

Industry-Driven Task Needs and Syllabus Recommendation for Business English Materials

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Abstract

The present study aims to identify the tasks needed and propose recommendation of topics and their coverage for the Business English course. This is a survey study employing a mixed method. The data were collected from 42 business professionals who use Business English in their workplace. The instruments used were a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide. The data obtained in this study were analyzed using descriptive quantitative and qualitative methods. The study results showed that 1) seven types of tasks are needed for the Business English course: reading, writing, listening, speaking, document translation, business etiquette, and others (handling complaints), 2) eight topics are recommended based on the data analysis, namely handling clients 1, handling clients 2, meeting with clients, business presentations, writing for the company, English correspondence, handling telephone calls, handling complaints. Hence, business professionals perceive that language skills, knowledge, and business etiquette are needed. Course designers should consider this study results in designing and developing their Business English materials or books for the students' learning to be effective.

Keywords: Business English; business professionals; industry demands; task-based need analysis

Introduction

The rise of international business exchanges has brought new challenges to companies (Batsila & Shrestha, 2022). To take part in international business and win global competitions, companies need superior human resources (Kholis & Iryanti, 2021). They need to be more advanced to be ready to face the global demands, especially in their English skills. This is because English fulfils the international language requirement and becomes a business language (Abilasha & Ilankumaran, 2018). This is also supported by Kholis and Iryanti (2021) and Destrin and Zaki (2023), who state that English is often used as the main communication tool at work. In addition, Farani and Yustisia (2021) emphasize that foreign language proficiency is an important requirement of the present job market. In short, English is an imperative language for building a business nowadays.

To fulfil the requirements of future employers, students must prepare themselves by acquiring key skills in English and cross-cultural understanding (Fajaryati et al., 2020). Taking Business English course can be an effective way to develop these competencies. Business English focuses on information exchange, business communication skills, and language requirements for solving business-related problems. The course guides students to be skilful in communicating using English to handle tasks or challenges in a business context. It also develops students' cultural competence, which is important to minimise misunderstandings due to intercultural exchange (Jingzi et al., 2016). Business English equips students with competencies to use English in practical business contexts.

Some benefits of taking Business English courses are proposed by Li (2024). Firstly, it creates good cooperative communication. It helps companies to communicate and deal with international customers, partners, and suppliers. A good cooperative relationship can be established when both parties communicate well. Secondly, Business English helps companies promote and market internationally. Thirdly, it helps to establish negotiation and cooperation. When employees of a company are proficient in Business English, they can conduct better negotiations with international customers and reach cooperation agreements. Fourthly, it helps to grow cultural awareness. By learning Business English, individuals and organisations can better understand the business culture and market needs of different countries and regions. Lastly, it helps to avoid misunderstanding and conflict. Business English reduces ambiguity in information transmission since both parties know the message discussed. In conclusion, a Business English course benefits the company and employees.

In developing Business English programs, conducting a need analysis is crucial (Changpueng & Pattanapichet, 2023). Need analysis refers to the assessment of the language and communication requirements of learners based on their careers, company, and cultural background (Lasekan et al., 2023). Recognising them enables the course designers to meet the specified needs to help the students solve the problems they encounter on the field (Meyer & Norman, 2020). Thus, need analysis not only promotes relevance but also optimises the practical learning of the course material. The basis for need analysis should be clearly defined to see what students should master. Task-based need analysis focuses on the task as the unit of analysis (E. Park, 2021). Tasks measure successful language use as completing the tasks shows the learners' language skills (Aizawa et al., 2023). Tasks are designed to help students not only to use the language they already have but also to develop new language skills. This is because they practice their language through tasks and, in turn, they gain proficiency. Furthermore, Nunan (2004) suggests that the tasks are a part of the communication process and require students to practice their language skills in real communication. The tasks are intended to issue the students in the

real world and make them feel the real world (Bui & Tai, 2022). Therefore, the task-based approach is the most suitable method for the needs assessment in Business English.

Needs analysis on Business English course has been subject to many pieces of research. Guiyu and Yang (2016) investigated the status of the program in China and the obstacles that students faced in the class. Wang and Shen (2019) explored the perceptions of Business English Writing (BEW) among Chinese MBA students. Rimkeeratikul (2022); Ebrahimi (2019); Alhassan (2021); Batsila and Shrestha (2022); Wang and Shen (2019) focused on the language skill needs for the course. Xie (2023) investigated the needs and challenges of using simulation techniques in Business English instructions. Seeing the objectives of the previous research, the following gaps are identified: 1) There is a lack of studies that focus on the needs of Business English courses, particularly in Bali contexts, where many institutions offer Business English in the curriculum, due to the need of English proficient staff in the local business establishments; 2) Most of the research investigated the perception of Business English students, neglecting the insights of Business professionals. Meanwhile, business professionals' opinions on the course needs are crucial because they know the industry's current needs. Basturkmen (2010), Dudley-Evans and St John (2008), and Hutchinson and Waters (1987), for instance, have stressed the need to obtain information from business professionals regarding the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course design; 3) The existing studies investigate the need for language skills but exclude the need for business etiquette, which is an inseparable component of Business English skills and knowledge.

To address the mentioned gaps, this study aims to investigate the need for Business English courses from the perception of business professionals in Bali. It will identify the needs of the Business English course and give recommendations on the topics to be provided in the course book and the coverage of each topic, which includes language skills and business etiquette. The study findings are instrumental in improving the relevance and effectiveness of Business English courses in the region and aid course designers in designing curricula that better meet the demands of both language skills and other important aspects of business communication.

Literature review

Task-based needs analysis

TBLT analyses students' learning needs by analysing the tasks required in real-life work contexts. The objective is to ensure that the class instruction is tailored to the needs and, therefore, relevant and meaningful to the students (Ellis et al., 2020; Long, 2005; Munby, 1978). The procedures of a task-based needs analysis are as follows: 1) identifying the target or key tasks, 2) analysing the task requirements, which cover the language skills and general knowledge needed to complete a task successfully, 3) gathering data on the task requirements, 4) prioritising needs, that is to prioritise needs based on their relevance and frequency of occurrence in the real workplace (Ellis et al., 2020; Long, 2005; Munby, 1978). Long (2005) claimed the advantages of task-based needs analysis compared to other approaches. They are: 1) it provides more valid data on the target tasks, especially when obtained from domain experts (rather than teachers or linguists), 2) it identifies real-world uses of the target language, 3) the results can directly be used as input for the task-based course design.

Business English

Business English is a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) that focuses on the language skills for effective workplace communication in professional and commercial contexts,

such as in business correspondence, negotiations, and business presentations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). As English continues as an international language and lingua franca in business communication across the globe, proficiency in Business English is crucial for one's professional career and success (Rajprasit et al., 2022; Yao & Du-Babcock, 2023). Key components of the Business English course include business-related terminology and practical communication skills in English (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2008). In addition, knowledge of cross-cultural communication and business etiquette is also crucial as business involves people from different regions and cultures (Aririguzoh, 2022; van Hoorn, 2019). In relation to Business English instructions, task-based language teaching has been proven effective as it helps tailor the instructions based on real-world needs, hence making the instructions applicable and effective (Ellis et al., 2020; Nunan, 2004).

Research method

Research design

The present study is a survey study that assess the needs for a Business English course for university students in Bali and provide a list of recommendations on topics and their coverage. Quantitative measure was used to evaluate the task needs, with response percentages analysed to identify needs priorities. Qualitative method was applied when analysing the interview results, providing deeper insights into the specific needs and preferences of the business professionals.

Participants

Using purposive sampling, this study involved 42 business professionals who use English in their workplace. The majority were male. The respondents included professionals from industries such as hospitality, healthcare, government agencies, professional services, travel agents, radio stations, and educational institutions. The study's scope was vast, indicating each industry's specific communication and operational needs. Managers were dominant in this area, followed by directors, business owners, secretaries, etc., offering diverse perspectives on business communication dynamics. Their professional experience varied between under 1 year to over 21 years.

They were given a link to share their thoughts in a Google form. Data were collected from June until December 2023. After obtaining the questionnaire results, twenty-one business professionals were interviewed to gain deeper insights into their perception and experience regarding Business English needs.

Instrument

The present study utilised a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale and a semi-structured interview guide to investigate the needs for Business English courses and design the syllabus for the course. Before implementation, the instruments were tested by two experts. Using the Gregory formula, the test yielded a value of 1.00, suggesting that the questionnaire was highly appropriate for usage. The questionnaires comprised 47 items, divided into eight sections, namely 1) Reading tasks (11 items); 2) Writing tasks (10 items); 3) Listening tasks (7 items); 4) Speaking tasks (10 items); 5) Document translation (3 items); 6) Interpreting tasks (1 item); 7) Business etiquette (4 items); and 8) Other tasks (1 item). Respondents were expected to choose responses on the frequency of the occurrence of the tasks in their workplace, ranging from "never," "seldom," "sometimes," "often," and "always."

Data analysis

The qualitative data from the interviews were analysed descriptively, while the quantitative data from the questionnaires were calculated to determine the percentage. Tasks were included by counting the percentages of responses from the respondents. They were considered necessary if they were deemed "often" or "always" by more than 50% of the respondents. Following task-based needs analysis procedures, important tasks were identified, followed by identifying task requirements and sequencing the tasks. This process resulted in recommendations for topics and material coverage of each topic, including the needed language skills and business etiquette.

Results

The results of the study are presented in two parts: task needs, and contents of the syllabus, which included recommended topics and their coverage: language skills and business etiquette.

Task needs

Table 1. Task needs as perceived by business professionals

Task	Percentage (%)
Reading Tasks	Memos (58.50), proposals (58.50), reports (90.20), contracts or agreements (65.80), business emails (78.10), reservations (78.10), minutes of meetings (68.30), client feedback (78.00), booklets or brochures (56.10), news articles (51.20), and market research, including companies' profiles or websites (53.70).
Writing Task	Memos (58.50), proposals (61.00), reports (90.30), contracts or agreements (60.90), business emails (78.00), reservations (78.00), minutes of meetings (71.20), client feedback (78.10), booklets or brochures (53.70).
Listening Task	Face-to-face meetings (80.50), briefings (85.40), presentations (58.50), and negotiations (58.50).
Speaking Task	Face-to-face meetings (72.90), virtual meetings (53.60), briefings (78.00), presentations (56.15), and negotiations (68.80)
Document Translation	Financial documents/statement (60.90)
Business Etiquette	Meeting etiquette (61.00), dining etiquette (53.70), physical appearance/grooming (75.60), and social talks (68.30).
Other Task	Handling complaints (68.20)

Table 1 presents different tasks in a business setting, listed based on their response percentage. The reading task needs included a variety of business documents, with business emails and reservations obtained the highest percentage and news articles obtained the lowest percentage. A wide range of business documents were also deemed necessary for writing tasks. Memos gained 58.50%. Proposals got 61.00%, slightly higher than memos. Reports gained the highest percentage, 90.30%. Contracts or agreements got 60.90%. Business emails obtained 78%, similar to reservations. Minutes of meetings amounted to 71.20%, and client feedback was also important and recognised at 78.10%. Booklets or brochures obtained 53.70%.

Regarding listening tasks, some essential tasks were in face-to-face meetings, with 80.50 in percentage, briefings with 85.40%, and presentations and negotiations obtained the same percentages of 58.50%. Five tasks were listed for speaking tasks, namely speaking in face-to-face meetings, which obtained 72.90%, whereas virtual meetings were considerably lower at 53.60%. Briefings received much attention, that is 78.00%. Presentations and negotiations were

stressed at 56.15% and 68.80%, respectively. Only one task was listed for document translation, namely translating financial documents or statements, with a percentage of 60.90%. Regarding business etiquette, meeting etiquette obtained 61%, dining etiquette 53.70%, and physical appearance 75.60%. Another area with considerable responses, at 68.30%, was social talks. Additionally, handling complaints was also considered important to be included, with a percentage of 68.20%.

The respondents' interview results further strengthened the questionnaire results, as seen in the following transcriptions.

“Two common forms of written communication used by the hotel front office and reservation staff are email and WhatsApp. Although guests often use both forms of communication, email is considered the most formal and is used for business purposes and to document client requests and financial transactions” (R1, hotel manager)

“Problems that cause guests’ complaints sometimes happen. Staff have to train themselves to handle complaints because we may not make guests or clients upset. They may move to other hotels and give bad reviews. We have to solve them until clear. We have to show we are reliable and responsible.” (R7, Human Resource Director)

“Reading tasks include emails, memos, and reports. Writing includes emails, memos, minutes of meetings, reports, and social media posts.” (R15, travel agent manager)

“In the hotel industry, reports and contracts are crucial documents. Reports are created weekly or monthly by different departments, while contracts are issued yearly by travel agents. Business email is done mostly by reservations as well as marketing and managers. Managers use email to book services. Meeting minutes include a list of tasks. Guests provide feedback through email, travel agents, direct communication, and notes”. (R20, hotel manager)

“Briefings are conducted daily and are short, with staff usually only listening and not asking questions. During presentations, you have to listen carefully to be able to ask relevant questions. It is important to pay close attention to avoid missing important details. Speed dating skills are essential in business. To introduce oneself and the business effectively. During negotiations, it is important to listen carefully to requests and requirements, and if necessary, take notes.” (R23, business owner)

“Presentation and negotiation skills are important. Remember in a presentation, not only your words, your body language and voice are also important. From what I experience, sometimes people are good at presenting, but weak in negotiating. They need to learn how to negotiate.” (R31, language agency manager)

“Business etiquette is important for the employees. Etiquette in meetings, dining, physical appearance, and social conversations are important aspects of working in the hospitality industry. Meeting etiquette includes being on time and following dress codes and schedules. Dining etiquette is crucial for VIP guests and top-level management.” (R36, hotel manager)

“Students need to learn terms specific to the workplace. Terms are usually specific to the section.” (R41, hospitality consultant)

In accordance with the results of the interviews, it can be synthesised that several communication skills and business etiquette aspects were revealed. While WhatsApp was

considered informal, emails were used for business correspondence, client inquiries, and financial transactions. Emails were regarded as professional written communication channels. A company or hotel could not afford to lose customers or deter them due to poor handling of their complaints, and thus, staff dealing with the guests should be well-equipped in approaches to deal with such complaints. Email was the most widely used form of communication, and business correspondence such as memos, reports, contracts, meeting minutes, and other required papers were essential. Another was public speaking, or the capacity to both present and negotiate while observing non-verbal cues like body language and voice tone, among other things. Business etiquette was also vital, where things like how they talked in meetings, how they dressed, and behaved when dining with guests were crucial, especially when they were interacting with management and other influential or important guests. The final prerequisite, which was crucial for both students and employees, was understanding the particular language or terminologies used at the workplace.

Contents of the syllabus

Table 2. The contents of the syllabus

No	Topics	Tasks	Etiquette
1	Handling Clients 1	Reading and writing business memos, introducing oneself and others, doing speed dating in business	Grooming and non-verbal communication
2	Handling Clients 2	Writing itineraries, inquiry emails on tours and accommodation reservations, making reservations, picking up clients, introducing oneself, and introducing others	Dining etiquette, social etiquette
3	Meeting with Clients	Writing meeting memos and minutes of meetings, participating in meetings, negotiating (preparation and strategies)	Virtual and offline meeting etiquette
4	Business Presentations	Creating PPT presentations, financial documents, contracts/agreements, presenting	Presentation etiquette
5	Writing for the Company	Writing business cards, letterhead, company profiles as in brochures and flyers, business proposals, business reports	Writing etiquette
6	English Correspondence	Reading and writing emails, quotations, and invoices	Writing etiquette
7	Handling Telephone Calls	Making and handling incoming and outgoing calls, making and filling in message forms, implementing phone etiquette	Phone etiquette
8	Handling complaints	Handling face-to-face complaints, complaints by phone, complaints by email, filling in complaint logs, implementing etiquette in handling complaints	Handling complaint etiquette

Table 2 provides recommendations of topics, tasks, and business etiquette to be included in Business English materials/books. The initial modules of the course were devoted to handling clients. Under this section, the students were taught how to write and respond to business memos, introduce themselves and others, do speed dating in business, implement good

appearance and body language, and so on. For a follow-up on this topic, the next would require the students to write itineraries and email tour and accommodation reservation inquiries. Furthermore, they would also role-play calls and bookings, picking up clients and self-introductions and the introduction of other people. This section also has dining and social etiquette that students must master when dealing with clients during informal occasions such as business meals or dining.

The next topic covered meetings with clients and included writing meeting memos, conducting meetings, negotiating, and writing meeting minutes, which were crucial for recording meeting conduct. It also discussed the etiquette of virtual and offline meetings, which would help the students to behave properly during meetings.

In business presentations, students were expected to prepare PowerPoint (PPT) presentations, write financial documents like balance sheets and statements, and draft preliminary contracts or agreements. They would also present and negotiate. Manners during presentations were emphasised to help students know how to comport themselves during presentations or negotiations by using the right words, gestures, and actions to readers.

Writing for the company involved designing business cards, letterhead, and company profiles for brochures and flyers. The students would also be able to write business proposals and reports. The practices of writing communication in companies were also studied. These included the language used and the formality of the writings, among other things.

English correspondence included reading and writing emails, quoting, and invoicing, essential for business communication. Once more, emphasis was placed on courtesy in the writing method, including punctuality, accuracy, and formality of the e-mail and other types of interaction.

Handling telephone calls included making and answering calls, both received and initiated by the caller, and filling out message forms. The students would also demonstrate phone etiquette because it was an essential part of business communication by phone. They would learn how to take and make calls, control the tone and content used during the call, and use proper mannerisms when leaving or receiving messages.

The last one was handling complaints. Students would also learn how to do complaint handling in different forms: verbal, telephonic, and written complaint handling. They would also be trained to complete complaint logs detailing all the complaints to ensure they were captured. The major concept of the outlined course was manners when addressing complaints, which enabled the students to demonstrate the appropriate attitude in handling complaints to ensure that the clients were treated professionally and patiently to get them satisfactory solutions to their problems.

Discussion

After analysing the data, it was found that the tasks needed involved four major language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Reading comprehension can define how efficiently readers understand and analyse written material or texts. In a business setup, professionals are often surrounded by textual information they need to analyse and respond to daily (Duke & Cartwright, 2021; McCarthy & McNamara, 2021). Such skills are decoding, word recognition, comprehension, strong vocabulary, reading speed or fluency, interpretative skills, skimming and scanning skills, contextual meaning, purposeful reading, retention and recalling (Vettori et al., 2023). Decoding assists the readers in comprehending the meaning of words and the text's message; fluency is about appreciation of meaning, critical thinking, and making inferences to make the reader more engaged; skimming and scanning enable the readers to

handle large amounts of information. Retention and recalling should be emphasised and practised to effectively remember and apply information in meetings, negotiations, and strategic planning. As a result, reading abilities have beneficial and crucial repercussions for the staff's communication, learning, and decision-making in the workplace. From the data, reading tasks cover all sorts of materials, but the highest emphasis is on reports and business emails. This indicates that professionals spend a great time analysing and interpreting detailed information, which is the cornerstone of decision-making. The high percentage of business emails indicates the vital importance of electronic communication in the everyday running of businesses. Surprisingly, materials such as booklets, brochures, and news articles have lower percentages, which shows they are still important but not very central to daily tasks.

Business writing skills entail several competencies that enable business professionals to write effectively in the workplace (Jackson et al., 2022; Rios et al., 2020). Some of these skills include coherence, where the writing is clear and there is no extra loophole of information or poor choice of words; proper sequence that leads the reader through the content systematically; flexibility in its approach towards the choice of words depending on the intended audience and setting (Barroga & Matanguihan, 2021; S. Park et al., 2021). It also seems to include precision, particularly with issues to do with grammar, punctuation as well as the validity of the information being presented in the text, plus flexibility depending on the type of writing being done, whether it is for emails, posts on social media and the likes (Gubala et al., 2020). On the other hand, reader sensitivity makes writing important because the reader's awareness and understanding of the topic are crucial (Chen et al., 2021; Khairuddin et al., 2021; To et al., 2020). Moreover, cultural aspects of writing should also be considered while working in the international business context because writing to different people needs to follow legal and ethical norms (Böhm et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023). These skills are, therefore, vital as they contribute to the development of professionalism in communication, relationships, and the achievement of organisational goals. This is why business professionals consider it important for these skills to be mastered in the workplace. It enables the staff to do things like reports, respond to emails, make reservations, and create meeting minutes. The data in this study showed that reports again emerge to the top, shedding light on their importance to business communication. The staggering importance of writing business e-mails and the client-feedback also reinforces the need for clear and effective written communication in maintaining client relationships and ensuring operational efficiency is important. Writing booklets or brochures is the least common option, as these tasks seem more specific and not done daily.

The next one is listening tasks. Listening is a basic skill instrumental to the process of second language learning (Barani, 2011). It is critical for the development of oral communication in any language and thus has a vital role in generating general communication competencies (Alam & Shahnaz Sinha, 2009; Atasheneh & Izadi, 2012) e. In a similar vein, Segalowitz (2003) states that listening accounts for nearly half of our daily interactions. Listening involves a complex interaction of a few components, namely 1) the tasks: the complexity and types of listening tasks, 2) the items: the complexity and the nature of whether they are holistic or local, 3) the text; the language, informational density, and topic, and 4) the recording: the number of speakers, speech rate, accent, and the authenticity (Field, 2012). This implies that the materials should cover authentic recording, maybe in the forms of audio or audio-visual recording, and as much as possible, exposing different accents and speech rates, as in the real workplace, the students will communicate with people from around the globe. Providing authentic texts will also benefit students in terms of exposure to the real use of English. Therefore, the development of

the materials under listening tasks, such as listening to briefings, meetings, presentations, and negotiations, authentic recordings, exposure to different accents and speech rates, and different types of listening texts relevant to business situations need to be taken into consideration. Embedded in listening skills are also soft skills such as active listening, which is the highest level of listening. Active listening is key to effective communication, involving listening comprehension, empathy, and decision-making (Jahromi et al., 2016). In the business context, practising active listening in various contexts, including meetings, presentations, and negotiations for the staff, can facilitate their understanding and follow-up ability (Kluger & Itzchakov, 2024).

The last one of the four language skills is the speaking skill. Based on business professionals' opinions, the staff should be able to express their thoughts precisely, properly, and effectively in briefings, face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, telephoning, negotiations, handling complaints, and presentations. Business communication is about information exchanges between two or more people for company profits (Violanti, 2017). Hence, most of the activities in business involve speaking; thus, being skilful in it is imperative (Barat & Talukder, 2023). Burns (2019) proposed three components of second language speaking competence. The first is language and discourse knowledge, the second is core speaking skills, and the third is communication strategies. All necessitated adequate speaking skills. Knowledge of language and discourse includes sound patterns, grammar, vocabulary, and their organization so that they are socially and pragmatically accepted. Core speaking skills include fluency, speech quality, and managing speech flow. Communication strategies include preparations before speaking, effective nonverbal communication, and interaction strategies. This guides the coverage of the recommended contents of Business English materials. All three of them need to be included so that students will be able to speak properly, fluently, and effectively and the intended outcomes of the speaking task are fulfilled.

In the document translation section, the translation of financial documents/statements is deemed important. This, in turn, indicates that students need to understand terms in finance and financial information, as it is a critical document in business operations and decision-making processes (Binh et al., 2022; Yoshikuni et al., 2023). The business etiquette section is also stressed across tasks since business etiquette is essential in business communication (Böhm et al., 2022; Moore & Hanson, 2022). For example, engaging in activities such as meeting clients or presenting business proposals involves grooming, body language, and mannerisms of presenting. Thus, etiquette integration helps the learners get the proper linguistic knowledge and cultural background to operate in working environments (Jhaiyanuntana & Nomnian, 2020). Notably, the business etiquette training covered physical appearance/grooming, underscoring that personal presentation greatly matters in professional settings. Social talks and meeting etiquette are also significant, highlighting the role of interpersonal skills and professional demeanor in successful business interactions. Dining etiquette is also important in daily business operations. Lastly, dealing with clients' issues and complaints is a noticeable and necessary form of business communication (Shams et al., 2020). Avoiding customers' complaints is almost impossible (Harun et al., 2018). Complaints may damage a company's image, but if managed properly, can increase clients' satisfaction and loyalty (Jeanpert et al., 2021). They can be in the forms of emails/letters, phone calls, and face-to-face complaints (Barnhoorn et al., 2021). Therefore, students need to be exposed to the procedures, language, and etiquette for handling these three types of complaints.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these findings demonstrate the importance of integrating specific tasks with appropriate etiquette to promote efficient business communication based on business professionals' points of view. They expected the staff to be skillful in all four language skills, financial document translation, handling complaints, and implementing business etiquette. The findings also lead to a list of recommended topics and their coverage, including language skills and etiquette, that can be developed into Business English materials or books. Notably, business professionals perceive that staff should be able to read and write memos and emails and have grooming skills and knowledge of nonverbal communication that would build rapport with clients. Furthermore, meetings and presentations necessitate good writing skills for employees who must produce meeting memos and other papers and a thorough understanding of meeting, negotiation, and presentation etiquette. In writing tasks, internal communication responsibilities such as generating business proposals and reports emphasize the importance of writing etiquette to retain professionalism. In addition, staff should be instructed on proper phone or complaint etiquette to handle such exchanges successfully. Finally, aligning communication strategies with suitable etiquette is critical for preserving professionalism, clarity, and positive business relationships, improving organizational effectiveness.

It is suggested that course designers consider the listed topics, language skills, and etiquette when developing the course materials. To periodically ask for and update information from business professionals about current workplace needs is also recommended. This will ensure the applicability and effectiveness of the materials, and the students will be ready to compete and work in the real-world workplace.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest in this work.

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