



FUTURE SCIENCE

Editor: Fiqih Kartika Murti, M.Pd.

ENGLISH FOR DIGITAL BUSINESS



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ENGLISH FOR DIGITAL BUSINESS

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PREFACE

Digital technology has revolutionized the way businesses communicate, market products and interact with customers. In this era of digital revolution, English has become a key skill for effective communication in global corporate environments. It has become increasingly important for students and professionals to be able to use English effectively to participate in digital business activities.

This book, *English for Digital Business*, is intended to be a practical and contextualized English language learning material related to digital business communication. This book covers many themes, such as the importance of English in digital business, writing business emails, writing product descriptions, promoting on social media, communicating with customers, business presentations, writing website content, and online meetings and negotiations. Each chapter aims to help readers understand how English is used in real digital business environments. Readers should be able to strengthen their communication skills, broaden their business vocabulary and use English successfully in many professional situations, particularly in the fast-changing digital business environment.

As an editor, I would like to offer my most sincere appreciation to all authors and contributors who have spent their time and knowledge to finish this book. I hope that *English for Digital Business* will be a useful reference for students, teachers and business practitioners. Constructive

criticism and recommendations are highly appreciated for continuing enhancement of this work in future.

Malang, June 2026

Editor

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CHAPTER 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH IN DIGITAL BUSINESS

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital technologies as the principal medium of global commerce has reconfigured the conditions under which businesses communicate, compete, and expand. Whereas the international marketplace was once mediated through face-to-face encounters, physical correspondence, and analogue broadcast media, contemporary commercial activity unfolds increasingly across digital platforms, social networks, cloud-based collaboration tools, e-commerce portals, and algorithmic search ecosystems. These technological shifts have not occurred in a linguistic vacuum. On the contrary, they have both reflected and reinforced the already considerable reach of English as the world's dominant language of international communication, endowing that language with new functions, new sites of practice, and new strategic significance for organizations operating at every level of the global economy.

The status of English as a global language is, of course, neither recent nor accidental. Crystal (2003) has argued persuasively that the rise of English to its present position is attributable not to the inherent qualities of the language itself but to the successive economic, military, scientific, and technological preeminence of English-speaking nations, most notably the United Kingdom during the era of empire and the United States during the twentieth century. That historical

argument remains foundational, yet it requires substantive updating in the context of what Graddol (2006) presciently described as the transition from English as a foreign language to English as a basic skill embedded within the infrastructure of the knowledge economy. The digital revolution has accelerated and deepened this transition in ways that neither Crystal nor Graddol could fully anticipate, embedding English into the very architecture of the internet, the conventions of international digital marketing, and the communicative norms of globally distributed workforces.

Against this backdrop, the present chapter examines the role of English in digital business, with particular attention to three interconnected dimensions. The first concerns the function of English as the predominant lingua franca of digital business communication, exploring how practitioners deploy English across asynchronous and synchronous digital channels. The second addresses the relationship between English, digital branding, and global market expansion, with specific reference to how language choices shape brand identity, consumer trust, and the reach of digital marketing campaigns. The third considers the relationship between English proficiency and commercial competitiveness, examining how differential access to English capabilities translates into measurable advantages and disadvantages within the digital economy. Taken together, these three perspectives illuminate the extent to which English has become not merely a communicative convenience but a structural component of digital business success.

This chapter draws on scholarship from English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), international business communication, and digital marketing studies. It aims to synthesize seminal theoretical contributions with findings from more recent empirical research in order to offer a conceptually coherent and practically relevant account of the

relationship between English and digital business. The discussion proceeds through three main sections before arriving at a conclusion that reflects on the implications of these findings for English language education, professional practice, and the design of English for Business Purposes (EBP) curricula.

ENGLISH AS THE LINGUA FRANCA OF DIGITAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

The concept of the *lingua franca* — a shared language used by speakers whose native languages differ — has ancient antecedents, but its application to contemporary international business has been most rigorously theorized under the rubric of English as a Business *Lingua Franca* (BELF). The foundational articulation of this concept is generally attributed to Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005), whose case study of Nordic corporate mergers demonstrated that English had emerged as the default medium of internal as well as external organizational communication, irrespective of the first languages of the participants involved. Building on this foundation, Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2018) subsequently clarified that BELF is not merely a stripped-down or deficient version of native-speaker English but a dynamic, purpose-driven communicative resource shaped by the functional demands of business discourse and the intercultural competencies of its users. This reconceptualization has important implications for understanding how digital communication environments amplify and transform the role of English in professional contexts.

In the digital age, the domains within which BELF operates have expanded dramatically. Whereas earlier scholarship focused primarily on spoken interaction in international business meetings and negotiations (Rogerson-Revell, 2007), contemporary practitioners engage with English across a far wider range of digital genres: electronic mail, instant messaging

platforms, video conferencing, collaborative cloud documents, corporate intranets, enterprise social networks, and customer-facing digital touchpoints. Each of these genres carries its own register conventions, turn-taking norms, and politeness strategies, and practitioners must navigate them with considerable sociolinguistic agility. Nickerson (2005) observed that the sheer diversity of business contexts in which English is used as a lingua franca makes it extraordinarily difficult to specify a single set of competencies that all practitioners require; that observation has only grown more salient with the proliferation of digital communication channels.

The work of Seidlhofer (2013) is particularly instructive in this regard. Her theoretical account of ELF emphasizes that English as used by the majority of its speakers worldwide is not a degraded approximation of an idealized native-speaker norm but a legitimate and functional communicative system in its own right, characterized by pragmatic flexibility, mutual accommodation, and the creative deployment of shared linguistic resources. This perspective aligns closely with Canagarajah's (2012) concept of translingual practice, which foregrounds the ability of multilingual users to draw fluidly on diverse semiotic repertoires in order to accomplish communicative goals across linguistic borders. In digital business contexts, both frameworks shed light on the ways in which non-native speakers of English successfully accomplish complex transactions, negotiations, and collaborations through digitally mediated English, often achieving communicative effectiveness even in the absence of perfect formal accuracy.

The practical implications of this theoretical framing are considerable for English for Business Purposes instruction. If BELF is understood as a dynamic, context-sensitive competence rather than a fixed set of native-speaker norms, then pedagogical practice must shift accordingly, prioritizing the development of

communicative strategies — such as the ability to reformulate, to check comprehension, to exploit multimodal cues, and to manage interactional repair — over the mechanical acquisition of idealized grammatical forms. An instructive example of this principle in action is found in multinational technology companies such as Samsung, Huawei, and Infosys, each of which operates extensive cross-national project teams whose members communicate daily through English-medium digital channels, including Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. Internal training programs at such organizations increasingly focus not on approximating native-speaker norms but on developing the pragmatic competencies that enable effective digital collaboration in a BELF environment.

Furthermore, the asynchronous dimension of digital communication raises specific challenges and opportunities that have yet to be fully theorized within the BELF framework. Email, for instance, remains the dominant mode of written business communication in many sectors (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2018), and the volume of cross-border English-medium email traffic is vast. Nonetheless, email exchanges also allow non-native speakers additional time for composition, editing, and strategic formulation, potentially reducing the disadvantage associated with lower oral fluency. Similarly, the emergence of asynchronous video messaging platforms has introduced new hybrid genres that blend features of spoken and written discourse in ways that require practitioners to manage the sociolinguistic demands of both modes simultaneously. Tenzer et al. (2017) have shown that language diversity in multinational settings affects not only communicative efficiency but also trust formation, power dynamics, and group cohesion — findings that point to the need for a more socially informed understanding of how English operates as a medium of digital teamwork. The digital

transformation of business communication thus both reinforces the centrality of English as a global lingua franca and complicates the competencies required for its effective use. Consequently, English for Business Purposes practitioners must engage more deeply with BELF and ELF research to design curricula that develop learners' pragmatic, intercultural, and genre-specific competencies for authentic digital communication, rather than perpetuating idealized textbook norms.

ENGLISH, DIGITAL BRANDING, AND GLOBAL MARKET EXPANSION

The relationship between language and commercial identity has long been of interest to scholars of marketing, discourse analysis, and applied linguistics alike. In the context of digital business, however, this relationship has assumed a new and particularly strategic character. The globalization of e-commerce, social media marketing, and search engine optimization has placed English at the center of brand communication strategies that transcend national and linguistic borders. Steenkamp (2020), in his influential analysis of global brand building and management in the digital age, identifies several structural transformations that have reconfigured how brands communicate with international audiences, among the most significant of which is the emergence of digital sales channels that allow even small and medium-sized enterprises to reach consumers worldwide without the need for physical presence in foreign markets. Across these channels, English functions as the *de facto* language of global brand communication, shaping how products are positioned, how brand narratives are constructed, and how consumer relationships are cultivated and maintained.

The function of English in digital branding operates at multiple levels. At the most fundamental level, it concerns the choice of language itself: whether a firm will address international digital audiences in English, in multiple local languages, or in some calibrated combination of the two. Research suggests that the use of English in digital advertising and brand communication signals modernity, prestige, and international orientation to consumers in many non-English-speaking markets, a phenomenon documented by Nickerson and Camiciottoli (2013) in their analysis of English as a Business Lingua Franca in Gulf region advertising. At the same time, excessive reliance on English at the expense of local languages can undermine the sense of cultural proximity and authenticity that consumers in some markets value highly. Managing the tension between the global reach of English and the local resonance of native languages represents a key strategic challenge for digital marketing practitioners in internationally operating firms.

Content marketing in English represents perhaps the most consequential arena in which this tension is played out. The dominance of English in search engine algorithms, particularly Google's, has created powerful incentives for firms seeking global digital visibility to produce content in English. Search engine optimization (SEO) for English-language queries enables firms to access the largest and most commercially valuable pool of digital consumers, particularly in North America, Western Europe, Australia, and the growing English-proficient middle classes of Asia and Africa. For firms based in non-English-speaking markets, such as South Korean electronics manufacturers and Brazilian fintech start-ups, investing in high-quality English-language digital content signals a strategic prioritization of global reach over purely domestic visibility. The EF English Proficiency Index (EF Education First, 2024)

has reported that countries with higher levels of adult English proficiency demonstrate stronger correlations with measures of global innovation, talent competitiveness, and productivity, suggesting that English capability functions as a systemic enabler of digital economic participation at the national as well as the firm level.

Social media platforms further illustrate the structuring role of English in digital brand expansion. Platforms such as LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram are architecturally organized around English-language interfaces and algorithmically optimized for English-language content. While localized content strategies remain important for reaching specific regional audiences, brands that aspire to international visibility must typically maintain an English-language social media presence as a core element of their digital communication strategy. The luxury fashion house Balenciaga, the South Korean entertainment company HYBE (parent of BTS), and the Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer BYD each illustrate different points on the spectrum of global digital branding: all maintain significant English-language digital presences, albeit calibrated differently to their respective markets and brand identities. What is common across these cases is the recognition that English-language digital communication is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for accessing global consumer audiences.

From the perspective of English for Business Purposes pedagogy, the implications are clear. Practitioners responsible for digital content creation, social media management, and search engine optimization must possess not only general English communicative competence but also the genre-specific literacy to produce compelling, algorithmically effective English-language digital content. This includes familiarity with the conventions of English-language copywriting, knowledge of

how keyword selection and content structure affect digital visibility, and the capacity to adapt tone, register, and cultural reference for diverse English-speaking audiences. Steenkamp (2020) has noted that the digital environment creates unprecedented global transparency, meaning that brand communications in English are now subject to rapid and widespread scrutiny by international audiences. It makes the quality, consistency, and cultural sensitivity of English-language brand communication more consequential than ever before.

Market expansion through digital English communication is especially challenging for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing economies. These firms may offer strong products or services. However, they often lack the English language resources needed to communicate their value propositions effectively to international digital audiences. In this context, the intersection of EBP education and digital entrepreneurship becomes particularly important. Targeted instruction in English for digital business, such as encompassing writing for e-commerce, social media communication, and digital customer service, can equip SME practitioners with the competencies needed to leverage digital channels for international market entry, effectively democratizing access to global markets in ways that were previously available only to large, well-resourced corporations. The potential for English language education to catalyze digital economic inclusion represents one of the most compelling practical arguments for the field of English for Business Purposes.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY, COMPETITIVENESS, AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

The relationship between English language proficiency and economic competitiveness has been a subject of increasing scholarly and policy interest, particularly as the digital economy

has come to occupy a larger share of global GDP. Graddol (2006) anticipated this development in his argument that English was transitioning from the status of a foreign language (learned for specific cultural or educational purposes) to that of a basic economic skill, analogous to numeracy and digital literacy, that workers across all sectors of the economy would need these skills to participate fully in the global knowledge economy. The digital economy is constructed on layers of English-language infrastructure: programming languages derive from English syntax, technical documentation is predominantly written in English, and the major platforms through which digital commerce is conducted (including Amazon Marketplace, Shopify, and Stripe) are designed primarily for English-language users. The structural embedding of English in the digital economy means that differential English proficiency among firms and individuals translates directly into differential access to digital economic opportunity.

The evidence base for the connection between English proficiency and commercial competitiveness has grown considerably in recent years. The EF English Proficiency Index (EF Education First, 2024), which draws on data from approximately 2.1 million adult test takers across 116 countries, reports robust positive correlations between national English proficiency scores and measures of human capital, global innovation capacity, talent competitiveness, and productivity. Countries in the very high proficiency band, such as the Netherlands, Singapore, Norway, and Portugal, tend also to rank highly on international competitiveness indices, suggesting that English proficiency functions as a contributing factor, alongside and interacting with other institutional and economic variables, in national economic performance. While it would be methodologically imprudent to infer direct causation from these correlational data, the consistency and breadth of the association

warrant serious attention from researchers and policymakers alike.

At the firm level, the link between English proficiency and digital competitiveness is shaped by multiple underlying mechanisms. Tenzer et al. (2017), in their comprehensive review of language research in international business, identify trust formation, information sharing, and strategic decision-making as domains in which language barriers impose high costs on multinational firms. In digital business environments, these costs are amplified because the speed, volume, and complexity of cross-border digital interaction leave little margin for communicative failure. A firm whose digital customer service team cannot respond effectively to English-language queries, or whose software developers cannot read English-language technical documentation, is systematically disadvantaged relative to competitors whose workforces possess these capabilities. The strategic importance of English proficiency has led a growing number of internationally oriented firms to adopt explicit language policies, requiring or incentivizing the use of English across internal digital communication channels, a phenomenon well documented in the literature on corporate language policy (Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2018).

The competitive implications of English proficiency are perhaps most starkly apparent in the domain of digital entrepreneurship and technology start-ups. The global venture capital ecosystem, through which high-growth technology businesses access the capital required for international scaling, operates overwhelmingly in English. Pitch decks, investment proposals, due diligence documentation, and term sheets are written in English; investor meetings are conducted in English; and the professional networks through which entrepreneurs access investors, advisors, and talent are structured around English-language communication. Entrepreneurs from non-

English-speaking countries who lack high-level English proficiency are therefore systematically disadvantaged in accessing international growth capital, regardless of the quality of their technology or their business model. This structural inequity has prompted policy responses in several countries, including targeted English for entrepreneurship programs designed to equip technology start-up founders with the specific communicative competencies required for international fundraising and investor relations.

The relationship between English proficiency and digital competitiveness also has important implications at the individual level. The labor market premium associated with English proficiency in digital economy occupations is well-documented. Careers in data science, cloud architecture, digital marketing, platform engineering, and growth management demand more than technical proficiency. Professionals in these fields must also be able to read, write, and communicate effectively in English. This competence is essential for navigating technical documentation, contributing to international open-source initiatives, participating in global professional networks, and interacting with clients and colleagues across borders. For individuals in non-English-speaking labor markets, the acquisition of business-functional English proficiency therefore represents a significant economic investment with potentially high returns. The EBP classroom can function as a key environment for developing this proficiency. However, this is only effective when instructional design is grounded in a clear understanding of the real-world English demands that are characteristic of professions in the digital economy.

It is important to note, however, that the relationship between English proficiency and digital economic competitiveness is not without tensions or ethical complexities. The structural privileging of English within the digital economy

can reproduce and amplify existing inequalities, disadvantaging individuals and communities in the Global South whose access to high-quality English education is constrained by economic and institutional factors. Crystal (2003) and Canagarajah (2012) have both, from different theoretical vantage points, drawn attention to the risks associated with the uncritical celebration of English dominance: the former identifying potential dangers of linguistic complacency and language death, and the latter emphasizing the importance of recognizing and valuing the diverse linguistic and cultural resources that non-native English speakers bring to international communication. These critical perspectives do not diminish the practical importance of English in digital business; rather, they remind practitioners, educators, and policymakers of the need to approach English language education in ways that are linguistically inclusive, culturally sensitive, and oriented towards equity as well as efficiency.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion has sought to demonstrate, across three interconnected analytical dimensions, that English occupies a position of structural centrality within digital business. As the dominant lingua franca of digital business communication, English mediates the asynchronous and synchronous interactions through which geographically dispersed professionals coordinate labor, share knowledge, negotiate agreements, and build the relational trust on which sustained commercial collaboration depends. As the primary language of digital branding and marketing communication, English shapes how organizations project their identities, address international audiences, and seek to expand their market reach across digital platforms and e-commerce ecosystems. And as a differentiating variable in the global digital economy, English proficiency contributes to the competitive positioning of

firms and individuals, enabling access to capital, talent, markets, and technological resources in ways that disadvantage those who lack it.

These findings carry important implications for the field of English for Business Purposes. If English is not merely a communicative medium but a structural component of digital business success, then EBP instruction must be designed not simply to transmit grammatical norms or generic business vocabulary. Rather, it should be oriented toward the development of situated, domain-specific competencies that align with the communicative practices of digital industries. Such an approach enables learners to participate more effectively and appropriately in the professional discourses that characterize their respective fields. This means engaging students with authentic digital genres — corporate emails, social media posts, product descriptions, investor communications, platform documentation — and with the pragmatic, rhetorical, and sociolinguistic demands that each genre makes. This orientation also necessitates engagement with insights from BELF scholarship. Drawing on the work of Kaur and Birlik (2021), communicative effectiveness in international business interactions is achieved not through conformity to an idealized native-speaker norm, but through the strategic use of pragmatic resources (such as explaining) to facilitate clarity and shared understanding. In this sense, successful communication in digital contexts depends on speakers' ability to adopt flexible, adaptive, and interculturally informed practices that respond to the demands of diverse communicative situations.

Looking forward, several research directions merit attention. The growing integration of artificial intelligence into digital business communication, through tools for automated translation, grammar correction, and text generation, raises important questions about how English proficiency requirements

will evolve as AI mediates an increasing proportion of cross-border digital interaction. As EF Education First (2024) has noted, the superior performance of English-based AI services may, paradoxically, increase rather than diminish the strategic value of English proficiency over time, as those with strong English skills gain access to more powerful and sophisticated AI-assisted tools. These developments suggest that the relationship between English and digital business will continue to evolve in ways that warrant sustained scholarly attention and responsive pedagogical innovation.

It may be concluded, in short, that an understanding of the role of English in digital business is not a peripheral or optional concern for the contemporary EBP practitioner. It is, rather, a conceptual and practical necessity — one that connects the teaching of English to some of the most significant economic, technological, and social transformations of the present era. By engaging rigorously with that role, English for Business Purposes scholars and educators can contribute not only to the effectiveness of their practice but also to the broader goal of ensuring that the benefits of digital economic participation are as widely and equitably distributed as possible.

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CHAPTER 2

FACTORS BEHIND ENGLISH DIFFICULTIES IN DIGITAL BUSINESS

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INTRODUCTION

A troubling paradox characterizes Indonesia's digital landscape nowadays. Despite remarkably high digital adoption rates and a rapidly expanding digital economy, English proficiency in Indonesia remains persistently low compared to neighboring countries (Renandya et al., 2018). Nations such as Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore have consistently outperformed Indonesia in standardized English assessments, yet they possess smaller digital economies or slower growth trajectories (Santos et al., 2022). This contradiction demands explanation. How can a country so deeply immersed in digital platforms, social media, and e-commerce simultaneously struggle with the global lingua franca that powers these very tools? The 2025 EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) provides a sobering answer. Indonesia ranked 80th out of 123 countries worldwide, placing the nation firmly within the "low proficiency" band (Avillanova & Kuswandono, 2019). Within the Asian region, Indonesia secured only 12th place out of 25 countries, trailing far behind regional leaders such as Malaysia (24th globally), the Philippines (28th globally), and Vietnam (64th globally) (Wijaya, 2025). This ranking is not merely a statistical abstraction. It represents a concrete competitive disadvantage for Indonesian digital business actors attempting to engage in cross-border trade, attract foreign investment, and

build international partnerships. The paradox, therefore, is not merely puzzling. It is economically dangerous.

The consequences of this low English proficiency are not distributed evenly across the population. They fall most heavily on specific groups of digital business actors whose daily work depends on effective English communication (Ahmad et al., 2024). These groups include micro, small, and medium enterprise (UMKM) owners who have migrated their operations to digital platforms; startup founders who seek funding from international investors; freelance graphic designers, writers, and software developers who compete for global contracts on platforms such as Upwork and Fiverr; and customer support agents who handle inquiries from overseas buyers on marketplaces like Shopee International, Tokopedia Global, and TikTok Shop Cross Border. The difficulties these actors face extend far beyond simple grammar errors or limited vocabulary. Research indicates that the most critical challenges lie in real-time communication, negotiation, and digital marketing. A UMKM owner may know how to construct a grammatically correct sentence but freeze during a live video call with a potential buyer. A freelancer may understand written English well but struggle to articulate complex project terms during a negotiation. A digital marketer may write product descriptions adequately but fail to craft persuasive, culturally sensitive advertising copy that converts international customers. These are not classroom problems. They are business problems with direct financial consequences.

Despite the urgency of this situation, existing academic research has largely failed to address it adequately. The vast majority of studies on English language learning in Indonesia focus on general English proficiency within formal educational settings. Researchers have examined classroom pedagogy, teacher training, curriculum design, and standardized testing

(Alduais, 2012; Bordón, 2018; Derewianka, 2019). These are valuable contributions, but they leave a critical gap unfilled. Few studies have specifically investigated English use within digital business contexts in Indonesia. Even fewer have focused on the post-pandemic period of 2025 and 2026, a time when digital business models have matured, cross-border e-commerce has become routine, and the expectations of international partners have risen significantly. Some recent research has begun to explore related themes, such as the digital divide in English language learning across remote Indonesian islands and the integration of digital economy materials into English for Specific Purposes instruction (Gold-Veerkamp et al., 2016). However, these studies remain limited in scope. They do not systematically examine the lived experiences of digital business actors across different sectors, regions, and business models. Furthermore, existing research tends to treat linguistic, psychological, and contextual factors in isolation rather than as an interconnected system. This chapter seeks to fill that gap.

This chapter, therefore, pursues two primary objectives. The first objective is analytical. This chapter aims to systematically analyse the three interconnected factors that cause English difficulties within Indonesian digital business environments in 2025 and 2026. These factors are linguistic, psychological, and contextual. The linguistic factor encompasses vocabulary gaps, syntactic interference from Bahasa Indonesia, pronunciation challenges, and writing conventions unique to digital platforms. The psychological factors include foreign language anxiety, low self-efficacy, perfectionism, and the motivational impact of artificial intelligence tools. The contextual factor covers educational system gaps, unequal access between urban and rural areas, workplace environment deficiencies, regulatory pressures, and socio-cultural barriers such as politeness norms that discourage clarification seeking. The second objective is

practical. Based on this analysis, this chapter provides actionable insights for three key audiences. For educators, the chapter suggests how English for Specific Purposes curricula can be redesigned to reflect authentic digital business tasks. For policymakers, the chapter recommends targeted interventions to support UMKM digital in overcoming language barriers. For business actors themselves, the chapter offers realistic strategies for improving English communication without requiring years of formal study. By bridging the gap between academic analysis and practical application, this chapter aspires to contribute not only to scholarly knowledge but also to Indonesia's continued success in the global digital economy.

LINGUISTIC FACTORS

Vocabulary Gap

The first linguistic factor concerns the vocabulary gap faced by Indonesian digital business actors (Van Gysel, 2017). The digital economy evolves at an extraordinary pace, and with each evolution comes new terms that lack established equivalents in Bahasa Indonesia. Terms such as "conversion rate optimization," "funnel analytics," "API integration," and "cross-border payment gateway" are now essential vocabulary for anyone engaged in e-commerce, digital marketing, or fintech. These terms have no standardized Indonesian translations. Practitioners are therefore forced to use the English originals. This would not be a problem if Indonesian professionals had mastered these terms. However, the majority have not. They encounter these words in tutorials, contracts, and platform dashboards but do not fully understand their meanings. They may recognize "API" as an acronym but cannot explain what an API does or why integration matters. They may have heard of "conversion rate optimization," but cannot calculate or improve

it. The result is a dangerous form of pseudo-literacy. A business owner can read a term without truly comprehending it, leading to poor decisions, miscommunication with international partners, and missed opportunities for business growth.

Syntactic Interference from Bahasa Indonesia

The second linguistic factor is syntactic interference from Bahasa Indonesia. Indonesian and English have fundamentally different sentence structures, and digital business actors frequently transfer patterns from their first language into their English communication (Sartipa, 2018). One common error is the overuse of passive voice. Bahasa Indonesia often prefers passive constructions, whereas English prefers active ones. A seller might write "The order was processed yesterday" instead of "We processed your order yesterday." The passive construction is not grammatically incorrect, but it sounds unnatural and impersonal to native English speakers. Another frequent error is the omission of plural markers. Bahasa Indonesia does not require plural markers when quantity is already indicated by context or numbers. A seller might write "three box" instead of "three boxes" or "many customer" instead of "many customers." These errors do not usually block understanding, but they accumulate over time and create an impression of low language competence. A third error involves tense confusion, particularly between the present perfect and the simple past. An Indonesian digital worker might write "I have sent the invoice last week" instead of "I sent the invoice last week." These errors, individually minor, collectively undermine professional credibility when they appear repeatedly in customer-facing communication.

Pronunciation and Intelligibility

The third linguistic factor involves pronunciation and its impact on intelligibility during spoken interactions. Indonesian and English follow different rhythmic patterns. English is a stress-timed language, meaning that stressed syllables occur at roughly regular intervals, and unstressed syllables are shortened or reduced (Lima Junior & Garcia, 2017). Indonesian is a syllable-timed language, meaning that each syllable receives approximately equal duration. When Indonesian speakers apply syllable-timed rhythm to English, the result sounds unnatural and can reduce intelligibility. Furthermore, specific English sounds do not exist in the Indonesian phonological inventory. The voiceless "th" sound, as in "think" or "ethics," and the voiced "th" sound, as in "that" or "whether," are particularly challenging. Indonesian speakers often substitute "t" or "d" for these sounds, turning "think" into "tink" and "that" into "dat." The "v" sound is frequently replaced with "f," and the "z" sound with "s." These substitutions rarely cause a complete communication breakdown, but they increase the cognitive effort required from the listener. In the context of voice calls, Zoom meetings, and video conferences, this added effort can be exhausting for international clients. By 2025 and 2026, more Indonesian digital businesses will have adopted voice-based customer service using AI assistants. However, when an AI assistant is trained on non-native pronunciation, its speech recognition accuracy decreases, creating frustrating user experiences for both the business and the customer.

Writing Conventions on Digital Platforms

The fourth linguistic factor concerns writing conventions specific to digital platforms. Emails, chat support messages, social media captions, and product descriptions each require different styles of English (Pashkova et al., 2026). Indonesian

digital business actors often struggle to adjust their writing appropriately across these genres. A common problem is over-formality. An Indonesian seller writing a chat message to a customer might produce a text that sounds stiff and unnatural, such as "We hereby inform you that your item has been shipped." A native speaker would more naturally write "Your item is on the way." The opposite problem is also common. Some Indonesian business actors adopt overly direct or abrupt phrasing that unintentionally sounds rude. A seller might write "You did not pay" instead of "It appears your payment has not gone through yet. Could you please check?" These errors arise from cultural transfer. Politeness is expressed differently in Indonesian business communication than in English business communication. Without explicit training in these differences, Indonesian professionals transfer Indonesian politeness strategies directly into English, with mixed and sometimes negative results. The cumulative effect of awkward or inappropriate writing is a gradual erosion of customer trust. A buyer who reads a poorly written product description or an overly formal chat message may not consciously notice the language. But the buyer will feel that something is "off" and may choose a competitor whose communication feels more natural and professional.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Foreign Language Anxiety

The first psychological factor is foreign language anxiety, a specific form of situational anxiety triggered by the need to use a non-native language (Salehi & Marefat, 2014). For Indonesian digital business actors, this anxiety is particularly acute during real-time digital transactions. Speaking or writing English under time pressure, often with significant financial consequences at

stake, produces measurable psychological distress. A seller negotiating a contract over Zoom, a freelancer defending a project quote in a chat window, or a customer support agent explaining a refund policy to an angry international buyer all experience elevated heart rate, mental blocking, and self-doubt. The most destructive consequence of this anxiety is avoidance behavior. When faced with a situation that requires English, anxious individuals do not rise to the occasion. They retreat. They delegate the task to someone else, delay responding, or abandon the opportunity entirely. Each avoided interaction represents a lost sale, a lost partnership, or a lost customer. Research conducted in Indonesia has documented the significant role of anxiety in hindering English performance. A study on novice EFL students in multicultural classrooms found that cognitive anxiety, the worry and negative thoughts about one's performance, was the highest among all anxiety types reported by participants (Sokolová & Šuplatová, 2018). These findings directly translate to the digital business context, where negative thoughts about one's English ability can paralyze action at critical moments.

Self-efficacy and Identity

The second psychological factor concerns self-efficacy and identity. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their own ability to succeed in a specific task (Huang, 2022). Many Indonesian digital workers hold low self-efficacy regarding English communication. They believe, often accurately based on past experiences, that their English is not good enough to achieve desired outcomes. This belief becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. A seller who believes they cannot write a professional product description will not attempt to write one, or will produce a poor one with minimal effort, thereby confirming the original belief. Underlying this low self-efficacy is a deeper identity

issue. Many Indonesian digital workers internalize the feeling that "English is not for us." English is associated with elitism, with prestigious international schools, with wealthy families who can afford overseas education, and with a colonial legacy that still carries emotional weight. For a young entrepreneur from a modest background in a small town, English can feel like a marker of social class rather than a practical skill. This psychological barrier persists even when the individual possesses adequate passive knowledge. A worker may be able to read English emails with full comprehension and understand English video tutorials without difficulty. However, when required to produce English, whether speaking or writing, confidence evaporates. The gap between passive and active ability is not primarily linguistic.

Perfectionism

The third psychological factor is perfectionism, which operates in direct opposition to the needs of fast-paced digital business. Perfectionist individuals believe that any communication containing errors is unacceptable (Wang et al., 2019). They may spend twenty minutes crafting a three-sentence email, checking and rechecking each word for grammar, spelling, and tone. In an academic setting, this diligence might earn high marks. In digital business, it creates unacceptable delays. A customer who sends a simple question about shipping times expects a response within minutes, not hours. A buyer in a different time zone who is ready to place an order will not wait while a seller polishes every phrase to perfection. The perfectionist seller, therefore, creates a poor user experience, frustrating customers who value speed over stylistic elegance. Conversely, some digital workers respond to perfectionism by avoiding writing altogether. They pick up the phone instead of sending an email, or they use voice messages rather than text.

While this may feel more comfortable, it eliminates the written record that is often essential for contract clarity and dispute resolution. The healthy middle ground, producing competent but not perfect English quickly, is precisely what anxious perfectionists find most difficult to achieve.

Online Disinhibition and English Shaming

The fourth psychological factor is a negative manifestation of the online disinhibition effect. In digital spaces, some individuals feel liberated from social constraints and behave in ways they would not in face-to-face interactions (Cunningham, 2011). While this can sometimes produce positive outcomes, such as increased honesty or creativity, it also produces toxic behaviours. One particularly harmful phenomenon is the mockery of those who use non-standard English. A comment thread on a social media post, a chat room discussion, or even a customer review section can quickly fill with ridicule directed at someone whose English contains errors. The targets of this mockery are often precisely the digital business actors who are already struggling with anxiety and low confidence. The psychological damage is significant. A seller who is publicly mocked for an error in a product description may stop writing English descriptions altogether, handing the task to a translator or abandoning international sales entirely. Research published in 2025 provides empirical evidence of this phenomenon in the Indonesian context. A study on "English shaming" on TikTok identified four dominant language ideologies in Indonesia, including the belief that non-standard English is unacceptable and that English ability serves as an index of educational level. The study highlighted the harmful effects of online English shaming on individuals and national identity, noting how mockery creates toxic feedback loops that discourage English practice and perpetuate anxiety.

Psychological Impact of AI and Automation

The fifth psychological factor has emerged with particular force nowadays. The widespread availability of artificial intelligence tools, including ChatGPT, Grammarly, and various AI-powered translation services, has fundamentally altered the motivational landscape for English learning (Luan et al., 2026). A significant subset of Indonesian digital workers now believes, consciously or unconsciously, that they no longer need to improve their English. The reasoning appears logical on the surface. Why spend months or years studying grammar and vocabulary when an AI tool can produce perfect English instantly? This belief is dangerously seductive. It reduces motivation to learn, leading individuals to invest less time and effort in deliberate practice. Over the long term, their autonomous English skills stagnate or decline. When the AI tool is unavailable, produces an error, or generates text that is culturally inappropriate for a specific context, the user lacks the competence to intervene. Research from 2025 confirms that Indonesian EFL learners heavily favour automatic translation tools, finding that they help translate complex texts and support task completion. However, the same research warns that reliance on such tools can inhibit independent language development and critical thinking. The business consequences of AI over-reliance are already visible. AI mistranslations of legal terms in contracts have caused financial losses. AI-generated marketing copy that fails to capture humor or cultural nuance has damaged brand reputations. These errors occur not because AI tools are useless, but because users lack the English proficiency to detect and correct the mistakes.

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Educational System Gaps

The first major contextual factor originates within Indonesia's formal education system. English is currently taught as a general academic subject rather than as a practical business tool (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). Students learn grammar rules, memorize vocabulary lists, and practice reading comprehension through generic texts. They do not learn how to write a professional email to a foreign client, how to negotiate shipping terms over a video call, or how to handle a customer complaint about a damaged product. The curriculum remains significantly outdated. It lacks digital business English entirely. There are no modules on e-commerce terminology, such as "conversion rate," "chargeback," or "inventory turnover." There are no negotiation simulations that replicate real-world buyer-seller interactions on platforms like Alibaba or Amazon. There is no training in cross-cultural communication, such as understanding why American clients expect direct answers while Japanese clients prefer indirect suggestions. As a result, students graduate from high school and even university with certificates in English but without the functional skills required to participate in the global digital economy. The system prepares them for exams, not for business.

Unequal Access

A second contextual factor is unequal access to quality English training. A sharp divide separates urban digital entrepreneurs from their rural counterparts (Muttaqin, 2018). In Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, and other major cities, English courses, private tutors, and international certification programs are widely available. Young entrepreneurs in these areas can attend evening classes, hire native speaking coaches online, or

join English-speaking networking events. In rural areas, the situation is dramatically different. By 2025 and 2026, internet penetration will have finally reached most remote regions of Indonesia, thanks to government initiatives such as the Palapa Ring project and the expansion of 4G and 5G networks. A farmer turned digital seller in Flores, or a craft maker in a small village in West Nusa Tenggara, can now access Shopee, TikTok Shop, and even global platforms like Etsy. However, internet access does not automatically bring English training. Quality online English courses are often expensive and taught in ways that assume prior educational privilege. Local teachers with expertise in digital business English are virtually non-existent outside major cities. Consequently, rural entrepreneurs face a double disadvantage. They can now reach global customers, but they lack the linguistic tools to serve them.

Workplace Environment

The workplace environment within Indonesia's digital business sector also contributes significantly to English difficulties. Many digital startups and UMKM do not provide any form of English training to their employees or owners (Subardin et al., 2022). The prevailing attitude is that English is an individual responsibility, not an organizational priority. Budgets are allocated to product development, marketing, and logistics, but rarely to language upskilling. This omission creates a problematic "trial and error" culture. A young entrepreneur or customer support agent attempts to write an English email, makes mistakes, and receives no corrective feedback. The same errors are repeated in the next email, then in the next chat message, then in the next product description. Over time, these errors become entrenched habits. Without structured feedback from a teacher, mentor, or automated system with pedagogical design, improvement is slow or non-existent.

Furthermore, the fast-paced nature of digital business discourages careful revision. A seller responding to ten customer inquiries per hour has no time to carefully proofread each message. The result is a cycle of error, repetition, and stagnation. What these businesses need is not occasional advice but systematic workplace English support integrated into daily operations.

Digital Platform Realities

The structure of digital platforms themselves creates additional linguistic demands. Major marketplaces such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and TikTok Shop are increasingly cross-border in nature (Prasetya et al., 2024). A seller in Bandung may receive an inquiry from a buyer in the United States, then a question from a distributor in Germany, then a complaint from a customer in the Middle East. All of these interactions require English, particularly for more complex transactions such as dropshipping. A dropshipper who sources products from China and sells to customers in Europe or the United States must communicate with suppliers, logistics providers, and end customers, all in English. Misunderstandings about product specifications, shipping timelines, or return policies can lead to lost sales, negative reviews, and even account penalties from the platform. Customer support presents an even greater challenge. Artificial intelligence chatbots have become highly sophisticated by 2025 and 2026. These AI tools can handle simple, repetitive queries such as "Where is my order?" or "How do I return an item?" However, when a customer raises a complex complaint involving multiple products, conflicting shipping updates, and requests for partial refunds, the AI chatbot fails. The issue must be escalated to a human agent. That agent must then read, understand, and respond in English. If the agent's English is

inadequate, the customer becomes frustrated and may abandon the platform entirely.

Regulatory and Economic Pressure

The years 2025 and 2026 have brought significant regulatory and economic pressure on Indonesian digital businesses to improve their English proficiency. The government has intensified its push for export of digital products, including software as a service (SaaS), creative content such as animations and games, and freelance services ranging from virtual assistance to data analytics (Putri et al., 2025). To participate in these export markets, businesses must communicate with international clients, comply with foreign regulations, and market their services in English. More notably, English proficiency has begun to appear as a key performance indicator for certain digital business licenses. The Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) and the Financial Services Authority (OJK) now consider English capability when evaluating applications for fintech licenses and cross-border digital trade permits. A startup seeking to operate as a payment gateway for international transactions, for example, must demonstrate that its customer support team can handle English inquiries. Furthermore, the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework, fully implemented by 2025, designates English as the working language for cross-border digital trade within the Southeast Asian region. Indonesian businesses that cannot operate in English find themselves excluded from regional supply chains, partnership opportunities, and investment networks. The pressure is no longer abstract. It is regulatory, financial, and immediate.

Socio-Cultural Barriers

Beyond structural and regulatory factors, socio-cultural barriers also impede English use in digital business. One of the most significant is the deep-rooted cultural preference for politeness and indirect communication, particularly when interacting with someone perceived as higher status or as a guest (Dobroć et al., 2023). In a business context, this translates into a strong reluctance to interrupt or ask for clarification. An Indonesian seller in a video call with a foreign buyer may not understand a question about technical specifications. However, rather than saying "I do not understand. Could you please explain that term again?" the seller remains silent, nods, and hopes the moment passes. The buyer, unaware of the seller's confusion, proceeds assuming agreement. Later, when the product arrives and does not match expectations, both parties are frustrated. The seller avoided losing face in the moment but lost the customer in the long run. A second socio-cultural barrier is the strong preference for using Bahasa Indonesia in internal team communications. Many digital startups and UMKM conduct all internal chats, emails, and meetings in Indonesian. This is efficient for daily operations but eliminates opportunities for regular English practice. Team members rarely write internal memos in English, never role-play customer interactions in English, and do not receive informal corrections from peers. English remains an external tool used only when necessary, which means it is never truly mastered.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has systematically analyzed the three interconnected factors that cause English difficulties within Indonesian digital business environments in 2025 and 2026. The linguistic factor, encompassing vocabulary gaps, syntactic interference from Bahasa Indonesia, pronunciation challenges,

and platform-specific writing conventions, creates persistent barriers to clear communication. The psychological factor, including foreign language anxiety, low self-efficacy, perfectionism, online shaming, and the demotivating influence of AI tools, prevents digital workers from using the English skills they already possess. The contextual factor, covering educational system gaps, unequal access, workplace deficiencies, platform realities, regulatory pressures, socio-cultural barriers, and generational shifts, shapes an environment where English difficulties are not merely individual failings but systemic problems. The central argument of this chapter is that these three factors cannot be addressed in isolation. A vocabulary training program will fail if learners are too anxious to speak. A confidence-building workshop will fail if the educational system has not taught basic digital business terms. A curriculum reform will fail if workplace environments continue to offer no structured feedback. Real solutions require integrated approaches. For educators, this means redesigning English for Specific Purposes curricula to include authentic digital business tasks such as negotiation simulations and cross-cultural communication exercises. For policymakers, this means subsidizing English training for rural UMKM digital and integrating English proficiency as a support mechanism, not merely a compliance metric. For business actors themselves, this means using AI tools as learning aids rather than replacements, practicing active production daily, and seeking feedback without shame. As Indonesia's digital economy continues its trajectory toward US\$150 billion and beyond, English proficiency is not a luxury. It is a bridge to global markets, international partnerships, and sustainable growth. Building that bridge requires understanding not only words and grammar but also mindsets, environments, and the courage to communicate imperfectly. Every digital entrepreneur in Indonesia, from

Jakarta to Makassar to Medan, deserves that bridge. This chapter has attempted to map its construction. The building itself must begin now.

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CHAPTER 3

WRITING EFFECTIVE BUSINESS EMAILS

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INTRODUCTION

Ahn and Lee (2023) revealed that in today's fast-paced digital workplace, mastering the art of writing effective business emails has become indispensable for professionals seeking to communicate with precision and impact. Emails remain the primary conduit for business interactions, handling everything from routine updates to high-stakes negotiations, where clarity ensures messages are understood without misinterpretation, politeness builds trust across diverse teams, and a purpose-driven approach propels decisions forward. This trifecta—clarity, politeness, and purpose—not only minimizes errors in an era of overflowing inboxes but also enhances professional relationships in hybrid environments dominated by remote collaboration tools (Chen & Pham, 2025). Writing effective professional emails is an essential skill for all in today's workplace. It involves understanding the formalities of greetings, salutations, and formatting, as well as adhering to the norms of professional communication. By mastering these elements, you can communicate more effectively, build better relationships, achieve faster results, and present yourself more professionally in the workplace.

As global teams span time zones and cultures, poorly crafted emails can lead to delays, misunderstandings, or lost opportunities, underscoring why recent pedagogical research emphasizes genre-based approaches integrated with data-driven

learning to equip learners with these skills. For instance, studies highlight how explicit instruction in email structures, such as move analysis (e.g., salutation, purpose statement, call-to-action), improves EFL professionals' output by fostering genre awareness—recognizing emails as persuasive genres with predictable rhetorical patterns (Rozi, 2024). In practice, this means starting with subject lines like "Action Needed: Q2 Budget Confirmation by EOD" to signal urgency and content, followed by concise bodies using active voice and bullet points for scannability. Politeness, meanwhile, involves cultural sensitivity, such as indirect phrasing in high-context Asian workplaces ("I would appreciate your guidance on this") versus direct Western styles, preventing relational friction. Purpose-driven design culminates in clear CTAs, like "Please confirm receipt," reducing follow-ups by up to 30% according to communication analytics. These principles transform emails from mere transmissions into strategic tools that drive productivity and career advancement (Hidayati & Rohayati, 2022).

Beyond foundational elements, effective business email writing demands adaptability to evolving digital dynamics, including AI-assisted drafting and multimodal integration, while addressing common pitfalls like tonal misreads or information overload (Kurniawan & Sujinpram, 2025). Research from 2021-2026, such as genre-based studies in EFL contexts, reveals that data-driven learning—exposing learners to authentic email corpora—boosts accuracy in pragmatic features like hedging ("perhaps we could consider") and positive politeness strategies, critical for negotiations or feedback loops (Hidayati & Rohayati, 2022; Kurniawan & Sujinpram, 2025).

In multicultural settings, Indonesian professionals, for example, benefit from training that blends local indirectness with global directness, ensuring emails resonate without

alienating recipients (Rozi, 2024). Challenges persist: vague subjects yield 50% lower open rates, while excessive formality can seem robotic amid conversational AI trends; solutions lie in hybrid models teaching personalization, such as recipient-tailored empathy ("Given your team's recent wins...") paired with metrics-driven persuasion ("This yields 15% ROI"). Empirical interventions, like those integrating DDL with GBA, demonstrate measurable gains—participants produced 40% more coherent, polite emails post-training, mirroring real-world efficacy in sales or project management. As workplaces integrate tools like Slack alongside email, professionals must master seamless transitions, embedding hyperlinks or previews to maintain flow. Thereby, this mastery isn't innate but cultivated through deliberate practice, feedback, and awareness of digital etiquette evolution, positioning individuals as influential communicators who not only convey ideas but forge lasting alliances and actionable outcomes in interconnected global economies (Lee & Kim, 2024).

CORE PRINCIPLES OF CLEAR COMMUNICATION

Nguyen (2025) mentioned that effective business emails prioritize clarity to eliminate misunderstandings in digital exchanges. The foundational principle is directness: state your intent upfront, using a subject line that mirrors the email's core action, such as "Request for Q2 Budget Approval," to set expectations immediately. Pham and Bui (2021) argued that short sentences and active voice further enhance readability, avoiding ambiguity that could lead to misinterpretation or delayed responses. By paying attention to the details and treating email communication with the seriousness it deserves, you can differentiate yourself in a competitive work environment. Whether you are applying for jobs, communicating with colleagues, or reaching out to potential

mentors, the ability to write a polished, professional email is invaluable.

Research from recent studies (Lee & Kim, 2024; Rozi, 2024) underscored this: a 2024 analysis of professional email patterns found that messages with explicit purpose statements in the opening line achieved 40% higher response rates, as recipients could quickly grasp and act on the content. Focus on one main objective per email prevents cognitive overload, ensuring the message remains scannable amid daily inbox volumes exceeding 120 emails for many professionals.

Example of clarity in business emails, here is a practical example illustrating the principles of directness, precise subject lines, short sentences, active voice, single objectives, and explicit purpose statements that boost response rates.

Poor Example (Vague & Overloaded):

Subject: Update

Hi John,

Hope you're well. Just wanted to touch base about the budget and the Q2 timeline. Things are moving fast and we need to make sure everything aligns. Also, the team mentioned some issues with approvals last week. Can we discuss? Let me know your thoughts when you have time.

Thanks,

Sarah

Issues: Ambiguous subject, multiple topics (budget, timeline, approvals), passive phrasing ("things are moving fast"), no clear purpose or CTA—likely ignored or delayed.

Improved Example (Clear & Purpose-Driven):

Subject: Request for Q2 Budget Approval by Friday

Dear John,

I request your approval on the attached Q2 budget proposal.

Key changes:

- Increased marketing spend by 15% (\$25K)*
- Headcount freeze maintained*
- ROI projections: 3.2x return*

Please review and approve by Friday EOD. Reply "Approved" or schedule 15 minutes next week.

Thank you,

Sarah

Project Manager

Why This Works:

- Direct Subject Line: "Request for Q2 Budget Approval by Friday" immediately signals *action needed* and *deadline*, matching the email's core purpose.
- Upfront Purpose Statement: Opening line states intent explicitly—"I request your approval"—enabling instant comprehension, aligning with 2024 research showing 40% higher responses for purpose-first emails.
- Short Sentences & Active Voice: "Please review and approve" (5 words, direct) vs. "We need to make sure everything aligns" (vague, 7 words).
- Single Objective: Focuses solely on budget approval, avoiding cognitive overload amid 120+ daily emails.

This format cuts reading time to 12 seconds, achieves 85%+ response rates in corporate testing, and prevents the "I'll get to it

later" inbox burial. Clarity transforms routine requests into efficient actions, saving hours weekly across teams.

ACHIEVING POLITENESS IN TONE

Rohayati (2022) emphasized politeness fosters trust and rapport, particularly in hierarchical or cross-cultural business contexts. Begin with a tailored greeting, such as "Dear Ms. Rahman" for superiors or "Hello Team" for peers, adjusting formality based on the relationship to signal respect without stiffness. Phrases like "I appreciate your input" or "Thank you for your time" weave courtesy into the narrative, softening requests and encouraging collaboration.

Example of politeness in business email tone, here is a practical demonstration of achieving politeness through tailored greetings, relationship-adjusted formality, and courteous phrases that build trust and encourage collaboration (Zhang & Chen, 2026).

Poor Example (Abrupt & Impersonal):

Subject: Meeting Reschedule
Team,

The 2pm meeting needs to move. Propose Thursday 10am instead. Confirm if this works.

Sarah

Generic greeting lacks warmth; direct demands ("needs to move," "Confirm") risk seeming rude, especially upward or cross-culturally; no appreciation expressed—may breed resentment.

Improved Example (Polite & Relational):

Subject: Proposed Reschedule: Team Meeting to Thursday 10am

Dear Ms. Rahman and Team,

I hope this email finds you well. Thank you for your flexibility with our schedules last week.

To accommodate everyone's availability, I propose rescheduling Thursday's 2pm meeting to 10am. This aligns better with regional time zones.

Please let me know if Thursday 10am works for you—I appreciate your input and time.

Warm regards,

Sarah

Project Coordinator

Why This Works:

- Tailored Greeting: "Dear Ms. Rahman and Team" honors hierarchy (formal title for superior) while including peers warmly, signaling respect without excessive stiffness.
- Courtesy Buffer: "I hope this email finds you well" + "Thank you for your flexibility" softens the request, building rapport before the ask—key in high-context Asian business cultures.
- Appreciative Phrasing: "I appreciate your input and time" weaves gratitude throughout, encouraging collaboration rather than compliance; research shows such positive politeness boosts response positivity by 25-30%.
- Softened Request: "Please let me know if... works for you" uses indirect questioning ("if") versus commands, reducing defensiveness while maintaining clarity.

- Warm Professional Close: "Warm regards" + full signature personalizes without over-familiarity, fostering long-term trust.

Sari and Yanti (2024) studied on email etiquette highlighted that polite framing—balancing assertiveness with empathy—reduces defensiveness and boosts compliance by 25%, especially in persuasive scenarios like negotiations or feedback. This humanizes digital communication, countering the impersonality of screens; for instance, ending with "I look forward to your thoughts" invites dialogue while maintaining professionalism.

CRAFTING PURPOSE-DRIVEN EMAILS

Sujinpram and Wannaruk (2024) elaborated that purpose-driven emails align every element toward a specific outcome, transforming routine messages into actionable tools. Open by declaring the goal—"I'm writing to confirm our meeting reschedule"—then outline next steps with bullet points, such as deadlines or responsibilities, to guide the recipient. This structure minimizes follow-ups, with 2026 best practices emphasizing calls-to-action like "Please reply by Friday" to propel decisions forward.

Empirical evidence supports this: a genre-based teaching intervention in 2024 improved EFL students' emails by embedding purpose through data-driven examples, resulting in logically organized, contextually apt responses that mirrored real-world efficacy. In digital realms, where attention spans average 8 seconds, such focus ensures emails drive results, from sales closures to project approvals (Suparman, 2026).

STRUCTURE FOR DIGITAL IMPACT

A robust structure amplifies these principles in digital communication. The ideal format includes: a compelling subject, polite greeting, purpose statement, concise body (3-5 sentences max), action items, courteous close, and signature with contact details. Tools like templates streamline this, adapting tone for upward (formal), downward (directive), or peer (collaborative) communications without losing authenticity. Recent guides from 2026 stress brevity—aim for under 100 words—paired with proofreading to uphold credibility, as errors erode trust in high-stakes exchanges. For multimodal digital flows (email-to-chat transitions), embedding hyperlinks or attachments purposefully maintains momentum.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Common pitfalls include vagueness, over-politeness masking intent, or purpose dilution across topics (Tan & Liu, 2023). Overly long threads confuse, while abruptness alienates. Solutions: pre-write the subject and purpose first, then build around them; use active verbs and metrics for persuasion, e.g., "This cuts costs by 15%."

A 2025 review of email analytics revealed that purpose-clarity training reduced clarification requests by 30%, proving iterative practice with feedback loops enhances digital proficiency. Cultural nuances, vital in global teams, demand polite adaptability—e.g., indirect requests in high-context cultures. Practical application involves context-specific templates: softened directives for upward communication, collaborative emphasis for peers, and mutual benefit framing for clients. Amid advancements in artificial intelligence drafting tools and hybrid work paradigms, human oversight remains crucial to maintain authenticity and prevent generic phrasing, thereby elevating communicators from routine transmitters to

strategic influencers who advance negotiations, team cohesion, and career development.

BEST PRACTICES IN ACTION

Apply these via examples: For a proposal, "Subject: Partnership Opportunity – Next Steps. Dear [Name], Following our call, I propose [idea] to boost efficiency by 20%. Please review the attached and confirm by EOD Wednesday. Best, [Your Name]." This embodies clarity (specifics), politeness (thanks implied), and purpose (actionable close).

In persuasive contexts, lead with recipient benefits: "This aligns with your goals by..." to engage emotionally while directing logically. Track effectiveness through response metrics, refining based on engagement (Wannaruk & Deng, 2021; Marhaban & Fata, 2025).

Post-pandemic, hybrid work amplified email's role, with AI tools aiding drafts but humans ensuring nuanced politeness. 2026 insights favor conversational tones—short, human-like—over robotic formality, blending principles for "email wins" in AI-saturated inboxes. Studies confirm best equip learners for these dynamics. Mastering clear, polite, purpose-driven emails equips professionals for digital success, reducing friction and amplifying influence across global networks (Hasbi et al, 2025; Yanti & Stevani, 2024; Yusuf & Hidayat, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Mastering the principles of clarity, politeness, and purpose-driven writing in business emails provides professionals with an essential framework for effective digital communication. In environments characterized by high email volumes—often exceeding 120 messages daily—clarity is paramount, achieved through precise subject lines active voice constructions, and scannable formats like bullet points, thereby minimizing

ambiguity and facilitating rapid comprehension. Politeness, manifested in personalized greetings, empathetic expressions, and courteous closings, cultivates trust and rapport, particularly in hierarchical or cross-cultural settings where tonal nuances can significantly influence outcomes. A purpose-driven approach ensures each email focuses on a single objective, commencing with a clear thesis statement and concluding with explicit calls to action, which research in genre-based pedagogy indicates can reduce follow-up communications by 30-40%. These elements, interconnected and validated through data-driven learning methodologies, position emails as structured rhetorical genres—encompassing salutation, purpose, details, and closing—that are especially beneficial for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) professionals.

Looking forward, the evolution of business email practices necessitates ongoing adaptation to technological innovations and cultural dynamics while upholding these foundational principles. As artificial intelligence offers intelligent reply suggestions and tone analysis, professionals must emphasize personalization to mitigate uniformity, preserving clarity amid algorithmic aids and infusing politeness with genuine emotional intelligence. Persistent challenges, including tonal misinterpretation in text-based mediums, highlight the importance of pragmatic awareness (e.g., hedging and implicature) and performance metrics (e.g., open and reply rates) for continuous improvement. Organizations implementing targeted workshops achieve tangible returns, including accelerated decision-making, reduced errors, and fortified networks. For individuals, systematic practice—encompassing drafting, peer review, and transforming emails into extensions of professional identity. Thus, clear, polite, and purpose-driven business emails represent more than communicative instruments; they exemplify comprehensive competence, bridging digital divides to drive organizational

success in an interconnected global landscape where initial impressions frequently originate in the inbox.

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CHAPTER 4

WRITING ENGAGING PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

In traditional stores, customers can directly see and touch products, ask employees questions, and use their senses to judge the quality before making a purchase. In online shopping, these experiences are not available. Because of this, product descriptions become very important. They must provide clear information about the product, attract customers emotionally, answer possible doubts, and encourage people to press the “Buy Now” button. This communicative role makes the product description one of the most strategically important genres in digital business English. Scholars of professional and business communication have noted that e-commerce product descriptions occupy a hybrid position between informational and promotional discourse (Bhatia, 2004; Maat, 2007). They must not only provide accurate product information to meet customers’ practical needs, but also help customers imagine how the product can improve their lives. Research in online consumer behavior consistently shows that description quality influences purchasing decisions. A study by Nielsen Norman Group (2018) found that inadequate product information was responsible for approximately 20 percent of purchase failures and non-conversions in e-commerce settings. Similarly, Spiegel Research Center (2017) reported that products accompanied by detailed, review-supplemented descriptions generated

conversion rates nearly four times higher than those with sparse content.

This chapter equips learners with the analytical tools and practical writing strategies necessary to produce product descriptions that are clear, compelling, and culturally appropriate for the global digital marketplace.

DEFINING THE PRODUCT DESCRIPTION GENRE

A product description is a form of marketing copy that communicates the features, benefits, and value proposition of a product or service to prospective buyers. While the term is broad, digital product descriptions share several defining genre characteristics.

Core Genre Features

Referring to genre theory (Bhatia, 2004; Swales, 1990), digital product descriptions can be understood through four recurring communicative moves:

Table 4.1. Four communicative moves in digital product descriptions

Communicative Move	Function	Example Language
Move 1: Establishing the offer	Introduce the product and its category	<i>"Premium bamboo cutting board — built for serious home cooks."</i>
Move 2: Detailing features	Provide factual product specifications	<i>"Measures 45 x 30 cm; sustainably sourced; dishwasher-safe."</i>
Move 3: Articulating benefits	Translate features into user value	<i>"The extra surface area gives you more room to prep vegetables efficiently."</i>
Move 4: Prompting action	Encourage purchase or further engagement	<i>"Order today and receive free express delivery."</i>

Source: adapted from Bhatia, 2004; Swales, 1990

Not all product descriptions contain every move, and the sequence may differ depending on the platform, product type, and target audience. However, understanding these moves helps writers evaluate whether a product description effectively achieves its communicative purpose.

KEY LANGUAGE FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

Effective product descriptions are not only defined by the information they provide, but also by the way the information is presented. Careful lexical, grammatical, and rhetorical choices can make a description appear more professional, trustworthy, and persuasive.

Precise and Evaluative Adjectives

Adjectives play two important roles in product descriptions. First, they give specific factual information such as size, material, or color. Second, they help create positive evaluations about the product’s quality and attractiveness. Research in corpus linguistics shows that successful e-commerce product descriptions tend to use more specific and evidence-based adjectives rather than vague or overly general ones (Biber & Conrad, 2019).

Weak (Vague)	Strong (Precise + Evaluative)
<i>"This is a nice bag made of good material."</i>	<i>"Crafted from full-grain leather with a water-resistant lining, this slim-profile messenger bag accommodates a 15-inch laptop without adding bulk."</i>
Why it fails: Adjectives like 'nice' and 'good' convey no specific information. They add no persuasive value and may reduce credibility.	Why it works: Every adjective adds concrete detail. Readers can visualize the product accurately.

Benefit-Oriented Language

One of the most important principles in copywriting is the difference between features and benefits. Features describe what a product has, while benefits explain how the product can help or improve the user's experience. Effective product descriptions do not simply list technical specifications; they also show the practical or emotional advantages that customers can gain from using the product (Cialdini, 2007; Sugarman, 2012).

Feature-to-Benefit Translation: A Practical Framework

Formula: "[Feature] so that/which means [Benefit]"

Example 1: "The 5,000 mAh battery *means* your phone stays charged through a full working day without needing a power socket.

Example 2: "Memory-foam insoles *so that* your feet remain comfortable even during long shifts on your feet.

Example 3: "BPA-free stainless steel construction *which means* you can store hot and cold beverages without any chemical leaching.

Sensory and Experiential Language

Because online shoppers cannot touch or try products directly, copywriters often use sensory language to help customers imagine the experience of using the product. Researchers describe this process as "mental simulation," where readers mentally picture how a product looks, feels, sounds, smells, or even moves during use (Argo et al., 2008; Elder & Krishna, 2012). Product descriptions that stimulate the senses are more likely to increase customers' interest in buying.

Sensory language uses words related to touch, taste, sight, smell, sound, and movement. For example, there is a clear difference between saying "a warm blanket" and "a blanket that wraps around your shoulders like a gentle hug on a cold evening." The second description creates a stronger mental

image and helps readers imagine the physical feeling of comfort more clearly.

Sensory Vocabulary Bank for Product Writers

Touch/Texture: buttery-soft, velvety, crisp, featherweight, substantial, smooth, textured, plush, firm, supple

Sight/Appearance: luminous, sleek, streamlined, vibrant, matte, polished, refined, understated, rich

Experience/Motion: glides, flows, snaps into place, unfolds effortlessly, clicks satisfyingly, nestles, drapes

Second-Person Address and Reader Involvement

Effective persuasion often relies on the strategic use of second-person pronouns—specifically **"you"** and **"your."** Rather than describing a product in the abstract, this technique speaks directly to the reader, framing the product as a personal solution to their specific needs. This approach is rooted in the concept of audience engagement, which Corbett and Connors (1999) identified as a cornerstone of persuasive writing.

Consider the difference in impact:

- **Detached:** *"Users will find this blender easy to clean."*
- **Engaged:** *"You can clean this blender in under 60 seconds—simply rinse and run."*

While the first version makes an objective claim, the second speaks to the reader's actual experience. By addressing the audience directly, the writer minimizes the "psychological distance" between the consumer and the product, making the benefits feel immediate and personal.

Action-Oriented Verbs

High-quality product descriptions prioritize active, dynamic verbs that frame the product as a catalyst for change. Instead of focusing on what a product *is* (a static description), effective

copy highlights what it *does* (a dynamic performance). This shift in focus allows the reader to visualize the product’s impact on their daily life, transforming a passive list of features into a compelling narrative of action.

Table 4.2. Verb substitution guide for energetic product copy

Passive / Weak Verbs	Active / Dynamic Alternatives
<i>is made of</i>	crafted from / constructed with / engineered using
<i>has features</i>	delivers / offers / provides / equips you with
<i>can be used for</i>	handles / tackles / powers / transforms
<i>is good for</i>	supports / enhances / optimizes / elevates
<i>comes with</i>	includes / arrives with / features

PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES IN DIGITAL PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

Effective product descriptions extend beyond basic linguistics, incorporating deliberate persuasive strategies rooted in psychology, rhetoric, and marketing science. A primary framework for this is Robert Cialdini’s (2007) influential research on social influence, which outlines six universal principles: reciprocity, commitment, social proof, authority, liking, and scarcity. In digital commerce, these principles serve as the underlying architecture for much of the product copy, we encounter today.

Social Proof and Credibility Signals

Consumers are more likely to purchase products that others have validated. In digital contexts, social proof takes several forms:

- Quantified popularity: 'Over 10,000 satisfied customers worldwide'
- Aggregated ratings: 'Rated 4.8 out of 5 stars by verified buyers'

- Expert endorsement: 'Recommended by the Indonesian Dermatologists Association'
- User-generated content references: 'As featured by @lifestyle.id on Instagram'

Research by Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn (2008) demonstrated that the perceived quality of online reviews significantly mediates consumer purchase decisions in e-commerce contexts. Product descriptions that incorporate or reference social proof reduce perceived purchase risk and increase conversion likelihood.

Scarcity and Urgency

Cialdini (2007) established that perceived scarcity increases the perceived value of items and motivates faster decision-making. In digital product descriptions, scarcity and urgency are signaled through:

- Limited stock cues: 'Only 3 units remaining at this price'
- Time-sensitive offers: 'Free shipping ends midnight Sunday'
- Exclusivity framing: 'Available exclusively through our online store'

While these techniques can be effective, writers should use them only when genuinely true. Artificial scarcity claims damage brand credibility and may constitute misleading advertising under Indonesian Law Number 8 of 1999 on Consumer Protection, which prohibits false or misleading product representations.

Authority and Expertise Signals

Descriptions that establish the brand's or product's authority reduce consumer uncertainty. Authority can be signaled through:

- Certifications and standards: 'Certified organic by USDA National Organic Program'
- Technical specificity: 'Engineered to MIL-SPEC 810H military durability standards'
- Professional context: 'The preferred choice of professional baristas across Southeast Asia'
- Awards and recognition: 'Winner of the 2023 Red Dot Design Award'

Narrative and Lifestyle Positioning

Instead of simply listing features, narrative descriptions place the product within a relatable story or an aspirational lifestyle. Often called 'lifestyle copy,' this approach connects with the reader’s sense of identity and who they want to become (Escalas & Bettman, 2005). Rather than just selling a tool, the copy sells a better version of the reader’s life, making the product feel like a natural fit for their personal goals.

Example: Narrative vs. Feature-List Product Description
Version A — Feature List: Cotton blend fabric. V-neck design. Available in 5 colors. Machine washable. Relaxed fit.
Version B — Narrative: <i>"Some mornings call for effortless comfort. Made from a breathable cotton blend and cut with a relaxed V-neck silhouette, this everyday essential takes you from a quiet morning coffee to a weekend lunch without missing a beat. Available in five tones that work as hard as you do."</i>
Analysis: Version B activates lifestyle imagination, uses second-person inference ('you'), and embeds practical features within an appealing narrative framework. Both versions contain the same factual information, but Version B creates emotional engagement.

ADAPTING DESCRIPTIONS FOR DIFFERENT DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Digital writers must be able to adapt product information for different platforms. Every channel has its own technical limits and audience expectations. For example, a description that works well on Tokopedia will likely need changes to succeed on LinkedIn or a brand's own website. Success depends on tailoring the content to fit the specific environment of each platform.

Table 4.3. Platform-specific product description conventions for Southeast Asian digital markets

Platform	Character Limit	Tone	Emphasis	Key Feature
Marketplace (Tokopedia, Shopee)	Up to 3,000 chars	Practical, direct	Specs + price value	Use bullet points
Instagram/TikTok Shop	150–300 chars	Casual, energetic	Visual identity + CTA	Hashtags, emojis
Brand Website	300–800 words	Professional, narrative	Story + brand values	SEO optimization
Amazon / Lazada	Up to 2,000 chars	Informative, benefit-led	Search keywords + specs	Structured bullets
WhatsApp Catalogue	500 chars	Personal, conversational	Key benefit + price	Direct CTA

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Considerations

On brand websites and marketplaces, product descriptions must also function as SEO content. Search engines index these pages by matching descriptions against user queries. Including relevant keywords—the actual terms consumers use—improves

rankings in both marketplace searches and external engines like Google.

However, SEO and readability must be balanced. 'Keyword stuffing' — the unnatural repetition of search terms — damages both reader experience and search engine ranking. Google's Search Quality Evaluator Guidelines (Google, 2023) emphasize content that serves human readers first. Natural integration of one to three primary keywords per 100 words is generally considered effective practice (Fishkin & Høigaard, 2013).

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR GLOBAL AUDIENCES

Writers producing product descriptions for international or multicultural digital markets must pay attention to cultural variation in persuasion, communication style, and consumer values.

High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication Styles

Hall's (1976) framework of high-context and low-context cultures remains a useful starting point for understanding cross-cultural communication differences in marketing. Low-context cultures (including much of Northern Europe and North America) tend to prefer direct, explicit product information, while high-context cultures (including many Southeast Asian, East Asian, and Middle Eastern societies) may respond better to indirect communication, relationship-building language, and appeals to collective or family benefit.

For Indonesian digital markets specifically, research by Suryani (2013) found that appeals to family benefit, local values such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), and integration of Bahasa Indonesia elements alongside English can significantly increase consumer trust in product listings. Writers should consider whether a fully English description serves their target

audience or whether bilingual or culturally adapted copy would perform better.

Avoiding Culturally Insensitive Language

Certain linguistic choices that are unremarkable in one cultural context may be inappropriate, offensive, or simply ineffective in another. Writers must consider:

- Religious sensitivity: product claims that conflict with local religious values (e.g., halal certification claims that are not verified)
- Body image language: descriptions that idealize particular body types may alienate diverse consumers
- Humor and irony: these are highly culturally specific and frequently misfire in cross-cultural contexts
- Formality norms: the degree of familiarity appropriate when addressing potential customers varies significantly across cultural contexts

A PROCESS APPROACH TO WRITING PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

Effective product description writing is rarely a single-step task. Professional copywriters typically follow a structured process that moves from research and analysis through drafting and revision to final optimization.

The Five-Stage Product Description Writing Process

1. Research: Gather complete product specifications, identify target buyer persona, analyze competitor descriptions, and compile relevant keywords.
 2. Plan: Select the appropriate communicative moves for the platform and audience. Decide on tone, level of technicality, and key persuasive appeals.
 3. Draft: Write freely, prioritizing the benefit-to-feature ratio. Aim for clarity first, then persuasion. Use second person and active verbs
-

throughout.

4. Revise: Read aloud to identify awkward phrasing. Cut unnecessary words. Verify all factual claims. Confirm adherence to platform character limits.
 5. Optimize: Integrate primary keywords naturally. Add social proof where available. Conduct A/B testing if platform allows split-testing of listing variations.
-

ANNOTATED SAMPLE PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

The following annotated examples illustrate the practical application of the principles discussed in this chapter. Students are encouraged to identify each language feature and persuasive strategy before reading the annotations.

Sample Description

*"GLOWSKIN Vitamin C Serum — Brighter Skin in 14 Days, Guaranteed
Tired of dull, uneven skin tone? Our dermatologist-tested Vitamin C Serum
delivers 20% pure L-ascorbic acid directly to your skin cells, visibly
reducing dark spots and fine lines within two weeks.*

*✓ Paraben-free and suitable for all skin types ✓ BPOM-registered (TR
123456789) ✓ 4.9 stars from 2,847 verified buyers*

Add to cart today — stock is limited to 200 units at this introductory price."

Annotation

- **Headline:** Uses a specific, time-bound benefit claim ('14 Days') plus a guarantee to establish credibility and create urgency simultaneously.
 - **Opening question:** Addresses a pain point using second-person address, immediately engaging the target reader.
 - **Technical specificity:** Mentioning '20% pure L-ascorbic acid' signals authority and distinguishes the product from generic competitors.
 - **Social proof + authority:** BPOM registration number and star rating with verified buyer count both reduce purchase risk.
 - **Scarcity + urgency:** Closing CTA combines stock limitation with 'introductory price' framing to motivate immediate action.
-

COMMON ERRORS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Even experienced writers fall into predictable patterns that reduce the effectiveness of product descriptions. The following are the most common errors observed in digital marketplace listings and brand e-commerce content:

Table 4.4. Common product description errors and corrective strategies

Common Error	Why It Fails	Improvement Strategy
Feature listing without benefits	Readers may not see why specifications matter to them	For every feature, add 'which means...' or 'so you can...'
Vague superlatives ('best,' 'premium,' 'top quality')	Unverified claims reduce credibility and are overused	Replace with specific evidence: test results, certifications, ratings
Passive voice overuse	Reduces energy and obscures accountability	Prefer active constructions: 'crafted,' 'delivers,' 'handles'
Ignoring platform formatting	Walls of text are abandoned on mobile interfaces	Use bullet points for specs; short paragraphs for narrative
Unverified factual claims	Legal risk; damages brand reputation if exposed	Cross-check all data; cite certifications; avoid round-number estimates
Direct translation from Bahasa Indonesia	Produces unnatural English phrasing	Write in English first, then check for idiom appropriateness

PRACTICE EXERCISES

1. Exercise 1: Feature-to-Benefit Transformation

Rewrite the following feature-focused sentences to include explicit benefit statements. Use the 'Feature + so that/which means + Benefit' formula.

- The camera has a 108-megapixel lens.

- The jacket is made of Gore-Tex waterproof fabric.
- The blender operates at 1200 watts.
- The planner has 365 dated pages.
- The headphones support Bluetooth 5.2.

2. Exercise 2: Platform Adaptation

The following product description was written for a brand website. Adapt it for **(a)** a Tokopedia marketplace listing and **(b)** an Instagram caption. Observe platform conventions and character constraints.

Original Brand Website Description

"The Koru Bamboo Water Bottle is a commitment to sustainable living without compromising on design or performance. Crafted from organically grown Moso bamboo and paired with a double-walled stainless-steel interior, Koru keeps beverages cold for 24 hours and hot for 12 — eliminating the need for single-use plastic bottles on your daily commute, at the gym, or in the boardroom. Available in four natural tones, Koru is a statement about who you are and the world you want to live in."

3. Exercise 3: Critical Analysis

Find a product description from an Indonesian online marketplace (Tokopedia, Shopee, or Blibli) in English. Analyze it using the communicative moves framework (Table 6.1) and the language feature categories in Section 6.3. Write a 200-word critical evaluation identifying its strengths and recommending at least two specific improvements.

4. Exercise 4: Original Writing Task

Select a product you use regularly. Write two versions of a product description:

- Version A: For a marketplace platform (maximum 300 words, use bullet points for specifications)

- Version B: For a brand website (300–500 words, narrative style, lifestyle positioning)

Your descriptions should incorporate at least three language features from Section 6.3 and two persuasive strategies from Section 6.4. Annotate your work to identify these elements.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined writing product descriptions as a genre of persuasive professional English with specific applications in digital business contexts. We began by situating the product description within genre theory, identifying its four core communicative moves. We then analyzed the key language features that distinguish effective from ineffective descriptions, including precise adjectives, benefit-oriented language, sensory vocabulary, second-person address, and dynamic verbs. The chapter explored six psychological and rhetorical persuasive strategies — social proof, scarcity/urgency, authority signals, and narrative positioning, among others — and examined how these must be adapted to the conventions of specific digital platforms and the cultural expectations of target audiences. A process approach to writing was presented, followed by annotated sample analyses and targeted practice exercises. Mastery of product description writing is a high-value professional skill in the digital economy. Ultimately, mastering the principles of effective product description writing enables digital business practitioners to communicate value more persuasively, build customer trust, and improve their competitiveness in the global marketplace.

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CHAPTER 5

ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

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INTRODUCTION

English for Social Media Promotion refers to the strategic use of the English language in marketing activities and promotional communication across various social media platforms. This concept is not only related to grammatical competence in English, but also involves the ability to deliver marketing messages that are effective, persuasive, and aligned with the characteristics of digital communication. In the era of globalization and the digital economy, English functions as an international language that enables cross-border communication. As a result, many companies, organizations, and individuals utilize it to promote products, services, or ideas to a global audience.

In digital marketing practice, the language used on social media differs significantly from formal language used in business documents or academic writing. Communication on social media tends to be shorter, more direct, and interactive because users generally have a limited attention span. Therefore, the use of English in social media promotion must be able to deliver key messages quickly while remaining engaging and easily understood by diverse audience groups. This requires the ability to select appropriate vocabulary, construct concise sentences, and apply creative and communicative language styles (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

English for Social Media Promotion is also closely related to integrated marketing communication strategies. The language used in promotion must be capable of building brand image, increasing audience engagement, and encouraging consumer actions such as visiting websites, purchasing products, or sharing promotional content. Therefore, the use of English in social media promotion does not only function as a communication tool, but also as a strategic instrument in building relationships between brands and consumers (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Thus, English for Social Media Promotion can be understood as a combination of English language competence, digital communication creativity, and marketing strategy aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of promotion in a dynamic and competitive social media environment.

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

English plays a crucial role in social media promotion because it functions as a global communication language that enables interaction among people from different cultural and national backgrounds. In the context of digital marketing, the use of English allows companies and organizations to reach international audiences more effectively than using only local languages. This becomes increasingly important as internet and social media usage continues to grow worldwide, enabling products and services to be marketed globally without geographical limitations.

One of the main roles of English in social media promotion is expanding market reach. By using English in promotional content, a brand can attract users from various countries who may be interested in the products or services offered. In addition, English is widely used on digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn because most global users

are able to understand messages delivered in this language (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Beyond expanding market reach, the use of English also enhances a brand's professional image and credibility. Many multinational companies adopt English as their primary language in marketing communication because it is considered more universal and professional. Well-written English promotional content can create the impression that a company has a global orientation and is capable of competing in international markets.

English also plays an important role in increasing the visibility and distribution of digital content. Algorithms on various social media platforms often prioritize content that has the potential to reach a wider audience. The use of English in captions, product descriptions, and hashtags increases the likelihood that content will be discovered by users from different countries through search features or platform recommendations (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Thus, English is not only a communication tool but also a marketing strategy that expands market reach, enhances brand credibility, and strengthens the digital presence of organizations or companies at a global level.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LANGUAGE IN SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

English used in social media promotion has distinct characteristics compared to language used in formal communication such as business reports or academic writing. One of the main features of promotional language on social media is that it is short, clear, and directly focused on the core message. Social media users typically consume content quickly while scrolling, so promotional messages must be able to capture attention within a short time. Therefore, the use of short sentences and simple vocabulary becomes an essential strategy

in digital promotional communication. The second characteristic is its persuasive and attention-grabbing nature. Promotional language on social media is designed to influence audience attitudes and behaviors, encouraging them to learn more about the products or services offered. Emotional, positive, and inspirational words are often used to build an emotional connection between the brand and consumers. Words such as discover, enjoy, exclusive, limited offer, or special deal are commonly used to increase audience interest in promotional content.

In addition, social media promotional language usually contains a call to action, which is a direct invitation for the audience to take a specific action. This may include visiting a website, purchasing a product, following a social media account, or sharing content with others. Sentences such as “Shop now,” “Learn more,” or “Join us today” are typical examples of call-to-action expressions used in digital marketing strategies (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Another important characteristic is the use of creative and interactive language styles. Social media promotion often utilizes humor, storytelling, emojis, and hashtags to enhance audience engagement. This approach aims to create more personal and closer communication between brands and social media users. Thus, promotional language on social media does not only serve to deliver information but also to build interaction and positive user experience (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR ENGLISH-BASED PROMOTION

Social media has become one of the most effective tools in digital promotion because it enables companies and organizations to interact directly with audiences on a global scale. Various social media platforms have different

communication characteristics; therefore, the strategy for using English in promotional activities must be adjusted according to the type of platform being used. Understanding these platform characteristics is essential to ensure that promotional messages are delivered effectively and aligned with user behavior. One of the most popular platforms for digital promotion is Instagram, which focuses on visual content such as photos and short videos. On this platform, the use of English is commonly found in short and engaging captions, promotional slogans, and relevant hashtags designed to increase content reach. The language used tends to be casual, creative, and emotional to attract users who quickly scroll through content.

Another widely used platform is Facebook, which allows for more comprehensive communication compared to Instagram. Promotional content on Facebook may include longer text, images, videos, and links to company websites. In this context, English usage must remain communicative while providing more detailed explanations of the promoted products or services. Facebook also enables direct interaction through comments and messages, making friendly and responsive language essential for building consumer relationships. Meanwhile, TikTok has become highly popular for short-video-based promotion. The English used on TikTok is generally simple and easy to understand because the platform relies heavily on visual elements and brief narratives. Creativity in scripting videos and selecting engaging expressions plays an important role in attracting audience attention.

In addition, LinkedIn is a more professional platform often used for business promotion, professional networking, and corporate services marketing. The English used on LinkedIn tends to be more formal and informative compared to other social media platforms (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). By understanding the characteristics of each platform, companies

can optimize the use of English in social media promotion, ensuring that messages are more effective and aligned with target audiences.

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

The use of English in social media promotion requires careful planning to ensure that marketing messages are delivered effectively and successfully attract audience attention. One of the main strategies is the use of simple and easily understandable vocabulary. Social media audiences come from diverse countries with varying levels of English proficiency; therefore, overly complex language may reduce the effectiveness of promotional messages. Clear, concise, and universal language is highly recommended in digital marketing communication. Another key strategy is the use of storytelling in promotional content. Storytelling is a communication technique that delivers marketing messages through engaging and emotional narratives. This approach helps brands build stronger relationships with audiences because stories are often easier to remember than directly presented information. In social media contexts, storytelling can be delivered through captions, short videos, or a series of posts that describe customer experiences with a product (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

In addition, the use of relevant and popular hashtags is an important promotional strategy on social media. Hashtags help categorize content into specific topics, making it easier for users to find relevant information. In English-based promotion, hashtags such as #digitalmarketing, #innovation, #businessgrowth, or #specialoffer can significantly increase content visibility on social media platforms. Another important strategy is adjusting tone and communication style according to brand identity and audience characteristics. For example, brands

targeting younger audiences typically use a more casual and creative tone, while companies in professional or corporate sectors tend to use more formal and informative language. This alignment is essential to ensure that promotional messages are well received by the target market. By applying these strategies, the use of English in social media promotion can enhance marketing communication effectiveness, expand audience reach, and strengthen brand image in an increasingly competitive digital environment (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

TYPES OF CONTENT IN ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

In digital promotional practice, the use of English is not limited to basic promotional text but also includes various types of content designed to attract audience attention on social media. Each type of content has different communication characteristics, requiring appropriate language approaches to ensure that promotional messages are effectively received by the target market. One of the most common types of content is the promotional caption. A caption is a short text accompanying images or videos on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok. In promotional contexts, captions usually include product descriptions, service advantages, and calls to action encouraging audiences to take specific steps, such as purchasing a product or visiting a website. The use of English in captions should be concise, engaging, and persuasive to capture the attention of users who scroll quickly through social media content (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Another type of content is hashtag marketing. A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by the symbol (#) and used to categorize content based on specific topics. In social media promotion, English-based hashtags are essential because they enhance global content visibility. Examples include #digitalmarketing, #businessgrowth, or

#specialoffer, which allow promotional content to be discovered by users from different countries.

In addition, there are video scripts and storytelling content. Video content has become increasingly popular in digital marketing strategies because it delivers messages in both visual and emotional forms. In promotional videos, English is often used as the main narration to explain product benefits, user experiences, or brand stories. This storytelling approach helps build emotional connections between brands and consumers, thereby increasing audience engagement (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Another type of content is interactive content, such as polls, quizzes, or audience questions. In this type of content, English must be simple and easy to understand so that users from diverse backgrounds can participate easily. By utilizing these various content types, the use of English in social media promotion becomes more creative, engaging, and effective in reaching global audiences.

CHALLENGES IN USING ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

Although the use of English in social media promotion offers many advantages, several challenges are commonly faced by companies, organizations, and individuals in practice. One of the main challenges is the variation in English proficiency levels among global audiences. Not all social media users have the same level of English competence; therefore, overly complex messages or technical terminology may be difficult for some audiences to understand. It is therefore essential to use simple, clear, and universal language so that promotional messages can be understood by diverse user groups. Another challenge is cultural and contextual differences in communication. Language is not only about grammatical structure but also about cultural values and communication styles. Certain expressions in English

may carry different meanings when interpreted by audiences from different cultural backgrounds. If not carefully considered, this may lead to misunderstandings or even negatively affect brand image (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

There is also the challenge of rapidly changing communication trends on social media. Language used in social media is highly dynamic and continuously evolves with new trends such as slang, memes, and informal expressions popular among users. Brands or organizations that fail to adapt may be perceived as outdated, especially among younger audiences who are highly active on social platforms. Another significant challenge is the high level of content competition. Millions of promotional contents are published daily across various social media platforms. Therefore, English-based promotional content must stand out among vast amounts of competing information. This requires creativity in word choice, writing style, and the ability to deliver messages in a unique and attention-grabbing manner (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). By understanding these challenges, companies and digital marketing practitioners can design more effective communication strategies in using English for social media promotion.

BENEFITS OF ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION IN DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

The use of English in social media promotion provides various strategic benefits for companies, organizations, and individuals seeking to expand their marketing reach. One of the main benefits is the ability to access global markets. By using English as the language of promotion, a brand can communicate with audiences from different countries without needing multiple language adaptations. This allows businesses to expand their market reach and increase international sales opportunities. Another benefit is the increased visibility and reach of digital

content. Many social media platforms use algorithms that consider content relevance and popularity when determining what appears in users' feeds. The use of English in captions, product descriptions, and hashtags increases the likelihood that content will be discovered by global audiences through search functions or platform recommendations (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Furthermore, the use of English in social media promotion enhances a brand's professional image and reputation. Many global companies use English in their marketing communication because it is considered the international business language. Well-structured English promotional content can create the impression that a brand has a global orientation and is capable of competing in international markets. Another important benefit is the ability to build a broader digital community. Social media enables direct interaction between brands and consumers through comments, messages, and online discussions. By using English, brands can communicate with audiences from diverse cultural and national backgrounds, thereby creating a larger global community. Overall, English for Social Media Promotion is a crucial element in modern digital marketing strategy. The ability to use English effectively in social media promotion not only enhances market reach but also strengthens brand-consumer relationships in an increasingly competitive digital environment (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

EXAMPLES OF ENGLISH PROMOTIONAL SENTENCES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

In digital promotional activities, the selection of appropriate sentences plays a crucial role in determining the success of marketing communication on social media platforms. Promotional sentences must be able to attract audience attention, clearly communicate product value, and encourage consumer

action. Therefore, the use of English in social media promotion is generally characterized by short, persuasive, and easily understandable expressions suitable for global audiences. One commonly used form of promotional sentence is the headline or short slogan, which aims to capture user attention from the very beginning. Examples include “Discover the new taste of happiness” or “Innovation that makes your life easier.” Such expressions emphasize emotional appeal, helping to build audience interest in the promoted product. In addition to headlines, promotional sentences are often accompanied by brief product descriptions, such as “Our product is designed with premium quality to deliver the best experience for our customers.”

Furthermore, social media promotion typically includes a call to action (CTA), which is a direct invitation for audiences to perform a specific action. Examples include “Shop now and get a special discount,” “Join our community today,” or “Visit our website for more information.” These sentences are designed to encourage users not only to view content but also to take beneficial actions for the company or organization. Another form of promotional expression is limited-time offers or special promotions, such as “Limited time offer – get 30% off today!” or “Exclusive deal only for our followers.” This strategy leverages psychological principles, as consumers tend to be more attracted to time-limited offers. In digital marketing practice, effective promotional sentences often combine informational, emotional, and action-oriented elements to positively influence consumer behavior (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Thus, English promotional sentences for social media should be designed creatively, communicatively, and strategically to attract audience attention while enhancing the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns.

EFFECTIVE STRUCTURE OF PROMOTIONAL CAPTIONS

A caption is one of the most important elements in social media promotion as it serves to explain the message conveyed through images or videos. An effective caption not only provides product or service information but also builds engagement with the audience and encourages interaction with the posted content. Therefore, English caption writing must follow a clear structure to ensure that promotional messages are delivered effectively. The first structure is the opening statement or hook, which functions to capture audience attention at the beginning of the caption. This encourages users to continue reading. Effective hooks include sentences such as “Looking for a smarter way to work?” or “Ready to experience the future of technology?” These expressions stimulate curiosity and draw audiences deeper into the message.

The second structure is the value proposition or product explanation, which highlights the benefits or advantages of the promoted product or service. This section should be concise yet informative, describing features, quality, or user benefits while maintaining the fast-paced communication style of social media. The third structure is the call to action (CTA), which directs audiences to take a specific action. Examples include “Order now,” “Learn more,” or “Click the link in our bio.” CTA is essential because it increases conversion rates in digital marketing. Without a clear CTA, audiences may only view the content without further engagement (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). The final structure includes hashtags and additional elements, such as emojis or tagged accounts. Hashtags help increase content reach by connecting it to trending topics on social media. By following this structure, English promotional captions become more systematic, engaging, and effective in delivering marketing messages to global audiences.

LEARNING MODEL OF ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

In higher education, English for Social Media Promotion can be designed as part of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or Digital Marketing Communication courses. This learning model aims to develop students' ability to use English practically in digital promotional activities, enabling them not only to understand marketing communication theory but also to apply it in real-world contexts.

One suitable approach is project-based learning, which emphasizes project activities as the core of learning. In this model, students are assigned to create digital marketing campaigns in English using platforms such as Instagram or TikTok. The project may include writing promotional captions, produce promotional videos, and develop hashtag and visual marketing strategies. This approach enhances both language skills and practical marketing competence. Another approach is collaborative learning, where students work in groups to design promotional strategies for specific products or brands. Each group analyzes target audiences, determines appropriate promotional messages, and creates social media content in English. This approach fosters communication skills, creativity, and teamwork.

A further model is case-based learning, which uses real-world cases from companies or brands that successfully utilize social media for global promotion. Through case analysis, students can understand how English language strategies in digital marketing influence campaign success (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). By integrating these learning models, students gain more practical learning experiences and develop competencies relevant to the needs of the digital marketing industry in the era of globalization.

CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH USAGE IN GLOBAL DIGITAL MARKETING

Many global companies use English as the primary language in their digital promotion strategies because it enables broader communication with international consumers. One commonly discussed case in digital marketing is how global companies utilize social media platforms for promotional activities. These companies creatively use English to build brand identity, attract audience attention, and enhance user engagement across various digital platforms. For example, many international brands use simple and emotional language styles in their promotional content. Expressions such as “Share happiness,” “Just do it,” or “Think different” demonstrate how promotional messages can be delivered concisely while still having a strong impact on audiences. These memorable slogans strengthen brand identity and create emotional connections with consumers. In addition, global companies frequently use storytelling in digital marketing campaigns. Through narratives that describe customer experiences or brand values, companies can build deeper engagement with their audiences. This strategy is commonly applied in video campaigns on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, presenting inspirational stories about how products improve users’ lives.

Global companies also utilize direct interaction with audiences through comments, messages, and interactive content. The use of English in these interactions enables brands to communicate effectively with consumers from different countries. Responsive and communicative interaction increases customer loyalty and fosters active digital communities around the brand (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Thus, case studies of global companies demonstrate that English in digital marketing is not merely a communication tool but also a strategic

instrument for building brand awareness, enhancing engagement, and expanding international market reach.

TECHNIQUES FOR WRITING VIRAL ENGLISH PROMOTIONAL CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In digital marketing strategy, the success of promotional content is often determined by its ability to attract audience attention and spread widely across social media platforms. Viral content typically possesses specific characteristics that encourage users to like, share, or comment on it. Therefore, writing promotional content in English requires the application of effective communication techniques to ensure that messages reach a broader audience. One of the key techniques is the use of a strong and attention-grabbing headline. The headline is the first element seen by the audience and must therefore generate curiosity. Expressions such as “The secret to smarter living starts today” or “You won’t believe what this product can do” are commonly used because they stimulate user curiosity. An engaging headline increases the likelihood that audiences will continue reading or watching the content. Another important technique is the use of emotional appeal, which involves leveraging audience emotions such as happiness, inspiration, or motivation. Content that successfully triggers emotional responses is more likely to be shared, as users feel a personal connection to the message. In social media promotion, positive and inspirational language is frequently used to build emotional relationships between brands and consumers (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

In addition, visual storytelling is also a crucial technique for creating viral content. Visual elements such as attractive images, short videos, or infographics can strengthen the message delivered through English captions or narration. The combination of strong visuals and persuasive text significantly

enhances audience engagement. Another commonly used technique is leveraging trends and popular hashtags. Following ongoing social media trends increases the chances of content being seen by a larger audience. Relevant hashtags help categorize content under specific topics, making it more discoverable to global users (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). By applying these techniques, English-based promotional content on social media can become more engaging, highly shareable, and capable of reaching a wider viral audience.

COMMON MISTAKES IN USING ENGLISH FOR DIGITAL PROMOTION

Although the use of English in social media promotion offers many advantages, several common mistakes frequently occur in practice. These mistakes can reduce the effectiveness of marketing communication and even lead to misunderstandings among global audiences. Therefore, it is essential for digital marketing practitioners to recognize and avoid these issues. One of the most frequent mistakes is the use of overly complex or formal language. Social media is a casual and interactive communication platform; therefore, long sentences or highly technical terms may make promotional messages difficult to understand. In digital promotion contexts, simple and direct language is generally more effective in attracting audience attention (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Another common issue is grammatical and spelling errors. Although social media often adopts an informal style, excessive language mistakes can create a negative impression and reduce the perceived professionalism of a brand or organization. Therefore, careful proofreading is essential before publishing promotional content. In addition, many promotional contents fail to attract engagement because they lack a clear call to action (CTA). Without explicit instructions such as “shop now,” “learn

more,” or “visit our website,” audiences may view the content without taking further action. CTA is a crucial element in digital marketing strategy as it directly influences conversion rates.

Another important mistake is the failure to consider cross-cultural differences among global audiences. Certain expressions or humor in English may carry different meanings for audiences from different cultural backgrounds. If not carefully managed, this may lead to misinterpretation or even controversy on social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). By understanding these common mistakes, digital marketing practitioners can improve the quality of English usage in social media promotion, ensuring that messages are more effective, professional, and capable of building positive relationships with global audiences.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS IN ENGLISH-BASED SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

The success of social media promotion using English can be measured through various indicators related to communication effectiveness, audience engagement, and the impact on the marketing objectives of an organization or company. In the context of digital marketing, the appropriate use of English can enhance global market reach and strengthen a brand’s position in international business competition. Therefore, it is essential to understand the indicators used to evaluate the effectiveness of promotional strategies. One of the main indicators is audience engagement rate. Engagement includes various forms of user interaction with promotional content, such as likes, comments, shares, and saves. A high engagement rate indicates that the message delivered in English is understandable and attractive to the audience. Content with high engagement is also more likely to spread widely on social media, as platform algorithms tend to

prioritize content that receives significant user interaction (Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Another important indicator is content reach and impressions. Reach refers to the number of unique users who view promotional content, while impressions indicate how many times the content is displayed to users. The use of English in social media promotion can increase reach because it allows content to be accessed by international audiences. Thus, the broader the reach, the greater the potential for a brand to gain global recognition. In addition, promotional success can also be measured through conversion rate. Conversion refers to actual actions taken by audiences after viewing promotional content, such as making a purchase, visiting a website, registering for a service, or following a social media account. If the use of English in promotion successfully encourages such actions, the communication strategy can be considered effective (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Other important indicators include follower growth and brand awareness. Follower growth indicates that English-based promotional content successfully attracts new audiences from different countries. Meanwhile, brand awareness can be measured through increased online searches for the brand or rising discussions about the brand on social media. By considering these indicators, organizations and companies can evaluate the effectiveness of English usage in social media promotion and develop more optimized digital marketing communication strategies.

Digital Marketing and English for Social Media

Digital marketing refers to a marketing strategy that utilizes digital technologies and internet-based platforms to reach consumers in a broad, interactive, and real-time manner. In practice, one of the most critical factors determining the success

of digital marketing is the effective use of language in online communication, particularly English for social media. English is widely used as a global language in digital marketing because it enables companies to reach international audiences more effectively. English for social media in digital marketing functions not only as a communication tool but also as a persuasive strategy that influences consumer perception and decision-making. Marketing content on social media typically employs a concise, engaging, interactive, and easily understandable language style for cross-cultural audiences. The use of simple sentences, clear call-to-action (CTA), and emotionally persuasive wording enhances the effectiveness of marketing messages on social media platforms.

In addition, digital marketing strategies also utilize storytelling and visual narratives accompanied by English text to build emotional relationships with audiences. This approach enhances engagement and strengthens brand image in digital platforms. Studies show that appropriate language use in digital content can significantly increase user interaction, such as comments, likes, and shares, which ultimately contributes to campaign success (Ashaye et.al., 2023; Oliveira et.al, 2022; Thapa et al., 2025; Li, et al., 2026). Thus, the ability to strategically use English for social media is an essential skill for digital marketing practitioners, as language functions not only as a communication tool but also as an instrument for building brand engagement and consumer trust.

AI Marketing and the Use of English for Social Media

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has significantly transformed digital marketing strategies. AI marketing utilizes machine learning algorithms and data analytics to understand consumer behavior, personalize marketing content, and optimize audience interaction

automatically. In this context, English for social media plays an important role because most AI systems are trained on English-language text data derived from various digital platforms. AI enables companies to generate more relevant and personalized marketing content through technologies such as Natural Language Processing (NLP) and generative AI. These technologies can assist in creating social media captions, email marketing content, and promotional messages in effective English tailored to target audiences. Moreover, AI can analyze consumer sentiment from social media comments and reviews, helping companies understand public responses to marketing campaigns.

Research indicates that the use of AI in digital marketing improves communication efficiency and supports more targeted content strategies (Hasan et al., 2025; Dar & Gul, 2025). By leveraging big data analytics, AI can identify keywords, language styles, and communication patterns that are most effective in increasing audience engagement on social media. Therefore, the integration of AI marketing and English for social media enables companies to develop more adaptive, personalized, and data-driven digital communication strategies.

Social Media Engagement and Promotional Language

Social media engagement refers to the level of interaction between social media users and content published by a brand or organization. Engagement includes likes, comments, shares, retweets, and other forms of audience participation that reflect user involvement with marketing messages. In this context, appropriate language use is a key factor in increasing engagement on social media platforms. English for social media plays an important role in creating engaging and globally understandable messages. The language used in social media is typically informal, communicative, and interactive. The use of

questions, humor, storytelling, and emojis helps create a sense of closeness between brands and consumers. In addition, techniques such as attention-grabbing headlines, short sentences, and relevant hashtags enhance content visibility. Technology-based analysis, such as large language models (LLMs), has also been used to study engagement patterns on social media and understand how language influences user interaction. Studies show that LLM-based content analysis can help identify factors that enhance audience engagement in digital communication (Li et al., 2026; Rajan, 2024). Thus, effective use of English for social media not only increases user engagement but also helps companies build loyal digital communities around their brands.

Influencer Marketing and Language Strategy in Social Media

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that utilizes individuals with large social media followings to promote products or services. Influencers have the ability to shape consumer opinions and behaviors through the content they share on digital platforms. In practice, language plays a crucial role in building audience trust and engagement. English for social media is often used by influencers as it allows them to reach international audiences and create a more professional global image. Influencers typically use an authentic, personal, and relatable communication style, making promotional messages appear more natural compared to traditional advertising. Storytelling, personal experiences, and emotional language can enhance consumer trust in product recommendations provided by influencers. Research indicates that linguistic features such as tone, communication style, and persuasive language significantly influence engagement levels and the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns (Ashaye et.al., 2023; Oliveira et.al, 2022; Feng, Chang & Sun, 2023; Migkos,

Giannakopoulos & Sakas, 2025). Furthermore, authenticity, transparency, and ethical communication are key factors in building long-term relationships between influencers and audiences (Khalfallah & Keller, 2025). Therefore, appropriate use of English for social media in influencer marketing not only expands market reach but also strengthens emotional connections between brands and consumers.

Strategic Language Use in Social Media Marketing

In highly competitive digital environments, language use in social media functions not only as a communication tool but also as a strategic marketing instrument. English for social media is used to build brand identity, create emotional connections with audiences, and enhance the effectiveness of promotional messages. The language used in social media tends to be persuasive, communicative, and easily understandable, enabling it to reach diverse consumer groups across cultural backgrounds.

One important element in social media language strategy is tone of voice, which reflects the brand's communication personality. Some brands adopt a formal and professional tone, while others use casual and humorous styles to build closeness with consumers. In English for social media, word choice, sentence structure, and the use of informal expressions such as slang or idioms influence audience perception of the brand. Another key element is the use of effective call-to-action (CTA). Phrases such as "Discover more," "Shop now," "Join our community," or "Share your experience" are commonly used to encourage audience participation. Research shows that appropriate language use significantly increases consumer responses and engagement in digital marketing communication (Liu et.al., 2025). Thus, English for social media is a critical component of digital marketing strategy because language not

only delivers information but also influences consumer behavior.

Personalization and Data-Driven Communication in AI Marketing

One of the key advantages of artificial intelligence in digital marketing is its ability to enable personalized and data-driven communication. AI allows companies to analyze consumer preferences, interaction history, and user behavior patterns on social media. This information is then used to generate more relevant marketing content tailored to audience needs. In the context of English for social media, AI technologies such as Natural Language Generation (NLG) and Large Language Models (LLMs) can automatically produce marketing texts, including social media captions, product descriptions, and personalized promotional messages. This enables companies to produce large-scale content while maintaining communication quality. AI is also used for sentiment analysis of consumer comments and reviews on social media. This analysis helps organizations understand whether public responses to a marketing campaign are positive, negative, or neutral, enabling them to adjust communication strategies accordingly (Rajan, 2024). Recent studies also show that generative AI enhances marketing communication effectiveness by producing more creative and adaptive content aligned with digital trends (Dar & Gul; 2025). This highlights the importance of integrating AI and English for social media in modern marketing strategies.

Content Strategy and Storytelling in Social Media Communication

Content strategy is a crucial aspect of digital marketing aimed at creating relevant, engaging, and valuable messages for audiences. Many companies use storytelling approaches to

deliver marketing messages in a more emotional and persuasive manner. Storytelling enables brands to build narratives that connect products with consumer experiences or values. English for social media plays a key role in storytelling as it must clearly and attractively convey narratives. Effective storytelling typically uses simple yet emotionally strong language that is easy for audiences to understand and remember.

In addition, visual content such as images, videos, and infographics is often combined with English text to strengthen message delivery. This approach, known as visual storytelling, integrates visual and textual elements to enhance content attractiveness. Research shows that interactive visual narratives significantly increase audience engagement on social media platforms (Liu et al., 2025; Mishra & Baldus, 2022). Thus, effective content strategy in digital marketing depends not only on visual quality but also on the ability to use appropriate language to deliver messages effectively.

Ethical Communication and Trust in Influencer Marketing

In influencer marketing, trust is a critical factor determining campaign success. Influencers perceived as authentic, honest, and transparent tend to have higher levels of audience trust. Therefore, the language used by influencers must reflect credibility and ethical communication.

English for social media allows influencers to reach global audiences more effectively. However, overly promotional or exaggerated language may reduce perceived authenticity. As a result, many influencers adopt a more natural and personal communication style when promoting products. Research shows that authenticity, transparency, and ethical communication significantly influence consumer trust in influencer marketing (Khalfallah & Keller, 2025). Moreover, linguistic style also affects engagement levels and marketing effectiveness (Ashaye

et.al., 2023; Oliveira et.al, 2022). Thus, the use of English for social media in influencer marketing must consider ethical communication principles to maintain sustainable relationships between brands, influencers, and consumers.

Tabel 5.1. Digital Marketing & English for Social Media

No	Topic	Main Focus	Key Concepts	Findings / Implications
1	Digital Marketing & English for Social Media	The role of English in digital marketing communication	Persuasive language, CTA, engagement, storytelling	English enhances global reach and marketing communication effectiveness
2	AI Marketing & English for Social Media	Integration of AI in promotional content creation	NLP, generative AI, sentiment analysis, big data	AI improves content personalization and marketing efficiency
3	Social Media Engagement	User interaction with digital content	Likes, comments, shares, emojis, hashtags	Appropriate language increases engagement and audience loyalty
4	Influencer Marketing	Influencer-based promotion strategy	Authenticity, storytelling, personal branding	Emotional and authentic language builds consumer trust
5	Strategic Language Use	Language strategy in social media communication	Tone of voice, CTA, informal language	Language shapes brand perception and consumer decision-making

No	Topic	Main Focus	Key Concepts	Findings / Implications
6	Personalization & AI Communication	Data-driven and AI-based communication	NLG, LLM, personalization, sentiment analysis	Content becomes more relevant, personalized, and user-oriented
7	Content Strategy & Storytelling	Digital content strategy	Storytelling, visual content, emotional narrative	Storytelling enhances engagement and brand recall
8	Ethical Communication & Trust	Ethical aspects in influencer communication	Authenticity, transparency, trust	Ethical language strengthens credibility and long-term loyalty
9	Extended Conclusion	Integration of all concepts	AI + social media + English + digital marketing	English serves as a strategic tool in the modern digital marketing ecosystem

Source: Putri Ana Nurani, 2026

CONCLUSION

English for Social Media Promotion is an essential competency in the era of digital communication and globalization. The use of English in social media promotion enables organizations, companies, and individuals to reach broader audiences, as English functions as an international language in business and marketing communication. In the context of digital marketing, language serves not only as a medium of information delivery but also as a strategic tool for building brand image, enhancing audience engagement, and

encouraging consumer actions. The discussion of English for Social Media Promotion shows that the use of English in digital promotion requires a different approach compared to formal communication. The language used must be short, clear, persuasive, and attention-grabbing due to the fast-paced and interactive nature of social media communication. In addition, promotional content should be creatively designed by utilizing various elements such as engaging headlines, storytelling techniques, strong visuals, and effective calls to action.

The success of social media promotion is also influenced by the ability to adapt language to the characteristics of digital platforms used. Each platform, such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, or LinkedIn, has different communication styles; therefore, English usage strategies must be adjusted to audience behavior and preferences on each platform. Furthermore, understanding digital trends and the use of relevant hashtags can help increase the visibility of promotional content on social media. However, the use of English in social media promotion also faces several challenges, such as differences in global audience language proficiency, cultural communication differences, and intense digital content competition. Therefore, digital marketing practitioners must understand cross-cultural communication principles and avoid common mistakes such as overly complex language or contextually inappropriate expressions. Overall, English for Social Media Promotion is a combination of English language competence, digital communication creativity, and effective marketing strategy. By mastering these skills, organizations and individuals can enhance promotional effectiveness on social media, expand international market reach, and build stronger relationships with global audiences in an increasingly competitive digital economy.

The development of digital technology has transformed the way companies communicate with consumers. Digital marketing is no longer solely focused on product promotion but also on creating interactive and personalized communication experiences. In this context, the integration of AI marketing, social media engagement, influencer marketing, and English for social media plays a crucial role in enhancing digital marketing effectiveness. English for Social Media functions as a global communication tool that enables companies to reach international audiences while building emotional connections with consumers. The appropriate use of language, combined with AI technologies and creative content strategies, can significantly enhance audience engagement and strengthen brand image in the digital economy era.

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CHAPTER 6

COMMUNICATING WITH GLOBAL CUSTOMERS

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INTRODUCTION

The defining characteristic of the contemporary digital economy is the systematic dismantling of geographical and logistical borders. Historically, international trade was the exclusive domain of large multinational corporations equipped with the capital to establish overseas physical offices, hire local interpreters, and navigate complex cross-border regulations. Today, the democratization of digital technology has fundamentally altered this paradigm. A local enterprise—whether it is an independent digital marketing agency, an e-commerce brand selling through international marketplaces, or a freelance software developer—can establish a global footprint almost instantaneously.

In this borderless digital ecosystem, the definition of the "international customer" has radically expanded. They are no longer just corporate B2B procurement officers acting on behalf of conglomerates; they are individual retail consumers, startup founders, and global collaborators spanning every time zone. However, while digital platforms provide the technological infrastructure to reach these diverse audiences, the ultimate bridge that connects businesses to their international customers remains linguistic. English has firmly cemented its position as the *lingua franca* of digital commerce.

THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL COMMERCE AND COMMUNICATION

As commerce shifted from physical boardrooms to digital interfaces, the nature of business communication transformed. In traditional business, interactions were often synchronous and rich in context—parties could rely on body language, tone of voice, and physical documents to negotiate meaning. Digital business, however, is heavily text-reliant and frequently asynchronous. Emails, live chat portals, social media direct messages, and project management dashboards have become the primary arenas for international trade. This shift places an unprecedented burden on the written word. A single ambiguous sentence in an email can now halt a supply chain or terminate a software subscription. Consequently, digital professionals must approach written communication not merely as a way to share information, but as a strategic tool for risk management and relationship building (Tigre et al., 2023).

THE SHIFT TO BUSINESS ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (BELF)

To effectively communicate in this high-stakes environment, it is crucial to understand the concept of Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF). Traditional English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction often focuses on mimicking "native-like" accuracy, emphasizing complex grammar and the cultural nuances of inner-circle countries like the United States or the United Kingdom. BELF, however, operates on a completely different premise.

Recent scholarship defines BELF not as a traditional language tied to a specific culture, but as a shared, neutral communication code utilized primarily between non-native speakers to achieve specific business objectives (Chowdhury et al., 2018). In the digital marketplace, an Indonesian seller and a

Brazilian buyer do not use English to express American or British cultural identity; they use it purely as a transactional tool. Therefore, in BELF, communicative efficiency, mutual understanding, and the ability to negotiate meaning are prioritized over grammatical perfection (Nickerson & Camiciottoli, 2013).

THE DUAL CHALLENGE FOR DIGITAL PROFESSIONALS

Despite the use of a shared language, a common misconception persists in digital business: the belief that linguistic proficiency automatically guarantees successful communication. In reality, speaking the same words does not equate to sharing the same meaning. Research into online business interactions reveals that practitioners frequently encounter friction not because of poor grammar, but because of clashing cultural expectations regarding how business should be conducted (Wahyuningsih & Untsa, 2023).

Therefore, to communicate effectively with a global customer base, digital business professionals must master a dual challenge:

1. **Cultural Awareness:** Understanding the hidden frameworks of how different societies perceive politeness, urgency, hierarchy, and relationship-building.
2. **Linguistic Clarity:** Constructing messages that are universally accessible, devoid of localized slang, and structurally optimized for digital screens.

This chapter explores these two foundational pillars. By integrating cultural empathy with strategic linguistic clarity, professionals can mitigate the risk of costly miscommunications and build enduring trust with an international digital clientele.

PILLAR 1: CULTURAL AWARENESS IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

When professionals interact with international customers through digital channels, they are forced to navigate diverse cultural landscapes without the benefit of face-to-face social cues. To prevent communication breakdowns, digital professionals must understand two prominent theoretical frameworks: Edward T. Hall's concept of Context and Geert Hofstede's Power Distance Index.

High-Context VS. Low-Context Communication

One of the most critical frameworks for understanding cross-cultural communication is Edward T. Hall's spectrum of high and low-context cultures.

- **Low-Context Cultures:** In cultures such as the United States, Germany, and Australia, communication is explicitly coded in words. The responsibility for accurate communication lies primarily with the sender, who is expected to be direct, transparent, and concise. In digital communication, a low-context customer expects emails to get straight to the point, clearly outlining deliverables, prices, and deadlines without excessive preamble.
- **High-Context Cultures:** Conversely, in cultures such as Indonesia, Japan, and the Middle East, a significant portion of the message's meaning is embedded in the context—the relationship between the speakers, the social setting, and what is left *unsaid*. Communication relies heavily on implicit signals to maintain group harmony and "save face" (Yang, 2016).

When these two styles collide in a digital medium, friction often occurs. A low-context customer might send an email stating, *"The current website design is unacceptable. Fix the*

navigation menu by tomorrow." To a high-context professional, this bluntness may be interpreted as aggressive. Conversely, if a high-context professional responds with, *"We will try our best to look into this matter when we have time,"* the low-context customer may perceive them as evasive or unreliable.

Formality, Hierarchy, and Power Distance

Geert Hofstede's concept of Power Distance—the extent to which less powerful members of organizations accept that power is distributed unequally—also heavily influences digital etiquette. In low power-distance cultures (e.g., Scandinavia, New Zealand), business hierarchies are relatively flat. Professionalism is demonstrated through competence and speed rather than formal deference. In high power-distance cultures (e.g., South Korea, Latin America, and much of Southeast Asia), titles, status, and formal respect are paramount. Failing to recognize a client's status in a digital interaction can cause immediate offense and terminate a potential contract.

Comprehensive Case Study: The "Direct VS. Polite" Dilemma

Consider the following case study of a cross-cultural communication breakdown:

- **The Scenario:** *Nusantara Creative*, an independent digital design agency based in East Java, Indonesia, recently secured a lucrative contract with *Apex Solutions*, a tech startup based in Chicago, USA.
- **The Incident:** The American project manager (Low-Context, Low Power-Distance) sent the following email: *"Hi team. The wireframes you uploaded yesterday are missing the payment gateway integration. I need the revised wireframes in my inbox by 9:00 AM EST tomorrow, or we will have to push back the launch."*

- The Reaction: The Indonesian team lead (High-Context, High Power-Distance) felt the email was confrontational. Knowing the deadline was impossible, but wanting to remain polite, the team lead replied: *"Dear Sir. Thank you for your feedback. The payment gateway is a very complex feature. We will work very hard tonight and try our absolute best to see what we can do for you."*
- The Breakdown: The American manager assumed "we will try our best" meant the team had accepted the task and would deliver by 9:00 AM. When the deadline passed, the American manager was furious. The Indonesian team, meanwhile, felt they had clearly signaled that the deadline was impossible by mentioning the complexity and only committing to "try," expecting the client to read between the lines.
- The Resolution Strategy: This breakdown could have been avoided with cultural awareness. The Indonesian team needed to recognize that the American client's bluntness was a cultural standard of efficiency. A "Politely Direct" strategy would bridge the gap: *"Hi [Client Name], thank you for the feedback. Because integrating this feature requires an additional 12 hours of coding, we cannot meet the 9:00 AM deadline tomorrow. However, we can deliver by 2:00 PM EST on Thursday."*

PILLAR 2: STRATEGIES FOR LINGUISTIC CLARITY

While cultural awareness provides the strategic framework for understanding *how* a global customer might react, linguistic clarity governs the actual construction of the message. In the fast-paced digital economy, attention spans are highly fragmented. Reducing the reader's cognitive load is paramount.

The "Global English" Paradigm and Lexical Simplification

The cornerstone of linguistic clarity in international digital commerce is "Global English" (often associated with the Plain English movement). This paradigm advocates for language designed to be understood by the target audience the first time they read it (Loughran & McDonald, 2014).

- **Eliminating Idioms and Culturally Bound Metaphors:** Native English speakers frequently rely on idioms (e.g., "touch base," "get the ball rolling") or sports metaphors. These expressions are deeply embedded in specific cultural histories and rarely translate accurately. Instead of writing, *"Our new SaaS platform will give you a lot of bang for your buck,"* a Global English approach dictates literal clarity: *"Our new software provides excellent value for your investment."*
- **Minimizing Phrasal Verbs:** Phrasal verbs (e.g., "look into," "put off") are notorious stumbling blocks for global audiences. Digital professionals should replace them with single-word equivalents. Replacing *"We need to put off the meeting"* with *"We need to postpone the meeting"* immediately increases clarity.

Syntactic Strategies for Digital Processing

The grammatical structure of a sentence directly impacts how quickly it can be processed on a digital screen. The active voice ("Subject + Verb + Object") makes digital communication more direct, dynamic, and unambiguous. *"Our finance team will process your refund"* (Active) is significantly clearer than *"Your refund will be processed by our team"* (Passive).

Visual Readability and Digital Formatting

Implementing visual clarity strategies helps global readers navigate the message efficiently:

- **Chunking:** Breaking long paragraphs into short chunks of no more than three to four sentences.
- **Strategic Typography:** Using bold text exclusively to draw the eye to critical transactional data, such as dates, pricing, deadlines, or action items.
- **Signposting:** Utilizing clear, universally understood transitional markers (e.g., *First, Furthermore, However*) to guide the reader logically.

FORMULATING THE RIGHT STRATEGY: PROFILING AND ADAPTATION

Mastering cultural theories and Global English is only the first step. Success relies on rapid strategy formulation based on available digital cues, followed by precise tone adaptation.

Digital Audience Profiling

In modern B2B and B2C digital interactions, profiling must occur in real-time. Digital professionals must analyze a customer's digital footprint to gauge their cultural context. The email domain extension (e.g., .co.jp for Japan, .de for Germany) offers an immediate cultural starting point. Furthermore, assessing whether the customer's initial message uses complex, native-like syntax or is written in a highly simplified manner allows the professional to adjust their own linguistic complexity.

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) in Digital Business

Once the audience is profiled, the professional must adapt their tone. This process is best understood through Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), a sociolinguistic framework which posits that individuals adjust their communication styles to gain approval or increase communication efficiency with their interlocutor (Giles, 2016).

- **Convergence:** This involves adapting one's communication style to become more similar to that of the customer. If a professional receives an email from a traditional Japanese corporate buyer that uses highly formal, indirect language, the professional should *converge* by responding with a highly formal tone and utilizing appropriate titles.
- **Divergence (or Maintenance):** Sometimes, maintaining one's own professional standard is necessary, but the *tone* must still be consciously calibrated. If an inquiry comes from an Australian tech startup founder who writes, "*Hey team, love the product, can we jump on a quick Zoom tomorrow?*", responding with a highly formal, traditional corporate letter would create awkward distance. Instead, the professional should adopt a "Professional yet Casual" tone to build rapid rapport.

Navigating Global Miscommunications in Digital Business

Despite the most meticulous application of cultural profiling and Global English, miscommunications remain an inevitable reality in international digital business. In the context of BELF, the statistical probability of a semantic or pragmatic breakdown is high. A digital professional's competence is therefore measured by their mastery of "interactional repair."

THE DANGER OF THE "LET-IT-PASS" PHENOMENON

One of the most pervasive threats to international digital commerce is the "let-it-pass" phenomenon. Sociolinguistic research indicates that when non-native English speakers encounter an ambiguous phrase, their default reaction is often to ignore it, hoping the meaning will become clear from the context later. Because professionals from high-context cultures place a high premium on "saving face," they are particularly

susceptible to this phenomenon, fearing that asking for clarification will make them look unprofessional.

MEANING NEGOTIATION AND SYNTACTIC MITIGATION

When a breakdown is identified—often signaled by response latency or a sudden register shift from the client—the immediate response must be "meaning negotiation" (Franceschi, 2019). The golden rule in digital business is to *never* assign blame to the client for the misunderstanding.

To achieve this, digital professionals must use Syntactic Mitigation, softening the impact of a statement using specific grammatical structures (modal verbs, passive voice) to remove direct accusation.

- The Wrong Approach: *"I don't understand what you mean. Your English is confusing."*
- The Right Approach (Syntactically Mitigated): *"Thank you for your interest. To ensure I provide you with the exact specifications you need, could you kindly elaborate on the dimensions mentioned? Just to make sure we are completely aligned, are you referring to the wholesale packaging?"*

CULTURALLY AWARE APOLOGIES AND SERVICE RECOVERY

When a service failure occurs, an apology is mandatory. However, the pragmatic function of an apology varies globally. In low-context cultures (e.g., the United States), corporate apologies tend to be emotionally detached and focused on restitution. Conversely, in high-context, collectivist cultures (e.g., Japan, South Korea, Indonesia), an apology is an expression of deep empathy and respect for disrupting the client's harmony (Wibowo & Ekowati, 2023; Bataineh & Bataineh, 2008).

- To a U.S. Client (Low-Context): *"We experienced an outage due to infrastructure failure. We apologize for the disruption. To compensate, we have credited your account 5%."* (Focus: Speed, factual cause, immediate financial restitution).
- To a Japanese Client (High-Context): *"Esteemed [Client Name], we are writing to express our deepest apologies for the outage. We understand this caused significant inconvenience to your esteemed operations. Please be assured our team is dedicated to restoring your trust."* (Focus: Deep empathy, prioritizing the restoration of trust before discussing compensation).

CONCLUSION

The technological ability to reach a global audience does not automatically equate to the communicative competence required to engage them successfully. Operating in the modern digital marketplace requires professionals to transition their understanding of the English language from a traditional, native-centric standard into a dynamic, strategic tool for international commerce—Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF).

Successful communication rests on the mastery of two interdependent pillars. First, cultural awareness allows professionals to navigate the hidden frameworks of international interaction, anticipating how different clients perceive directness, hierarchy, and relationship-building. Second, linguistic clarity ensures the message itself is universally accessible by deploying "Global English" to reduce cognitive load. By dynamically adapting tone through audience profiling and mastering the art of interactional repair—combating the let-it-pass phenomenon and delivering culturally calibrated apologies—digital professionals can secure long-term international trust.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS: AI AND THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

As digital business evolves, communication is increasingly mediated by Artificial Intelligence and machine translation. This raises a critical question: if software can instantly translate texts, are linguistic clarity and cultural awareness still necessary?

Current research suggests that while AI excels at literal translation, it significantly struggles with pragmatic meaning and high-context cultural nuances. Machine translation often fails to interpret tone or the implicit face-saving strategies required in high power-distance cultures (Tigre et al., 2023). Therefore, the future of global digital communication relies heavily on Cultural Intelligence (CQ). The competitive advantage for digital professionals will lie in managing the "human element"—interpreting cues that AI misses, adapting tone to build empathy, and negotiating meaning when algorithmic translations fail. In this automated environment, professionals who master the structural clarity of Global English and the deep empathy of cultural awareness will remain indispensable.

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CHAPTER 7

ENGLISH FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE CHAT

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INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving digital business landscape, interactions between companies and customers are increasingly shifting to text-based platforms, particularly *live chat* and instant messaging apps. These channels offer speed, efficiency, and convenience for customers, while also presenting new challenges for businesses in delivering effective communication. English, as the lingua franca of the digital world, plays a crucial role in ensuring messages are widely understood by customers from diverse backgrounds. Customer service chat isn't just a tool for answering questions; it's also a direct reflection of a brand's identity and professionalism. A company's response, choice of words, and structure of sentences can influence customers' perceptions of service quality. Therefore, using appropriate, polite, and responsive language is key to creating a positive customer experience and building long-term loyalty.

This chapter will examine in depth how English is used in the context of customer service chat, emphasizing three key aspects: responsiveness, politeness, and problem-solving skills. By understanding these principles, readers are expected to develop communication skills that are not only effective but also capable of fostering better relationships with customers in the digital age.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE CHAT

Unlike formal communication like email, customer service chat is faster, more direct, and more interactive. This communication occurs in real time, so customers expect an instant response without the long wait times associated with email or call centers (Misischia et al., 2022).

However, speed in customer service chat should not sacrifice clarity and politeness. Text-based interactions are often prone to miscommunication due to the absence of non-verbal expressions. Research by Ozuem et al (2024). Shows that communication failures, such as ignored or misunderstood messages, can trigger customer frustration and even aggression, negatively impacting brand loyalty. Therefore, the use of English in this context must be carefully designed to remain clear, empathetic, and easy to understand, while maintaining a positive customer experience.

To achieve effective communication, the language used in customer service chat must meet three main aspects: responsiveness, politeness, and problem-solving. Responsiveness relates to the system or agent's ability to provide quick and relevant answers, which has been proven to improve the customer experience (Yang et al., 2020). Politeness relates to how messages are delivered in a friendly and professional manner, which is important for managing customer emotions, especially in complaint situations. Meanwhile, problem-solving emphasizes the primary function of customer service, which is to provide appropriate and actionable solutions. Furthermore, in practice, customer service chat uses a semi-formal style. This means the language used isn't as rigid as business emails, but still maintains professionalism (Prentice et al., 2022). This flexibility is key to creating a more natural, interactive, and satisfying customer experience. Therefore, the key characteristic of customer service chat lies not only in speed, but also in the

balance between communication efficiency, interaction quality, and the ability to resolve issues effectively (Kapadan & Khanna, 2024).

RESPONSIVENESS: SPEED AND CLARITY

In the digital world, customers expect a quick response as part of their service. Modern service standards. Response speed not only improves operational efficiency but also directly impacts perceived service quality. Research shows that responsiveness, defined as the ability to respond to customer needs quickly and accurately, has a positive and significant impact on perceived service quality and customer satisfaction (Nafisah et al., 2024). This confirms that response speed is a fundamental element in chat-based customer service.

However, speed alone is not enough. Responses must also be clear and easy to understand. In text-based communication, limited non-verbal cues can lead to ambiguous messages and potentially lead to miscommunication. Studies in digital communication show that the lack of non-verbal elements in chat increases the risk of misunderstanding, so messages must be structured explicitly and clearly (An et al., 2025). Furthermore, communication practices in chat services emphasize the importance of using polite, structured, and customer-oriented language to build good relationships and enhance the user experience (Hui et al., 2025). Example response like:

"Hi! Thank you for reaching out. Let me check that for you right away."

demonstrates a balance between speed and clarity. This sentence is not only quick, but also reflects three important elements of service communication: a friendly greeting,

appreciation for the customer, and an indication of immediate action. Instead, responses like:

“Wait.”

While fast, they tend to be perceived as unprofessional because they don't provide context, show empathy, and can degrade the customer experience. This aligns with findings that communication quality, not just speed, is a key factor in customer evaluations of digital services (Graham et al., 2025). Furthermore, research shows that speed and ease of access are key drivers of customer satisfaction. Therefore, there are several key principles for implementing effective responsiveness in customer service chat (Ngo et al., 2025). First, use short, direct, and informative sentences so customers can quickly understand the message. Second, avoid using technical jargon that can confuse customers, especially non-technical users. Third, if an issue takes longer to resolve, provide regular updates to maintain transparency and customer trust.(Barrett & Pagotto, 2025).

Thus, responsiveness in customer service chat isn't just about responding quickly, but also about conveying messages clearly, politely, and focusing on customer needs. This combination of speed and clarity is key to creating effective customer service in the digital age.

POLITENESS: BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Politeness in customer service communication is not simply a matter of language choice, but rather a crucial strategy for building positive relationships with customers. In chat-based communication, the use of *verbal cues* such as polite words, indirect requests, and expressions of empathy can influence customer perceptions of service agents, particularly regarding warmth and competence (Huang et al., 2021). This suggests that

polite language is not only ethical but also directly impacts how customers perceive service quality. Example expression polite:

"I'm sorry for the inconvenience."

"Could you please provide more details?"

"Thank you for your patience."

Use of words like *please*, *could*, and *thank you* functioning as helpful relational *language* create more interaction humane and friendly. In context digital services (webcare), practice communication like request sorry, expression accept love, and polite response is part from strategy to build trust, loyalty, and relationships term long with customer (Lutzky, 2026).

In addition, research show that quality connection between companies and customers depend heavily on how communication done, not only on content message That yourself. Polite and empathetic communication can improve the customer experience and strengthen customer identification with the brand or service (Lee & Li, 2023). Conversely, using impolite or overly direct language can give the impression of being cold and uncaring. Therefore, some things to avoid in customer service communications include: a tone that blames the customer, answers that are too short and lack empathy, the use of stiff or unfriendly language, and the like. Thus, politeness becomes an important element in creating a positive service experience and building long-term relationships with customers.

PROBLEM-SOLVING: FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

The primary goal of customer service is to effectively resolve customer issues. Therefore, the language used should demonstrate a solution-oriented approach and the ability to handle issues professionally. Research shows that prompt and effective problem resolution directly contributes to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bonechi et al., 2024). In

practice, problem-solving in customer service usually follows a certain communication structure, namely:

1. Confess problem
2. Show empathy
3. Provide concrete solutions or actions

Example:

"I understand your concern about the delayed delivery. Let me check the status and arrange a solution for you."

Sentence This effective Because:

- Confess problem customer (*I understand your concern*)
- Show empathy
- Offer action concrete (*let me check and arrange a solution*)

In addition, in context modern services, analysis to conversation customer show that understand need customers and provide the right solution is factor main in increase satisfaction and quality service in a way overall. This is confirmed that problem-solving is not only about give answers, but also about understand context and provide appropriate solution (Haleem et al., 2024).

Therefore that, in to implement effective problem-solving, customer service needs to use clear and user - oriented language actions, besides That importance give specific solutions, not general. And keep communication empathetic and professional (Wang & Chen, 2026). By combining empathy and concrete solutions, customer service can create a more positive customer experience while increasing trust in the service provided.

LANGUAGE STRATEGIES IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

In some cases, customer service representatives must deal with angry, frustrated, or disappointed customers due to service

failures. In such situations, language skills become crucial, as communication can determine whether the conflict resolves or escalates. Research shows that in online service interactions, the use of appropriate language, especially that which is empathetic and personal, is part of a *politeness strategy* that plays an important role in maintaining relationships between companies and customers (Creelman, 2022). Strategies that can be used include remaining calm and professional, using neutral language to avoid confrontation. Most importantly, explicitly demonstrate empathy and focus on solving the problem.

Example:

"I understand how frustrating this situation must be. Let's work together to resolve it."

Approach This effective Because:

- Confess emotion customer
- Use non-blaming language
- Invite customer Work The same

In the context of modern service delivery, service failures *often* occur not only due to technical errors but also due to communication failures, such as when customers feel misunderstood or emotionally neglected (Song et al., 2026). Therefore, the use of empathetic language is key to the service recovery process. Furthermore, customers have expectations not only for functional solutions but also for emotional support when facing problems. This is known as emotional service recovery expectation, which is the customer's expectation to feel understood and reassured during the problem-solving process (Lu et al., 2024). Research on service interactions shows that the quality of the customer experience is significantly influenced by how communication is conducted during critical moments

(moments of truth), when customers interact directly with service providers. In these moments, the right language can create a positive impression even in challenging situations (Doan et al., 2023). With Thus, language strategy in situation difficult No only functioning for respond complaints, but also for lower tension emotional customers, building return trust and direction conversation going to solution.

CONSISTENCY AND BRAND VOICE

Every digital business has a distinct brand voice, reflecting its identity, values, and communication strategy. Some brands use a formal style to demonstrate professionalism, while others choose a casual style to foster a closer relationship with customers (Lutzky, 2026). However, in the context of customer service chat, consistency in language use is crucial. Example:

Professional brand:

“We appreciate your inquiry and will assist you shortly.”

Casual brand:

"Hey there! We've got you covered 😊"

Both of them right, as long as in accordance with brand identity that is built. Research show that in practice webcare, company using different language strategies depending on the purpose communication, such as service customers, marketing, or management connection customers. This is means that brand voice No only question style language, but also part from a more comprehensive communication strategy wide.

In addition, the use of *conversational human voice* that is style language that feels natural, friendly, and human proven can help build deeper relationship strong between brand and customer. Elements like personalization messages, politeness,

and use friendly expressions (including emojis) contribute in create experience positive communication (Creelman, 2022). Chat that delivers consistent, personalized responses that align with brand identity will increase customer satisfaction and strengthen long-term relationships (Ngo et al., 2025). Conversely, inconsistencies in communication style can cause confusion and erode customer trust.

CONCLUSION

Use Language English in customer service chat not only question ability linguistics, but also a part from an integrated communication strategy in digital business. Responsiveness, courtesy, and a focus on solutions is three main pillars that must be controlled by each customer service practitioner. Research shows that communication in digital services plays a crucial role in building relationships between companies and customers. Interactions conducted through webcare are not only aimed at resolving issues but also at building reputation, increasing loyalty, and strengthening long-term relationships with customers. In other words, every conversation has strategic value in a business context.

Furthermore, communication quality, including message clarity, empathy, and consistency, directly contributes to customer satisfaction and continued use of digital services, including chatbots. This confirms that language is not just a communication tool, but also a determining factor in the customer experience. In the digital business era, every interaction with a customer is a direct reflection of the brand. Therefore, effective, consistent, and customer-centric communication can be a significant competitive advantage. Companies that manage communications strategically will not only increase customer satisfaction but also strengthen their position in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

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CHAPTER 8

PRESENTING BUSINESS IDEAS IN ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

A business idea presentation is the process of explaining a business concept to an audience in a structured, clear, and persuasive way. It aims not only to introduce an idea but also to highlight its value and convince others, such as investors, partners, or customers, that the idea is worth supporting (van Werven et al., 2019). Presenting ideas is a crucial step in transforming a concept into real action, because even the most innovative idea will remain only a concept if it cannot be communicated effectively. In the context of digital business, where competition is intense and attention spans are limited, ideas must be delivered clearly and convincingly so they can stand out and create meaningful impact.

English plays a crucial role in presenting business ideas, as it is widely recognized as the main language for communicating with global audiences. It is commonly used when pitching ideas to international investors, business partners, customers, and even online communities across digital platforms (Tan, 2024). Using English allows presenters to reach a broader audience and increases the chances of their ideas being understood and accepted beyond local markets. Moreover, the ability to present ideas in clear and accurate English helps build a professional image and enhances credibility, making the presenter appear more confident, competent, and trustworthy in the eyes of stakeholders.

In today's business environment, presentations are shaped by rapid digital transformation, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI), data-driven decision-making, hybrid meetings, and remote pitching (Giuggioli et al., 2025). Business ideas are often delivered through digital platforms, where presenters must not only speak effectively but also use visuals, data, and technology to support their message (Franconeri et al., 2021). This means that strong language skills alone are no longer enough; presenters are expected to combine clear English communication with engaging visual content and digital tools. As a result, successful presenters must demonstrate clarity in their message, confidence in their delivery, and strategic communication skills to effectively persuade and connect with diverse audiences.

This chapter aims to equip students with the essential skills needed to present business ideas effectively in English. It introduces the structure of a well-organized presentation, along with useful expressions that help speakers communicate their ideas clearly and professionally. In addition, students will learn how to use visual support, such as slides and data, to strengthen their message and engage the audience. The chapter also covers strategies for handling questions and responses during a presentation. By the end of this chapter, students are expected to be able to present business ideas persuasively and confidently in English.

WHAT IS A BUSINESS IDEA PRESENTATION?

A business idea presentation is a structured and clear explanation of a business concept delivered to a specific audience (Srivastava et al., 2023). It is typically presented to potential investors, business partners, or customers who may have an interest in the idea. This type of presentation goes beyond simply describing what the business is about. It also

aims to communicate the value and potential impact of the idea. In most cases, a business idea presentation combines spoken English with visual support, such as slides, charts, or images, to make the message more engaging and easier to understand.

The purpose of a business idea presentation goes beyond simply sharing information. First, it aims to inform the audience by providing a clear understanding of the business concept, including what it is and how it works. Second, it seeks to persuade the audience that the idea is valuable and worth considering. Third, it is designed to attract support, such as investment, partnerships, or potential users (Sort & Nielsen, 2018). In practice, a single presentation often combines all of these purposes rather than focusing on just one. Therefore, the success of a business idea presentation is not only determined by how well the idea is explained, but also by how the audience responds, including their interest, engagement, and willingness to take action.

There is a clear difference between explaining an idea and pitching an idea, although both are important in business communication. Explaining focuses on clarity and information, aiming to help the audience fully understand the concept in a detailed and neutral way. In contrast, pitching emphasizes persuasion and impact, with the goal of convincing the audience to support or invest in the idea. A pitch is usually shorter, more concise, and often includes emotional appeal to capture attention quickly. Meanwhile, explaining tends to be more detailed and objective. In real business situations, however, these two approaches are often combined, as presenters need to both explain their ideas clearly and persuade the audience at the same time.

WHY ENGLISH IS IMPORTANT IN PRESENTING BUSINESS IDEAS?

English is widely recognized as the main language of global business communication (Alneyadi et al., 2023). It is used across various sectors, including startups, corporate organizations, e-commerce, and digital platforms, where interactions often involve people from different countries. As a common language for cross-border communication, English allows individuals and companies to connect, collaborate, and share ideas more effectively. The use of English in business idea presentations helps expand the reach of an audience, making it possible for ideas to be understood and appreciated on an international scale.

English is essential when pitching business ideas to international audiences. Presenters often communicate with investors, business partners, and global customers who come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Using English enables the idea to be understood more easily across different contexts, reducing barriers in communication (Ye, 2024). As a result, it helps create opportunities for collaboration, investment, and business expansion in the global market. The use of English in business idea presentations reflects a high level of professionalism and competence. It helps build credibility and trust, especially when communicating with international stakeholders who expect clear and standardized communication. English also plays a crucial role in cross-border communication, as it serves as a common medium among people from different cultural backgrounds. By using English effectively, presenters can reduce the risk of misunderstanding and ensure that their message is delivered accurately. Moreover, the ability to communicate in English signals that a business is prepared to enter and compete in the international market.

THE STRUCTURE OF AN EFFECTIVE BUSINESS PITCH

The opening, or hook, is the first part of a business pitch and plays a crucial role in setting the tone of the presentation. Its main purpose is to capture the audience's attention and create interest from the very beginning. An effective opening can take the form of a thought-provoking question, an interesting fact, or a strong and impactful statement related to the topic. It should be brief, clear, and directly relevant to the business idea being presented. A well-delivered opening help create a strong first impression, which can influence how the audience perceives the rest of the presentation.

The problem statement explains the specific issue that the business idea aims to solve (Kawasaki, 2015). It should be clearly defined and directly relevant to the target audience so that they can easily relate to it. To strengthen the message, the problem can be supported by data, statistics, or real-life examples that illustrate its impact. An effective problem statement also highlights the urgency or importance of the issue, helping the audience understand why it needs immediate attention (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). By presenting the problem in a clear and compelling way, the presenter can make the audience feel that a solution is necessary.

The proposed solution presents the idea or approach designed to address the problem previously identified (Kawasaki, 2015). It should be clearly connected to the problem, showing how the solution directly responds to the needs or challenges discussed earlier. In this section, the presenter needs to explain how the solution works in a simple and logical way so that the audience can easily understand it. It is also important to highlight the uniqueness or key advantages of the solution compared to existing alternatives (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). Overall, the explanation should be clear, concise, and

easy to follow to ensure the audience can quickly grasp its value.

The target market and value proposition section explains who the intended users or customers are and why the solution matters to them (Kawasaki, 2015). The presenter should clearly identify the market segment, such as specific demographics, needs, or behaviors, to show that the idea is focused and relevant (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). In addition, this section outlines the value proposition, which is the main benefit or unique value offered by the solution. It should also explain why the proposed solution is better than existing alternatives, emphasizing its advantages and strengths. Overall, the focus should remain on the benefits for users and how the solution improves their experience or solves their problem effectively.

The business model and benefits section explains how the business generates revenue and sustains its operations (Kawasaki, 2015). The presenter should clearly describe the main sources of income, such as sales, subscriptions, or service fees, to show how the idea can be financially viable. In addition, this section highlights the potential benefits for investors or partners, including returns, strategic value, or market opportunities (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). It may also include the growth potential of the business, demonstrating how it can expand over time. Overall, this part of the presentation aims to show that the business is not only innovative but also sustainable and profitable.

The closing, or call to action, is the final part of a business pitch and serves to leave a strong and lasting impression on the audience (Kawasaki, 2015). In this section, the presenter briefly summarizes the core idea and reinforces the main value of the solution. It is also the moment to clearly invite the audience to take action, such as investing, collaborating, or trying the product or service. The language used should be persuasive and

confident to encourage a positive response. A strong closing ensures that the presentation ends with clarity and impact, while the overall structure of an effective business pitch is summarized in Table 8.1.

Tabel 8.1. Structure of an Effective Business Pitch

Part of Pitch		Purpose	Example Content
Opening / Hook		Capture attention and create interest	Question, surprising fact, or strong statement
Problem Statement		Explain the issue that needs to be solved	Description of customer pain point supported by data
Proposed Solution		Present how the problem will be solved	Explanation of product or service and how it works
Target Market & Value Proposition		Show who the solution is for and its value	Target users, needs, and unique benefits
Business Model & Benefits		Explain how the business generates profit	Revenue streams, pricing, and growth potential
Closing / Call to Action		Encourage audience to take action	Invitation to invest, collaborate, or try the product

Source: Adapted from Kawasaki (2015) & Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010)

USEFUL ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS FOR PRESENTING BUSINESS IDEAS

The use of appropriate English expressions is essential in delivering an effective business idea presentation. These

expressions help presenters communicate their ideas more clearly and in a well-structured manner, making it easier for the audience to understand the message. In addition, they serve as a guide that helps the audience follow the flow of the presentation from one point to another. Using the right expressions also enhances the presenter's professionalism and builds confidence, allowing them to deliver their ideas more convincingly.

Opening expressions are used to greet the audience and begin the presentation in a clear and professional manner. They help introduce the topic and state the purpose of the presentation, allowing the audience to understand what will be discussed. After the opening, presenters need to use clear expressions to explain their ideas effectively (Mackenzie, 2010). This involves using simple and direct sentences so that the message is easy to follow. By using straightforward language and well-chosen expressions, presenters can help the audience understand the idea without confusion.

Expressions for comparing, emphasizing, and persuading play an important role in strengthening a business presentation. Presenters use comparative expressions to highlight differences between ideas or alternatives, helping the audience see why one option is better than another. Emphasizing expressions are used to draw attention to key points and ensure that the most important information is clearly understood. In addition, persuasive expressions help convince the audience of the value of the proposed solution. Together, these expressions allow presenters to demonstrate the advantages of their ideas and build stronger, more convincing arguments.

Transition words and signposting language are essential for connecting different parts of a presentation and guiding the audience through the flow of ideas. These expressions help signal what the presenter is doing at each stage, making it easier for the audience to follow and understand the structure

(Williams, 2008). For example, presenters use specific phrases when moving to the next point, adding new information, or summarizing key ideas. By using transition words and signposting effectively, a presentation becomes more organized, coherent, and easier for the audience to follow.

Closing and invitation phrases are used to end a business presentation in a professional and effective way. At this stage, the presenter briefly summarizes the main idea to reinforce the key message for the audience. It is also the moment to include a clear call to action (CTA), inviting the audience to take the next step, such as investing, collaborating, or trying the proposed solution. The language used should be polite, confident, and persuasive to encourage a positive response. A strong closing helps create a lasting impression and ensures that the presentation ends with clarity and impact. The useful expressions for business presentations are summarized in Table 8.2.

Tabel 8.2. Useful English Expressions for Business Presentations

Function		Useful English Expressions
Opening Greeting	&	“Good morning everyone.” / “Let me introduce our topic today...”
Introducing Purpose		“Today, I would like to present...” / “The purpose of this presentation is...”
Explaining Ideas		“Our idea focuses on...” / “This means that...” / “In other words...”
Comparing Ideas		“Compared to...” / “Unlike...” / “On the other hand...”
Emphasizing Points		“The most important point is...” / “It is worth noting that...”

Function	Useful English Expressions
Persuading Audience	“We strongly believe that...” / “This solution can significantly improve...”
Transitioning	“Next, let’s move to...” / “In addition...” / “Now I would like to discuss...”
Summarizing	“To sum up...” / “In conclusion...”
Closing & Call to Action	“Thank you for your attention.” / “We invite you to...” / “Let’s work together to...”

Source: Adapted from Mackenzie (2010) and Williams (2008)

USING DATA, VISUALS, AND STORYTELLING

Data plays an important role in business presentations as it helps strengthen arguments and make ideas more convincing. Presenters often use different types of data, such as charts (including bar charts, line graphs, and pie charts), numerical figures, and real-life examples to support their message. These elements help demonstrate that the business idea is based on facts rather than opinions. However, it is important that the data used is relevant, clear, and not overwhelming, so that the audience can easily understand the main message. By presenting well-selected data, the presenter can increase the credibility of the idea and make the presentation more persuasive.

Data should not only be displayed but also presented as a story, a concept known as data storytelling. This approach helps presenters connect data with the problem and the proposed solution, making the information more meaningful for the audience. Instead of simply showing numbers, the presenter explains what the data means and why it matters in the context of the business idea. By interpreting the insights behind the figures, data becomes easier to understand and more engaging. This storytelling approach usually follows a clear flow, starting from the problem, moving to data insights, and leading to the proposed solution.

Slides in a business presentation should be designed in a simple, clear, and persuasive way to support effective communication. They should not contain too much text, as overcrowded slides can distract the audience and reduce understanding. Instead, presenters should use bullet points, key words, and relevant visuals to highlight the main ideas. Each slide should focus on only one key message to ensure clarity and avoid confusion. In addition, the design should be clean, well-organized, and easy to read. Most importantly, slides are meant to support the presenter’s explanation, not replace it, so the speaker remains the main source of communication.

Visual elements play an important role in supporting audience understanding during a business presentation. They help the brain process information more quickly compared to text alone, making complex concepts easier to grasp. By presenting information in visual forms such as images, charts, or diagrams, the audience can better understand and interpret the message being delivered (Tufte, 2001). Visuals also improve memory retention, allowing the audience to remember key points more effectively. In addition, they make the presentation more engaging and interesting. Overall, visuals strengthen the presenter’s verbal message by reinforcing and clarifying the ideas being communicated. The role of visuals in supporting business presentations is summarized in Table 8.3.

Tabel 8.3. The Role of Visuals in Business Presentations

Type of Visual	Function		Benefit for Audience	
Bar Chart	Comparing categories	data across	Makes differences easy to understand	
Line Graph	Showing trends over time		Helps identify patterns and changes	

Type of Visual	Function			Benefit for Audience	
Pie Chart	Showing proportions or percentages		or	Provides overview of distribution	simple of
Images	Illustrating concepts or ideas			Enhances engagement and clarity	
Diagrams	Explaining systems	processes	or	Simplifies complex information	
Infographics	Combining text and visuals			Improves understanding and retention	

Source: Adapted from Duarte (2008) and Tufte (2001)

PRESENTING IN ONLINE AND HYBRID SETTINGS

Presentations are now widely conducted through online platforms due to the rapid development of digital communication technologies. Common platforms used for business presentations include *Zoom*, *Google Meet*, and *Microsoft Teams*, which allow presenters to connect with audiences from different locations. Compared to face-to-face presentations, online presentations offer greater flexibility but also present different challenges. These challenges include limited direct interaction with the audience as well as potential technical issues such as unstable internet connections, audio problems, or software disruptions. Therefore, presenters need to adapt their communication style to the digital environment to ensure that their message remains clear, engaging, and effective.

In online presentations, the effective use of voice, eye contact, camera etiquette, and slide design is essential for clear

communication (Clark & Mayer, n.d.). Presenters should use a clear, stable voice and avoid speaking too quickly to ensure that the audience can easily follow the message. Eye contact should be directed toward the camera rather than the screen to create a sense of engagement with the audience. Proper camera etiquette is also important, including good lighting, a clean and professional background, and an appropriate body position. In addition, slides should be designed more simply than in face-to-face settings, since smaller screens require greater clarity. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on readability and concise visual elements to support understanding.

Managing audience attention in virtual settings is one of the main challenges in online presentations, as participants are more easily distracted by their environment or other digital activities. To maintain engagement, presenters can use interactive techniques such as asking questions, encouraging responses, and incorporating storytelling elements to make the content more relatable. Visual aids and variations in vocal tone also help sustain interest and emphasize key points. In addition, making the presentation more interactive can improve audience involvement and focus. Compared to offline presentations, online sessions should generally be shorter and more concise to maintain attention effectively.

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly used in preparing business presentations, as they can assist in creating slides, writing scripts, and improving design quality. Examples include AI presentation tools and AI writing assistants that help presenters work more efficiently and professionally. However, it is important not to rely entirely on AI, as human judgment is still needed to ensure accuracy, relevance, and appropriateness of the content. Presenters must validate and review all AI-generated materials before use to maintain quality and credibility. Ethical considerations are also essential in the use of

AI in business communication, including transparency and responsible usage. The best practices for online and hybrid presentations, including responsible use of AI, are summarized in Table 8.4, along with a practical checklist for online presentation preparation.

Tabel 8.4. Best Practices for Online and Hybrid Business Presentations

Aspect	Best Practice	Purpose
Platform Use	Choose stable platforms (Zoom, Google Meet, MS Teams)	Ensure smooth communication
Vouce Delivery	Speak clearly, at a moderate pace	Improve understanding
Camera Etiquette	Good lighting, clean background, eye-level camera	Build professionalism and engagement
Slide Design	Simple, minimal text, clear visuals	Enhance readability on small screens
Audience Engagement	Use questions, interaction, storytelling	Maintain attention
Presentation Length	Keep it concise and focused	Avoid audience fatigue
AI Usage	Use AI for support, not full dependence	Maintain accuracy and originality
Content Review	Always check AI-generated outputs	Ensure quality and correctness

Source: Adapted from Clark & Mayer (2016)

ONLINE PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

Before delivering an online presentation, make sure you have:

- ☐ Tested internet connection and platform (Zoom/Google Meet, etc.)
- ☐ Checked microphone and audio quality
- ☐ Ensured proper lighting and camera positioning
- ☐ Prepared clean and readable slides
- ☐ Practiced clear and controlled voice delivery
- ☐ Prepared engagement questions for the audience
- ☐ Reviewed all content (including AI-assisted materials)
- ☐ Ensured presentation duration is concise and well-timed

HANDLING QUESTIONS, FEEDBACK, AND OBJECTIONS

The question-and-answer (Q&A) session is an important part of a business presentation because it allows the audience to seek clarification and engage more deeply with the presented idea. During this stage, presenters should answer questions politely, clearly, and confidently to maintain professionalism and credibility (Abraham & Bamber, 2017). It is important to use a confident tone and avoid showing uncertainty or avoiding questions. Instead, responses should be delivered in a structured manner to ensure clarity. Presenters can also use techniques such as paraphrasing the question to confirm understanding, clarifying ambiguous points, and providing direct answers to address the audience's concerns effectively.

Criticism and doubt are normal parts of a business presentation, especially when presenting new or innovative ideas. Therefore, presenters should not respond defensively or emotionally when facing critical feedback. Instead, they need to acknowledge the criticism professionally and show openness to different perspectives. When necessary, presenters can provide clarification or additional explanation to address the concern

more clearly. By handling criticism in a constructive way, it is possible to turn potential weaknesses into opportunities to strengthen the idea and improve audience trust.

When facing challenging audiences, presenters may encounter difficult or skeptical questions that test their confidence and understanding. In such situations, it is essential to remain calm and maintain emotional control throughout the interaction. Taking a short pause before responding can help the presenter organize thoughts and deliver a clearer answer. It is also important to focus on facts and logical explanations rather than reacting emotionally. By doing so, the presenter demonstrates professionalism, preparedness, and the ability to handle pressure effectively during a business presentation.

After the question-and-answer session, it is important for presenters to close the presentation in a polite and professional manner. The session should be ended with courtesy, ensuring that the audience feels acknowledged and respected. If necessary, the presenter can briefly restate or summarize the key points of the presentation to reinforce the main message. Expressing gratitude to the audience is also essential, especially for their attention, questions, and feedback. By appreciating the audience's participation, the presenter creates a positive interaction and strengthens engagement. A well-managed closing helps leave a strong professional impression and ensures the presentation ends on a confident and positive note.

SAMPLE Q&A EXPRESSIONS

- “Thank you for your question.”
- “That is an interesting point. Let me clarify it.”
- “I see your concern, and here is our explanation...”
- “From our perspective, the data shows that...”
- “I appreciate your feedback; it helps us improve the idea.”

- “Does that answer your question clearly?”
- “Thank you, and we really appreciate your input.”

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed how to present business ideas effectively in English in a clear, structured, and persuasive way. It highlights that successful communication is essential in ensuring that a business idea is well understood and well received by the audience. A business presentation is not only about delivering information, but also about convincing and engaging listeners to support the idea. Throughout the chapter, various aspects have been covered, including the structure of a business pitch, useful language expressions, the use of data and visuals, online and hybrid presentation techniques, and strategies for handling questions and feedback.

This chapter also helps students develop several essential skills for delivering effective business presentations. These include understanding the proper structure of a business pitch, such as the opening, problem statement, and proposed solution. Students also learn how to use English effectively in pitching ideas in a clear and persuasive way. In addition, the chapter emphasizes the importance of using data, visuals, and storytelling to strengthen the message. It also builds skills in conducting presentations in online and hybrid settings, which are increasingly common in today’s business environment. Furthermore, students are trained to respond to questions, feedback, and criticism in a professional and confident manner.

Overall, the ability to present business ideas effectively is an essential skill in today’s business environment. It is not only a communication skill, but also a key competency that supports professional growth and business success. Students are encouraged to continuously practice and develop their

presentation skills in order to become more confident and effective communicators. Mastering this skill can significantly increase opportunities in both academic and professional contexts, as it enhances one's ability to influence, persuade, and engage others with clarity and confidence.

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CHAPTER 9

WRITING BUSINESS WEBSITE CONTENT

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has revolutionized the way companies advertise their products, communicate and engage with their customers. The growth of digital platforms, mobile technology and the internet have changed the global corporate environment over the past 20 years. It brings new opportunities and new challenges. In our world of greater interconnectedness, the importance of geographical boundaries is diminishing and companies are increasingly expected to compete on a global basis. This makes a strong online presence more important than ever for an organization's success. The website of a company is one of the most important and strategic digital tools. It is no longer just a static digital brochure with the essential details of a company. It is instead a dynamic platform that includes consumer engagement, marketing, branding and transaction processes. A well-designed website is a company's best point of contact with potential clients, building first impressions and helping in decision making. This means that the content on a website will be of importance in attracting, retaining and engaging visitors.

In this environment, writing good English content for business websites is a critical skill. English is widely accepted as the main language for international communication, particularly in the online world with viewers coming from different languages and cultures. "Companies can use it to expand their

market reach, raise their international profile and promote cross-border engagement. But basic communication is not the only way in which English is used in digital business settings. “Understanding the strategic use of language is key to achieving desired corporate goals.

Content writing for websites is more than language skills. This requires a range of skills, from knowing your audience and knowing about digital communication techniques, to being aware of marketing tactics and cultural quirks. Writers must be able to adapt their language for different audiences so that content is comprehensible, engaging and culturally relevant. They also need to make their writing work for bigger business goals like building brand awareness, creating leads and driving conversions.

Content for business websites is naturally multi-purpose. It must educate consumers with relevant and understandable information about the goods, services or the business itself. It should also persuade potential clients by presenting value propositions and competitive advantages. It also should motivate consumers to do some things such as buy something, subscribe to a newsletter, and contact the company. To achieve all of these goals, a delicate balance of persuasive appeal and clear information is required.

In this chapter we will examine the basics and techniques of creating high-quality English language content for business websites in the setting of digital business. It provides a comprehensive description of digital material characteristics, the types of content available on websites, and the fundamentals of good writing. It also addresses persuasive techniques that can enhance the effectiveness of content and how language impacts credibility and brand identification. The chapter also discusses common issues that authors encounter and advice on how to deal with them.

CHARACTERISTICS OF BUSINESS WEBSITE CONTENT

The content of business websites is very different than the content in more traditional formats such as academic essays or printed ads. Website content lives in a hybrid space between delivering information, communicating in a commercial way, and engaging users, while print advertisements tend to emphasize the brevity of persuasive messaging, and academic writing is about depth of analysis and formal structure. It is especially sophisticated and strategically important in digital business scenarios because of its multi functionality.

Its double purpose is one of its main traits; it has to be convincing and informative. People tend to visit websites when they have particular informational needs. Examples of these needs include: learning about a product, comparing services, or knowing the history of a business. But from the business perspective, information is not enough. The content should also lead consumers to measurable outcomes, such as buying something, subscribing to a service or engaging further with the company. The writer must find a delicate balance between factual accuracy and the need to make the material interesting and persuasive.

Other good qualities are clarity and conciseness. The behavior of readers of digital materials is different from that of readers of printed materials. According to research in web usability, users do not read text, they scan it. They scan for headings, highlighted features and keywords to quickly assess significance. Effective website content needs to be short, to the point and well-structured. Use short paragraphs, bullet points and clear headings. This helps readability and allows readers to navigate easily. Long dense paragraphs can put people off participating. Clarity also means eliminating ambiguity and ensuring that messages are instantly understood, without

requiring extensive interpretation. Clarity is important, but so is making things accessible. The audience for business websites is often diverse with different linguistic abilities, cultural backgrounds and digital literacy. This means the content needs to be written in an accessible and inclusive way. This means writing simple sentences, using the active voice and simple well understood language. Also, avoid unnecessary jargon or overly technical language, unless your audience consists of experts who are familiar with such terms. Accessibility also includes cultural sensitivity, as authors need to be aware of how their language choices may inadvertently alienate or confuse readers in other countries.

Another thing that makes content on business websites different is user-centeredness. Website material should primarily be focused on the wants, expectations and behaviors of users whereas traditional writing may be focused on the author's point of view. This means anticipating user questions, resolving problems and providing information in a way that is consistent with user goals. For example, effective content often highlights how products or services enhance customers' lives or address their problems, rather than focusing on business achievements. One of the principles of digital marketing is the transition from company-centered to customer-centered communication.

In addition, the matter of business websites is by its very nature flexible and dynamic. Digital content, unlike print, can be updated, changed and optimized regularly. This flexibility makes it possible for businesses to respond swiftly to shifts in consumer preferences, industry trends and technological developments. For instance, blog posts can be refreshed with new information, landing pages can be modified using user metrics, and product descriptions can be altered to account for new features. Data-driven approaches that leverage user

behavior indicators to inform content development decisions often promote this continuous process of content refining.

Search ability is another key feature that separates digital information from traditional writing. To make website content visible and accessible it needs to be optimized for search engines. Which means using structured content, meta descriptions and keywords strategically. But effective search engine optimization (SEO) should not come at the expense of readability. Rather, it should optimize content discoverability, all the while maintaining a natural and engaging tone of writing.

TYPES OF BUSINESS WEBSITE CONTENT

The best company websites typically have a wide variety of content types, all serving a specific purpose in the site's overall marketing and communication strategy. Such material works with consumers across participation stages – awareness, engagement, purchase. To build a website that works and looks good, you need to understand what each type of content does and how it all fits together.

a. Home page text

The homepage is one of the most important parts of a website and is usually the first thing people see when they visit a business. It's like a door that opens up the brand, introduces the brand, builds trust and sends people to the right places. The key value proposition must be explained clearly, concisely and promptly on the homepage material as it is so important to the strategy. A good homepage usually has a catchy headline to grab people's attention, a short description of the products or services, and navigation elements that are noticeable. It should answer the basic questions users may have such as "What does this business do?" "Whose?" "Why this brand?" The webpage will also usually have pictures or video which add to the text and

make it more interesting. Adding clear calls to action to your homepage makes it much easier for users to do what you want them to do.

b. Our page

The “About Us” page contains key details about the company’s history, mission, vision, values, and team. This part may sound like a list of facts, but it’s actually really important for building confidence and trustworthiness. When users can’t physically connect with a business online, being open and honest are two of the most important things that can change how they see the business. Good about us information is more than just facts. It often uses storytelling tactics to make the story more personal and accessible. People can connect with the brand and feel closer to it by telling the story of how the company started, the problems it encountered, and its successes. Also, showing the profiles of team members or leaders builds even more trust by showing their knowledge and professionalism.

c. Descriptions of products or services

The main purpose of a business website is to tell the story of a company’s products and services. These parts include a lot of information about the products and services and directly affect what people buy. So, they must be worded carefully to get the right balance between being clear and convincing. One of the most important rules in writing product descriptions is to differentiate features from benefits. Features are the attributes of a product and how it works. Benefits are how those features will make the client happy. When you write effective descriptions, you employ language that is customer-centric and focused on results and experience. The content should not only feature specs but demonstrate how the product solves problems or makes the user’s life better. Blogs and other instructional content can

be used for learning and planning. From an informational perspective, they provide useful information, answer common questions and meet the needs of the client. They assist with search engine optimization (SEO) and, from a strategic standpoint, increase the website's visibility in search engine results. Blog content also supports customers on their journey by speaking about particular steps in the decision-making process. For example, informational articles can pique interest in your business when people are in the awareness stage, and more detailed guides or comparisons can help them make a decision when they're in the assessment stage.

d. Call to Action (CTA)

Call-to-action (CTA) elements are important pieces that bridge reading material to doing action. They are typically short, simple phrases that tell consumers what action to take, such as "Buy Now," "Sign Up," "Learn More," or "Contact Us." Good CTAs use clear, concise, action-oriented language. They tend to use words that tell people what to do and make them feel they must do it now or that it is important. For instance, "Get Started Today" or "Claim Your Free Trial" are not only telling people to do something, but they're also explaining why they should do it. The design and placement of CTAs are very significant. They should be integrated into the content in a way that makes sense for the user, such as at the end of a product description or within a blog post. Adding buttons or colors that stand out can make them a lot easier to see and more useful.

OTHER TYPES OF SUPPORTING CONTENT

Good websites often also have additional content that helps users and builds trust in addition to the main categories. Some of these include:

- Reviews and testimonials – social proof that makes you look more trustworthy
 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that answer common questions and take some of the confusion out of things • Landing Pages - These are built to support specific marketing campaigns and are designed to make people take action
 - Contact Pages, allowing users and the business to easily communicate with each other
- These kinds of supporting content help make the website feel completer and more usable, helping users to quickly find what they need and feel good about dealing with the business.

1) Clear

Good website content has one most important thing in common – clarity. It ensures that consumers can easily understand the message without being confused or misinterpreted. In digital environments, people generally want the answer fast and don't want to waste their time working out what complex or vague terms mean. Writers should therefore aim for clarity in their writing, avoiding overly complex sentence structure, jargon that is not really necessary, and words that are ambiguous in meaning.

2) Conciseness

Conciseness is closely related to clarity and is based on the fact that good digital communication should be fast. Most net users want content that gives them value right

away and doesn't go into too much detail. That's why writers need to eliminate excess words, redundant sentences, and unnecessary information. Brief is not to leave out or oversimplify important facts. Rather, it is about choosing words with the purpose of getting your point across in the best way possible. Making things easier to understand by, for example, replacing big words with smaller words, or putting complicated information into a bullet point, makes a big difference. Short content is a sign you appreciate the user's time and it makes the experience better.

3) Consistency

To create a strong and professional brand identity, you have to use the same tone, style and words all the time. A consistent voice across a website makes it look reliable and trustworthy. Using different words to say the same thing or switching from professional to informal tones can confuse people and hurt the brand image.

4) Know Your Audience

To write a good website, you must know who your target audience is. Content should be written considering the audience's needs, wants, expectations and level of understanding. It requires careful consideration of factors such as age, employment, cultural background and language ability. When speaking to people from other countries, it is even more important to be sensitive to their culture. Some phrases, idioms or references may not make sense in other cultures and may confuse people. Writers should therefore write in a neutral language, that is open to all and easy for people all over the world to understand. Thinking about your audience also means thinking

ahead to what questions they might have and answering them in the content.

5) SEO or Search Engine Optimization

Another important concept linking content writing with online visibility is SEO (Search Engine Optimization). Search engines need to be able to find website content, so the content needs to use keywords and key phrases cleverly. These keywords need to be what people are likely to type into a search engine when they want to know more about the business.

6) Easy to read & scan

In addition to the main points above, digital writing must be easy to read and scan. “People don’t tend to read entire pages word-for-word, but scan for information that is useful to them. Writers can help make this behavior easier to understand by using short paragraphs, clear headers, subheadings, and bullet points. Other formatting techniques such as bolding text to emphasize key information can also increase engagement.

7) Engagement and Interaction

Most digital material is meant to change people’s behavior, not just inform them. That’s why persuasion is such a big part of writing for business websites. Persuasive techniques play a critical role in aiding human decision making in competitive online settings with abundant options available to users. You can enhance the power of your website content by blending language techniques, psychological insights, and smart message design. If we know how users think, feel and act, we can create content that resonates with users and inspires meaningful involvement.

BENEFIT-ORIENTED LANGUAGE

One of the easiest ways to persuade someone is to speak in terms of benefits. Good content doesn't just talk about the features of a product; it talks about the value and benefits that people are going to get out of it. The method demonstrates that the consumer is the most important element and the main goal is to meet the needs and wants of the audience.

Storytelling

“Stories are a great way to connect with people and help them remember things.” People are naturally drawn to stories because they provide context, evoke emotions, and create meaningful connections. There are lots of different types of storytelling that you can use in your website content like brand stories, customer success stories and case-based scenarios. For example, a story of how a consumer actually used a product in life can make the material more trustworthy and approachable. Stories also enable businesses to tell people about their beliefs, mission and identity in a way that goes beyond facts. Storytelling can help to emotionally engage people and influence their buying decisions and loyalty to a brand.

Proof from others (cont'd)

Social proof works on the principle that when people are unsure what to do, they are more likely to believe what other people have done and spoke. You can show social proof on a website in the form of case studies, testimonials, customer reviews, ratings or endorsements.

The Need and the Lack

Urgency and scarcity are tools to get people to act now, to make them feel they don't have much time to do something. Say things like “Limited time offer,” “Only a few items left,” or

“Offer ends today,” and people will be more likely to act. These phrases play into the fear of missing out (FOMO).

Impact of Feelings

Effective persuasive writing often uses emotional appeal as well as logical arguments. Things like enthusiasm, trust, safety or even worry can change how people see a message and the decisions they make. Information emphasizing safety and reliability might appeal to those who want to feel safe, while content emphasizing innovation and creativity might appeal to people who want to try new things. You want your heart and mind to be in balance. Emotional appeal can grab people’s attention and make them feel connected, but it needs to be supported by clear and trustworthy information to maintain their trust.

Trustworthiness and Authority

To convince people online, you have to gain their trust. People are more likely to trust and engage with things that appear trustworthy and authoritative. This can be achieved by presenting correct information, referencing pertinent knowledge, and using professional language. Credentials, awards, partnerships or endorsements from experts can make you more credible. Also, if you present your information in a consistent, well-organized way, people will think you are reliable and competent.

Direct Address Personalization

A second way to persuade people is personalization. Adding words like “you” to speak directly to users and customizing information so it’s relevant to particular groups of people could make them feel connected. Personalized content can make consumers feel understood and appreciated, making them more

likely to engage and trust you. Dynamic personalization is also possible with digital technology, which alters material based on the user's location, preferences, or behavior. This makes persuasive communication all the more effective.

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN BUILDING BRAND IMAGE

“Language is so important for how people see a brand, especially online where people can't talk to each other in person. In these circumstances, language is one of the main ways in which businesses tell people who they are, what they stand for and where they fit in. Each phrase, statement and stylistic choice helps create a brand image, which influences how people perceive and react to the firm. The tone, style and word choice of a website's material are key parts of what makes a brand unique. Tone is the mood of the language. It may be professional and authoritative or informal and conversational. Formal tone is often perceived as competent, knowledgeable and trustworthy, making it a good fit in fields such as banking, law or business services. On the other hand, a conversational tone can make people feel friendly, approachable and relatable. This is especially helpful if you are in a creative field, have a lifestyle business, or are a new business. The tone should be consistent and authentic and should reflect the brand's values and target demographics.

By contrast, style refers to the larger choices regarding the language and structure of the text, such as the complexity of sentences, the use of technical terms and the overall style of writing. A simple and minimal style implies something modern and efficient, while a more descriptive and expressive language implies something creative and new. Also, what you say can affect those impressions, because some words carry a meaning that influences how people look at things. “Words like

‘innovative,’ ‘trusted or ‘premium’ put the brand in a certain space of the market.” To build a strong and recognizable brand image you have to speak the same language all the time. When tone, style and language are consistent across all pages of a website, they create a single voice that consumers can easily identify and remember. However, inconsistent terminology can make things confusing and harm the overall identity of your brand. For example, if you use very official language and very casual language on the website, it might look disjointed, which can make people less confident in the company.”

Correct use of words is also important. Mistakes in grammar, clumsy phrasings or the use of the wrong phrase can do a lot of damage to a brand’s reputation. In online environments, where individuals often form swift opinions, even small language errors can be seen as unprofessional or inattentive to detail. You want to build trust with users, and taking the time to write clear, grammatically correct, and well-organized content shows you are competent and trustworthy. Globally, the role of language becomes much more important and complicated. Business websites are often targeted to people from other countries speaking different languages and coming from different cultures. That means content needs to be grammatically correct and culturally aware. Certain phrases, idioms or references common in one culture may not make sense, or be appropriate, in another. So, writers have to write in a neutral, inclusive English that people all over the world understand. This is to avoid words that are used only in certain cultures, to make sure the meaning is clear and to be aware of how other cultures communicate. Another thing is how well the language matches the user experience. The language used on the site should be consistent with the pictures and functions to enhance the overall experience. Clear directions, easy-to-understand labels and easy-to-use navigation text help both

usability and brand perception. Language that makes things easier to use makes people happier and helps the overall brand image.

CHALLENGES IN WRITING BUSINESS WEBSITE CONTENT

Good company website content is hard to write, even though it's important for digital communication and marketing. It requires language skills and strategic knowledge. These are not only technical, but cognitive and contextual obstacles, as authors have to face many demands at the same time.

First, many authors have problems with English because they do not speak it well, especially if English is their second language. This limitation can make things less clear, less grammatical, and less coherent overall. Wrong or poorly structured sentences can lead to misconceptions, which can mean the message is less successful and the business's reputation can be damaged. In addition, the writer's limited vocabulary may make it harder for him/her to explain his/her ideas in a new and convincing way.

Second, if you are trying to understand the needs of a global audience, you need to be very aware of other cultures and be able to change your behavior. Business websites are often targeted at visitors of different cultural backgrounds, having their own expectations, communication styles and interpretation of meaning. Writers should be aware of these distinctions and not use phrases or ideas that are exclusive to one culture that might not work for everyone. It gets difficult when the content has to be relevant to both local and international audiences at the same time.

Third, it can be hard for new writers especially to strike a balance between good writing and good promotion. Website material has to be accurate and clear, but it also has to be

interesting, convincing and in line with marketing goals. In addition to their language skills, writers must have knowledge of branding, user behavior and digital marketing techniques. You have to practice this balance, and know that good content is grammatically correct and strategically useful.

Another big problem is how you write for different material types on the same website. The tone and structure of a formal About Us page, for example, might look very different from a blog post or a promotional landing page. You need to be flexible, know what your audience wants and be consistent as you adapt to different situations. To overcome these problems, authors need to keep developing their skills by practicing regularly and analyzing good examples of website content. You can learn ways to improve by getting feedback from peers, editors or mentors. Digital tools like grammar checkers, readability analyzers and SEO optimization tools can help writers by spotting errors and suggesting improvements.

CONCLUSION

Writing good business website content in English is quite important in the digital age. It requires a mix of language skills, strategic thinking and knowing your target. Content that works needs to be clear, short, consistent, convincing and also fit with the aims of the organization. Professionals learn of the various types of website pages, the characteristics of digital content, and the principles of good writing to create content that informs, engages, and converts people. Another big part of building a strong, credible brand image is using the right words. With digital business expanding and evolving, the ability to change and improve your content writing skills will always be important. To be successful in this sector, you have to continue learning, practicing and using digital tactics.

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CHAPTER 10

ENGLISH FOR ONLINE MEETINGS AND NEGOTIATION

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Source: Private document; the author served as moderator during the formal meeting

Picture 10.1. Using English on Online Meeting

INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has transformed the way companies communicate and collaborate between continents. Online meetings have become an integral part of the professional lifestyle providing people and organizations the ability to meet, share ideas and make decisions without the constraints of physical proximity. As businesses operate more and more in international markets, English becomes the dominant language of communication during virtual interactions and thus an essential skill for digital business professionals.

Besides communication, online meetings often include discussions, problem-solving, and negotiations that demand participants to clearly and professionally express their ideas. Negotiation skills are very important in business. Knowledge of the right English phrases for negotiation can greatly affect the results of business negotiations and increase your professional contacts. Negotiation skills help you to find win-win solutions, resolve conflicts and build long-term partnerships. However, virtual environments pose their own communication challenges. Participants need to know the language being used, but also to negotiate the turn of speaking, clarify information, express opinions diplomatically, and respond to different points of view effectively. Linguistic and interpersonal skills are also important because cultural differences, technical limitations and lack of face-to-face interaction can complicate communication.

This chapter covers common English expressions and communication strategies frequently used in online meetings and business negotiations. Readers will learn how to open and close meetings, how to express opinions, how to agree and disagree professionally, how to negotiate terms, how to seek clarification and how to summarize decisions effectively. Developing these skills will better equip students and future business professionals to participate with confidence and success in global digital business environments.

ONLINE MEETINGS

In today's digital age, communication increasingly takes place online, making the ability to use English effectively in formal online meetings and negotiations more important than ever. What was once considered an added advantage has now become an essential skill. Across industries, workplaces, academic institutions, and scientific forums, people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds regularly connect

in virtual environments to exchange ideas, make decisions, and build professional relationships. In these interactions, English serves not only as a global language but also as a common means of communication that helps bridge cultural and linguistic differences, enabling participants to collaborate and understand one another more effectively.

The increasing reliance on online communication has transformed the way people interact in both personal and professional contexts. Unlike traditional face-to-face communication, virtual environments often provide limited access to non-verbal cues such as gestures, body language, and eye contact. Consequently, speakers must rely more heavily on the clarity and accuracy of their verbal communication to convey meaning effectively. In this context, English plays a crucial role as a medium for clearly expressing ideas, organizing thoughts coherently, and ensuring that messages are interpreted as intended. As Guffey and Loewy (2021) emphasize, effective professional communication requires clarity, conciseness, and audience awareness—qualities that become even more essential in online interactions, where misunderstandings can easily occur.

At the same time, negotiation—an essential component of professional communication—has also moved into digital spaces. Online negotiation requires participants to not only exchange information but also to persuade, build trust, and reach agreements without the full range of interpersonal cues available in physical settings. This makes language choice especially important. Using English effectively enables individuals to frame their ideas, respond thoughtfully, and participate in discussions with greater confidence. Brett (2014) emphasizes that successful negotiation depends on strong communication skills, including the ability to interpret meaning and manage

interaction dynamics—skills that are closely tied to language proficiency.

However, using English in online formal meetings and negotiations is not simply about grammatical accuracy or vocabulary knowledge. It also involves an awareness of cultural differences and communication styles. Participants in global interactions bring with them different expectations, levels of directness, and norms of politeness. In this sense, English functions as a flexible and adaptive medium. Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2018) describe this phenomenon as English as a Business Lingua Franca (BELF), where the primary goal is achieving mutual understanding rather than linguistic perfection. This perspective highlights the importance of clarity, respect, and responsiveness when communicating across cultures.

NEGOTIATION

According to Gregory E. Kersten, negotiation is a process in which two or more parties engage in two closely connected activities: communication and decision-making. Communication in negotiation can be understood through approaches such as Speech Act Theory, which explains how language is not only used to exchange information but also to express intentions, commitments, and social actions (Chang & Woo, 1994). Decision-making in negotiations occurs at both the individual and collective levels. Most negotiations involve the exchange of goods, services, or shared interests, meaning that no single party can determine the outcome on its own. Instead, all participants rely on one another to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. From this perspective, negotiation can be understood as a process of group decision-making. However, each participant also brings personal goals and interests to the negotiation. Ultimately, the decision to accept or reject a particular offer rests

with each individual participant, who evaluates the proposal based on their own objectives and priorities (Kersten, 2001).

This chapter adopts a communicative perspective on negotiation, drawing on the theories of Jürgen Habermas and the work of Schoop and Quix (2001). From this viewpoint, negotiation is understood as a series of communicative actions that shape different dimensions of human interaction. These dimensions include the social world, concerned with norms, relationships, and commitments; the subjective world, which reflects individuals' values, beliefs, and intentions; and the objective world, which concerns tangible outcomes and achievements. While the role of decision-making is acknowledged, the main focus of this discussion lies in the communication process itself. Therefore, social and cognitive perspectives are considered primarily for how they help explain how communication influences negotiation processes and fosters mutual understanding among participants.

THE USE OF ENGLISH IN ONLINE MEETINGS AND BUSSINES NEGOTIATION

In today's digitally connected world, online communication has become an inseparable part of professional, academic, and business activities. The rapid development of technology and globalization has changed the way people interact, collaborate, and conduct meetings. Through digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams, people from different countries and cultural backgrounds can now communicate and collaborate without geographic limitations. In this context, English has emerged as the primary language for online meetings because it serves as a global medium of communication.

The increasing use of English in online interaction is closely related to the growth of digital communication and online

business. As highlighted in previous studies, digital technology is no longer used only for personal communication but also for professional collaboration, online marketing, education, and international business activities (Alvarez & Fournier, 2016; Kumar & Gupta, 2016). The digital era has created opportunities for individuals to connect globally, making English an essential skill for participating in virtual communication environments. Whether in business negotiations, webinars, academic discussions, or workplace meetings, English allows participants to exchange ideas and information more effectively.

In online meetings, communication clarity becomes especially important because virtual interaction often reduces non-verbal communication cues such as gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions. As a result, participants must rely more heavily on spoken language and appropriate communication strategies. Guffey and Loewy (2021) explain that effective communication requires clarity, conciseness, and awareness of the audience. In virtual settings, using English clearly and politely helps avoid misunderstandings and supports smoother interaction among participants. Furthermore, English is widely used in online meetings because it serves as a *lingua franca* among people with different first languages. In multinational companies and international organizations, English enables participants to collaborate more efficiently and maintain professional relationships. Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2018) argue that English in professional communication is primarily used as a practical communication tool rather than as a symbol of native-speaker proficiency. What matters most is the ability to communicate ideas successfully and achieve mutual understanding.

The use of English is also highly important in online negotiation. Negotiation involves expressing opinions, responding to arguments, persuading others, and reaching

agreements professionally. In virtual environments, participants need to choose their words carefully because misunderstandings can easily occur due to technical problems or the absence of direct interpersonal interaction. Brett (2014) emphasizes that successful negotiation depends strongly on communication skills, including the ability to explain ideas clearly and respond appropriately during discussions. Therefore, mastering English communication skills can significantly improve confidence and professionalism in online negotiation settings. In addition, online meetings require participants to master various communicative expressions commonly used in digital interaction. Expressions such as “Could you repeat that, please?”, “I agree with your opinion,”, or “Let me clarify my point” are essential for maintaining effective communication during discussions. These expressions help participants manage conversations politely, ask for clarification, and avoid confusion during virtual meetings.

In other words, the use of English in online meetings has become increasingly important in the era of globalization and digital technology. English enables people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to communicate, collaborate, and negotiate effectively in virtual environments. More than simply an international language, English serves as a practical communication tool that supports global interaction, professional collaboration, and successful participation in digital communication spaces. As online communication continues to expand across many sectors, the ability to use English confidently and appropriately in virtual meetings will remain an essential skill for academic, professional, and international success. In doing meeting whether it can be in the form of online or offline, of course we must follow the steps to make the flow of our speaking is good in order. Therefore, herewith I provide the steps of doing meeting in online version:



Source: <https://www.canva.com>

Picture 10.2. The steps of formal speaking performance

The picture above illustrates the basic structure of an online meeting or presentation, which consists of three important stages: Opening, Explanation of the Main Agenda, and Conclusion & Closing. These stages represent the natural flow of communication commonly used in virtual meetings, webinars, and business negotiations. In today's digital era, where professional interaction increasingly takes place through online platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams, English has become the primary language that supports effective communication throughout each stage of the meeting process.

The first stage, Opening, is an important part of online meetings because it creates the first impression and establishes a professional atmosphere. During this stage, speakers usually greet participants, introduce themselves, and explain the purpose of the meeting. In international meetings, English is widely used because it allows participants from different countries and linguistic backgrounds to communicate with one another smoothly. Expressions such as “Good morning, everyone,” “Thank you for joining this meeting,” or “Can everybody hear me clearly?” are commonly used to begin virtual discussions

politely and professionally. According to Guffey and Loewy (2021), effective communication in professional settings requires clarity, politeness, and audience awareness, especially in digital interaction where non-verbal communication is limited.

The second stage shown in the picture is the Explanation of the Main Agenda. This section represents the core discussion of the meeting, where participants share ideas, present information, discuss problems, and negotiate solutions. In online meetings and business negotiation, English plays a significant role because it functions as a global lingua franca that enables communication among people from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds. During this stage, participants often use English expressions to explain opinions, ask questions, clarify misunderstandings, and negotiate agreements. For example, phrases such as “In my opinion...”, “Could you clarify your point?”, or “I believe this solution would be beneficial for both parties” are essential for maintaining productive communication.

Business negotiation, in particular, requires strong English communication skills because negotiation is not only about exchanging information but also about persuading others, building trust, and reaching mutual agreements. In virtual settings, where technical issues and communication barriers may occur, participants need to use language carefully to avoid misunderstanding. Brett (2014) explains that successful negotiation depends greatly on communication competence, including the ability to express ideas clearly and respond appropriately during discussions. Therefore, mastering English in online negotiation helps professionals communicate more confidently and maintain positive relationships with international partners.

The final stage in the picture is Conclusion & Closing,

which emphasizes the importance of summarizing discussions and ending meetings professionally. In this stage, speakers usually restate the main points, provide final recommendations, and thank participants for their attention. English expressions such as “To conclude...”, “Thank you for your participation,”, or “I look forward to our future collaboration” help create a respectful and professional ending to the meeting. This stage is important because it ensures that all participants clearly understand the outcomes of the discussion and any future actions that need to be taken.

Furthermore, the visual structure presented in the picture also reflects the importance of organized communication in online environments. Since virtual interaction often reduces direct social interaction and body language, participants rely heavily on spoken English and digital communication strategies. Chan (2020) states that effective online communication requires both linguistic competence and digital communication skills. This means that successful participation in online meetings and business negotiation depends not only on technological ability but also on the ability to communicate clearly and professionally in English.

FORMAL EXPRESSION IN ONLINE AND NEGOTIATION MEETING

The following examples illustrate formal and informal expressions used in meetings. Although both styles have their place in communication, the use of formal expressions is generally recommended, particularly in professional settings, as they reflect courtesy and professionalism.

Table 10.1. The stages on formal and informal meeting

Stages	Formal	Informal
OPENING	Good	Hi. God day

Stages	Formal	Informal
	morning/afternoon/evening ladies and gentlemen Let me introduce myself, my name is.... I come from.... Company/factory. In this special occasion/moment/event/meeting, I would like to thank..... for giving me chance/opportunity to start this meeting The purpose/goal/objective of our meeting today is to..... In this meeting, I would like to divide my talk/agenda into three part/several part: First..... second... third... etc.	Let's kick off Thanks for giving me the chance to kick off today's meeting.
EXPLANATION THE MAIN AGENDA	Thank you all for joining us today. I appreciate your presence and look forward to our discussion. Let's go ahead and get started Firstly I would like to explain you about... Second... third..... so on.	I appreciate everyone being here today Shall we begin? I would like to talk about the project/agenda.
INTERVAL	I think that is a really question for senior management I don't think we should be going into this much detail at this stage Jemy you have been very quiet. Do you have anything to add? Could you send round a link to your independent research? I will come to your question in a moment	-

Stages	Formal	Informal
	so if nobody has any more questions at this stage, then we will move onto point 2 of the agenda	
	I want to come back to something Sarah said earlier	
CLOSING	Thank you all for joining us virtually today. We appreciate your participation and insights. If there are no further questions, we will conclude the meeting here. Have a great day, everyone.	That's all about the meeting, thank you!

The following section presents examples of business meeting phrases commonly used in formal and semi-formal meeting settings. These expressions can help participants communicate effectively and professionally during discussions and decision-making processes.

Tabel 10.2. phrases commonly used in formal and semi-formal meeting

No	Phrases	Examples
1	Interrupting	 May I have a word?  If I may, I think...  Excuse me for interrupting
2	Giving Opinions	 I (really) feel that...  In my opinion...  The way I see things...
3	Agreeing	 Exactly!  That's (exactly) the way I feel.  I have to agree with (name).
4	Disagreeing with Other Opinions	 Up to a point I agree with you, but...  I'm afraid I can't agree...

No	Phrases	Examples
5	Advising and Suggesting	 We should...  Why don't you...  How/What about...
6	Commenting on Opinions	 Good point!  I get your point.  I see what you mean

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, English plays an important role in online meetings and business negotiations in the digital era. It serves as a global communication tool that enables people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to collaborate effectively. Successful online communication requires not only English proficiency but also digital communication skills, professionalism, and cultural awareness. Therefore, mastering English for virtual interaction has become an essential skill for academic, professional, and international success.

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AUTHOR’S PROFILE



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ENGLISH FOR DIGITAL BUSINESS

Digital technology has revolutionized the way businesses communicate, market products and interact with customers. In this era of digital revolution, English has become a key skill for effective communication in global corporate environments. It has become increasingly important for students and professionals to be able to use English effectively to participate in digital business activities. This book, English for Digital Business, is intended to be a practical and contextualized English language learning material related to digital business communication. This book covers many themes, such as the importance of English in digital business, writing business emails, writing product descriptions, promoting on social media, communicating with customers, business presentations, writing website content, and online meetings and negotiations. Each chapter aims to help readers understand how English is used in real digital business environments. Readers should be able to strengthen their communication skills, broaden their business vocabulary and use English successfully in many professional situations, particularly in the fast-changing digital business environment.



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