Eclecticism as a Key Factor in Successful Business English Instruction

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Abstract
The paper presents the results of a qualitative, longitudinal study in the specific context of postgraduate Business English education, which, despite the high demand for Business English courses and their profitable position in the educational services sector, still tends to be an underdeveloped research area, especially in a non-Anglophone context where Business English is most often taught. The paper's primary objective was to identify the key factors contributing to successful Business English postgraduate instruction and to discuss which aspects of Business English teaching were crucial in the eyes of students and problematic in the view of their teachers. The brief literature review, which is presented in the first section of the paper, concerns the position of Business English as a part of the profitable and challenging area of English for Specific Purposes, the specificity of Business English teaching, and its methodology. The main research methods applied in the longitudinal qualitative case study approach were a semi-structured interview and a student satisfaction survey (used mainly to validate the results of the interviews). The results revealed the most crucial factors with reference to a successful instruction of Business English in postgraduate education, its most important aspect being eclecticism, which is elaborated on in detail in the paper.
Key words: Business English teaching, postgraduate education, non-Anglophone context, eclecticism

Introduction

English language teaching in general, and especially English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Business English as its part, has an established status in European educational settings (Maican, 2017) and is nowadays considered a very profitable area (Ramirez, 2015). For that reason, we may witness an ongoing discussion concerning the need to develop a modern Business English teaching methodology that would consider modern Business English students' needs and expectations and ways of satisfying them (Geng, 2017). Such an approach to Business English (BE) teaching is likely to affect Business English teachers, who may identify many problems with reference to the specificity of business language teaching.

Therefore, this study aims to discuss the key aspects of successful Business English instruction in the specific area of postgraduate university education. In the first part of the paper, a brief literature review concerning the position and specificity of Business English teaching is provided, whereas the second part of the paper comprises its author's qualitative study design, results, and discussion. The empirical research was based on a longitudinal case study of postgraduate studies in Business English. Data sources such as surveys and personal, semi-structured interviews carried out for five years were combined to identify key aspects of successful Business English instruction.

Literature review

Business English belongs to a branch of applied linguistics. It comprises specialist vocabulary and other linguistic aspects of the language reality aimed at bringing pragmatic principles to be utilized in the language reality (O'Keeffe & McCarthy, 2009). Business English teaching, according to Zhu et al. (2016) and Zeltera and Zagan-Zeltera (2010), should be elaborated on in the larger context of English for

Specific Purposes (ESP) as it shares its important characteristics, including needs analysis, syllabus design, course design, and materials selection and development, involving a specific language corpus and emphasis on specific types of communication in a specific context. However, it differs from other varieties of ESP due to its mix of specific and general content (Ellis & Johnson, 1994). ESP itself, as defined by Hans and Hans (2015), refers to teaching language in a larger context than linguistics and grammar only, incorporating the knowledge from such areas as, for instance, accounting, computer sciences, tourism, and business management, so is not taught as a topic being part of students' actual working environment and essential to them (apart from the students' actual world but rather incorporated into a subject area essential to the learners (Ghafar, 2022). The crucial goal of ESP courses is to enhance students' effective communication skills in their professional and academic contexts, which are unique to a specific field of study, line of work, or kind of activity (Javid, 2013) and to use English effectively in a particular sector (Fitria, 2019).

Business English learning and teaching is considered a very important branch of ESP (e.g., Geng, 2017; Kustec, 2014; Mihaescu, 2013). Therefore, ESP and BE Teaching have developed into a profitable area over the last three decades (Ramirez, 2015), which may lead to ESP teaching being considered very challenging for some teachers who want to satisfy all the needs of their key customers (here understood as students learning Business English).

The needs of BE students, as Maican (2017) indicated, may be very specific, like, for instance, needs concerning specific lexis in a given context and field (like, for instance, English for financial analysis), or more general, referring to English language use in the business environment (Frendo, 2005). The former requires teachers' specialist knowledge in a given sub-field of Business English Teaching and the necessity to teach specific lexis. In contrast, the latter refers to more general EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching to make students understand the language used in business area by its native speakers or other professionals which is not very difficult to users of language that already are quite professional in general English (Frendo, 2005). The above shows how diverse the field of Business English Teaching is and the needs of students, which, in turn, can be perceived as a challenge for the teacher. There are other Business English Teaching-related challenges due to the specificity of this teaching field, which are presented below.

Business English Teaching specificity, goals, and related challenges

Business English-related challenges, first of all, derive from BE specificity as it is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary subject based on linguistics and applied linguistics (Zhu, 2010), absorbing other research methods and consisting of such elements as business background knowledge, the language used in a business context (Chuan & Zhu, 2011), and business communication skills, rather than being a simple addition of business and English (Geng, 2017). When it comes to the specificity of learning and teaching Business English, it entails learning and teaching business-related vocabulary, communication skills, and business-related subjects such as for instance, marketing, sales techniques, EU funds, etc.(Zhu *et al*., 2016) and generally, in view of Mihaescu (2013), teaching a language and skills at the same time. The teaching goals for Business English students are not only to simply gain some business knowledge but to learn how to use English to communicate flexibly and efficiently in a business environment and deal with real problems occurring in international business (Zhu *et al*., 2016). This is more difficult for the teacher than teaching general English as it requires expertise in more than one field, such as linguistics and management, which the teacher may lack (Łuczak, 2012; Wieczorek, 2020).

Nowadays, Business English teachers are expected to have a business background and to constantly update their teaching techniques to offer their students profound

knowledge in this field (Tang, 2015). However, an average graduate of an English Philology department very rarely exposes knowledge concerning business teaching specificity, business-related vocabulary, or understanding of business-related situations (Wieczorek, 2020; Gibson, 2002), not to mention the knowledge concerning modern teaching techniques that would be applicable in the context of Business English teaching (Kustec, 2014) or its cultural dimensions and the dynamics of business communication (Gibson, 2002). This, in turn, indicates that many English teachers are simply not at all prepared to teach ESP and business English, especially, which may trigger difficult emotions. What is more, teaching business language usually requires, according to Ringler (1997), a more practical approach than the typical language-teaching approach entailing standard lecturing, as the former aims to empower students to use business English skills in practical business situations. As a result, it is more difficult to design and implement for the teacher than typical, general foreign language content (Wieczorek, 2020).

Further challenges faced by Business English teachers concern choosing lesson objectives and main focus, the type of specialized vocabulary to be taught, the course and syllabus design (Zeltera & Zagan-Zeltera, 2010) where the syllabus and course content, including the choice of tasks, the assignments, and the instructional strategies (Ho, 2011), are frequently and constantly adjusted and perfected by the changing business environment and students' changing needs (Geng, 2017), which is very time-consuming and difficult for teachers that are anyway overloaded with work (Wieczorek & Mitręga, 2017). What is also stressed by Zeltera and Zagan-Zeltera (2010) is the fact that the teacher should possess at least basic knowledge concerning the business expectations for future businessmen and the ability to choose teaching methodologies helpful in teaching to meet those expectations. Another issue closely connected to the choice of the teaching methodology and student needs concerning the course content is the heterogeneity of the taught group often encountered by business language teachers (Wieczorek, 2020). The heterogeneity in this context is caused by vast differences about students' linguistic background (mixed-ability groups), students' background in business knowledge, age, and social status (Sadaf, 2009). This means that within one group (usually in a situation outside the bachelor or master programs realm), there may be English Philology graduates who would like to enhance their business-related skills and vocabulary and professionals working in a business environments who lack appropriate linguistic background; people that are young and have a good basic knowledge of English, or people much older with poorer command of English, but vast business knowledge. The heterogeneity mentioned above often results in different expectations and satisfaction levels between corporate workers and English Philology graduates, with the former expecting more practice concerning effective communication skills development and the latter expecting more advanced linguistic input, which triggers teachers' dilemmas concerning what to teach and whom to satisfy more (Wieczorek, 2020). Another challenging aspect of teaching Business English concerns providing a theoretical framework for the classes, with the witnessed lack of a theoretical framework allowing ESP teaching (Chen, 2011). It does not also seem exactly clear who would make a better Business English teacher: an English Philology graduate with vast teaching experience but a lack of business-related knowledge, a professional from the field of business, or an academic teacher with business-related background and basic knowledge of English, but lacking formal linguistic qualifications and deep knowledge of linguistic structures and foreign language teaching methodology-related knowledge and skills.

As shown above, successful business English Teaching, meeting the expectations of the changing business environment and BE students, requires interdisciplinary knowledge, diversified course content, and eclectic teaching methods, considering the heterogeneity of Business English groups of students taught. Therefore, eclecticism is briefly discussed and defined below as it seems to cure some of the challenges

described above. At the same time, it is a challenge in terms of implementation and choice of given methods and strategies.

Eclecticism as a part of successful BE methodology and a challenge for the teacher

Eclecticism as an approach to foreign language teaching refers to the purposeful use of a variety of language learning methods and activities, even though each of them may have different characteristics and may be motivated by different underlying assumptions (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Furthermore, the choice of a method should each time depend on the aim of a given lesson and the abilities of a given group of students since the eclectic approach to teaching allows the teacher to select what works within their own dynamic contexts (Brown, 2002). This makes eclecticism an effective strategy of catering to the diversified needs of all Business English students (taking into consideration their different backgrounds and learning objectives), but at the same time, a challenging approach for the teacher who cannot teach in the same way each group and each year, but rather has to analyze the needs of a specific group, the specificity of their jobs, their level of linguistic proficiency and after that he or she needs to come up with a mixture of methods and activities relevant in that given situation (Chernus et al., 2022). The choice of the mixture cannot, of course, be accidental or very spontaneous; every decision about learning in the case of a professional eclectic approach is based on a detailed and holistic understanding of all learning theories and related pedagogical methods, taking into consideration the purpose and context of teaching, students' needs, or available resources (Gao, 2011). It is, therefore a vital approach in the realm of foreign language teaching in general as it entails teaching different language skills during one lesson unit, but in the case of Business English teaching, it is especially important due to the fact that, apart from teaching language skills, the teacher teaches content that belongs not to one, but to two fields: linguistics and management (Wieczorek, 2020), so the methods are even more diversified. There are, of course, other aspects of Business English teaching methodology apart from eclecticism, which are worth discussing, and this is done below. Eclecticism is not incorporated into the forthcoming section since it is not only an example of BE teaching methodology but also a challenge for the teacher, and for that reason, it was described between the section devoted to challenges and the one focusing on BE teaching methodology.

Selected aspects of the Business English Teaching methodology

Due to the popularity of Business English in business settings and foreign language educational sector (Geng, 2017; Ramirez, 2015) and the fact that it has for a long time been the language dominating the world of business and communication in multinational companies around the world (Pikhart & Klimanova, 2020), a question concerning its teaching methodology arises. Many researchers in the area of foreign languages, especially business language teachers, ask themselves questions concerning the existence of business English teaching methodology. However popular its teaching may be and how many courses are nowadays on educational offer in the realm of Business English, there is still a lack of clearly applied teaching methodology. Furthermore, as Klimanova and Pikhart (2021) claim, there has not been significant research in the field of Business English teaching as a lingua franca in educational settings, especially in so-called post-communist countries, even though Business English is one of the most rapidly growing fields in the area of English language teaching and, generally, applied linguistics and a leading ESP branch.

They claim (ibid.) that most of the teaching strategies within the BE realm result from ESP teaching methodology, especially the focus on the satisfaction of student's immediate needs, the application of authentic materials, and intercultural awareness.

Which should be taken into consideration while preparing BE courses as they are crucial aspects for the successful implementation of its methodology. Sadly, there are not many BE textbooks that would meet the needs of the students as they focus on general business topics and skills to suit all students in general rather than pay attention to the needs of different business entities/groups (Chan, 2013). Pikhart and Klimanova (2020) also stress that intercultural awareness is one of the most critical features of the methodology of Business English Teaching due to its popularity in the global market. The conditions for Business English Teaching methodology include (Klimanova and Pikhart, 2021:2):

-Employing English to achieve students' discipline-/job-specific needs;

-Learners becoming more autonomous and faster as compared to other learners of English due to the tendency of BE courses to be short;

-Learners have more significant opportunities to exploit modern information technologies due to BE courses being at the forefront of implementing these technologies in language teaching;

-Learners' being exposed to a multitude of individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds when engaging with BE speakers ;

-Teachers work with authentic materials more than general ELT teachers since these materials demonstrate how real-world assignments are perceived and handled in their subject disciplines or their jobs.

As presented above, there are many conditions that teachers of Business English need to meet to make their teaching effective and their students satisfied. There are still many questions with regard to how to meet the needs, who should do the teaching, and what the key to successful BE instruction is. Some of the questions are answered by the study results presented below.

Current study design and results

The research results presented in the current paper were qualitative in nature and carried out in postgraduate Business English-related education settings in Poland. As mentioned by Klimanova and Pikhart (2021), there is still a lack of significant research in the field of Business English teaching not only in educational settings in general but especially in so-called post-communist countries. The study results, therefore, fill the gap, as its results concern Business English teaching to students from Poland, which is one of the post-communist countries. The study area is between the service provider (here: the Business English teachers) and customers (here: Business English students) within postgraduate studies in the area of Business English. The case study method has already been used in prior studies concerning business relationships (e.g., Pérez and Cambra-Fierro, 2015). We can call the relationship between a BE teacher and their students (here seen as customers) a business-like one.

Study context

The research is mainly qualitative in nature; it is an ongoing, longitudinal case study approach referring to Business English postgraduate studies. To be more precise, the study context concerns postgraduate, two-semester studies organized at a medium-sized public university located in one of the biggest cities in Poland. The study has been carried out for five years (from 2019 to 2023), with five groups of students in total. Results of a similar study and also a database of Business English students (data obtained between 2008 and 2018) have been already described by Wieczorek (2020) and Wieczorek and Mitręga (2020); however, they concerned only the dark side of the dyadic relationship between the between an organization (a university) and their key customers (postgraduate students). The current study context described revolves around the relations between teachers and students, the problems encountered by the former, and the educational needs and satisfaction of the latter. The time brackets

concerning the current study and the material from the database are between 2019 and 2023.

There were two groups of informants within the context of the current study: Business English teachers and postgraduate students. In total, there were 16 students who were subjects of qualitative, semi-structured interviews (the saturation was achieved after 14 students had been interviewed) and two teachers whose experience was described. When it comes to the teachers, these were two teachers teaching Business English-related post-graduate studies (one having linguistic background and formal qualifications in the area of foreign language teaching and the other one having business-related background, no formal qualifications in the area of foreign language teaching, however having a good English language competence and experience of living and working in an English-speaking country).

The students were either corporate workers from various business sectors who lacked linguistic knowledge in relation to business English vocabulary and who lacked good English communication skills or English philology graduates (mostly English teachers) who lacked business-related knowledge and Business English vocabulary. They chose that offer for two reasons mainly: first of all, acquiring a diploma in the area of Business English studies nicely tailored to their career, and secondly, they were looking for new knowledge and competencies in relation to business and business-related soft skills area. They had clear needs and high expectations, and at the same time, some of them had really significant knowledge in the area of sales, communication, and sometimes middle-level management as they were experienced employees. This way, they were valuable and demanding customers for the university and lecturers. When it comes to the distribution of the type of informants, 8 of them were corporate workers, whereas 6 of them were teachers of English. The disproportion in their distribution is not accidental; it also portrays the disproportion between teachers and corporate workers in each of the five student groups since there are always more of the latter within each group investigated.

Study objectives and methods

The objectives of the current study were as follows:

The main objective of the described study was to find key aspects of successful Business English instruction in the area of postgraduate education. The aim of the detached objectives was:

- to investigate what the BE teachers find most problematic in view of the specificity of BE teaching and how they cope with the problems;
- to investigate the expectations of BE students towards their teachers and the study program (as these two are interconnected) and what, in their opinion, teachers and university should do to meet the expectations;
- to investigate what is most crucial for successful Business English instruction from the perspective of students and teachers, in view of the expectations of the former and the potential problems encountered by the latter, and check if the expectations of students differ from the opinions of teachers with regard to the expectations.

As previously mentioned, the main method was a longitudinal case study, mainly qualitative in nature, whose only quantitative element incorporated was data obtained from student satisfaction surveys whose results were used to validate the study program in the light of student opinion. The longitudinal case study method allowed us to observe which aspects of Business English teaching the teachers find most problematic in view of the specificity of the teaching (i.e., combining linguistic content with business-related context and teaching skills), what the needs of BE students are, if the needs are satisfied and what is the key to successful Business English instruction to cater for the needs of very heterogeneous groups.

The second method, and at the same time, the most important one in the context of this paper, was the interview method. Semi-structured interviews were carried out

each year with students who volunteered to share their opinions concerning their needs with reference to Business English-related content to be learned, the quality of teaching, expectations towards the teachers, and the study program. The only quantitative element, as already mentioned, was a student satisfaction survey used systematically (twice each year) measuring the performance of teachers concerning their expert knowledge, the proportion between theoretical and practical elements in each subject, the quality and usefulness of materials administered for students, the quality of teaching style of each teacher, teachers' attitudes towards students. There were also open-ended questions, which were considered to be more important for the purpose of our case study approach. The participants (students) were asked twice each year which elements of the offer and teaching they were most satisfied and dissatisfied with and why and who their favorite and most disliked teachers were and why. They were also encouraged to give suggestions concerning the study concept, offer, and program, and many of them provided such information.

The research was mostly qualitative in nature, which, taking into consideration the sensitivity of the issue under investigation (people's feelings and problems concerning Business English teaching and learning), assured the best results thanks to the closeness between the researcher and the investigated reality (Konecki, 2000). Therefore the qualitative interview was chosen as one of the study methods. The empirical material, however, contained some quantitative elements (Likert scale-based information concerning the performance of all academic teachers, usefulness of materials, teachers' attitudes towards students) which were a part of the student satisfaction survey that was already described in the paper and whose aim only was to validate the qualitative content. The qualitative data was analyzed in accordance with QDA (Qualitative Data Analysis, Seidel, 1998) principles, namely the process of noticing, collecting, and thinking. On the basis of the emerging theory, study objectives were addressed, and they are elaborated on in the next section of the paper.

Study results

As a result of Seidel's (1998) Qualitative Data Analysis carried out for the purpose of the study, interesting results emerged in relation to students' expectations and satisfaction sources, teachers' problematic areas of Business English teaching, and key factors contributing to successful Business English instruction were identified. All the study objectives were answered and presented from the perspective of teachers and students. The results of the study are categorized and presented below.

Teachers' most problematic areas with reference to BE teaching and their ways of coping with them

As mentioned earlier, there were two teachers participating in the study. The first one, called Respondent T1, is a teacher with a business-related background and a good command of the English language but no formal linguistic background, whereas the other teacher has the formal linguistic background and a very good command of English but no formal qualifications with regard to business-related knowledge and skills. Both of them taught all the students participating in the interviews. The most problematic area identified by both teachers is the heterogeneity of the groups taught, which causes differences in expectations of the students (for instance, different expectations concerning the level of the linguistic input provided, where students with formal linguistic background are disappointed that the proficiency level of the group is not higher and the exercises provided are not more advanced as a result, whereas students with business background find it all right or even too high, however expect more content with reference to business-related processes discussed, etc.). Both teachers admitted it was their source of frustration and stress. However, they seem to have totally different strategies for coping. Respondent T1 claimed that he each year chooses the certain level of difficulty concerning the issues raised during the classes on the basis of the expected proficiency level of the group, assumed on the basis of

recruitment information specifying how many people have business-related backgrounds and how many of them are English Philology graduates. Then, he tries to stick to it in order to maintain his teaching-related self-esteem, which, in his opinion, is crucial for utilizing the teacher's full potential while teaching. It is illustrated by one of his comments provided below.

"You know, everyone will have different expectations because people differ, their levels of knowledge differ, and generally, I'm not able to meet the expectations of them all at once. I assume that if I am self-confident, they feel they have a competent teacher who is worth listening to. […] Even if I'm aware that some people may be bored because they already know certain content or the level is too low for them, I need to adjust it to the level of the least proficient ones". [Informant T1, translation mine].

The other informant, on the other hand, claimed that she tries hard each year to cater to the expectations of two groups of students, and to do it, she uses as diversified exercises and activities as possible to let each group gain new knowledge and boast their knowledge in the area of their professional expertise. For that reason, she, first of all, chooses activities that interchangeably perfect either linguistic skills and business-related skills (for instance, negotiation skills of students who are asked to role-play negotiations with given business entities after covering negotiation-related vocabulary) so that both groups of students feel interested, have the opportunity to share their professional knowledge with the other group and have the opportunity to speak. She also claimed that she generally tries to use as many methods (and, to be precise, some elements of the methods) of foreign language teaching as possible and, this way create opportunities for students with different needs, differing emotional problems (like, for instance, fear of speaking) or totally different professional background, to practice vocabulary, soft skills or speaking skills while doing a given activity.

" *It is difficult [to teach such heterogeneous group]. However, it is possible to do it successfully if one takes into consideration their different needs. The more diversified the exercises and content, the more people are pleased and the more opportunities for them to learn something new. This way, they also don't lose focus easily, have more fun, and like the classes and teachers. It is crucial not to build two antagonistic teams, in case of doing team exercises and creating competition between the teams – each team should be composed of people with linguistic background and business backgrounds because this way they learn from each other and don't try to show who is a better – philologists or corporate workers.[…] I think student emotions are the greatest key to success; if they are positive, they can learn more, and in this context, to make them positive means to diversify activities and levels of difficulty in such a way that everyone feels worthy at least from time to time*". [Informant T2, translation mine].

As shown above, both informants find the heterogeneity of the group problematic. However, their coping strategies are totally different as one is, first of all, teacher-centered (mainly revolving around the emotional well-being of a teacher), whereas the other one is student-centered (focusing on the emotional well-being and competence of students). Both approaches seem to make sense as teacher's emotions have an influence on the atmosphere in the classroom, and they generally should not be neglected, whereas catering to the emotional needs of students is also very important, especially for successful language instruction. Student satisfaction surveys showed that during the five years of study, Informant t2 scored higher than the other one 8 out of 10 times (the survey is administered twice a year, so each group was surveyed twice each year), so it can be assumed that for students the diversification of activities and focusing on their emotional well-being is more important than teacher's self-confidence. It should also be noted here that, due to formal linguistic background and,

as a result, knowledge of many methods of teaching foreign languages, Informant T2 was slightly more advantaged here.
Other problems mentioned by the teachers concerned students' expectations to have fun all the time while learning (which is not always possible if very difficult content is discussed like, for instance, accountancy-related vocabulary or ways of doing break-even analyses, etc.), to be treated individually (the expectations of each person should be fulfilled in view of students) and to have teachers with perfect knowledge of English and business skills at the same time. All these expectations cannot be, in the opinion of the investigated teachers, met at once since it is very difficult to find a teacher perfect in both areas or to implement the fun element all the time. Composing the team of teachers having either of the mentioned backgrounds and diversifying the exercises and methods of teaching is so far the best solution, which is also stressed by students whose opinions and expectations are described in the next section.

Students' expectations with reference to BE instruction and BE teachers
The qualitative analysis of the obtained data revealed that teachers are aware of their students' expectations with reference to BE instruction. The group of investigated students was generally satisfied with the course content and the organization of studies, which was shown in the student satisfaction surveys each year and also revealed during the interviews. They were of the opinion that the program nicely caters to their expectations and the recent job market requirements as well, even though some of the interviewed students claimed it should be regularly updated since the trends in business tend to change really fast, which results in the emergence of new expectations with regard to vocabulary to be learned and business phenomena to be discussed. When it comes to their expectations concerning the teachers, the most crucial and most often mentioned ones concern the diversification of activities. In view of the students, it was still not enough, even though Informant T2 tried really hard to meet the needs. The students expect not only diversification when it comes to the class activities and exercises but also when it comes to the expertise of teachers. They would, of course, much appreciate it if each teacher had the expertise of both fields at once. However, it is not possible. Generally, students expect diversification in teachers, exercises, and linguistic input, which is proved by some of the provided narrations.
" *I like it that we do so many funny things, like, for instance, pretending to be cultural advisors, or trying to sell the comb for bald people as we did last semester. I would like though more advanced exercises and higher level of proficiency, but I understand there are people in the group that wouldn't understand it and wouldn't be able to do the exercises. Maybe a good solution would be to provide the more advanced part of the group with exercises with a higher level of difficulty and the less advanced people with different exercises at the same time*". [Informant 5, translation mine].
As shown in the above narration, students appreciate practical exercises, especially with the incorporated fun element and they would appreciate more diversified exercises that would cater for the needs of both groups at the same time.
" *I learnt a lot this year and I loved the fun element in them. It is important for people who already have their jobs and are tired after the whole week of hard work it also a little bit eases the tension I feel when I need to talk in English and the people around are better speakers. I really appreciate it that the teacher designed some activities in such a way that I also could contribute with my broken English [laughs] as they concerned my sector. It must be difficult to involve everyone, I guess she somehow remembered who was who, or maybe took notes when we introduced us during the first class, because the speaking activities very often concerned what we do for a living. I really liked it*". [Informant 9, translation mine].
Informant 9 appreciated the fun element and the opportunity to speak created for everyone in the group, no matter of their proficiency level, what again strongly

stresses the value of diversification of exercises and teaching approaches (aiming at speaking practice, vocabulary practice or business-related exercises respectively).

" *I liked some of the games, but I think there was too much fun and sometimes it seemed childish. I would prefer more difficult exercises, for instance some translation exercises where we could find business-related equivalents with reference to given sector of business and more advanced discussions. Maybe the classes should be sometimes held in two subgroups or more eclectic methods should be used. I'm aware I'm a teacher of English and I have high expectations since I know all the methods, but some teachers here don't as they are not teachers at all formally*". [Informant 10, translation mine].

As shown above, students more advanced linguistically tend to have higher expectations and they may especially expect different foreign language teaching methods than their corporate colleagues. What is more, the fun element seems to be more appreciated by corporate workers rather than English philology graduates.

It may be caused by the fact that the latter are self-confident in English-speaking situations and do not need fun elements and extra encouragement to speak in front of others or generally to use English in oral and written form. For less advanced students the affective aspect of learning and teaching is more important. Both group most often mention the diversification of exercises, methods of teaching and approaches as a key to successful Business English instruction, which is also supported by opinions of BE teachers and some remarks from the student satisfaction survey mentioned before.

Most crucial factors contributing to successful Business English instruction in view of teachers and students: study conclusions and discussion

On the basis of the analysed qualitative material presented in the previous section it can be assumed that the investigated teachers had a clear understanding of the needs and expectations of their students which up to a point they found problematic due to their sometimes mutually exclusive character (e.g. differing expectations of corporate workers versus English philology students).

•*Taking the affective aspect into consideration while teaching and learning Business English*

The teachers were aware of the importance of the affective/emotional aspect of teaching a language, which, in general, has previously been confirmed by many researchers in the field of foreign language teaching especially since the spread of popularity of positive psychology (e.g. MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2016; MacIntyre et al., 2019). The positive influence of (positive) emotions on the development of foreign language knowledge and skills is confirmed by the Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions (Li et al., 2018), which states that positive emotions like enjoyment facilitate the building of language-related resources with their positive power to broaden a given person's perspective and open them to derive more from learning language (Li et al., 2018, after MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012). The principles of another theory – the Control-value Theory, also confirm the role of enjoyment in activating learners' academic achievement (Li et al., 2018, after Pekrun et al., 2007 and Piniel and Albert, 2018). Both investigated teachers were aware of the role of emotions in the context of Business English teaching. However, one of them (Informant T1) was more focused on the teacher's emotions, whereas the other one (Informant T2) was more concerned about students' emotions. At first glance, it may seem that Informant T2 was more right in their focus. However it cannot be denied that the emotions on the side of the teacher also play a great role in the foreign language teaching realm since, first of all, teachers are important agents within the domain of education (Livingston et al., 2022) and their emotions have an influence on their students' emotions (Becker et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2023) since happy and enthusiastic teachers are likely to "produce" happier, more engaged and motivated students.

•*Creating positive atmosphere through the implementation of "fun-activities"*
Both groups of informants were also aware that the introduction of the so-called fun element into the teaching was a helpful factor in lowering the inhibitions of some students (especially the speaking-related ones and especially in case of corporate workers as students) and generally contributed to creating the positive atmosphere in the classroom which, in turn, creates opportunities for learners to enjoy themselves and make progress (Moskowitz and Dewaele, 2019). Good classroom atmosphere and students' progress and enjoyment lead for positive learning outcomes and high-quality education (Zhang, 2023), giving students the opportunity to grow linguistically and emotionally (Greenier et al., 2021). Teaching adults who are already involved in fulfilling their career-related duties, working in different sectors of business (corporate workers) or in educational services (English Philology graduates who usually work in public or private schools) requires creating for them not only opportunities to gain knowledge easily, but also to relax after their working week and generally, feel safe enough to speak a foreign language, make mistakes, correct themselves (all in front of others) and progress this way. This point is evidently connected with the previous one, as positive atmosphere in the classroom contributes to positive emotions of students.
•*Frequent updates of the course programme and content*
Some informants stressed the need to frequently update the course programme and update in view of the fast-changing business environment and trends.). It is coherent with suggestions of Geng (2017), who argued that the teachers of Business English should constantly adjust and perfect the curriculum in accordance with the changing business environment and students' changing needs. This, of course, might be problematic for some teachers and was in previous researches reported as their source of stress (Wieczorek, 2020), however it seems one of the important keys to satisfy the needs of Business English students and the teachers should take all possible measures to update their syllabi, teaching materials and sometimes even the teaching methods in order to effectively teach new content. It was also reported by Klimanova and Pikhart (2021) and Lee et al. (2019), who not only claimed that such constant updates allow to keep pace with the latest business trends, but also mentioned the importance of developing human– computer interaction referring mainly to online learning whose implementation is especially important for Z Generation students who will soon dominate the job market (and, as a result, will become a significant group of clients in the educational services environment) and whose learning preferences should be taken into consideration. The ideal situation would be to each year update the course not only basing on the latest business trends, but also on the needs analysis of a currently taught group which would be time-consuming and stressful for the teacher and it would also often entail the change of teaching methods which would be most suitable in a given learning situation with a given group of students. It leads to the next, and in view of the author of the paper, the most important point within the methodology of Business English teaching, which refers to the role of eclecticism in teaching.
•*Eclectic approaches and teaching methods*
When it comes to the heterogeneity of the taught groups resulting from the specificity of postgraduate Business English teaching (Wieczorek, 2020), the teachers find it problematic. They either somehow neglect it or keep their previously designed course of teaching action (as in case of Informant T1), or try to cater for the diverse student needs proposing very diversified activities and foreign language teaching methods (as in case of Informant T2); the second approach seems to be more effective and significantly more preferred by the students which was confirmed by student satisfaction surveys in which Informant T2 scored higher than her colleague. It is strongly connected with the signaled need of all informants to be taught with as diversified methods as possible in order to meet the expectations of all people in the group who, first of all, very often have very different English proficiency levels and,

secondly, either are corporate workers or English Philology graduates and these two groups have different backgrounds and needs and expectations. Given the general specificity of Business English teaching and greater heterogeneity of Business English groups as compared to teaching at BA or Masters programs at regular university courses, which, as assumed by the author of the paper, can be witnessed not only in the context of the current study but generally while postgraduate Business English teaching, it seems crucial to use eclectic teaching methods. By eclectic methods, we understand diversified methods and activities selected as a result of careful consideration based on the analysis of a given teaching situation and group of students (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) whose choice allows the teacher to select what works within their dynamic contexts (Brown, 2002). For instance, the use of the grammar-translation method to give students the equivalent of the taught business-related vocabulary items in their native language if they need it for their work or the application of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching if the students need to focus on spoken language in the context of business communication. These two needs could be catered to during one lesson. Hinkelman (2018) pointed out the importance of implementing blended learning methods into the Business English instructional process, especially given the rapidly changing business environment, so again, it is visible here that the points presented are interconnected (the need to frequently update the course content and program and the use of diversified teaching methods). All the above points show the importance of implementing the eclectic approach to teaching business English. This teaching approach, especially popularised in the realm of foreign language teaching, teaching combines the principles of various methods and approaches to language teaching (Kumar, 2013) that, in a given situation, depending on the lesson objectives and students' individual differences, motivations, and current needs (Iscan, 2017; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Such an approach to teaching not only caters to satisfying students' need for the diversity of methods and approaches, but it also, according to Parupalli (2018), enhances the active interaction between students and teachers and allows them to find connections between their own life experiences and the ideas presented during language learning-related activities (Kumar, 2013) and practice different skills in need to be perfected (Gao, 2011). Study results (the results of the qualitative interviews and the results obtained from the Student Satisfaction Survey) also indicated that the informants valued the learner-centered teachers and these, according to research (e.g., Blumberg, 2008), usually employ selected teaching methods, soi t further validates the main claim of the paper, that eclecticism is a key to Business English success. The paper's author sees eclecticism in this context not only as a diversity of foreign language teaching methods used to teach Business English but also as the diversity of the content taught by one teacher to a group of students. Previous research by Wieczorek (2020) indicated that Business English teachers in postgraduate education do not only teach about business language (for instance, vocabulary, writing, etc.), but they also teach business communication (after Gibson, 2002), soft skills (after Sadaf, 2009) relevant for business purposes for instance principles of manipulation, stress management strategies in business settings, public speaking, etc.), so it can be assumed that these teachers are also expected to possess at least basic knowledge from more than one field (Tang, 2015). It can be seen as another indicator of eclecticism as it creates opportunities to provide students with diversified content, skills, and knowledge.

Study conclusions and limitations

In conclusion, taking into consideration the specificity of Business English teaching (especially in the postgraduate education sector), the needs of students identified as a result of the study, and the suggestions and problems encountered by the investigated

teachers of Business English, eclecticism emerges as the most crucial factor contributing to successful Business English instruction. Successful instruction is understood here as such type of Business English instruction, which allows heterogeneous groups of students to learn the business-specific language even given some affective problems (like, for instance, apprehension to speak a foreign language in front of others), students' diversified needs and different levels of proficiency within one group and the constant need to update the course content and, materials to catch up with current business trends. The application of eclectic teaching methods seems to cater to all the needs and problems mentioned, and therefore, it is considered a key to Business English teaching and learning success.

Implications for educators and suggestions for further research

Eclectic methods of Business English teaching appear to be the key issue in catering to the diversified needs of Business English students and various contexts of Business English instruction. However, their use is also a challenge and a source of stress for the teacher who needs to each time analyze students' needs and propose a choice of relevant methods and materials and, additionally, if possible, relate to the context of the student's personal life and experiences (Gao, 2011). In order to do so, the Business English teacher should be familiar with many existing teaching methods and the current trends in business (as they are fundamental to the choice of teaching resources). To do so, teachers teaching Business English should update their knowledge of methods and trends by participating in courses, conferences, and reading papers in the field. They should also be familiar with the political context and basic legislation of the country where they teach as politics influences business processes (e.g., views of citizens and country leaders on globalization and governmental strategies of encouraging or discouraging inward investments as a result, etc.). As a result, the teacher should be familiar with current news, political parties that are part of the Government, and big figures in the domestic and international market (e.g., the names of big corporations and the sectors they belong to). In order to meet the needs of students and the modern Business English teaching objectives, the teacher must either be very open-minded, hard-working, and interested in many areas of life or participate in courses/postgraduate studies or generally university programs that would teach them, apart from business-related vocabulary and general foreign language teaching methodology, the fundamentals of business, elements of political science and regulations concerning managing business in a given country.

Some implications for universities and other entities should also be provided for preparing teachers to teach Business English or organizing the process. First, universities should organize courses, or at least workshops, devoted to Business English teaching methodology since BE teaching is becoming a very profitable area nowadays (Ramirez, 2015), and its status is already well-established in educational settings (Maican, 2017). At the courses, future English teachers would have the opportunity to learn vital strategies for teaching business language, strategies for selecting and creating helpful resources, and the fundamentals of business and business processes. The entities organizing the process of Business English teaching, on the other hand, should carefully select and recruit their teachers, combining people with linguistic expertise with the ones experienced in the business area (especially if recruiting a qualified and skilled Business English teacher is not possible).

Since there is still a lack of sound Business English methodology and the lack of significant research in the field, according to Klimanova and Pikhart (2021), it is especially visible in so-called post-communist countries. It is, therefore, a suggestion for further research to explore or even come up with a methodology for teaching Business English, taking into consideration the importance of eclecticism in this

context. The Business English teaching-related eclecticism should be further explored, and teachers' knowledge and understanding of it should be researched.

The study contributes to the very specific context of Business English postgraduate teaching, giving an insight into the problems encountered by Business English teaching teachers, the needs and expectations of their students, and, mainly, the possible solutions to meet student's needs and offer solutions to teachers in view of their concerns. However, the study, as the majority of qualitative studies, is not free from limitations (e.g., small sample, restricted context). It gives valuable insight into many aspects of Business English teaching, and it may be treated as a call for more future research in the area and a starting point for quantitative research using bigger samples and further validation.

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