SĂN SÀNG PHÁT TRIỂN SỰ NGHIỆP: NGHIÊN CỨU VỀ VIỆC DẠY VÀ HỌC TIẾNG ANH THƯƠNG MẠI TẠI LHU

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Tiếng Anh thương mại;
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Môn học kinh doanh;
Sẵn sàng nghề nghiệp;
LHU.

TÓM TẮT

Nghiên cứu này quan sát quan điểm của sinh viên Khoa Ngôn ngữ Anh tại LHU về tầm quan trọng của các môn tiếng Anh thương mại (TATM) và việc sử dụng TATM giúp họ trang bị những gì cho sự nghiệp của mình trong bối cảnh toàn cầu hóa. Sử dụng phương pháp tiếp cận hỗn hợp, bao gồm khảo sát và phỏng vấn với 41 người tham gia, nghiên cứu này xác định những thách thức, cơ hội và chiến lược chính để nâng cao chương trình giảng dạy. Các phát hiện cho thấy 99.8% sinh viên nhận ra tầm quan trọng của TATM đối với phát triển nghề nghiệp. Nghiên cứu kết luận rằng việc dạy-học tiếng Anh thương mại tuy gặp nhiều thử thách nhưng tạo tiền đề và cơ hội phát triển cho sự nghiệp sau này của sinh viên. Bài báo khuyến nghị kết hợp hoạt động học tập theo dự án và hoạt động trải nghiệm vào chương trình giảng dạy để tăng khả năng tuyển dụng và thu hẹp khoảng cách giữa lý thuyết và thực tiễn.

DEVELOPING CAREER READINESS: A STUDY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING BUSINESS COURSES AT LHU

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ABSTRACT

This study observes the perspectives of students from the Faculty of English Language at LHU regarding the importance of Business English (BE) courses and how the use of BE helps them equip themselves for their careers in the context of globalization. Using a mixed methods approach, including surveys and interviews with 41 participants, this research identifies key challenges, opportunities, and strategies for curriculum enhancement. Findings reveal that 99.8% of students recognize the importance of BE for career development. The study concludes that while teaching and learning BE face many challenges, it lays the foundation and provides opportunities for students' career development. The paper recommends incorporating project-based learning and experiential activities into the curriculum to enhance employability and bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Available online at: https://js.lhu.edu.vn/index.php/lachong

1. INTRODUCTION

"Career readiness" refers to someone who is serious and has a clear plan for their career path. They continuously learn and upgrade themselves, cultivate the necessary thinking and skills, and are steadfast in their goals to reach their main goals. They are ready for all challenges and opportunities, which shows a high spirit of progress that businesses are always looking for [1, 2-3].

"Key factor for career development" is a factor that has a strong influence on each person's career development, helping you advance quickly and have many opportunities in your career. Factors often include communication skills, a high learning spirit, building good relationships, critical thinking and problem-solving, working professionally, etc. [4, 5-6].

The increasing interconnectedness of the global economy has placed a premium on effective communication skills, particularly in English, within the business world. While numerous studies have highlighted the general importance of Business English (BE) for international business and trade [7-8], there is a need for more specific research on how students in particular contexts perceive the relevance of business-related coursework to their future career prospects. This is especially true in Vietnam, where the demand for Englishproficient graduates is growing rapidly [9]. While anecdotal evidence suggests a correlation between business knowledge combined with English proficiency and lower unemployment rates, empirical research is needed to explore this link and understand the specific challenges and opportunities faced by students pursuing business-related studies. The significance of BE for students has been highlighted in numerous earlier studies, but few have specifically addressed Vietnamese students, particularly in the context of LHU education. This study closes that gap by thoroughly examining how LHU students view BE and making recommendations for curriculum enhancement.

This study focuses on students at Lac Hong University (LHU) and investigates their perceptions of the connection between their business courses and their future careers. The study proposes dynamic teaching methods that students desire, proposes the development of the PBL (project-based learning) method, brings boring theory into a new version, creates learning activities to help students overcome shyness, equips them with more initiative, shapes their future, and emphasizes the responsibility of the school to connect real businesses into effective BE teaching and learning programs. Teachers' continuous updating of the education-market economy in teaching not only helps teachers enhance their professional reputation but also students' knowledge expands, they catch up with market trends, and they have clearer future plans. Using a mixed-methods approach (combining qualitative and quantitative data collection), this study seeks to:

- 1. Explore LHU students' perceptions of BE in relation to their future careers.
- 2. Identify the challenges and opportunities encountered in BE learning.

3. Propose improvements to BE curricula and teaching methods.

This research will contribute to a better understanding of students' needs and expectations, informing curriculum development and pedagogical practices at LHU to enhance graduate employability.

2. CONTENT

2.1 Literature review

The Importance of English in the Vietnamese Job Market

The era of globalization has opened up many job opportunities for both domestic and international workers. They are exposed to new knowledge, which enhances their professional skills, hones their abilities, and fosters creativity through modern technologies and management methods. In addition, apart from the job competition between individuals with higher and lower qualifications, there is also intense competition among multinational investors and businesses, both large and small. As a result, labor policies, salaries, and benefits have gradually risen compared to before [10].

Vietnam is gradually entering the era of national development and growth. Many businesses are starting to recruit for the BE sector to connect with the global economy. This is an opportunity for a dynamic, outward-looking generation who enjoys communication. In addition to fulfilling these factors, it also serves as a stepping stone for young people to go further, becoming global citizens and working with multinational companies in various countries [4].

Through the above studies, to gain a more specific perspective, articles in Vietnam have increasingly highlighted the importance of foreign language learning (business English) today more than ever. Learning one or two new languages is their 'key factor for career development,' opening up opportunities for personal and career development, effective communication, and the chance to travel abroad to explore diverse cultures and people, as reported [11-12]. Factors often include communication skills, a high learning spirit, time management, building good relationships, critical thinking and problem-solving, working professionally, etc. [4, 5-6].

The resolution "On fundamentally and comprehensively renewing education and training to meet the requirements of industrialization and modernization" is still being implemented, according to the People's Electronic Newspaper [9].

According to Rao [8], who also mentioned that as globalization and information technology have advanced, it is clear that the majority of people worldwide communicate with people in other parts of the world in English, which is the only internationally recognized language. English has also become a necessary tool for anyone hoping to work abroad or for a multinational corporation.

Student Perceptions of Career Readiness and the Role of Business Education

Rachmawati et al. [13] pointed out that the majority of students aspire to succeed like the individuals they admire and have a high level of control. They tend to be proactive in motivating themselves to achieve their goals and accept all outcomes as learning opportunities to further develop themselves.

Skoy [5] indicates the correlation between employer expectation and the technical and non-technical skills of recent graduates. Continuously assessing the gaps in students' skills provides a comprehensive approach to addressing employers concerns.

Balla [14] stated that although there are currently between 5,000 and 6,000 languages spoken throughout the world, English is the most commonly spoken language. Thus, there is an urgent need to make English a required subject in the curriculum, much like in the majority of other nations.

Rao [8] emphasized that because it connects the East and the West as well as the North and the South, English has become the language with the greatest rate of growth in the modern world and holds the status of a commercial language.

Challenges and Opportunities in Business Education

The minister of Malaysia noted that 30,000 Malaysian graduates had limited opportunities for better career prospects, especially when they equipped themselves with English proficiency, which would allow them to find casual jobs with high-salary cashiers and restaurant workers [15]. In addition to considering 4 aspects-knowledge, skills, abilities, and personality (KSAP)- they also consider the requirements of employers for students in order to address these issues in the teaching methods.

Business English (BE) was truly explored in the 1900s when people started to be introduced to terms related to commerce and import-export. When 42 ESP books were newly published, 21 of them were related to business commerce [16]. Courses and textbooks on BE sprang up rapidly, offering students and working professionals the opportunity to learn and meet the communication needs of an integrated world.

Business English in Specific Contexts

Jones and Alexander [7] emphasized that English is the primary language used by business people worldwide to communicate. It is used for communication between people from different countries, like Italy and Japan, Germany and France, as well as between foreigners and natives.

According to Pennycook et al. [17], English is not only widely used worldwide but also a component of the processes known as globalization. On the other hand, within the English language discipline, business English is a specialty that gives students knowledge of both English and economics [4].

Speaking, writing, listening, translation, and interpretation are the terms used to describe the many components of English that are traditionally taught using different teaching techniques. However, BE cannot be treated similarly because BE students are expected to

acquire the thorough command of English needed for business communication [18].

Meanwhile, Chan and Frendo [19] also divide the teaching and learning contexts of BE into three different settings. The first is in higher education, the second is in adult education, and the third is in corporate training.

2.2 Research methods

This is an exploratory study to assess the perceptions and needs of students studying BE at LHU, suitable for a not too large sample size, using a purposeful sampling method to ensure representativeness, and the collected data accurately reflects the research objectives. Similar to the study [20] surveyed 43 students, the study [21] surveyed 39 students on the awareness of learning English for personal and career development. Thus, a sample size of 41 students is appropriate to collect reliable data to conduct the study. Using a mixed-methods approach (combining qualitative and quantitative data collection), the participants are students from the Faculty of English Language. There are 41 participants for both methods: 34 completed the survey via Google Form, and 7 participated in interviews. The survey table includes answers and checkboxes, is provided in both Vietnamese and English, and presents quantitative and qualitative data. The research questions were selected for the interviews. Deeper comprehension of real-life events, individual insights, and recommendations for development are the main topics of the questions. Interviews lasting 20-25 minutes will be audio recorded and encrypted to safeguard private data.

The data collection process lasted for 3 weeks. In the first week, the author opened the survey link to class groups, asking for support from teachers and other classmates. After 7 days, the link was closed and the data was encrypted. The next week, 7 interviewees were found, time was arranged for both parties, and data collection began. In the final week, the collected data was compiled and the research paper was started.

With the initial criteria of discovering general trends while ensuring representativeness, 34 small-scale qualitative participants in a specific environment still came up with reasonable conclusions. Qualitative data were coded using the Thematic Analysis method; the responses were answered positively and divided into three main topics: (1) Students' perceptions of BE in the context of globalization, (2) Challenges and opportunities when studying BE, and (3) Evaluation and recommendation of effective teaching methods. In addition, for quality rather than quantity, the author selected 7 in-depth interview respondents, including current students, final students, and alumni, to ensure practical collection of many rich and practical perspectives, helping students and teachers have multi-dimensional conclusions in learning and teaching.

The author used reliability testing between the actual assessments between the two survey methods and in-depth interviews and selected common and different points to contribute to the research questions. In addition, the author analyzed the dispersion by randomly dividing the questionnaire into two parts; the results still showed consistency in the answers and had very specific explanations. The author combined level selection

questions, short answer questions, long answer questions, and even the list; based on that, the author could analyze all the factors that the study wanted to measure and reflect reality. To enhance the reliability of the data, students are informed in advance that this survey is intended to contribute to the article, is guaranteed to be private, and does not affect their studies.

The design used was a mixed-methods approach. Semi-structured interviews were used to get qualitative data (N=7) and online surveys to gather quantitative data (N=34). Students majoring in English at LHU participated. Thematic analysis and descriptive statistics were used to examine the data. To evaluate reliability, a straightforward percentage agreement approach was used.

Simple Percentage Agreement Formula

Consensus ratio = $a \div b \times 100 \approx 83\%$

In there:

a (Very Important Consensus Score): 27 people on the survey side + 7 people on the interview side= 34 people

b (A total of 34 people on the survey + 7 people on the interview)= 41 people

The results show that nearly 83% of students rate BE as a very important factor for their career and the global opportunities that await them. This figure is similar to the study of [8]. English appears in most documents on science and technology; the leading role is more than 80% in the 1990s, and the world's researchers all need to learn English. However, this research shows that BE is important in many different industries in Vietnam.

The questionnaire and interviews not only investigated students' perceptions of BE but also focused on evaluating the effectiveness of teaching methods and students' expectations for practical BE learning activities.

2.3 Data analysis

Data collection: Survey

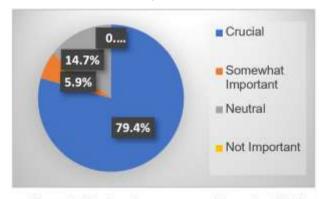


Figure 1: Students' awareness of the role of B.E.

The pie chart shows the role of BE in daily life: crucial (79.4%), somewhat important (5.9%), neutral (14.7%), not important (0%). The survey results emphasize that a majority of participants are well aware of the importance of learning BE, as well as understanding the correctness of their decision to choose a major. In fact, studies [8, 15-18] also clearly identify the close connection of BE, but there is still no specific data on specialized students in Vietnam. In addition, the uniformity of awareness of the major has

not reached 100% of the total; the percentage of students showing that learning normal BE accounts for 14.7% is a matter of concern. Creating conditions and requiring students to participate in experiencing business activities and applying BE in practice from the first years of study through teaching videos and sharing from alumni and business owners is necessary.

Career Plan	Number of Responses	Percentage
Teacher, tutor	23	56.1%
Office Staff	26	63.4%
Interpreter	13	31.7%
Manager/Business	16	39.0%
Higher Education/Other	13	31.7%
No plan	1	0.2%

Table 1: Students' dream job

As shown in the table, 99.8% of students have plans and jobs they desire after graduation, and 0.02% of student answered that they did not know. This shows that the careers that students dream of are mostly employees for large companies with suitable salaries and teachers' daily work in class. Compared to previous studies, this study accounted for 99.8% of LHU students having a career plan, higher than the results of the study [22], where 87.23% of students believed that English ability would bring them better job opportunities. Coincidentally, a study [13] shows that students tend to learn from someone they idolize. Through practical comparison, it confirms dreams through the way they communicate, share experiences, share professional knowledge, dedication to their profession, and other factors.

Questionnaires

After surveying some questions related to the awareness of the importance of business English (BE) in the context of globalization and their future careers. The author received the following responses:

If you work in a banking position, besides communicating with customers both domestically and internationally, some documents and industry annexes will also be in English. Additionally, trading software almost 100% uses English terminology.

Most contracts and important terms from large companies are written in English.

When communicating with international partners and clients, businesses typically use English to negotiate, exchange, and sign contracts or handle email correspondence.

Our country is in a period of development, and knowing a language commonly used in global business will help expand and attract foreign investment.

English is recognized as the global common language, and it is the best solution. It is not only a communication tool but also the key to success in the era of integration. It diversifies industries, expands markets, and reduces the high unemployment rate.

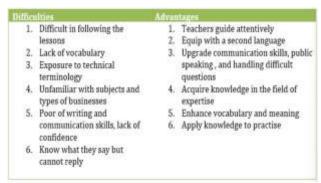


Table 2: List of the difficulties and advantages in learning the BE courses

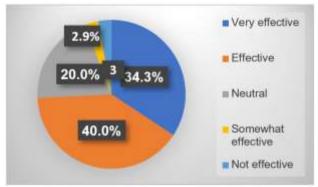


Figure 2. Students' evaluation of teaching methods of BE courses

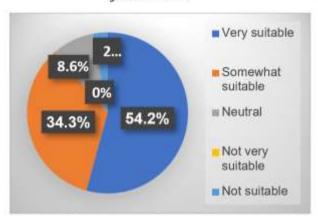


Figure 3. Students' evaluate BE courses against labor market needs

Continuing to delve into the teaching and learning methods of BE that teachers convey to students, we use questions with 5 different response levels to show the prominent percentages through figures 2 and 3. For figure 4, the results show that students evaluate the teaching methods of BE subjects at LHU: 40% effective, 34.4% very effective, 20% of students find it normal, the remaining 2.9% of student find it somewhat effective, and 2.9% of student find it ineffective. In addition, figure 5 shows the results of the students survey on the suitability of BE courses to market demand: 5.3% are very suitable to market demand, 34.3% are somewhat suitable, 8.6% are normal, and only 2.9% feel it is not very suitable; the percentage of students who find it inappropriate is 0%. Overall, the two figures above show that most students are well aware of the effectiveness of teaching and its connection to the needs of the labor market. To fully implement the suggestions of students, the author added 2 survey questions with unlimited content length, which we list below.

During your studies, which course did you find the most useful? Why? (The course that helped you develop some essential skills)

Career Plan	Number of Responses	Percentage
Communication, Speaking	18	33.3%
Writing	8	15%
Office Skills	5	9.2%
Business Reading	4	7.4%
Logistics	4	7.4%
Marketing/Management	7	13%
All courses	3	5.5%
No vote	5	9.2%

Table 3: Most useful subject for students

The votes for the BE courses that students thought were most useful are displayed in table 3: Courses pertaining to speaking and communication abilities received the most votes (18), followed by writing courses (8) and management/ marketing courses (7), with the remaining courses receiving fewer votes. Some of the reasons why students believe such courses aid in the development of the requisite skills are listed below.

I find Business Speaking most useful because it is very important for communication.

Business writing helped me improve my business writing skills, its structure, vocabulary, and ability to persuade.

Speaking, business management, and writing are crucial. When interacting with foreigners, the first thing is to know how to communicate. These lessons are showing the way of behaviors, getting more polite, respectful, and gentle.

Business speaking can be the most useful subject, as it helps develop communication and presentation skills in an international work environment.

Business for management because I find it has common vocabulary related to commerce.

Please provide a specific example of a course that you think needs the most change and how it should be changed:

English for Business Management: Invite experts from the industry, experts in the field of management, to share more practical experiences and better understand the reality of this industry.

Reading skills need to change the way of teaching so that the learning atmosphere is not boring. I feel overloaded with vocabulary and cannot remember it for long because it is not common. However, I still really want to remember them in order to improve my vocabulary.

Courses should be the soft skills students can choose to learn if they want.

Data collection: Interview

Quest	ions	Participant (Total=7)	Percentage
1.	What is your desired job or career plan after graduation?	7	100%
2	How do you think BE plays a role in your daily life?	7	100%
3.	Please share a real-life example where you see that "the use of Business English is very common and necessary today."	7	100%
4.	Do you often use Business English?	7	100%
5.	Which subject do you find most difficult or excel at the most?	7	100%
6.	Do you think the Business courses at LHU meet the needs of the job market?	7	100%
7.	Please provide a specific example of a course that you think needs the most change, and how it should be changed.	7	100%
8.	How can the curriculum and teaching methods of BE courses at LHU be improved to better equip students for the workforce?	7	100%

Table 4: Number of interview questions and the percentage of participants

100% of the 7 interviewees believe that business courses play a crucial role in their upcoming careers through the questionnaire in table 4. These courses help them gain a deep understanding of related fields such as management, marketing, finance, and strategy, etc. This has created a solid foundation, enabling them to easily develop clear career plans.

Additionally, when asked about the challenges and opportunities of studying business English courses, some students mentioned:

It is difficult for students to absorb a large amount of knowledge in specialized fields. Moreover, some businessrelated vocabulary may have different meanings from what they initially learned.

For business courses that are mainly theory-based, there is a lack of practical experience and a connection to real-life situations in businesses.

I have the opportunity to learn from experienced experts and lecturers. I also participate in clubs and job fairs with various large and small companies across different industries.

The surrounding environment is changing rapidly, and some textbooks are still not in line with reality. However, the school always creates opportunities for students to intern and organizes business partnerships to keep up with trends and foster personal development.

3. DISCUSSION

Based on the analyzed data, several key points can be drawn to serve the research question and effective teaching methods.

Strategy: The Connection Between Students and Role Models

According to the research by Rachmawati et al. [13], students tend to choose their career paths based on personal interests or the success of individuals they admire. This is also a strategy to enhance students' motivation and concentration. Emphasizing role models in

the business industry within related courses should be given attention.

Strategy: Transforming Theory into Practical Experience

Imitating practice helps reduce the theoretical load of lessons, encourages flexible learning, facilitates the acquisition of practical knowledge, and aids in long-term retention. The trend of shortening content while still maintaining completeness is more engaging compared to lengthy texts, especially when integrating images, sounds, videos, educational games, etc. According to the study by Hamri et al. [21], the design of educational games and appropriate challenges leads to positive outcomes in students' learning processes. The concept of 'learning through play' is widely applied and effective. Allowing students to give presentations (both individually and in groups) by analyzing interesting topics equips them with essential skills.

Strategy: "Extracurricular Activities and Career Orientation"

One student interviewed mentioned that the teaching methods in class are generally effective, and the teachers combine the material in an engaging and understandable way. However, the school should organize more extracurricular activities (with mandatory attendance to ensure full participation so everyone can gain a comprehensive perspective and learn from each other) and conduct surveys on 'desired careers' to invite related experts for teaching sessions. This would excite students, provide motivation, and encourage deeper exploration.

For students, the training points are truly important, but the most crucial aspect is what they take away after participating in extracurricular activities, workshops, clubs, etc. In addition, the interaction between faculties will help build relationships and expand their knowledge, not just limited to one scope. The research results show that 99.8% of LHU students have a career plan, affirming that the globalization context has an impact on students and requires BE skills in the labor market more and more strongly.

The results are consistent with worldwide patterns showing that BE improves employability. According to Hamari et al. [21], students gain from real-world experience, contemporary pedagogies including PBL (project-based learning), and role models in the business sector. In order to develop soft skills, BE programs should include required extracurricular activities and real-world business simulations.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Inspiration

Regularly invite famous people or business experts to give lectures. Create unexpected and relaxing situations so that students can remove passive barriers, build relationships, and develop good skills such as listening, observing, problem solving, communication, and teamwork, and increase initiative for the following lessons.

Putting theory into practice

Deploying course content into learning activities can provide opportunities for students to participate in specific learning tasks, negotiate hypothetical situations, create small projects with rewards, and play roles related to the course content.

Ensure consistent participation.

Teachers should change attendance at extracurricular activities and graded workshops to mandatory classes and provide benefits for participation and promote team spirit.

Evolving Career Trends

Conducting regular online surveys on career interests to facilitate the invitation of celebrities and experts to lecture at the school. In addition, this is also data for teachers to research further to develop effective and appropriate teaching programs.

Get a clear picture of the difficulties and opportunities in practice.

Encouraging students to participate in a few short-term internships arranged by the school as this can help students simulate all the practical experiences through a presentation in class. As a result, students can learn from each other and have a deeper insight through each presenter.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the role of BE learning in enhancing students' career readiness at LHU. Based on the research findings, the study has successfully answered the three research questions as follows:

To begin with, studying BE is a key part of the process for students to build professional vocabulary, communication skills, and cultural awareness. They are all critical for their employment in an international workplace.

Second, although LHU students understand the value of BE, they still struggle with confidence, practical application, and a dearth of interactive learning opportunities. Students' expectations for practical communication practice have not been entirely satisfied by the existing educational strategies.

Thirdly, the study suggests that PBL (project-based learning) be used as a successful strategy to enhance students' participation, collaboration, inventiveness, and everyday language use in BE classes. Career readiness is improved by PBL's ability to close the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

In order to give students more chances for active learning, teamwork, and real-world communication practice, it is advised that the LHU Faculty of English incorporate PBL exercises into the BE curriculum. The researchers collected research data through questionnaires and structured interviews with 41 students of the Faculty of English at LHU. Future research could expand the survey to include different groups of students for more generalizable results.

The career preparation of students is greatly enhanced by BE courses at LHU. However, to address existing constraints, pedagogical changes are required. To confirm results and investigate long-term effects, future studies should use a bigger, more varied sample.

Research Gap

With the continuous development of the education sector in particular and the global economy in general, business English is the bridge for development opportunities for each individual. However, the research on business English focuses on the European context [22-16]; there is still a lack of detailed analysis of the needs of Vietnamese students in learning BE. This article aims to fill that gap by assessing the most necessary skills and proposing teaching methods suitable to market needs so that students are confident in their future jobs.

Instructors can firmly follow the principles of the issues and conduct further studies on improved teaching methods. As a result, not only will students become more proactive in their learning, but instructors will also enhance their personal credibility by training successful, "strong bamboo shoots." Future research can build on this data to improve domestic education, allowing Vietnamese students to confidently step onto the international stage without falling behind in their field knowledge.

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