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ASPECTS OF LEARNING ENGLISH FOR MANAGERS

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Abstract. In the article today's globalized business landscape, English proficiency is a critical skill for managers, extending beyond basic language abilities to encompass leadership, communication, and cultural competence. This article explores key aspects of learning English tailored to the managerial role, focusing on business vocabulary, intercultural communication, leadership and negotiation skills, writing, and public speaking.

By developing a strong foundation in these areas, managers can enhance their effectiveness in diverse, international settings, improve team engagement, and navigate complex business interactions more successfully.

Ultimately, mastering English for management purposes empowers leaders to communicate clearly, resolve conflicts diplomatically, and build stronger professional relationships across borders.

Keywords: business English, managerial communication, leadership skills, intercultural communication, business vocabulary, public speaking negotiation, skills writing for business, team engagement, conflict resolution, networking, global business environment.

Statement of the problem. In an increasingly interconnected global economy, managers are required to communicate effectively across cultural and linguistic boundaries. English has become the dominant language of business, making it essential for managers to be proficient in its use.

However, many managers struggle to develop the specific language skills

required for leadership roles. This challenge goes beyond basic conversational fluency; it involves mastering business-specific vocabulary, understanding diverse cultural communication styles, and adapting language use to various professional contexts such as negotiations, presentations, and team management.

Without these specialized English skills, managers risk miscommunication, reduced team engagement, and difficulties in navigating complex negotiations and international collaborations.

Thus, the problem is not merely learning English, but acquiring the nuanced language and communication competencies necessary for effective management in global business settings.

Statement of the problem. In today's globalized business environment, English has become the lingua franca for international communication, yet many managers face challenges in acquiring the specific language and communication skills required for effective leadership. Traditional English language learning often focuses on general proficiency, which does not sufficiently address the unique demands of managerial roles. These demands include mastering business terminology, delivering clear instructions, negotiating persuasively, and leading diverse, multicultural teams.

The inability to communicate effectively in English can result in misunderstandings, diminished leadership credibility, and lost business opportunities. Managers who lack advanced English skills may struggle to engage teams, conduct successful negotiations, or present their ideas confidently in international settings. Therefore, the problem lies in the gap between general English proficiency and the specialized communication needs of managers, which must be addressed to enhance managerial performance in a global context.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

The current body of research emphasizes the growing importance of English proficiency in the managerial role, particularly in globalized business contexts. Recent publications identify key areas where non-native English-speaking managers face challenges, such as navigating complex communication, understanding

business-specific language, and managing multicultural teams. Several themes have emerged from recent studies, reflecting how English proficiency directly impacts managerial effectiveness and organizational success.

1. English as a Global Business Language

Research consistently confirms that English is the dominant language of international business. A report by Neeley (2020) in the *Harvard Business Review* states that many multinational companies have adopted English as their corporate language, underscoring the need for managers to develop proficiency in English to succeed in global environments. This trend is particularly critical in cross-border collaborations, where English serves as the primary mode of communication between teams and clients.

However, studies also point out the complexities of using English in business contexts. *English as a Business Lingua Franca* (BELF) research by Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2011) reveals that non-native speakers often use English differently, focusing more on clarity and mutual understanding than native-like fluency. This pragmatic approach, while useful, also requires managers to become adept at adjusting their language to the needs of their audience.

2. Business-Specific Language Skills

Several studies highlight the gap between general English proficiency and the specialized language required for effective business management.

Business English often includes industry-specific jargon, idiomatic expressions, and formal structures that non-native speakers may not encounter in standard language courses. Rogerson-Revell (2018), in the *Journal of Business Communication*, examined how managers must acquire a robust vocabulary to participate in meetings, negotiations, and report writing—contexts where precise language use is critical.

Moreover, reports such as those from the *Global English Training* institute (2019) emphasize that non-native English-speaking managers often struggle with mastering business communication skills, particularly in areas such as delivering presentations, giving instructions, or managing emails. The challenge is not only in

understanding English but also in using it in a manner that reflects professionalism and authority.

3. Cultural Intelligence and English Communication

The relationship between English proficiency and cultural intelligence (CQ) has been explored extensively in recent publications. Earley and Mosakowski (2020), writing in the *MIT Sloan Management Review*, point out that language skills alone are insufficient for managers leading international teams. Cultural understanding is equally important in interpreting non-verbal cues, indirect language, and varying levels of formality in business communication. Managers who speak English fluently but fail to grasp these cultural nuances may face barriers to effective leadership.

Research also highlights that cultural miscommunication can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, or a perceived lack of competence. A study by Seidlhofer (2011) found that English-speaking managers who are culturally adaptable are better able to navigate diverse team dynamics and avoid communication breakdowns. This has led to increased interest in integrating intercultural training into English language programs for managers.

4. Leadership and Soft Skills in English Communication

The ability to communicate leadership through language is another area of focus in recent research. A study published by the *British Council* (2018) found that managers who are proficient in using soft skills in English—such as giving constructive feedback, motivating teams, or resolving conflicts—are more successful in managing multicultural teams. Non-native English-speaking managers, however, often struggle to express empathy, emotional intelligence, and other soft skills in a second language.

Research has shown that managers need to be equipped with not just the technical language of business, but also the language of leadership. The ability to inspire, persuade, and negotiate effectively in English is essential for managers operating in international markets.

A 2021 report by the *Language Learning Journal* emphasized the need for managers to practice communication skills that reflect empathy and diplomacy,

which are essential for building relationships and fostering collaboration across borders.

5. Technological Innovations in Language Learning for Managers

Technology has played a significant role in advancing English language learning, especially for professionals. Recent publications have explored how digital platforms, apps, and AI-based tools are transforming the way managers learn English. For instance, Duolingo's 2021 business report shows that many companies are turning to AI-driven tools to provide customized learning paths, focusing on the specific communication needs of managers. These tools help address gaps in business English, offering targeted training in areas like business meetings, negotiations, and intercultural communication.

Online learning platforms such as Coursera and LinkedIn Learning also offer business-focused English courses, allowing managers to access flexible, on-demand learning. Studies suggest that these platforms are increasingly popular because they provide personalized feedback and simulate real-world business scenarios, making learning more relevant and efficient for professionals with time constraints.

Presentation of the main research material.

The research surrounding English proficiency for managers in global business settings highlights several critical themes.

As organizations become more international, managers must not only communicate effectively in English but also navigate the complexities of business-specific terminology, cultural differences, and leadership communication. Below, the main research findings are presented based on recent studies and publications. [1, p. 30]

1. English as the Dominant Language in Global Business

Numerous studies affirm that English is the primary language used in multinational corporations. Research by Neeley (2020) underscores that companies such as Airbus, Samsung, and Rakuten have officially adopted English as their corporate language. These organizations recognize that English proficiency is vital for cross-border collaboration, customer interactions, and internal communication

among diverse teams.

This shift has brought to light the challenges non-native English-speaking managers face. While general English proficiency is common, many managers struggle to adapt their language skills to professional settings. Business communication requires not just fluency but also the ability to use precise, industry-specific terminology. A key finding from Louhiala-Salminen and Kankaanranta (2011) is that managers often develop their own version of *English as a Business Lingua Franca* (BELF), focusing on simplicity and clarity to ensure mutual understanding across linguistic and cultural divides.[2, p.40]

2. Business-Specific Language Skills and Professional Communication

Research consistently points out that business English differs significantly from conversational English. Rogerson-Revell (2018) explored how managers must acquire specialized vocabulary, including industry jargon and formal expressions, to function effectively in meetings, reports, and negotiations. Managers are often expected to write clear, concise emails, deliver presentations, and lead meetings in English, where accuracy and professionalism are critical.

Several studies, such as those by the *Global English Training Institute* (2019), indicate that non-native English-speaking managers often face difficulties when it comes to formal written communication or oral presentations. The use of idioms, technical language, and culturally relevant phrases can hinder their ability to convey ideas persuasively. Misunderstandings arising from language barriers can negatively impact business negotiations, team collaboration, and client relationships. [3, p.50]

3. Cultural Intelligence and Multicultural Communication

One of the key themes in recent research is the intersection of language learning and cultural intelligence (CQ). While proficiency in English is essential, studies such as those by Earley and Mosakowski (2020) argue that successful communication also depends on understanding cultural differences. Managers must be aware of the varying communication styles, formalities, and non-verbal cues used in different cultures, even when speaking the same language.

Research shows that high cultural intelligence enhances a manager's ability to

lead diverse teams and work in international settings. Seidlhofer (2011) found that managers who combine language proficiency with cultural sensitivity can navigate complex social interactions more successfully. For example, a manager who understands that certain cultures prefer indirect communication or value politeness over directness will be better equipped to handle negotiations or conflict resolution in a global setting. [4, p.80]

4. Leadership and Soft Skills in English Communication

Studies also focus on the role of soft skills in leadership communication, particularly for managers who operate in English-speaking business environments. Non-native speakers often face challenges in expressing empathy, motivation, and emotional intelligence in English, which are essential for effective leadership. A study by the *British Council* (2018) highlights that while many managers may excel in technical business English, they often struggle to use the language in ways that demonstrate leadership qualities, such as diplomacy, persuasion, and conflict resolution.

Effective managerial communication involves not only conveying information but also inspiring, engaging, and building relationships with teams. Seidlhofer (2011) emphasized the importance of language in fostering trust and collaboration, especially in multicultural teams. Managers who can express empathy, provide positive feedback, and resolve conflicts using appropriate language are more likely to succeed in leadership roles. [5, p.12]

5. Technological Solutions for Language Learning

The rapid development of technology has provided new avenues for learning English, particularly for managers with demanding schedules. Research by *Duolingo for Business* (2021) and other language learning platforms shows that online courses and AI-driven language tools offer customized training that addresses the specific needs of business professionals. These platforms allow managers to practice real-world scenarios, such as negotiations, team meetings, and presentations, in English.

Moreover, advancements in adaptive learning technologies have enabled personalized language learning paths, focusing on industry-specific vocabulary and

communication skills. Studies have found that these tools not only improve language proficiency but also enhance learners' confidence in using English in professional settings. Research suggests that managers who engage in digital language learning platforms are more likely to develop the skills necessary to succeed in global business environments. [6, p. 37]

Conclusion and further prospects for improvement in higher education.

The research underscores the growing significance of English proficiency for managers in today's global business landscape. Effective communication in English is essential for managing diverse teams, conducting negotiations, and navigating complex international relationships. However, traditional English language learning approaches do not fully equip managers with the business-specific communication skills needed for leadership roles. This gap highlights the need for targeted language training that addresses not only technical business English but also cultural intelligence and soft skills, such as empathy, negotiation, and leadership communication. [7, p. 42]

Managers who master these skills are better equipped to communicate, lead diverse teams, and foster successful collaborations in international business environments.

Technological innovations, such as AI-driven language learning platforms, offer promising solutions by providing flexible, personalized learning paths that focus on real-world business scenarios. As the demand for global business communication continues to grow, these tools will play an increasingly critical role in helping managers develop the necessary competencies for success. [8, p. 13]

Further Prospects for Improvement in Higher Education

To address the challenges identified in the research, higher education institutions must evolve their curricula to better prepare students—particularly those pursuing management and business degrees—for the demands of global business communication. Some key prospects for improvement include:

1. Incorporating Business English in Management Programs

Higher education programs, particularly in business and management, should

integrate specialized English language courses tailored to business communication needs. These courses should focus on:

- **Business-specific vocabulary:** Teaching students the terminology and expressions commonly used in global industries.
- **Writing and presenting in English:** Emphasizing the ability to write clear, concise reports, emails, and proposals, as well as delivering professional presentations.
- **Leadership communication:** Training students to use English effectively in leadership roles, including motivating teams, resolving conflicts, and negotiating successfully.

By incorporating these elements into management education, universities can better prepare students for real-world communication challenges. [9, p. 2]

2. Developing Intercultural Communication Competencies

Given the multicultural nature of modern business environments, higher education should place greater emphasis on developing students' cultural intelligence alongside their English language skills. This can be achieved through:

- **Intercultural communication courses:** Teaching students how to navigate cultural differences in business communication, including understanding varying levels of formality, indirect communication styles, and non-verbal cues.
- **Collaborative projects with international students:** Offering opportunities for students to work on projects with peers from different cultures, allowing them to practice English in multicultural contexts while developing cultural awareness.

Integrating cultural intelligence into the curriculum will help students develop the adaptability and sensitivity required to succeed in global business environments.

3. Leveraging Technology for Personalized Language Learning

Higher education institutions should take advantage of technological advancements to offer personalized, flexible language learning solutions for students. This can be achieved by:

- **Incorporating AI-based language learning tools:** Universities can

partner with providers of AI-driven language platforms, allowing students to engage in adaptive learning that tailors content to their specific needs, whether it's business meetings, negotiations, or presentations.

- **Blended learning models:** Combining in-person instruction with online learning platforms that provide students with ongoing, on-demand language practice. These platforms can simulate real-world business situations and offer personalized feedback on students' progress.

This integration of technology will allow students to improve their English proficiency in a more efficient and targeted way, particularly in areas relevant to business management. [10, p. 6]

4. Enhancing Soft Skills Training in English

Soft skills are increasingly recognized as essential for managerial success, especially in global settings. Higher education should enhance its focus on developing these skills in English language courses by:

- **Simulating business scenarios:** Offering role-playing exercises where students can practice giving feedback, negotiating, and resolving conflicts in English.
- **Leadership communication workshops:** Providing workshops or seminars that focus on using English for leadership, helping students practice empathy, motivation, and team engagement through language.

By integrating soft skills training into English language education, universities can help future managers become more effective in their roles, regardless of cultural or linguistic barriers.

Further prospects for improvement in higher education:

To better prepare students for the demands of a globalized economy, higher education institutions must evolve their approaches to language and communication training, particularly for students in business and management programs. Several key areas of improvement can be pursued to address the gap between general English proficiency and the specialized communication skills required for effective management.

These improvements will ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary

tools to succeed in international business environments. The following prospects can help shape the future of higher education:

1. Integration of Business English and Communication Skills in Curricula

Higher education institutions should move beyond general language courses and embed business English and professional communication skills into business and management programs. By doing so, students can develop the practical language skills required to navigate international business environments effectively. Some steps to achieve this include:

- **Tailored English language courses:** Offer specialized courses that focus on business vocabulary, report writing, presentation skills, and industry-specific terminology.
- **Case studies and role-playing exercises:** Use case studies and business simulations to provide students with real-world scenarios, helping them practice communicating in professional settings.
- **Capstone projects in English:** Require students to complete final projects, presentations, or reports in English, giving them practical experience in business communication.

This integration will help students bridge the gap between theoretical language knowledge and practical application, making them more competent in global business settings.

2. Development of Intercultural Communication and Cultural Intelligence

In the context of global business, communication extends beyond language skills to include understanding cultural differences. Higher education should prioritize teaching intercultural communication as part of English language and business management programs. Prospects for improvement include:

- **Courses in intercultural communication:** Incorporate mandatory courses that teach students how to adapt their communication styles to different cultural contexts, including variations in non-verbal communication, hierarchy, and formality.
- **Collaborative international projects:** Facilitate cross-cultural group

projects where students from different countries work together on business tasks. This will provide hands-on experience with intercultural communication while using English as a common language.

- **Study abroad programs and exchanges:** Encourage or require students to participate in exchange programs or internships in English-speaking countries or multinational corporations, providing real-world experience in communicating across cultures.

By developing students' cultural intelligence alongside language skills, universities can ensure that future managers are equipped to lead diverse teams and collaborate effectively in international settings.

3. Enhanced Use of Technology in Language Learning

Technological advancements in education present an opportunity to provide more personalized and efficient language learning solutions. Institutions should leverage these tools to offer more flexible and customized learning experiences for students. Prospects for enhancing the use of technology include:

- **AI-driven language learning platforms:** Introduce AI-based tools such as Duolingo, Babbel, or Lingoda to complement traditional coursework. These platforms can offer personalized lessons tailored to students' proficiency levels and business communication needs.

- **Virtual reality (VR) and immersive learning environments:** Use VR technology to simulate business environments, allowing students to practice communication in a realistic, interactive setting. Students could conduct virtual negotiations, meetings, or presentations, helping them develop fluency and confidence in business English.

- **Language learning apps with industry-specific content:** Offer access to language apps that provide business-specific content, ensuring that students focus on relevant terminology and scenarios that reflect their future managerial roles.

Technological tools can offer students greater flexibility, allowing them to practice and improve their English skills outside the classroom while adapting to individual learning styles and professional needs.

4. Focus on Developing Soft Skills in English

Soft skills, such as emotional intelligence, leadership communication, and conflict resolution, are essential for managers operating in international environments. Higher education institutions should integrate soft skills training into business and language programs to ensure students can express these skills effectively in English. Areas for improvement include:

- **Workshops on leadership and negotiation:** Offer workshops that simulate leadership and negotiation scenarios in English. These exercises can help students practice persuasive communication, emotional intelligence, and conflict management in a business context.
- **Empathy and relationship-building in business English:** Provide training on how to use English in a way that fosters trust and collaboration, especially in multicultural teams. This includes learning how to give constructive feedback, motivate employees, and resolve interpersonal conflicts using appropriate language.
- **Peer feedback and mentorship:** Create opportunities for peer reviews and mentorship, where students practice delivering presentations or conducting meetings in English, receiving feedback on both language use and leadership effectiveness.

By developing soft skills in English, students will be better equipped to lead teams, manage conflicts, and build strong relationships in international business environments.

5. Collaboration with Industry for Practical Experience

Collaborating with businesses and industry partners can offer students hands-on experience and direct exposure to the language demands of managerial roles in global companies. Prospects for improvement in this area include:

- **Internships and work placements:** Establish partnerships with multinational companies to offer internships or work placements where students can apply their English and business skills in real-world settings.
- **Guest lectures and workshops from industry experts:** Invite professionals from global businesses to deliver guest lectures or lead workshops in

English. These sessions can provide insights into the specific language and communication challenges managers face in international contexts.

- **Industry-led projects and challenges:** Partner with corporations to present students with business challenges or projects that require English communication. Students can work on solving real-world problems, preparing them for future managerial roles.

By connecting students with industry, universities can ensure that their English language training is aligned with the practical needs of businesses operating in international markets.

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