real-World Practice 24.5%
Interactive Teaching Methods 21.6%
Career-Focused Topics 16.3%
Use of Media/Technology 18.0%
Improved Vocabulary Instruction 19.6%

Graph 3. Suggestion for English for Business Curriculum

a. Emphasize Real-World Practice
Students strongly recommended increasing real-life simulations, such as business presentations, meetings, and email writing.
"More real-life exercises will help students use English professionally." (Student 1)
This supports Basturkmen's (2020) view that ESP courses should simulate workplace realities.

b. Improve Vocabulary Instruction
Students requested more focused and contextualized business vocabulary instruction.
"There is a lack of attention to important business vocabulary." (Student 2)
According to Hyland (2019), ESP vocabulary teaching should emphasize both meaning and functional use.

c. Integrate Technology and Learning Media
Students suggested incorporating videos, case studies, and interactive platforms to enhance engagement.
"Using videos and real case studies would make learning more interesting." (Student 5)
Gollin-Kies et al. (2021) argue that multimodal learning increases engagement and retention in ESP contexts.

d. Add Career-Focused Topics
Students recommended including job interview practice, CV writing, and personal branding.
"This course helps prepare us for the real world of work." (Student 1)
This supports Hyland and Wong's (2023) recommendation to continuously update ESP curricula according to workplace demands.
e. Revise Teaching Methods and Assessment
Students favored interactive learning methods and project-based assessments over traditional exams.
"Group discussions and simulations help us act like professionals." (Student 3)

Discussion
The findings of this study provide comprehensive insights into students' challenges, perceived benefits, and constructive suggestions regarding the English for Business course. When interpreted through the lens of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) theory and previous empirical research, several important themes emerge related to learner needs, affective factors, and pedagogical implications. This discussion synthesizes those findings to offer a broader understanding of how the course functions in practice and how it might be strengthened to align more effectively with students' professional and academic goals.

Learners' Difficulties and Their Implications in ESP Learning
One of the most prominent difficulties identified in this study is students' limited vocabulary, particularly regarding business-specific terminology. This aligns with Basturkmen's (2020) assertion that ESP learners frequently struggle with domain-specific lexis due to insufficient exposure to authentic contexts. The student quotes describing confusion during discussions or uncertainty in vocabulary use indicate that learners' receptive knowledge may not yet be sufficiently developed to support productive tasks such as presentations, role-plays, and business writing.

Hyland and Wong (2023) also emphasize that ESP differs significantly from general English, especially in linguistic features such as tone, formality, structure, and professional jargon. The students' difficulties, therefore, are not merely a lack of general proficiency but reflect a deeper issue concerning the transfer of academic English knowledge into professional or business-specific contexts. This reinforces the idea that vocabulary instruction in ESP must be approached not as isolated word lists, but through contextualized activities where students encounter terms in meaningful, task-based situations.

Another major issue is the lack of adequate practice opportunities. Many students noted that, although the material was helpful, the absence of frequent real-world simulations limited their ability to internalize and apply the knowledge effectively. Gollin-Kies et al. (2021) argue that practice-based learning and feedback loops are central to developing professional communication skills. Without these, learners often possess passive knowledge that fails to translate into active performance. In the English for Business course, this becomes evident in students' moderate levels of confidence and frequent speaking anxiety, especially during live presentations.

Affective variables, particularly speaking anxiety and low confidence, emerged as significant barriers. Students expressed nervousness about grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and the pressure of performing in front of peers. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) provides a useful framework here: anxiety increases the affective filter, blocking language acquisition and hindering performance. As also reported by Lestari (2021), speaking difficulties among EFL learners often stem from limited practice opportunities and high levels of anxiety, which aligns with the challenges identified in this study. The findings suggest that although students are acquiring linguistic knowledge, emotional and psychological barriers may limit their willingness to participate. This highlights the importance of creating a supportive classroom environment where mistakes are normalized as part of the learning process and where scaffolding is provided for high-stakes tasks like presentations.

Finally, challenges in business writing and role-play indicate that students struggle not only with vocabulary but also with pragmatic competence. Hyland (2019) notes that ESP learners must understand not just what to say, but how to say it appropriately within professional norms—considering politeness, clarity, formality, and cultural expectations. Students' uncertainty about tone in business emails or pressure to respond instantly in role-plays reflects a need for more explicit instruction on pragmatics. This suggests that the development of communicative competence in ESP must extend beyond structural language instruction to include sociolinguistic and functional dimensions.

Perceived Benefits and Their Significance for ESP Learning

Despite the challenges, students reported notable benefits, particularly improvements in speaking ability and preparedness for business contexts. Speaking skills were identified as the greatest benefit, with 76 students highlighting increased fluency, confidence, and clarity. This reinforces the idea presented by Gollin-Kies et al. (2021) that oral performance tasks—if embedded consistently—can produce significant gains in communicative competence. It also suggests that even though presentation tasks cause anxiety, they contribute meaningfully to learners' growth when appropriately scaffolded. Preparedness for business contexts was also reported by 76 students. This finding is consistent with Basturkmen's (2020) emphasis on the need for contextualized, professionally relevant ESP instruction. Students' reflections suggest that the course successfully introduces them to workplace discourse, phrases used in meetings, email conventions, and professional etiquette. This alignment with workplace communication is essential, as ESP courses must bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world application.

Improved general communication skills, cited by 66 students, indicate that the course's benefits extend beyond business-specific scenarios. Students reported better ability to explain ideas, respond to questions, and interact in groups. This aligns with Hyland & Wong's (2023) understanding of ESP as not merely domain-specific language training but as a means of developing functional fluency applicable in diverse settings.

Furthermore, the increase in confidence and motivation among 57 students reflects emotional and psychological gains that are crucial for long-term language development. Wang (2024) suggests that learners' confidence and reduced anxiety significantly enhance language acquisition, supporting the notion that lowering the affective filter facilitates more effective engagement in professional English contexts (Wang, 2024).

Finally, the application of skills outside the classroom reported by 38 students demonstrates the practical value of ESP instruction. When learners begin to use English spontaneously in internships, workshops, and email communication, it indicates that the course content is relevant, transferable, and impactful. As Hyland (2019) points out, real-life applicability is central to the success of ESP pedagogy because it reinforces learner motivation and supports long-term retention.

Students' Suggestions and Lecturer's Implications

Students' suggestions offer valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers. The most common recommendation is to increase real-world practice through simulations, business meetings, email writing, and presentations. This aligns with the ESP principle that instruction should reflect authentic tasks that learners will encounter in professional environments. Basturkmen (2020) argues that real-world simulations not only enhance communicative competence but also help learners anticipate workplace demands. Incorporating more case studies, negotiation exercises, or business role-plays could therefore strengthen the course's practical relevance.

Students also requested improved vocabulary instruction, emphasizing deeper explanations and contextualized learning. This supports Hyland's (2019) perspective that vocabulary in ESP must be taught with attention to its pragmatic use in specific situations. This could involve corpus-based vocabulary lists, scenario-based learning, or explicit instruction on register and tone.

Another major suggestion involves incorporating more learning media and technology. Students expressed interest in videos, podcasts, interactive platforms, and collaborative online tools forms of multimodal learning that Gollin-Kies et al. (2021) identify as highly effective for language retention. Integrating digital resources may increase engagement and provide learners with exposure to authentic professional discourse.

Students also recommended adding career-focused content such as job interviews, CV writing, LinkedIn profiles, and personal branding. This aligns with Hyland and Wong's (2023) view that ESP curricula should be adaptive to evolving professional demands. Including such topics can enhance the perceived relevance of the course and provide tangible preparation for the workforce.

Finally, suggestions to revise teaching methods and assessment shifting toward interactive methods and project-based evaluations reflect a desire for more dynamic and experiential learning. Cotos (2014) argues that simulations, task-based learning, and collaborative projects increase autonomy and self-efficacy, both crucial for ESP learners. Implementing these methods may also help lower

anxiety by normalizing participation and providing opportunities for repeated practice.

Overall Interpretation of the Findings
Overall, the findings suggest that the English for Business course is effective in building students' communication skills, confidence, and readiness for professional contexts. However, certain gaps, particularly in vocabulary mastery, pragmatic competence, and real-world practice hinder optimal performance. Students' suggestions reveal a desire for more authentic, engaging, and professionally relevant instruction.

The alignment between student experiences and ESP theory indicates that the challenges they face are typical of learners transitioning from general English to domain-specific communication. By integrating more practice-based activities, enhancing vocabulary instruction, leveraging technology, and adopting career-oriented topics, educators can improve both learner outcomes and satisfaction.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings of this study reveal that students in the English for Business course encounter a range of challenges, including limited domain-specific vocabulary, insufficient practice opportunities, moderate confidence, speaking anxiety, and difficulties with presentations, business writing, and role-play. These challenges underscore the complexities of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learning, where transferring general English knowledge to professional contexts requires both linguistic competence and pragmatic awareness. Despite these obstacles, students reported significant benefits, such as enhanced speaking skills, improved communication, greater preparedness for professional settings, increased confidence, and the ability to apply skills outside the classroom.

The findings also emphasize the importance of affective factors, as learners' confidence and reduced anxiety aligned with Wang, 2024 relating to directly influence performance and engagement. Students' constructive feedback highlights the need for more authentic, real-world practice, contextualized vocabulary instruction, integration of technology and multimodal learning, career-focused activities, and interactive teaching methods. These recommendations align with established ESP principles, suggesting that task authenticity, learner agency, and practical relevance are critical for effective pedagogy.

Overall, the study indicates that while the course successfully enhances students' professional communication skills and confidence, addressing gaps in practice, vocabulary mastery, and pragmatic competence can further optimize learning outcomes. Educators and curriculum developers can leverage these insights to design adaptive, needs-based instruction that prepares students for the demands of real-world business communication while fostering sustained motivation and engagement.

For lecturers, this study offers not only a diagnosis of instructional pain points but also learner-informed recommendations that can be directly translated into course innovation. The emphasis on contextual relevance, task authenticity, and learner agency emerges as a key pedagogical priority.

Future research could extend this inquiry through longitudinal studies or cross-institutional comparisons, particularly to examine how students' business English competencies evolve across academic levels or internships. Such exploration would deepen our understanding of how ESP instruction can be better aligned with dynamic, real-world communication demands.

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