



Lexical and Grammatical Features of Business English



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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe a lexical and grammatical feature that can be integrated into English learning materials for business purposes (English for Business) in university and enrich business English vocabulary in order to understand a reading text in a professional context and business environment. The data collected were then analyzed using descriptive qualitative method. The finding of this study shows that in reading material that has been developed, lexical and grammatical feature data are found. In a lexical feature, the data found is in the form of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, compound noun, and word family. While, on the results of the analysis of grammatical feature, there are adjective markers and sentence structure such as simple present tense, simple future tense and of the present perfect tense.

1. Introduction

In university, it is expected that students will be equipped with English language skills in order to be able to face the global free-market competition. English course (for non-English majors), in Indonesia, is a part of personality development courses. This distinctive feature in the context of learning English should apply English for special purposes (English for Specific Purposes abbreviated as ESP). English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an approach in the teaching and use of English for specific fields and studies that are appropriate to the needs of the fields of science and professions of English users. Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 19) define ESP as an approach in language learning, in which all decisions made concerning teaching material and learning methods

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as a whole are based on the reason students learn English (Latupeirissa & Sayd, 2019; Brown, 2019; Sayd, 2020).

The results of a survey conducted through a questionnaire of student responses to teaching English in Bali given to 260 students from the faculties of economics and business in four private and public university in Bali showed that students needed English courses because of the demands for the use of English in the work field and the academic world is increasing and varying. Students wanted topics related to economics because it will help them in reading textbooks or articles in English. The survey results also showed that they had difficulty in micro-skills, namely in recognizing the essence of words and interpreting word order and meaning systematically. In the other side, while students want to improve their macro skills in terms of detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from context, and activating schemata to interpret texts in learning to read (cf. Hikmaharyanti, 2020).

Business and management are an inevitable part of local, national, international or corporate communities that use English as the main source of language. In the global aspect, English is mostly used by international business people or world trade (Zhang, 2007). Business English is considered important for everyone who wants to work in any business or school environment. Business English skills are essential for getting ahead at work. It is important to enrich business English vocabulary and knowledge, which can help the students more effectively and open up new career opportunities. The purpose of this study is to describe a lexical and grammatical feature that can be integrated into English learning materials for business purposes (English for Business) in university and enrich business English vocabulary in order to understand a reading text in a professional context and business environment.

2. Materials and Methods

There are several previous studies which are related to the lexical and grammatical feature of business English taken by the researcher (Jiang 2015; Sinturat 2010; Rao 2017). Jiang (2015), in his article about the study of language features of Business English, emphasized on the definition and the role of Business English, the lexical and syntactic features of Business English, the rhetoric features and social formula of Business English. In his study, he concluded that business English is used in business activities and the context in terms of business-related lexical, syntactic and grammatical features different from those of General English.

Sinturat (2010) investigate the 30 top high-frequency lexical phrases in online Business Letter Corpus (BLC) and five selected textbooks used at Thai universities. The lexical phrases found in his study has various functions in the business discourse, and its functions were based on different situational demands and requirements of the written communicative task. The lexical phrases which appear in the Business Letter Corpus (BLC) were more diverse in terms of the use of intensifiers, adjectives, and word choices than were found in the textbooks.

Rao (2017), in his research, emphasized the study and practice of the language and language skills needed for conducting various business functions and the study of words of business and management. Therefore, the students of business and management are suggested to study the language to get success in their future career. Moreover, the students have to enrich business English vocabulary to be able to communicate effectively in business negotiations, telephone conversations, written reports and emails, and professional presentations.

A lingual form is a form of language units in the form of phonological units, grammatical units, and lexicon units. Chaer (2004: 297) explained that the lingual form is also referred to as a language unit in the form of words, phrases or sentences. The lingual form can be used to display language

choices that come from various languages and cultures. In this research, it discusses the lingual form of a lexical and grammatical feature in the business field. Kridalaksana (2008: 142) defines a lexical feature as components of language that contain all information about the meaning and usage of words in the language, while the grammatical feature is defined as units that contain meaning, both lexical meaning and grammatical meaning. Later, the data on the lexical and grammatical feature is presented in English teaching materials for business purposes.

The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive, and inductive in-depth analysis of the phenomena that occur. The phenomenon that occurs focuses on the planning, process and results of learning English in tertiary institutions. This phenomenological research procedure requires the researcher to examine a number of subjects by being directly involved in developing patterns and relationships of meaning that occur (Cresswell, 2009). Data obtained directly from the initial tests, observations, and documents related to English learning for university level. All data were analyzed qualitatively, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions/verification (Miles, 1992; Creswell, 2019).

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Lexical feature

The lexicon is a language component that contains all information about the meaning and usage of words. The vocabulary consists of nouns which can be pronominal, expressions or phrases, nominal/verbal, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In this study, it is found that the lexical form is in the form of noun, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, compound noun, and word family. The following lexical data related to business can be presented as follows:

3.1.1. Lexical units in the forms of noun

Nouns are words that refer to things (concrete or abstract). Nouns function as subjects, objects, complement, and adverb. Based on noun data found in the design of English teaching materials for business purposes (*English for Business*), noun data found is noun data relating to business, people, places / organizations, business situations that have negative connotations, compound nouns (nouns + noun), compound nouns (noun + verb) and compound nouns (noun + adjective) as explained and word family. Noun that is related to business can be seen on the following table:

Table 1
Noun related to business

advertisement	invoice	project
agenda	logistics	prospectus
applicant	loyalty	quantities
branch	manufacturing	reputation
brand	marketing	risk
business	maximum	sales
circular	merchandise	services
commerce	merger risk	shipping
commodity	minumum	slogan
correction	output	sponsor
expansion	payment	stock
goods	price	strategy
growth	production	target
incentive	progress	warehouse
industry		

The table above is the noun data found in reading materials for business purposes. The noun is included in the form of a single noun associated with business terms. One example of noun "competition" in the following sentence is interpreted as a social process when between individuals or between groups compete to get something / goals / benefits :

To achieve commercial success firms need to do something different as Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis said" they need to know something that nobody else knows" in order to stand out from the *competition*

Table 2
Noun related to people

accounting service	employer	president
advertising executive	employment agencies	producer
agent	entrepreneur	promoter
bank cashier	executive	prospective clients
board member	franchisee	representative
board of directors	hiring manager	sales correspondences
chairperson	human resource manager	sales managers
chief executive officer	human resource management	shareholder
client	jobseeker	staff
competitor	manager	supervisor
costumers	managerial staff	supplier
creditor	marketer	user
director	partner	vendor
employee	present employer	wholesaler

Table 2 above is a noun data relating to people struggling in the business world. Supplier is a party either an individual / company that sells or supplies resources in the form of raw materials to another party whether that individual / company to be processed into certain goods or services. Sometimes many people think that suppliers and distributors are the same, but in fact they are different. Distributors only sell or distribute the finished product to retailers for resale to last consumers, while suppliers sell raw materials to other companies that need raw materials to produce finished goods. The sentence found in the reading text could be seen as follows:

External correspondence is commonly made to vendors, creditors, *suppliers*, existing customers, prospective clients, financial institutions, government offices, law and accounting firms, business affiliates, sponsors or donors, and other offices that have either direct or indirect business relationship with the company.

Table 3
Noun related to place/organization

agency	firm	network
accounting firm	franchise	nongovernmental service
advocacy groups	government office	office
branch	headquarters	point of sale
company	law firm	retail store
corporation	market place	voluntary organization
division		

Table 3 above is a noun related to business place. In economic terms, a branch office or an office / company / branch store is an office / company / shop located in a place other than the location of the main office. Usually only have a few employees to develop a business that can be forwarded to the head office or branch office. The example of sentence is shown in the following sentence:

Internal correspondence is a written communication between the employees, units, departments, and *branches* of the same organization

Table 4
Noun related to business situations that have a negative connotation

bailout	deficit	liability
bankruptcy	discrepancy	liquidation
barrier	depreciation	loss
crash	expense	overhead
debt		

Table 4 above is noun relating to business situations that have negative connotations. The word loss means a negative result of a trade or transaction that causes a decrease in the volume of funds invested as the following sentence:

Economic loss leans toward the side of facts and figures and is more “clear-cut” when compared to non economic *loss*

Compound Noun (compound nouns) is a noun (noun) formed from two or more words that can be a combination of nouns with each other or with other word classes where the results of the combination produce new meanings. Compound noun can be nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions combined to form another new word. Each noun that forms a compound noun has its own meanings, even if they are not put together, if they are put together, they will form a noun that has added meaning.

Table 5
Compound Noun (noun+ noun)

banking sector	business correspondence	jobs vacancy
benefit packages	business entities	local product
brand metrics	business hours	mobile transactions
business activities	business purposes	monopoly power
business affiliates	credit card	product planning
business analysis	customer feedback	product research
business community	discount letter	promotion letter
business competition	firm stocks	rival products
business cooperation	household goods	

Table 5 above is a compound noun (noun + noun). The word business can be reduced to several types of phrases such as business affiliates, business analysis, business community, business competition, business cooperation, business correspondence, business entities, business hours and business purpose. One of the example of the sentence using “business hours” can be seen on the following:

The purpose of resume are the followings: To pass the employer's screening process (requisite educational level, year's experience etc.) and to provide contact information, an up-to-date address and a telephone number (A telephone number that will always be answered during *business hours*).

The phrase *business hours* consist of two nouns that is business and hours. The word business, which means an activity carried out by individuals or organizations that involve the production, sale, purchase, and exchange of goods / services. While hours refers to time. Therefore, the compounded derivative nouns are defined as the hours during which a commercial business is usually run or the opening hours of a store or company.

Table 6
Compound Noun (noun+verb)

accounting report	marketing strategies	sales presentation
booming business	offer letter	sales proposal
brand advocates	online sales	sales report
brand designing	operating costs	sales service
cashing checks	order confirmation	sales volume
created positions	order fulfillment	selling ownership
depositing cash	purchases ordering	shortlisting
earning profits	sales correspondence	time-consuming
marketing letter		

Table 6 above is a noun phrase consisting of nouns and verbs. One example is booming business. Boom is a verb which is a term used to describe that purchase demand is booming. While business is a noun which means an activity carried out by individuals or organizations that involve the activities of production, sale, purchase, and exchange of goods / services. Therefore, booming business phrase has the meaning of a business in which an extraordinary trend / popularity spreads quickly over a long period of time and certainly becomes an attraction and attracts many people. The example sentence found in the reading text are as follows:

Food truck is becoming a *booming business* in Bali

Table 7
Compound Noun (noun+adjective)

better prospects	external correspondence	multiple business
customer loyalty	global market	personal business
customer satisfaction	internal correspondence	personalized correspondence
customer trust	massive sign	profit businesses
durable goods	maximum satisfaction	

Table 7 above illustrates compound nouns consisting of nouns and adjectives. The phrase "durable goods" is a combination of adjectives and nouns. Durable means a category of consumer goods that do not wear out quickly and therefore do not have to be purchased frequently. While, goods means materials that satisfy human wants and provide utility. So the phrase durable goods in the following sentence means that goods that can last for three years or more.

Once you have bought a *durable good*, they do not need to buy in the near future.

3.1.2 Lexical units in the forms of verb

Verbs are classes of words that describe an action, existence, experience, or other dynamic explanation. The verb functions as an explanatory and shows an action of a person or subject. Verb data on business activities can be seen in the table below:

Table 8
Lexical units in the forms of verb

advertise	earn	prioritize
allocate	employ	produce
authorise	establish	promote
building	estimate	purchase
calculate	export	recruit
compete	fund	refund
control	import	report
delegate	invest	retail
deliver	invoice	run
demand	maintain	satisfy
distribute	manage	supply
diversify	market	target
develop	negotiate	transfer

Table 8 above shows the adjective that can be found in the business text. One of the examples is the word “advertise” which means the presentation of persuasive material or messages to the public through mass media that aims to promote products or services sold by the company. The example sentences containing the verb advertise in the following sentence:

Instagram marketing is an effective way to *advertise* a product as it is said that a picture speaks a thousand words.

3.1.3 Lexical units in the forms of the adjective

The adjective is a word that has a function to explain a noun. Adjectives can explain the quantity, adequacy, order, quality, or emphasis of a word. Some of the words in Table 9 below have several functions as adjectives and adverbs (*), for example annual, commercial, competitive, domestic, economical, efficient, financial, logistical, primary, productive, profitable, prosperous, publicly, quarterly, regional, and strategic.

Table 9
Lexical units in the forms of the adjective

annual*	fiscal	prosperous*
commercial*	fixed	publicly*
competitive*	logistical*	quarterly*
core	operating	regional*
domestic*	primary*	regulatory
economic*	productive*	retail
efficient*	profitable*	strategic*
financial*		

In the sentence above, competitive adjective means the ability possessed by a company to have a higher performance than other companies in the same industry or market. Competitive adjectives can be changed into adverbs into the following example sentences

- Differentiation guards products and services from low-priced competition; marketers are increasingly global, increasingly crowded and, therefore, increasingly *competitive*.
- We will have to do some outsourcing to stay *competitively* priced".

3.1.4 Lexical units in the forms of adverb

The adverb is a word that explains the predicate (verb) of a sentence. Adverbs are types of words that provide information in other words, such as verbs, adjectives, and cannot explain nouns in sentences. Examples of adverbs are like the following table:

Table 10
Lexical units in the forms of adverb

efficiently	productivity	competitive
effectively	efficiency	financial
productive		

The word effectively means very useful. If something is useful, it means that the result is an outcome or effect that is following the wishes, for example, the following sentence

It may seem counter-intuitive, but a business owner's ability to effectively deal with customer complaints provides a great opportunity to turn dissatisfied customers into active promoters of the business.

3.1.5 Group Word- Based Lexicons

The word family is a group of words that have the same root (root) added with different suffixes and prefixes so that the meaning will be different, as explained in the following table:

Table 11
Word family

NOUN	VERB	ADJECTIVE
competitor, competition	compete (+preposition)	competitive
cost	cost	costly
product, production, producer	produce	productive
profit	profit (+preposition)	profitable/profitability

Products, production and producer are noun groups. Product is a noun meaning output (output, a thing produced). Production is a noun that means an activity or process of producing something (the act of production). Whereas producers are nouns, meaning people or bodies that produce something. The details can be seen in the following sentences:

- Firms must distinguish their *product* and service from the competitions at every stage of *production*-from raw material extraction to after-sales service.

-
- Basically, marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from *producers* to consumers or users.

Verb produce has the meaning of producing a product/item as contained in the following sentence:

The marketers gather information regarding what are the needs of the consumer and then decide upon what *to produce*.

While productive is an adjective given to something that has the power or ability to produce something as seen in the following sentence:

- *Productive* can be used more broadly to describe something that produces a positive result.

3.2 Grammatical feature

Grammatical units, as studied in this study, are morphemes (markers), in the form of words (markers), phrases, clauses, sentence structures, or other word unit markers. Based on the results of the analysis of grammatical aspects found in reading material were adjectival markers and sentence structure

3.2.1 Grammatical unit in the form of an adjective marker

Degree of comparison is a form of adjective or adverb that states a comparison. There are three types of degrees of comparison, namely: positive, comparative, and superlative degree. In reading English with business, objectives contain a comparative degree (more levels) that is used to state that the state of an object or person is more than another. The rules for the formation of the sentence is to add the ending "er" to short adjectives (usually consisting of one / two syllables) and combined with the word "than" as in the following sentence :

Rouser Reeves in the 1940s to represent the key point of dramatic difference that makes a product salable at a price higher than rival products.

3.2.2 Grammatical unit in the form of sentence structure

In English reading materials for specific purposes, the researcher found three tenses namely simple present tense, present perfect tense and simple future tense. The details were described as follows:

- a) Simple Present Tense sentence structure. In this study, the simple present tense is used to describe a product. In this reading activity, students are asked to explain or describe an object / product. Verbs used are attribute verbs, such as be (am, is, are). The tense used is simple present tense because it tells the facts of the object being explained. Action verbs are verbs that indicate an activity. The writing exercise can be seen in the following exercise (Figure 1).

C. Now work with a partner and try to write a good description about company's products and/or services. Use some well - known company's products and/ or services too.



Figure 1. Writing exercise about description

Besides being used to describe a product, the simple present tense is also taught in the following two writing exercises where students are asked to tell the local brand they like and give reasons why they like it:

G. Do you have a favorite local brand? What is it? and why do you like it?

Figure 2. Writing exercise about a favourite local brand

The following is a writing exercise that instructs students to do writing on social media, namely Instagram. Students must promote an item/product that they want to sell. Students must be able to do writing that can attract buyers. Simple present tense mastery is needed in describing this product. The following is an example of a writing exercise.

D. Imagine that you are selling products on Instagram. Discover ways to showcase and promote your product on Instagram. Please write Instagram posts that interest shoppers?

Figure 3. Writing exercise about promoting a product on Instagram

b) Present Perfect Tense sentences structure. In this study, it was found that grammatical feature in the form of Present Perfect Tense which was used to show an action or situation that had begun in the past and continued to the present or was completed at a certain point in the past but the effect was continuing. In the following application letter, students learn to use present perfect tense to discuss skills and work experience or talk about how many experiences they have or how long they have worked in the field. Present Perfect Tense is also used to complete summary/resume statements and cover letters. An example of a cover letter can be seen below:

- For the last three years I have been employed as a Cashier at the Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI), where I have played a key role in their success. My daily duties include; depositing cash, cashing checks, accepting loan payments, processing night deposits and selling Travellers Checks.
- In addition to this letter I have also attached my current resume which will give you a more comprehensive idea of my competencies.

c) Simple Future Tense sentence structure. Simple Future Tense is a grammatical feature that is taught on English material for business purposes. Simple Future Tense in the exercise shows events that have not yet happened or will occur in the future and end in the future. This form of tense is the most basic tense and the use of this tense is identical to the word *will* / *shall* or *be going to*. To make a Simple Future Tense sentence, it would be more complete if you add a description of the time. In general, the use of Simple Future Tense is the same as Simple Present Tense. However, the difference lies in the time of occurrence (S + will + Verb 1 + O). The following is an example of a writing exercise contained in Unit 1, which is about "The Secret of Business":

E. Imagine that you will open your own business for example food store or some other business. What will you prepare for the equipment and supplies? How much will this equipment cost? Will you rent the equipment or buy it? will you create a website for your business? Write your plan here

!

Figure 4. Writing pexercise about opening a business.

The writing exercise instructs students to imagine themselves as if they are going to open a business like a food shop or other business. Then, they are asked to think about the equipment and supplies of the products being sold—price of equipment and supplies for the product. Total costs to be incurred to purchase the equipment. They were also asked to think about how to market products through the website. They were asked to write their plans in the column provided. Tense that will be used by students is simple future tense.

4. Conclusion

Finally, this paper presents an example of teaching materials developed from such lexical and grammatical features of English used in reading material. Business English is becoming increasingly

very important in the business situation as more and more companies need their staff to be multi-lingual language and there are a lot of language features of Business English. With the increasing number of our vocabulary in English for business, we will be more skilled in understanding the contents of reading or what others are talking about. Because of its use in reading for business, English has its own specific linguistic features, both lexically and grammatically.

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