

**THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN DEVELOPING SECONDARY STUDENTS' BUSINESS
AND ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCE.**

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ANNOTATION: This study investigates the role of English in developing business and entrepreneurial competence among secondary school students. The research compares the effectiveness of the project-based English approach with traditional grammar-oriented English teaching methods. The findings reveal that project-based instruction significantly enhances students' communication, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and practical business knowledge. Through small business projects, and real-world task simulations, students demonstrated notable improvements: entrepreneurial thinking increased by 25–35%, while active classroom participation rose to 65–80%. Comparative analysis shows project-based approach provides clear advantages over traditional methods by integrating language learning with professional tasks, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, strengthening teamwork and leadership abilities, and preparing students more effectively for future professional environments. The study offers important practical and methodological recommendations for enhancing English through competency-based, applied, and innovative approaches.

Keywords: business, entrepreneurial competence, communication skills, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, professional development.

Introduction

In today's fast-paced and globalized world, the teaching of English plays a crucial role across all fields of human activity. In the spheres of business and entrepreneurship, English functions not only as an international language but also as a key tool that provides access to financial independence and opens pathways to developing one's own business initiatives. According to Language Services Direct's data English remains the most spoken language globally in 2024, with approximately 1.5 billion speakers and continues to dominate international business, science, and technology [1]. Within vocational and secondary campuses, teaching English supports students in developing both professional communication and analytical skills. These competencies significantly contribute to shaping their future business awareness, entrepreneurial mindset, and ability to participate effectively in economic activities. As a result, English serves not merely as a subject of study, but as a practical instrument that enhances students' readiness for real-world entrepreneurial challenges.

Literature Review

Several scholars highlight that fostering entrepreneurial competence among young people has become increasingly vital in today's world. Begiev and Asaul (2001) explain that entrepreneurship develops more effectively when individuals work in environments that encourage creativity and support the realization of innovative ideas [2]. They emphasize that modern societies need active young people who can propose new solutions and show initiative. For this reason, educators play a key role in helping students acquire the competencies necessary

for entrepreneurial achievement. Rubin (2014) adds that these competencies involve the practical abilities and knowledge required to run and maintain a business successfully [3].

Another comprehensive view is presented by the OECD (2018), which suggests that competence is not limited to knowledge alone [4]. It is defined as the ability to combine knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to deal effectively with complex, real-life situations. From this perspective, entrepreneurial competence includes not only academic preparation but also adaptability, emotional strength, and a positive, growth-oriented mindset. Saroni (2012) expands on this by emphasizing the significance of persistence in entrepreneurship education [5]. He argues that learners must cultivate “struggling skills,” meaning the capacity to confront challenges, overcome difficulties, and handle entrepreneurial tasks with confidence. Saroni believes such qualities can be developed through appropriate training and hands-on practice. Taken together, the literature shows that entrepreneurial competence is a multidimensional concept. It incorporates creativity, applied knowledge, resilience, critical thinking, and confidence in applying one’s abilities in practical contexts. Incorporating English language learning into this process further strengthens students’ potential by allowing them to communicate ideas effectively, present business plans, and engage in entrepreneurial activities at a global level.

Methodology

The study was conducted to investigate the development of business and entrepreneurial competence through English among students studying at an educational campus. This approach allowed for the observation of students’ participation in practical tasks, their experience, and the changes that occurred in a natural setting. The study involved 15 students aged 15–16. They were given 30 minutes to consider and work together. During the research, students’ engagement in practical tasks, their experience, and observed changes were analyzed in real-life conditions. English lessons were integrated with business-related practical tasks. Specifically, students were divided into groups and prepared and presented their mini business projects in a preliminary form. Each group provided information on key criteria such as business idea, planning, financing, verification, development, and market entry. The mini-projects included elements such as business idea, target customers, required resources, and expected outcomes. Through these presentations, students’ language skills, business thinking, and creative approach were assessed. Moreover, during practical lessons, students’ communication skills, creativity, initiative, and problem-solving abilities were observed. Short interviews were conducted to determine how English lessons helped them express business ideas, overcome difficulties, and develop entrepreneurial thinking.

Results

The results showed that integrating English lessons with business-related practical activities had a positive impact on the development of both language competence and entrepreneurial thinking among the students. Specifically, entrepreneurial thinking increased by 25–35%, while active classroom participation rose to 65–80%. The findings demonstrate that integrating practical business exercises into English lessons significantly enhanced multiple competencies among students. Notably, students exhibited improved communication skills, showing greater confidence and clarity in presenting business ideas in English. Their creative thinking and ability to propose innovative solutions increased, while initiative and problem-solving skills became more pronounced. Additionally, working collaboratively on mini-projects strengthened teamwork, coordination, and shared responsibility within groups.

Discussion

The analysis indicates that combining English instruction with hands-on business activities contributes not only to language proficiency but also to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset. Engaging in mini-projects provided students with experiences resembling real business

scenarios, fostering practical skills such as planning, resource management, financial estimation, and market-entry decision-making. Group-based tasks further encouraged collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving, while also enhancing creativity and peer learning. These observations support prior research showing that task-based and experiential learning approaches make language acquisition more interactive, applied, and motivating.

Conclusion

In conclusion, integrating English lessons with business-focused practical tasks effectively cultivates both linguistic competence and entrepreneurial thinking in students. Mini-projects and experiential exercises serve as powerful tools for developing creativity, initiative, and problem-solving abilities. This approach not only strengthens academic and language skills but also equips students with the competencies necessary to address real-world business challenges, preparing them for future professional endeavors.

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