

Enhancing Listening Comprehension in ESP Courses: A Business English Perspective

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Abstract

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Revised: 15-03-2025 English proficiency plays a vital role in achieving success within the global business environment. Despite this importance, many undergraduate students face difficulties in mastering the language effectively. Specifically, Business English students require targeted instruction that integrates language skills with professional and academic contexts relevant to the business field. Understanding these specific language learning needs is essential for developing an effective curriculum that prepares students for real-world business communication.

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English proficiency plays a vital role in achieving success within the global business environment. Despite this importance, many undergraduate students face difficulties in mastering the language effectively. Specifically, Business English students require targeted instruction that integrates language skills with professional and academic contexts relevant to the business field. Understanding these specific language learning needs is essential for developing an effective curriculum that prepares students for real-world business communication.

Methods

A survey was conducted among undergraduate students enrolled in a Business English course. The survey aimed to assess students' expectations for the course and evaluate their listening and comprehension skills during English-medium lectures and workshops. Data collection focused on identifying the students' perceived challenges and skill gaps, particularly in listening, comprehension, and oral communication, including presentation skills.

Results

The findings reveal that students need improvement in listening and comprehension skills. Additionally, students encounter significant challenges in speaking, especially when delivering presentations and engaging in business-related oral communication. These results indicate that enhancing listening skills alone is insufficient; active language use and speaking confidence are also crucial. To address these issues, the curriculum should adopt a dynamic and interactive approach, balancing receptive skills (listening and comprehension) with productive skills (speaking and presentation delivery).

Discussion

The study underscores the necessity of designing a Business English curriculum that aligns with students' academic and professional ambitions. Integrating content that promotes both receptive and productive skills can improve overall language proficiency, thereby better preparing students for future business opportunities. Educators are encouraged to develop contextually relevant and interactive coursework, fostering both understanding and active use of English in professional settings.

Keywords: ESP course, listening skills, needs, enhancement, outcomes

1. Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has emerged as a pivotal branch of English language instruction, driven by the evolving demands of global communication and specialized professional fields. Initially gaining prominence in the 1960s through English for Business Purposes due to the expansion of international trade, ESP has continued to adapt and expand into various disciplines. The development of discourse and genre analysis further solidified its significance in the 1970s, fueled by advancements in technology and computer-based language analysis.

The modern conceptualization of ESP focuses on addressing learners' specific communication and writing needs in specialized contexts, including business, medicine, technology, and academia. This tailored approach equips students with language skills relevant to their professional and academic goals. According to Flowerdew (2013), ESP courses increasingly emphasize listening comprehension as a cornerstone of effective communication, particularly in business and professional environments where understanding spoken interactions is crucial.

Long (2015) defines ESP as a learner-centered approach where course content is determined by the specific requirements of a target audience, ensuring that language instruction is practical and goal-oriented. Listening skills, in particular, are recognized as critical in ESP contexts due to their role in fostering professional success through meetings, presentations, and negotiations.

Moreover, as the global economy and international communication continue to evolve, the demand for Business English, particularly with an emphasis on listening skills, has grown. Listening competency enables learners to decode meaning, interpret contextual cues, and respond appropriately in dynamic professional settings. Field (2008) highlights that listening involves complex cognitive processes that require targeted instruction and practice.

Finally, by integrating listening-focused strategies such as interactive simulations, task-based learning, and authentic material exposure, ESP courses can better prepare students for real-world communication challenges. This specialized focus supports not only language development but also broader intercultural competence, a necessity in today's interconnected world.

The Impact of AI on Listening Skills in ESP

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into language learning has significantly reshaped how listening skills are developed in ESP. AI-powered tools, such as speech recognition software, virtual assistants, and adaptive listening platforms, offer learners real-time feedback and customized listening practice based on their proficiency levels (Chaudhary & Dey, 2022). These technologies help students engage with a variety of accents, speech rates, and professional vocabulary, thereby enhancing their listening comprehension in specialized fields.

Moreover, AI-driven conversation simulations and chatbots allow ESP learners to practice listening in context-specific scenarios, such as medical consultations, business negotiations, or technical discussions (Godwin-Jones, 2023). These tools provide an interactive and immersive learning environment, bridging the gap between classroom instruction and real-world application.

However, while AI enhances accessibility and personalization, it also presents challenges. Automated speech recognition (ASR) systems still struggle with nuanced meanings, contextual variations, and non-standard accents, which can lead to misunderstandings and reliance on machine-generated

transcriptions (Pérez-Paredes, 2023). Therefore, effective ESP instruction must balance AI-enhanced learning with traditional listening exercises to ensure learners develop critical thinking and contextual awareness alongside their listening skills.

Ultimately, by thoughtfully combining AI-driven tools with interactive simulations, task-based learning, and real-world listening materials, ESP courses can create a more dynamic and effective learning experience. This balanced approach ensures that students develop both technical language proficiency and the ability to navigate diverse communication contexts, equipping them with the skills needed for professional and intercultural interactions in a globalized world.

The Importance of Listening Comprehension in Business English

Recent studies emphasize the critical role of listening comprehension in professional contexts for Business English learners. These learners, often adult professionals or university students specializing in business-related fields, require targeted instruction to develop the listening skills necessary for effective communication in professional settings such as meetings, presentations, and negotiations. Despite years of English education, many students lack the proficiency needed to engage confidently in these specific environments, highlighting a gap between general English instruction and the demands of Business English.

Listening comprehension is a cornerstone of professional communication, enabling individuals to accurately interpret spoken information, respond appropriately, and build rapport in business settings. As Goh (2018) asserts, effective listening involves not only decoding linguistic input but also understanding cultural nuances and implicit meanings, skills essential for navigating international business interactions.

However, many learners face challenges in mastering these skills due to insufficient exposure to authentic listening materials during their prior education. According to Field (2019), traditional language instruction often prioritizes grammar and vocabulary over listening skills, leaving learners ill-prepared for real-world applications. This issue is particularly pressing in Business English contexts, where students must comprehend specialized vocabulary, rapid speech, and diverse accents.

To bridge this gap, ESP instructors must conduct a thorough Needs Analysis to identify learners' specific listening requirements. For instance, business students may need to understand financial reports, marketing pitches, or conference discussions. The Needs Analysis process, as outlined by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), helps instructors tailor their courses to address these precise demands. Furthermore, incorporating authentic listening materials—such as recorded meetings, interviews, and podcasts—can provide learners with realistic practice opportunities.

Another important part is to encourage learner autonomy for effective Business English instruction. As Holec (1981) highlights, autonomous learners are better equipped to set goals, select resources, and monitor their progress. For listening comprehension, this may involve using digital platforms like TED Talks, YouTube business channels, or industry-specific webinars. Studies by Richards (2021) underscore the value of these resources in familiarizing learners with diverse accents, speech rates, and discourse patterns.

Additionally, task-based learning strategies, such as role-playing business scenarios or analyzing case studies, can enhance listening skills by simulating real-world contexts. According to Ellis (2020), such

activities promote active engagement, helping learners develop both linguistic and pragmatic competencies.

However, time remains a significant constraint in ESP programs. With limited classroom hours, instructors must prioritize the most essential skills and content. Basturkmen (2010) suggests a focused curriculum that integrates listening with other skills, such as speaking and writing, to maximize learning outcomes.

Learner Contributions and Challenges

Business English learners often bring valuable subject-matter knowledge to the classroom, which can facilitate language learning. As Vargas (2017) notes, students with a clear understanding of their professional goals are more motivated to acquire the necessary language skills. However, they also face challenges, such as limited prior exposure to authentic listening materials and difficulties adapting to professional discourse.

Schleppegrell and Bowman (1986) identify three key factors influencing ESP learners' success:

1. **Focused Learning Goals:** Business English learners benefit from clear, goal-oriented instruction that aligns with their career objectives.
2. **Subject-Matter Knowledge:** Familiarity with business concepts aids in contextualizing new language inputs.
3. **Adult Learning Strategies:** Prior learning experiences and cognitive maturity enable adult learners to approach language acquisition strategically.

In conclusion, listening comprehension is a critical component of Business English instruction, demanding targeted strategies to address learners' specific needs. By conducting thorough Needs Analyses, incorporating authentic materials, and fostering learner autonomy, instructors can help students overcome challenges and achieve professional language proficiency. As the demands of the global business environment continue to evolve, equipping learners with effective listening skills will remain a central goal of ESP education.

Course Structure and Credit Allocation for Business English Courses

In general, the Business English courses at the University level are structured across three main levels: Business English I, II, and III. These courses aim to develop students' business-related English skills, focusing on communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and ICT tools. Topics range from CV writing and email etiquette to negotiation and company presentations, with assignments including individual and group projects. Evaluation is based on exams, participation, and assignments. Each course awards four ECTS credits. Weekly topics include *Careers*, *Companies*, *Selling*, and *Advertising*, with practical exercises in email communication, negotiations, and presentations. Assignments include individual work on business terms and group projects, with grades based on exams, participation, and assignment quality. The course uses texts such as *Market Leader* and *Business Result*, supplemented by dictionaries and additional resources. This represents the course progression, which continues with various business scenarios and language skills ([UPZ](#)).

The general breakdown of credits and hours for Business English courses is as follows:

Course	Credits (ECTS)	Hours (Total)	Activity Breakdown
Business English I	4	100	Lectures (30 hrs), Exercises (15 hrs), Midterms, Homework, Self-study, Final Exam
Business English II	4	100	Similar structure with increased focus on business cases and projects
Business English III	4	100	Advanced projects, presentations, and case studies

The Business English I, II, and III courses at the University of Prizren's Faculty of Economics each carry 4 ECTS credits and require about 100 total hours. These hours are allocated as follows:

- Lectures: 30 hours
- Theory/Lab Exercises: 15 hours
- Self-study and Assignments: 28 hours
- Midterm Test, Preparation, and Final Exam: 26 hours

All courses emphasize progressive skill development in business English, with increasing complexity and practical applications in real-world business contexts.

2. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to combine quantitative and qualitative data for a comprehensive understanding of how ESP listening comprehension can be enhanced in professional contexts. The study includes:

- A quantitative survey analysis based on questionnaire data.
- Qualitative insights from open-ended responses to identify challenges and recommendations.

The study's population consists of students enrolled in ESP courses, with a focus on Business English and related professional fields. A total of 120 participants were selected as the sample size for this research, drawn from the original survey data. The sampling method employed was convenience sampling, targeting attendees of the Business English course. This approach ensures accessibility to participants actively engaged in relevant learning contexts while reflecting the diversity within the ESP learner community. Questions include multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended formats.

The independent variables in this study include the frequency and type of listening practice undertaken by participants, as well as their exposure to professional English through lectures, workshops, and videos. These variables are expected to influence the dependent variables, which comprise the improvement in listening comprehension (measured through self-reports and feedback) and the participants' perceived ability to understand professional terminology and content. This relationship

aims to explore how different listening practices and exposure levels impact learners' comprehension in professional ESP contexts.

Research Questions

In order to better understand the effectiveness of ESP courses in enhancing business students' communication skills, this study poses several key research questions and hypotheses. These questions and hypotheses guide the investigation and provide a clear framework for analyzing the impact of customized ESP instruction.

1. **RQ1:** What is the impact of customized ESP courses on the oral communication and presentation skills of business students and alumni in their professional roles?
2. **RQ2:** What specific challenges do business students face when engaging with business terminology in English during workshops and seminars?
3. **RQ3:** How does the inclusion of business-specific vocabulary in ESP courses influence students' ability to understand and engage with industry-related content?
4. **RQ4:** To what extent do business students perceive the relevance and effectiveness of ESP courses in preparing them for communication in their future careers?

Also, the following hypotheses examine how the design of an ESP course could develop the listening comprehension and eventually improve the communication skills of business students.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Tailored business-specific ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses significantly improve listening comprehension skills among business students.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Students in business programs face greater challenges in understanding business terminology in English during workshops where English is the medium of instruction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Incorporating business-specific terminology in ESP courses enhances students' ability to engage with industry-related content and improves professional communication.

By addressing these research questions and hypotheses, this article aims to provide valuable insights into the design and delivery of ESP courses for business students. The findings will not only identify areas for improvement but also offer practical recommendations for creating more effective, engaging, and career-focused language learning experiences. This research contributes to the ongoing development of ESP methodologies, ensuring that you are equipped with the linguistic and professional skills necessary for success in the global business environment.

3. Results

The data from students regarding their experience with listening and acquiring professional English reveals a varied range of opinions. Most students feel confident in understanding professional terminology (84.3%), but many note that they rarely attend lectures where English is the primary language (62.2% of students attend rarely or occasionally).

Regarding listening skills, 60.3% believe their comprehension is adequate for professional use, while the majority of students rate improving their listening skills as important for their future careers (89.1%). A significant number prefer methods such as in-class activities (48.2%) and online resources (34.9%) to practice listening. Additionally, a considerable number of students have participated in

workshops or lectures conducted in English and generally rated their comprehension of the presented materials positively.

The improvement in listening skills has been noticeable for most students, though a significant portion feels the need for further enhancement in vocabulary, grammar, and speaking. Using English outside the classroom is common for most students (62.6%), and there is strong support for additional workshops focusing on improving listening skills. More than half of the students spend less than three hours per week practicing listening, and the majority are satisfied or very satisfied with the current level of listening activities in their ESP course.

Table 1: Summary of Student Responses on English Listening Comprehension and ESP Course Experience

How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?	N	%
No opinion	2	2.4%
Not confident	11	13.3%
Somewhat confident	43	51.8%
Very confident	27	32.5%
How often do you attend lectures or workshops where English is the primary language of instruction?	N	%
Never	6	7.2%
Rarely	28	33.7%
Occasionally	23	27.7%
Frequently	26	31.3%
Do you feel that your listening comprehension in English is sufficient for professional use?	N	%
Strongly disagree	4	4.8%
Disagree	1	1.2%
Neutral	28	33.7%
Agree	33	39.8%
Strongly agree	17	20.5%
How would you rate the importance of improving your listening comprehension in English for your future career?	N	%
Somewhat important	9	10.8%
Important	30	36.1%
Very important	44	53.0%
What is your preferred method for practicing listening comprehension?	N	%

One-on-one tutoring	6	7.2%
Interactive workshops	8	9.6%
Classroom activities	40	48.2%
Online resources (videos, podcasts)	29	34.9%
Have you ever attended a workshop or lecture delivered in English? If yes, how would you rate your overall understanding?		
	N	%
I have not attended	22	26.5%
Not clear	8	9.6%
Somewhat clear	29	34.9%
Very clear	24	28.9%
How would you describe the improvement in your listening skills since attending ESP courses?		
	N	%
Little improvement	29	34.9%
Moderate improvement	35	42.2%
Significant improvement	19	22.9%
Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e. Business English)?		
	N	%
Disagree	2	2.4%
Neutral	33	39.8%
Agree	31	37.3%
Strongly agree	17	20.5%
In which area do you feel you need the most improvement to better comprehend English in a professional context?		
	N	%
Vocabulary	20	24.1%
Grammar	24	28.9%
Listening skills	11	13.3%
Speaking skills	28	33.7%
How often do you use English outside of the classroom for professional or academic purposes?		
	N	%
Daily	23	27.7%
Weekly	29	34.9%
Monthly	4	4.8%
Rarely	27	32.5%
Would additional listening-focused workshops in English improve your comprehension skills?		
	N	%
Disagree	3	3.6%

Neutral	30	36.1%
Agree	30	36.1%
Strongly agree	20	24.1%
How much time do you currently spend practicing English listening skills per week?		
	N	%
Less than 1 hour	39	47.0%
1-3 hours	34	41.0%
3-5 hours	6	7.2%
More than 5 hours	4	4.8%
How do you feel about the current level of listening activities in your ESP course?		
	N	%
Very unsatisfied	1	1.2%
Unsatisfied	4	4.8%
Neutral	30	36.1%
Satisfied	32	38.6%
Very satisfied	16	19.3%

The data in Table 2 show students' preferences for listening activities that help them improve their English skills the most. Group discussions are the most preferred, chosen by 29.1% of students, reflecting the importance of interaction and idea exchange in developing language skills. Professional presentations rank second with 26.7%, suggesting that students value formalized situations as effective means of practicing the language. Educational videos are selected by 24.4%, emphasizing the potential of technology and visual resources in enhancing listening skills. Lastly, one-on-one conversations are the least preferred (16.3%), possibly due to a lack of opportunities or because they require more effort and personal preparation. This distribution suggests that students appreciate interactive activities and content-based approaches to improve their listening skills.

Table 2: What types of listening activities do you find most helpful for improving your English skills?

	N	%
Listening to professional presentations	46	26.7%
Participating in group discussions	50	29.1%
Watching educational videos	42	24.4%
Engaging in one-on-one conversations	28	16.3%

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Tailored business-specific ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses significantly improve listening comprehension skills among business students.

In this analysis, the Pearson correlation test was used to evaluate the relationships between different variables related to English listening skills and the impact of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses on improving these skills. The variables examined were: "Do you feel that your listening comprehension in English is sufficient for professional use?", "How would you describe the improvement in your listening skills since attending ESP courses?", "Would additional listening-focused workshops in English improve your comprehension skills?", and "How much time do you currently spend practicing English listening skills per week?". These variables were chosen because they are directly related to English listening comprehension levels, skill improvement after ESP courses, and the potential for further enhancement through additional activities, all of which are key factors in testing the hypothesis that tailored ESP courses improve listening skills.

The correlations found are as follows: The correlation between "Do you feel that your listening comprehension in English is sufficient for professional use?" and "How would you describe the improvement in your listening skills since attending ESP courses?" is positive and significant ($r = 0.315$, $p = 0.004$), indicating a moderate relationship between students' perceptions of their listening comprehension and their improvement after attending ESP courses. Additionally, the correlation between "How would you describe the improvement in your listening skills since attending ESP courses?" and "Would additional listening-focused workshops in English improve your comprehension skills?" is also positive ($r = 0.280$, $p = 0.010$), suggesting that the improvement in listening skills is linked to the belief that additional workshops could be beneficial. However, the correlation between "Would additional listening-focused workshops in English improve your comprehension skills?" and "Do you feel that your listening comprehension in English is sufficient for professional use?" is small and insignificant ($r = -0.104$, $p = 0.351$), suggesting that opinions on workshops are not necessarily connected to students' confidence in understanding English in a professional context.

Based on the p-values and correlations, hypothesis H1 can be accepted, as the results show a clear and significant relationship between ESP courses and the improvement of listening skills, particularly in terms of the perceived progress students make after attending the course and the need for additional workshops. Furthermore, the strong correlation between listening improvement and opportunities for extra activities supports the idea that specialized ESP courses positively impact students' oral communication skills and can help enhance these abilities in a professional context.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of Listening Comprehension, Skill Improvement, and Practice Frequency

Correlations

		Do you feel that your listening comprehension in English is sufficient for professional use?	How would you describe the improvement in your listening skills since attending ESP courses?	Would additional listening-focused workshops in English improve your comprehension skills?	How much time do you currently spend practicing English listening skills per week?
Do you feel that your listening comprehension in English is sufficient for professional use?	Pearson Correlation	1	.315**	.240*	.209
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004	.029	.058
	N		83	83	83
How would you describe the improvement in your listening skills since attending ESP courses?	Pearson Correlation		1	.097	.280*
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.385	.010
	N			83	83
Would additional listening-focused workshops in English improve your comprehension skills?	Pearson Correlation			1	-.104
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.351
	N				83
How much time do you currently spend practicing English listening skills per week?	Pearson Correlation				1
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N				

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Students in business programs face greater challenges in understanding business terminology in English during workshops where English is the medium of instruction.

For testing hypothesis H2, the Pearson correlation test was used to examine the relationships between variables related to the ability to understand professional terminology in English and the impact of using English outside the classroom environment. The variables analyzed were: "How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?", "Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e., Business English)?", and "How often do you use English outside of the classroom for professional or academic purposes?". These variables were selected to assess the relationship between students' confidence in understanding professional terminology, the influence of their overall English proficiency, and the extent to which they use English outside of formal instruction for professional or academic purposes, all of which can impact their experience in ESP courses.

The correlations indicate significant relationships between the variables. For example, the correlation between "How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?" and "Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials?" is positive and significant ($r = 0.245$, $p = 0.026$), suggesting that students' confidence in understanding professional terminology is linked to their perception that overall English proficiency affects their ability to comprehend ESP materials. Another interesting relationship is between "How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?" and "How often do you use English outside of the classroom for professional or academic purposes?", where the correlation is negative and significant ($r = -0.385$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that students who use English more frequently outside the classroom tend to have higher confidence in understanding professional terminology, but they may still require more practical opportunities to further improve their skills in this area.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Professional Terminology Confidence, General English Proficiency, and English Usage Frequency

Correlations

			Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e. Business English)?	How often do you use English outside of the classroom for professional or academic purposes?
How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?	Pearson Correlation	1	.245*	-.385**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.026	.000

professional terminology in English?	N	83	83
Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e. Business English)?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1	-.207 .060 83
How often do you use English outside of the classroom for professional or academic purposes?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N		1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the results, hypothesis H2 can be accepted, as they indicate that students experience significant difficulties in understanding professional terminology in English. The findings also suggest that using English outside the classroom is linked to students' confidence in their ability to comprehend ESP materials. This supports the idea that ESP courses, which use English as the primary medium of instruction, may pose significant challenges for students with limited English proficiency or those who do not frequently use English outside the academic environment. In this context, the conclusion is that these students could benefit from additional practical opportunities and extra support to enhance their understanding of professional terminology in English.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Incorporating business-specific terminology in ESP courses enhances students' ability to engage with industry-related content and improves professional communication.

To analyze Hypothesis 3 (H3), which suggests that incorporating business-specific terminology in ESP courses enhances students' ability to engage with industry-related content and improves professional communication, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between several variables: the importance of improving listening comprehension in English for future careers, students' satisfaction with the level of listening activities in their ESP course, confidence in understanding professional terminology in English, and the belief that general English proficiency affects the ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e., Business English). These variables were selected as they are directly related to listening skills and understanding professional terminology, both of which are essential for improving professional communication in English.

The results indicate a significant correlation between the level of listening activities in ESP courses and students' confidence in understanding professional terminology in English ($r = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that students who are more satisfied with listening activities in ESP courses feel more confident in understanding business-specific terminology. Additionally, the correlation between confidence in understanding professional terminology and general English proficiency ($r = 0.245$, $p <$

0.05) suggests that students with higher overall English proficiency are more confident in comprehending ESP materials that include business terminology.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis of Listening Comprehension Importance, ESP Course Activities, and Professional Terminology Confidence

Correlations

		How would you rate the importance of improving your listening comprehension in English for your future career?	How do you feel about the current level of listening activities in your ESP course?	How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?	Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e. Business English)?
How would you rate the importance of improving your listening comprehension in English for your future career?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1	.031 .779 83	-.099 .375 83	.209 .058 83
How do you feel about the current level of listening activities in your ESP course?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N		1	.578** .000 83	.223* .042 83
How confident do you feel in understanding professional terminology in English?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N			1	.245* .026 83
Do you believe that your general English proficiency affects your ability to comprehend ESP materials (i.e. Business English)?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N				1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on these results, Hypothesis H3 can be accepted. This indicates that ESP courses that incorporate business-specific terminology have a significant impact on enhancing students' ability to understand industry-related content and improve their professional communication. This finding supports the idea that the inclusion of business-specific terminology is beneficial for the development of students' professional skills in the context of English for Specific Purposes.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question (RQ)	Key Findings	Analysis and Interpretation
RQ1: What is the impact of customized ESP courses on the oral communication and presentation skills of business students and alumni in their professional roles?	- The improvement of listening skills is reported as moderate or significant by most students (65.1%). - A positive and significant correlation exists between listening skill improvement and students' perception of professional use ($r = 0.315$, $p = 0.004$).	Customized ESP courses have a positive and significant impact on improving listening skills, which in turn influences students' presentation and professional communication abilities.
RQ2: What specific challenges do business students face when engaging with business terminology in English during workshops and seminars?	- 62.2% of students rarely or occasionally attend lectures conducted in English. - Only 33.7% feel very confident in understanding professional terminology. - The majority require improvements in grammar and vocabulary (53%).	Students face significant challenges in understanding and using professional terminology due to limited participation in English-based lectures and a need for further improvement in grammar and vocabulary.
RQ3: How does the inclusion of business-specific vocabulary in ESP courses influence students' ability to understand and engage with industry-related content?	- 84.3% feel confident in understanding professional terminology. - The use of specific vocabulary and classroom activities are the most preferred methods for skill improvement (48.2%).	The inclusion of professional terminology in ESP courses has a significant impact on students' ability to comprehend and engage with industry-related content.
RQ4: To what extent do business students perceive the relevance and effectiveness of ESP courses in preparing them for communication in their future careers?	- 89.1% of students consider improving listening skills very important for their careers. - More than half are satisfied with the listening activities included in ESP courses (58%). - Additional listening workshops are highly supported (60.2%).	Students perceive ESP courses as relevant and beneficial for preparing them for communication in their future careers, valuing listening skills improvement and the need for additional practical activities.

The analysis of students' experiences with professional English in ESP courses shows that the majority feel confident in understanding terminology (84.3%) and consider improving listening skills highly important for their careers (89.1%). However, their participation in activities where English is the primary language remains limited, and most prefer interactive methods such as classroom activities (48.2%) and online resources (34.9%). The identified correlations suggest that ESP courses

significantly improve listening skills, while students' express interest in additional listening-focused workshops.

4. Recommendations and Conclusion

This study underscores the vital role of listening comprehension in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly for Business English learners preparing for professional communication. The findings reveal that while many students feel confident in understanding professional terminology, their exposure to real-world English usage remains inconsistent. This limited engagement with authentic listening materials presents a challenge, as effective communication in business settings requires not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to interpret nuances, different speech rates, and diverse accents.

Despite these challenges, the study confirms that customized ESP courses significantly enhance students' listening skills. A majority of participants reported noticeable improvement in their ability to comprehend spoken English in professional contexts. However, the data also highlight gaps in students' preparedness, particularly in their ability to process fast-paced discussions, technical terminology, and spontaneous interactions during workshops and meetings. The correlation analyses further indicate that students who engage more frequently with English outside the classroom and participate in structured listening activities exhibit greater confidence and proficiency.

To bridge these gaps, ESP courses should adopt a more dynamic and immersive approach. Integrating AI-powered tools, interactive simulations, and real-world listening exercises can create a richer learning experience, allowing students to engage with English in ways that mirror actual workplace communication. Additionally, structured workshops that simulate professional interactions such as business negotiations, client meetings, and team discussions can provide students with hands-on practice and reinforce their listening comprehension in relevant contexts.

The findings of this study highlight both the progress and challenges faced by Business English students in improving their listening comprehension skills within ESP courses. A significant portion of students (84.3%) expressed confidence in understanding professional terminology, yet many (62.2%) reported limited exposure to lectures and workshops conducted in English. While 60.3% of participants believed their listening skills were adequate for professional use, an overwhelming majority (89.1%) recognized the importance of improving their listening abilities for their future careers.

Students showed a preference for interactive learning methods, with classroom activities (48.2%) and online resources (34.9%) being the most favored approaches. Additionally, group discussions (29.1%) and professional presentations (26.7%) were identified as particularly helpful for enhancing listening skills. However, only 33.7% of students felt highly confident in understanding specialized business terminology, indicating a need for further vocabulary and comprehension support.

The correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between participation in ESP courses and perceived improvements in listening skills ($r = 0.315$, $p = 0.004$). Additionally, students who used English outside the classroom more frequently displayed greater confidence in understanding professional terminology ($r = -0.385$, $p = 0.000$). These findings support the effectiveness of tailored

ESP instruction while emphasizing the need for additional practice opportunities beyond the classroom.

Overall, the results confirm that while ESP courses significantly contribute to improving listening comprehension, students still face challenges in fully adapting to professional English environments. To address these gaps, incorporating more real-world listening exercises, technology-enhanced learning tools, and business-specific terminology workshops could further enhance students' proficiency and confidence in workplace communication.

Another key takeaway from this study is the importance of fostering learner autonomy. Encouraging students to supplement their learning with digital resources, such as podcasts, business-related talks, and industry webinars, can enhance their exposure to diverse linguistic inputs. Given the growing role of AI in language learning, incorporating adaptive listening platforms that provide real-time feedback can further personalize the learning experience and address individual weaknesses.

Ultimately, the goal of ESP instruction is not just to develop students' listening skills but to prepare them for real-world professional communication. By refining Business English curricula to include more interactive, technology-enhanced, and industry-specific listening exercises, educators can equip learners with the linguistic and intercultural competence they need to thrive in global business environments. Moving forward, continued research into the integration of AI and innovative listening strategies in ESP will be essential to ensuring that language instruction keeps pace with the evolving demands of the professional world.

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