

## Exploring English Language Needs: Business Students' and Teachers' Perspectives in a Saudi Undergraduate Context

**Ahmed Alghamdi**

English Language Institute  
King Abdul-Aziz University  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia  
[amoalghamdi@kau.edu.sa](mailto:amoalghamdi@kau.edu.sa)

### Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to explore the English language needs of business major students at the undergraduate level. The impetus for the research was therefore the need to explore ways of identifying the students' English language needs for academic purposes as viewed by the students, their language teachers and business lecturers. In particular, the author was interested in conducting what various researchers Al-Khatib (2005), Al Mamun and Rahman (2017) and Forey (2004) indicated that bridging the gap between the objectives of educational institutions and English language skills required in the academia will prepare students to meet their real-world needs and expectations. It should be noted that, it is a requirement in Saudi Arabia that students who wish to participate fully in the business environment require greater control of the English language for their future careers. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving both quantitative and qualitative (naturalistic) data and data analysis. Participants included business students (n = 254), language teachers (n = 20), and business lecturers (n = 3). Analysis of data from numerous sources (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews) indicated differences among the participants about perceptions of English language needs for academic purposes, but in general it was clear that the English language programme in its current form is not meeting the students' language needs.

**Keywords:** English for specific purposes (ESP), Needs analysis (NA), Present situation analysis (PSA), Saudi undergraduate context, Target situation analysis (TSA)

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