The Current Situation of Business English Teaching in Algeria: Students' Perceptions & Challenges at the Faculty of Economic Sciences, Commerce and Management at Setif1 University

الوضع الحالي لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية للأعمال في الجزائر: تصورات وتحديات الطلاب في كلية العلوم

الاقتصادية والتجارية والإدارية بجامعة سطيف 1

Madiha SENOUCI [1] , Ikhlas GHERZOULI [2]

[1] MCC- Mohammed Lamine Debaghine-Setif2 University (Algeria)
, m.senouci@univ-setif2.dz
[2] LTECAL Mohammed Lamine Debaghine-Setif2 University (Algeria),
i.gherzouli@univ-setif2.dz

Abstract: The present research aims to explore students' perceptions and challenges with Business English teaching at the Faculty of Economic Sciences at Setif1 university. To this end, an exploratory research design is followed using a semi-structured adapted questionnaire which is administered to 83 Business English students selected based on a purposive convenience sampling technique. The data are analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results reveal that students hold negative perceptions of the current BE course since it fails to meet their business-related needs. Another finding indicates that students are facing a number of challenges with Business English teaching among which are the lack of appropriate needs analysis for BE students and students' low level of general English proficiency. Based on the findings of this research, a number of pedagogical implications is provided.
Keywords: Business English, perceptions, challenges, students, university**.**

<u>الملخص</u>: يهدف البحث الحالي إلى استكشاف تصورات الطلاب وتحدياتهم التي تواجههم مع درس اللغة الإنجليزية للأعمال في كلية العلوم الاقتصادية بجامعة سطيف 1. ولتحقيق هذه الغاية، تم اتباع تصميم بحث استكشافي باستخدام استبيان شبه منظم مُعدَّل مع 83 طالبًا من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية للأعمال تم اختيارهم بناءً على أسلوب أخذ عينات هادف ومكيف. تم تحليل البيانات كميا ونوعا. كشفت النتائج أن الطلاب لديهم تصورات سلبية عن درس الإنجليزية للأعمال لأنها فشلت في تلبية احتياجاتهم المتعلقة بأعمالهم. أشارت نتيجة أخرى إلى أن الطلاب يواجهون عددًا من التحديات في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية للأعمال، من بينها الافتقار إلى تحليل الاحتياجات المناسبة للطلاب والمستوى العام المنخفض لإتقان اللغة الإنجليزية للطلاب. بناءً على نتائج هذا البحث، تم تقديم عدد من التوصيات التربوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الإنجليزية للأعمال، التصورات، التحديات، الطلاب، الجامعة.

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Corresponding author: Madiha SENOUCI, e-mail: madiha_senouci@yahoo.fr

1. INTRODUCTION

English for Specific Purposes (ESP, henceforth) is considered as one of the most demanded disciplines in academia and has been receiving increasing attention from researchers and growing practice in teaching especially in non-English at the tertiary level. The field of ESP has emerged as a response to the urgent need of implementing English at different levels of education and in the different fields of study such as medicine, engineering, science, technology, economy and business. ESP teaching has always been considered as a complex task with muti-disciplinary dimensions. It is usually defined as the teaching and learning of English in a particular non- English context, largely motivated by the need of English as a medium of communication and access to scientific and technical literature as claimed by Kennedy and Bolitho cited in (Otilia, 2015, p. 245). It is a type of language teaching which seeks to meet the needs of particular learners using education programs that are tailored to develop the communicative use of English in a specialized field of employment (Bolitho & West, 2017). In this regard, ESP has been considered as the key approach to fulfill the needs and the future career demands of learners in non-English departments. Accordingly, ESP teachers or practitioners seem to hold more responsibilities and play more roles than the common language teacher. ESP is an umbrella term for a myriad of various sub-divisions namely English for vocational purposes (EVP), English for medical purposes, (EMP)English for occupational purposes (EOP); English for academic purposes (EAP), English for sociocultural purposes (ESCP), English for legal purposes (ELP) and English for business purposes (EBP) (Otilia, 2015). Among the subfield of ESP, Business English (BE, henceforth) courses are the most needed and developed due to the present need of English as a key element for economic growth due to multinational companies seeking their personnel to perform tasks successfully and communicate effectively in business situations.

1.1 The Emergence and Nature of Business English Teaching

The Teaching of Business English, like any other approach of teaching, has developed over the past decades in terms of the way teachers and textbook designers perceive BE. In the late 1960's, teaching BE focused on business related-vocabulary and repetition drills and textbooks were mainly concerned with offering business specialist vocabulary in a context of written text or dialogue in a specific context such as trade or banking, with a total ignorance of

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the practice of business communicative skills in real life situations. In mid-1970's, teaching BE shifted to more communicative skills development and more functional syllabi. Textbook started to incorporate business communicative skills into the four language skills, speaking, reading, writing and listening. Teaching phrases introduced in business contexts were the main concern of BE courses with the help of BBC published books and videos about English for business. In the late 1980's, BE teaching moved more towards developing business communication skills as a result of company training programs which in turn resulted in the publication of BE materials such as books and coursebooks. At that time, a growing need has emerged to develop the communicative competence through promoting presentation techniques, negotiating strategies and meeting skills. During the 1990's, BE emerged as the focal facet of ESP teaching due to the high national and international enrollment in Masters courses of Business, Marketing, Finance, Banking, Accounting and Commerce. Nowadays, BE is taught in all universities worldwide and highlighted as the key factor to help individuals in the business domain to communicate effectively.

Business English which is a branch of ESP is a major type of English for occupational purposes which is a comprehensive interdisciplinary subject related to linguistics and applied linguistics (Xie, 2019; Zhu, 2010). In general, the term Business English refers to the use of English for economic or business purposes such as business meetings, trade, communication, management and commerce. In terms of the differences between BE and other sub-divisions of ESP, BE combines specific content related to a specific area of business and general content related to the general ability to communicate effectively in business situations (Ellis & Johnson, 2003). As a part of English language instruction and ESP, BE can be used to describe the course which largely aims to teach business lexemes (Walker & Harvey, 2008). However, BE cannot be limited to lexical instruction. It includes the different communication skills used in commerce topics, negotiations, corporate policy, business meetings, multimedia presentations, branding, and costumer relations (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Therefore, in teaching BE, practitioners, in addition to vocabulary, should focus on communicative skills for business learners. Practically, the most effective

teaching of Business English course is to cultivate general English language knowledge and skills, business knowledge and skills, and intercultural communicative competence (Brieger, 1997; Donna, 2000). Accordingly, the BE learner can be described as an "adult working in businesses of one kind or another, or preparing to work in the field of business. The business can be large multinationals, small private companies or even state-run concerns involved with providing products or services" (Donna, 2000, p. 2). To this end, students in BE classes learn English "not because they are interested in the English language or English culture as such but because they need English for study or work purposes" (Robinson, 1991, p. 2). Most of the time, BE course are designed for adult learners in tertiary level or in professional business work situation (Avsheniuk & Seminikhyna, 2020) Thus, BE teaching targets upper-intermediate or advanced leaners with some basic knowledge of General English and want to develop their English language ability for business and employment.

Moreover, teaching BE consists of five major components which are significantly important for the success of the instructional process. First, needs analysis is an essential step in BE context since it helps teachers to identify the required skills and competencies to be developed in learners and set the objectives of the BE course (Basturkmen, 2010). In this regard, since BE course aims to fulfill the work related-demands of students, conducting needs assessment is crucial in BE contexts. Needs analysis can be defined as the "process of determining the needs for which a learner or a group of learners requires a language and arranges the needs according to priorities" (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992, p. 242). Consequently, a teacher, during the process of needs analysis, is required to collect systematic information about "what" the learner needs and "how" the learner can learn effectively to meet his business-related needs. Second, BE methodology which should be based on the link between learners' language level and real life needs which helps designing an appropriate course. BE teachers, therefore, are invited to take the proficiency level of the students into consideration when designing their syllabus for more realistic objectives of the course. Third, the course design in BE should be either language centered, skills centered or learner centered based on course objectives and learners' needs (Hyland, 2006). Accordingly, the "teaching activity, whether its aim is to teach language or skills, is to be presented in context" (Dudley-Evans &

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St John, 1998, p. 11) and the words learnt by students should be the words they actually need in business fields (Harding, 2007). Fourth, materials selection in BE courses should be implemented carefully to meet the needs of learners and facilitate the teaching process. It includes published textbooks, visual aids and internet mediated resources. This latter has been receiving much attention in the current trend of BE teaching. In this regard, computer assisted language learning and the various technological innovations and resources should be incorporated to the curricula of BE teaching (Xie, 2019). Last, evaluation in BE should be done on continuous basis to assess learners' development and progress in achieving the objectives of the BE course (Avsheniuk & Seminikhyna, 2020). In this regard, formative assessment targeting learners' business communicative skills should be done to evaluate learners progress, and summative assessment can be used to check learners' overall achievement of the objectives of BE course.

The BE course usually includes a wide range of business-related topics such as teaching business phrases and vocabulary in relation to tourism, Information Technology, manufacturing, production, property, the stock exchange, international trade, transport, sale, advertising, marketing, accounting, commerce, e-commerce, economics, finance and insurance. The course of BE includes business settings such as attending business and shareholders' meetings; communication between colleagues; arrangement of commercial contracts, drawing up intra-company documents (memos and reports) and intercompany papers (letters, offers and advertising material); participation in negotiations and business phone calls or conferences (Pierini, 2014). Additionally, BE courses include the following skills: writing e-mails; receiving businessmen/visitors and making presentations

Finally, teaching BE is a challenging task for ESP practitioners. Those challenges are sub-divided into human and non-human. Human challenges are related to students and teachers; and non-human challenges are related to the context. First, students-related challenges include students characteristics, students' low level of general English proficiency, learners' low level of motivation to attend a BE class, and students' unawareness of their needs from a

BE course (Suzani, Yarmohammadi, & Yamini, 2011). Second, teacher-related challenges include teachers' lack of knowledge in the content field of business, teachers' ignorance of feedback, teachers' lack of interaction with learners and teachers' lack of experience with designing a BE course (Ho, 2011). Finally, context-related challenges include lack of training for BE teachers, the unavailability of BE teaching materials and the insufficient time allotted for BE courses, lack of appropriate BE syllabus and textbooks, large BE classes and lack of BE evaluation tests (Maruyama, 1996). These are some of the challenges which encounter ESP practitioners in general and BE teachers in specific.

1.2 Previous Related Research about Students' Perceptions & Challenges of BE Teaching

Recently, research in BE teaching is developing and has been the subject of inquiry to identify the different practices, challenges and recommendations. Among this research, the following studies tackles the perceptions and challenges faced by students in BE classes.

First, theoretical research (Zagan- Zelter & Zegan-Zelter, 2010) was conducted to present some challenges faced by both teachers and students when it comes to the study of business English. The challenges were related to the syllabus used and the materials and ICTs involved in the BE classroom. They recommend the necessity of adapting the course content and materials to the students' needs concerning their future jobs in business context as well as the assessment type and the content of the test used for obtaining the business English certificate. In addition, a study by (Dzięcioł-Pędich, 2014) to explore the perceptions of 199 students of Economics and Management at the University of Białystok. For data collection, a questionnaire was developed and administered to the participants who were selected conveniently. The findings indicate that students prefer to learn both General and Business English with speaking as the main focus of the ESP course. Another finding reveals that students expect to use the learnt business skills in professional settings. The results also indicate that students do not use the library materials for BE learning. The study presents possible implications of the results for ESP course designers, and highlights the importance of needs analysis for developing BE syllabi in the context of Polish Higher education.

Furthermore, another research (Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014) was conducted a study to examine the quality of Business English courses delivered in the Thai Higher Education, and investigate students' perceptions toward BE instruction in their universities. The participants are four instructors, and 140 students enrolling in the courses of four universities in the Bangkok. For data collection, the course syllabuses were analyzed, and a questionnaire was administered. The results reveal that the current situations of BE teaching are different in terms of course content, focus on learners' development, and instructional materials. Another finding reveals that students have positive perceptions toward the BE teaching. The results of this study help both BE instructors in terms of improving and revising the course to meet the needs of the present professional world and the trend of Business English instruction. Additionally, a study (Zhengguo, Lin, & Wenzhong, 2016) was conducted research to explore the education system of business English course in the School of English for International Business (SEIB) of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GODUF) in China. The sample consists of 68 undergraduate students in SEIB who completed a structures questionnaires meant for data collection. The results reveal that the majority of the students hope that the school provide more business courses in the curriculum setting. Another finding indicate that students prefer to have more opportunities to practice their English listening, speaking and business practice skills. Finally, a number of difficulties are revealed to face BE students such the lack of communicative skills, problems with understanding and remembering vocabulary and lack of interest. Based on the findings of this research, some suggestions are proposed for the improvement of the education system pf BE in China.

Another conducted study (Zhang, 2018) aims to explore the current situation of Business English teaching in Chinese Higher Education. For data collection, a questionnaire and an interview were used with 82 teachers and students of BE at the College of Science and Humanities of Northeast Normal Universities, China. The results of the research reveal that both teachers and students hold positive attitudes towards BE teaching which is perceived to meet learners' needs and abilities However, the participants believe that BE courses are highly theoretical

and no much attention is given to the practical aspect of BE. In addition, participants believe that the intensive training of BE cannot be helpful for their practical needs. The result of the research will be widely used in the improvement of the BE curriculum, the text books, the teaching strategies, etc. On the other hand, a piece of research (Abduh & Sofyan, 2019) is carried out a study to explore students' perceptions of a BE English teaching materials and strategies adopted by ESP Business English teachers. To this end, a descriptive qualitative approach was followed. Data collection was accomplished through semi-structured interviews which were analyzed using an interpretative analysis approach. The results indicate that students hold positive attitudes towards the material or textbooks that are used. They claim that the textbook already meets the learning needs of students. However, students consider the design of the book to be less attractive which makes them less interested in using the book. Another result indicates that students hold a variety of perceptions about the teaching strategies of their lecturers. They claim that the teaching strategies preferred by students are the ones with the following features: supportive, create fun learning, provide games, be disciplined and assertive but feel not pressured, have an active professional knowledge component.

Additionally, an attempt (Xie, 2019) was made to explored English major undergraduates' perceptions of the meaningful activities and resources of a BE course in one Chinese university context. For data collection, semi-structured questionnaires, and researcher's participant observation are used with 149 students enrolled in Business English courses. The results show that participants most often need improvements in note-taking skills, public speaking and need to learn business communication topics. Another finding entails that students prefer the communicative teaching methodologies, including role plays, oral presentation, theme-based discussion, games and group work. In addition, students often rely on electronic media resources, such as videos, internet and mobile applications more than the print media resources such as library, books and dictionaries. The findings of the research serve as a guide for better business English curriculum development and resources provision in the higher education context. Furthermore, a study by (Jantasin & Pantawee, 2020) aims to identify the challenges of using Business English among 123 major students at Roi Et Rajabhat University based on students' perceptions in order to help teachers

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revise and develop appropriate BE courses for the students. The research instrument used for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire in relation the different challenges faced by students with the four language skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing, respectively. For data analysis, Means and standard deviation and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used. The results of the study revealed that all BE students face moderate level of challenges with the four language skills with speaking reported as the most challenging and writing as the least challenging. Based on these findings, this study recommends a curriculum revision to include more classroom interactive activities for the improvement of students' speaking ability.

Moreover, a study (Larbi & Bensafa, 2020) was carried out in an attempt to examine the quality of Business English courses of Master1 Economics Students at Tlemcen University. For data collection, a questionnaire was administered to 6 teachers and 100 students. The findings reveal that needs analysis for BE courses is not adequately conducted. A further finding indicates a number of other challenges faced by students namely, BE teachers' lack of knowledge and experience in the field of business, the insufficient time allotted for BE class, teachers neglecting ICT's and visual aids, the lack of interest and motivation among learners, the lack of official BE syllabus and the lack of coordination between teachers of BE and those of subject matter. Consequently, these courses of BE are taught haphazardly and teachers unsatisfactorily follow ESP teaching fundamentals. Based on these findings, a number of suggestions are offered for the concerned parts. In addition, an investigation (Alhassan, Ali, & Ali, 2021) was conducted to explore both teachers and students' experience an English medium business course in Sudan. For data collection, a qualitative research methodology was adopted including, interviews, classroom observations and collection and analysis of some documentary data. As participants, Twenty-one BE students and ten subject teachers took part in the investigation. Results showed that students experienced a range of challenges which were perceived to have negative impact on students' academic performance and experiences. Among these challenges are students' lack of relevant business background, the English medium of instruction, communication problems, teachers' speed of

delivering the lectures and the poor writing skill. Pedagogical implications for both business English teachers and students are presented and discussed.

Finally, empirical research (Sartorio & Hamitouche, 2021) was conducted to explore the major challenges of BE teaching and learning at the faculty of Economic Sciences, Commerce and Management of the University of Ghardaia. The sample consists of 5 ESP teachers and 99 students enrolled at different departments across the faculty of economics. A classroom observation was conducted and two questionnaires were administered for both teachers and students as major tools for data collection. The results revealed that both BE teachers and students are facing many challenges. For teachers, the lack of an appropriate syllabus for BE, lack of ESP teacher training, lack of teaching resources, students' low level of motivation, large classes and insufficient instruction hours are the major obstacles of BE teaching. For students, the mismatch between BE course and their needs, the lack of the use of ICTS in the classroom, large classes and the insufficient allotted time are the faced challenges. As pedagogical implications, BE teachers should be provided by appropriate training, collaboration between BE teachers and subject teachers should be supported and BE syllabus design should be based on the accurate needs analysis.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Empirical research, addressing students' perceptions of BE teaching and the corresponding challenges, have been receiving extensive attention from researchers (Zagan- Zelter & Zegan-Zelter, 2010; Dzięcioł-Pędich, 2014; Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014; Zhang, 2018; Bunchutrakun et al, 2019; Abduh & Sofyan, 2019; Xie, 2019; Jantasin & Pantawee, 2020; Alhassan, Ali, & Ali, 2021; Zhengguo, Lin, & Wenzhong, 2016). However, in Algeria, although the courses of BE are provided in all universities in different departments of economics, commerce, management, finance and countability, the ESP teaching situation is not well investigated (Larbi & Bensafa, 2020; Sartorio & Hamitouche, 2021) and has been a subject of complain and dissatisfaction among students. Therefore, aiming to fill this gap in the literature, the experience of students with BE teaching needs to be explored.

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1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore students' experience with BE teaching at the faculty of Economic Sciences, Commerce & Management at Setif1 University. It aims to explore the perceptions and identify the challenges faced by students in BE classes in order to suggest possible solutions to overcome those challenges.

2. Methodology

In order to address the research problem, the current research follows an exploratory research design.

2.1 Research Questions

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the following research questions are to be answered:

1. What are students' perceptions of BE teaching?
2. What are the challenges faced by students in BE classes?

2.2 Participants & Setting

This research was conducted with 83 Business English students from the departments of Economics, Commerce, Finance, Countability and Management at Setif1 University. Business English is introduced as a foreign language course which is to be taught for 1 hour and a half per week with 1 as a coefficient value. The participants are 74 females and 9 males with an age range from 19 to 25. Participants studied General English for 7 years at middle and secondary school. Their level of General English ranges from low to average. The majority of participants (76) are full time students with 6 participants working as teachers at middle schools and secondary schools and 1 participant working at a private company. They were selected using a convenience sampling technique. In this respect, students are selected based on their availability and willingness to participate and answer the questionnaire. This study took place during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023.

2.3 Instrument

The instrument used for data collection is an adapted semi-structured questionnaire. It consists of three major sections. The first section is about the

background information of participants concerning age, gender, years of studying General English, level of General English, frequency of attending the BE class, professional activity. The second section aims to elicit students' perceptions of BE teaching. It consists of eighteen (17) items measured on a five-point Likert-scale, structured as "strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree" The third section is concerned with the different challenges faced by students in BE class. It consists of eighteen (17) items measured on a five-point Likert-scale, structured as "strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree". At the end of this section, an open-ended question is inserted for students to mention any other challenges.

2.4 Procedures

An online questionnaire was created as a "google form", translated to Arabic and sent to first year students from the different non-English departments at the faculty of Economics, Commerce & Management at Setif1 University. Among the population, a sample of 83 students completed the questionnaire. For data analysis procedures, the responses to close-ended questions are analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS.22) to calculate the means, percentages and ranks. The answers to the open-ended questions are analyzed qualitatively through thematic analysis in which common themes are identified, categorized and organized.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings are organized and analyzed under two sub-headings related to the two research questions: students' perceptions of BE teaching and the challenges faced by students in BE classes.

The analysis scoring range used for this research was suggested by an expert statistician. It is detailed in the following table:

Table N° 1: Scoring Range of Mean Ranks

Response Level	Scoring Range
Strongly Disagree	1.00-1.80
Disagree	1.81-2.60
Neutral	2.61-3.40
Agree	3.41-4.20
Strongly Agree	4.21-5.00

3.1. Students' Perceptions of BE Teaching

This section is devoted to the first research question about the students' perceptions of BE teaching. To this end, students are provided with a number of positive statements expressing different perceptions of BE.

Table N° 2. **Students' Perceptions of BE Teaching**

N°	Item	Mean	%	Response Level	Rank
1	BE course is crucial for passing the year	2.02	40.4	Disagree	10
2	BE course is necessary for better job opportunities	2.92	58.4	Neutral	17
3	BE course provides solid background in business theory	2.63	52.6	Neutral	**12**
4	**BE course provides practical business skills**	**1.68**	**33.6**	**Strongly disagree**	**4**
5	BE aims to provide intercultural knowledge	1.85	37	Disagree	8
6	BE course should have a high coefficient	2.66	53.2	Neutral	**13**
7	BE course helps with dissertation writing	1.81	36.2	Disagree	**6**
8	BE should be a compulsory course at the department	1.81	36.2	Disagree	6
9	**BE course is relevant to my academic studies**	**1.57**	**31.4**	**Strongly Disagree**	**3**
10	BE course is given equal importance to other modules	2.68	33.4	Neutral	14
11	Evaluation of BE is appropriate and valid	2.73	54.6	Neutral	**15**
12	The BE teacher helps me with the difficulties I face with BE	2.88	57.6	Neutral	16
13	**The BE teacher asks about my needs in BE course**	**1.40**	**28**	**Strongly Disagree**	**1**
14	**The BE teacher involves me in BE course design (setting objectives and selecting materials)**	**1.51**	**30.2**	**Strongly Disagree**	**2**
15	The BE course meets my expectations	1.86	37.2	Disagree	9
16	The time allocated for the BE course is sufficient	2.55	51	Neutral	11
17	I feel satisfied with the current BE design delivered at my department	1.77	40.6	Strongly Disagree	**5**

Total	2.13	42.7	Disagree

Source: Results from The Researchers' Own Collected Data

From table 2, students seem to have negative perceptions of BE teaching with a total mean value of (2.13). They strongly disagreed and disagreed upon the majority of the positive statement (10) about students' perceptions.

They claim that the teacher never asks about their needs from the BE and does not involve students in BE course design (setting objectives and selecting materials); and the BE course is irrelevant to students' academic studies and provides no practical business skills. Students strongly disagree with the related statement with mean values of (1.40), (1.51), (1.57) and (1.68) respectively.

In addition, students believe that BE cannot help with dissertation writing, should not be a compulsory course at the department, does not provide intercultural knowledge, does not meet students' expectations and is not crucial to pass the year with mean values of (1.81), (1.81), (1.85), (1.86) and (2.02) respectively.

On the other hand, students seem to hold some neutral perceptions towards BE teaching. They feel undecided about whether the time allocated for BE course is sufficient, whether BE course provides solid background in business theory, whether BE course should have a higher coefficient, whether BE course is given equal importance like other modules, whether BE evaluation is appropriate and valid, whether the teacher helps students with the difficulties faced with BE and whether BE is necessary for better job opportunities with neutral mean values of (2.55), (2.63), (2.66), (2.68), (2.73), (2.88) and (2.92) respectively.

The results from this section are similar to findings of (Zhang, 2018; Zagan- Zelter & Zegan-Zelter, 2010), in which students needs are neglected and the objectives and materials of course design are selected with no involvement of students in the decision-making process. Moreover, these findings agree with those from (Zhang, 2018; Xie, 2019; Larbi & Bensafa, 2020; Sartorio & Hamitouche, 2021), in which participants claim that the course does not match their needs since the BE is limited to teaching technical terms with total ignorance of the communicative skills needed in BE context. In addition, these results agree with the one from (Zhengguo, Lin, & Wenzhong, 2016), in which students claim that the course design of BE ignores the practical business skills.

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On the other hand, the results from this section disagree with findings of
(Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014; Zhang, 2018; Abduh & Sofyan, 2019), in which
students are reported to hold positive perceptions towards the current BE course
and claim that the material presented meet their needs. In addition, it contradicts
results from (Dzięcioł-Pędich, 2014), in which students complained that the BE
course focuses mainly on business material with no General English teaching,
which makes it difficult for them to deal with the course due to their low level in
General English.

When asked about their satisfaction with the current BE design delivered
at their department, students strongly disagreed with this statement with mean
value of (1.77), which confirms their negative perceptions of BE teaching. This
finding agrees with the one from (Zhengguo, Lin, & Wenzhong, 2016), in which
students are reported to be unsatisfied with the course design which is considered
illogical.

3.2. The Challenges Faced by Students in the BE Class

Learning BE is influenced by a number of constraints. The majority of
students claim that they face numerous difficulties inside the BE classroom. This
section is devoted to the second research question about the challenges faced by
BE students.

Table N° 3. The Challenges Faced by Students in the BE Class

N°	Item	Mean	%	Response Level	Rank
1	Teacher's focus on grammar and ignorance of the business communicative skills (real life tasks)	4.19	83.85	Agree	8
2	Students' low level of interest and motivation in BE class	4.18	83.61	Agree	10
3	**The lack of experience for BE teachers**	**4.24**	**84.8**	**Strongly Agree**	**6**
4	The lack of the appropriate BE textbooks	4.12	82.40	Agree	11
5	The insufficient time allotted for BE class	4.07	81.44	Agree	12

6	**Students' low level of general English proficiency (pronunciation, grammar, semantics… etc)**	**4.63**	**92.77**	**Strongly Agree**	**2**
7	**The lack of appropriate needs analysis for BE students**	**4.65**	**93**	**Strongly Agree**	**1**
8	The large class size	4.06	81.20	Agree	13
9	**The unavailability of BE authentic teaching materials**	**4.45**	**89.15**	**Strongly Agree**	**5**
10	The unavailability of assessment tests for BE evaluation	3.98	79.75	Agree	14
11	**Teachers' lack of the appropriate content knowledge of BE field**	**4.56**	**91.13**	**Strongly Agree**	**3**
12	The lack of a syllabus for BE with clear objectives	3.68	73.73	Agree	15
13	BE course highly focuses on General English	4.20	84	Agree	7
14	Lessons designed are irrelevant to BE and my field of study	4.19	83.8	Agree	8
15	Underestimating BE course due to its low coefficient	3.26	65.30	Neutral	17
16	The lack of teachers' feedback	3.45	69.15	Agree	16
17	**The lack of using ICT's**	**4.48**	**89.63**	**Strongly Agree**	**4**
	Total	4.14	82.81	**Agree**	

Source: Results from The Researchers' Own Collected Data

From the results demonstrated in the table 3 above, in general, students seem to face a variety of challenges with BE teaching with a total mean value of (4.14) indicating that students agree with all the 17 items for challenges.

The majority of students strongly agree the lack of appropriate needs analysis for BE students, students' low level of general English proficiency, teachers' lack of the appropriate content knowledge of BE field, the lack of using ICT's, the unavailability of BE authentic teaching materials and the lack of experience for BE teachers are among the major challenges facing BE students with mean values of (4.65), (4.63), (4.56), (4.48), (4.45) and (4.24) respectively.

In addition, students agree that BE course highly focuses on General English, teachers focus on grammar and ignore the business communicative skills, the lessons designed are irrelevant to BE and their field of study, students have a low level of interest and motivation in BE class, there is a lack of the

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appropriate BE textbooks, the time allotted for BE class is insufficient and the large sized classes makes the BE teaching/learning unfeasible. These challenges are among the main obstacles facing students in the BE class with mean values of (4.20), (4.19), (4.19), (4.18), (4.12), (4.07) and (4.06) respectively.

On the other hand, the unavailability of assessment tests for BE evaluation, the lack of a syllabus for BE with clear objectives, the lack of teachers' feedback and underestimating BE course due to its low coefficient are reported to be the least faced challenges in BE classes with mean values of (3.98), (3.68), (3.45) and (326)

Theses finding agree with (Sartorio & Hamitouche, 2021), in which the lack of using technology in the classroom, teachers' lack of training, the focus on teaching grammatical rules of General English, students' low level of motivation and interest, the insufficient allotted time for BE course, and the large sized classes are reported by students as the major challenges faced in BE classes. Furthermore, these results go hand in hand with (Larbi & Bensafa, 2020), in which results reveal that teachers' lack of content knowledge, the lack of needs analysis, the unavailability and lack of using ICTs, the insufficient time for BE course and teachers' lack of training in BE teaching are considered as the main challenges for BE students. Moreover, this research agrees with the one of (Dzięcioł-Pędich, 2014), in which the teachers' lack of business knowledge, the insufficient time allotted for BE class and neglecting the communicative skills (speaking) are the major obstacles facing students. In addition, the findings from this section agrees with the results from (Alhassan, Ali, & Ali, 2021), in which teachers' background knowledge, neglecting the communicative skills and students' low level of General English are revealed to be among the main problems facing BE students. Finally, this study agrees with the ones of (Zhengguo, Lin, & Wenzhong, 2016; Jantasin & Pantawee, 2020), in which students reported that the low level in General English (speaking and listening skills) is among the major challenges of learning BE

On the other hand, this section's results disagree with (Abduh & Sofyan, 2019) in which students reported the availability of authentic materials and textbooks for BE which is not the case in the current research which reveals that

the lack of authentic materials and appropriate BE textbooks is among the major challenges facing students in BE classrooms.

In response to the open-ended question, students mentioned absenteeism, lack of learning strategies and the boring teachers' methods of teaching as further challenges faced in the BE classroom.

4.Conclusion

In a nutshell, BE students seem to have negative perceptions of the current BE teaching at the faculty of Economic Sciences, Commerce and Management at Setif1 University. They claim that they feel unsatisfied with BE course due to a variety of challenges among which are: the lack of appropriate needs analysis for BE students, students' low level of general English proficiency, teachers' lack of the appropriate content knowledge of BE field, the lack of using ICT's, the unavailability of BE authentic teaching materials and the lack of experience for BE teachers.

5. Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of the current research, the following pedagogical implications are suggested to ameliorate the BE teaching situation in Algeria. The implications are ordered according to the main challenges faced by students in BE classrooms.

First, in relation to the lack of appropriate needs analysis for BE students, teachers should seek meeting students' expectations and identify their different needs in the BE course. Without a well-conducted needs analysis, teachers are to work in the dark and students will struggle with the BE course. This step of needs analysis is crucial for developing an appropriate course design with feasible objectives and meaningful content for BE students. It also helps with appropriate teaching material selection and development. Consequently, teachers, using needs analysis, keeps evaluating their teaching practices to make the necessary adjustments to meet their students' business-related needs.

Second, in relation to the low level of English language proficiency, universities should consider certain requirements on the English language proficiency level of the students prior to taking the BE classes. This means that students should have at least an intermediate level of General English proven by passing a language proficiency test such as TOEFL or IELTS. Accordingly, students with poor English proficiency level should be given a general or basic

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background of English language training before starting the BE class. In this
regard, teachers of BE may devote the first semester to teach General English
grammar and vocabulary then proceed to BE teaching. This leads to creating a
more homogeneous class with similar English language proficiency abilities. In
addition, General English can be included in students' curriculum to support BE
teaching.

Third, concerning the issue of the lack of business knowledge, BE
teachers should necessarily collaborate with subject matter teachers to gain
knowledge, advice and guidance. In this respect, the BE teachers focus on
business English language skills and the subject matter teachers focus on
professional skills of the students in order to work on achieving common goals of
designing more efficient meaningful BE syllabi. In this regard, the business
content teacher may assist the BE teacher in selecting the relevant content and
designing teaching tasks and activities that are suitable for BE students.
Additionally, BE teachers may collaborate with their students based on the
students' knowledge of their business field with the condition that students must
have a at least an intermediate level of General English to be able to
communicate and share their knowledge with the BE teachers.

Fourth, the use of Data Show, e-learning platforms, social media and
mobile applications has become the new trend of digital learning and BE teachers
should take advantage of it to boost students' interest, engagement and enhance
their achievement in BE classrooms. Teachers are invited to use ICT's because
teaching and learning quality is positively affected by the appropriate use of
technology. In this vein, when using ICTs, students' motivation increases to
attend the BE course and authentic business materials can easily be provided to
students helping teachers updating their traditional teaching methodology. In
addition, the use of ICT's help students with developing their BE knowledge and
skills. Therefore, the policy makers should equipe universities with language labs
with strong infrastructure is relation to internet access and connectivity for better
running of BE courses.

Fifth, BE teachers should receive the appropriate training to be
familiarized with the knowledge, strategies and skills needed to deal with BE

students. This training can be either self-training in which teachers read and continuously update their business-related knowledge or professional training in specialized schools, via seminars or through workshops. To this end, teachers need appropriate training not only to teach BE classes, but also for conducting appropriate needs analysis, designing adequate BE courses, implementing the appropriate methodology, selecting, developing and blending materials from the different BE textbooks and conducting BE related research. In this vein, recruitments of BE teachers should be done according to teachers' competency and experience in teaching BE.

Finally, the time allotted for the BE class is insufficient and should be increased to at least 3 hours per week. On the other hand, teaching BE through tutorial sessions (TD) is highly recommended to provide students with opportunities to practice BE in real life situations. To this end, the number of students per class should be decreased for better BE instruction for teachers will be able to focus on the communicative skills of individual learners in BE contexts using communicative tasks and activities. Moreover, BE textbooks are nowadays available in different forms (Techers' coursebooks, students' books, workbooks, CDs), and teachers are invited to support their teaching with one or more textbooks and recommend titles of appropriate student's books to their students.

6. **Bibliography**

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