Castledown

OPEN ACCESS

Language Education & Assessment
ISSN 2209-3591
https://www.castledown.com/journals/lea/

Language Education & Assessment, 8(1), 102673 (2025)
https://doi.org/10.29140/lea.v8n1.102673

Unveiling Trends and Gaps: A Systematic Review of Business English Teaching Research in China (2007–2023)

KE HU[a]

ASMAA ALSAQQAF[b]

[a]*Faculty of Education and Sports Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia*
ke_hu96@outlook.com

[b]*Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning (PPIB), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia*
asma3030@ums.edu.my

Abstract

A rapidly increasing body of research shows that language skills significantly impact decision-making in today's globalized business environments. Based on findings from a large data-driven literature survey using the PRISMA framework, this study applied descriptive statistics and content analysis to provide a comprehensive synthesis of key features of China's business English teaching, as seen through the lens of n = 23 major research studies, drawn from a total of N = 521 English journal articles published during 2007 to 2023. The synthesis suggests that (1) curriculum development, language acquisition, technology-aided language learning, and assessment in language learning were found to be the most focal topics among business English teaching; and (2) in most studies, quantitative research was utilized compared to a medium use of mixed methods and the least use of a qualitative approach to address issues raised within business English teaching. However, (3) a clear gap is identified by considering these findings for future research agendas, suggesting a possible investigation into teaching reforms of business English teaching and research methodology and setting. This study also advocates for more multi-level studies and suggests paying greater attention to potential new data sources and means of analysis. Future directions and implications are also discussed.

Keywords: business English, ESP, Chinese EFL, systematic review, trends and gaps

Copyright: *© 2025 Ke Hu & Asmaa AlSaqqaf. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.*
Data Availability Statement: *All relevant data are within this paper.*

Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) plays a pivotal role in the sustainable development of English language teaching (ELT) and has emerged as a topic of increasing interest in education. Similar to the concept of sustainable development, learning a foreign language (FL) emphasizes ensuring a well-rounded education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities among language learners. This is because learning a FL facilitates cross-cultural communication, enhances employability and competitiveness, and improves cognitive abilities (Alshayban, 2022). In this context, ESP makes foreign language education more specialized, aiding in the integration of language knowledge with specific academic disciplines. This integration highlights the need to adjust and optimize the professional construction of higher education institutions, break down disciplinary barriers, strengthen interdisciplinary integration, and cultivate versatile talents who can adapt to economic and social development as well as industrial transformation (Rafiq et al., 2021). Moreover, ESP enables students to interact meaningfully with the content of their specific disciplines. This interaction enhances their enthusiasm and participation in the learning process. By focusing on the language aspects of their subjects, ESP also helps learners become more proficient in using English in their fields of study and professional contexts. Additionally, it contributes to the development of students' intercultural and digital literacy (Galante, 2014). This, in turn, broadens their international perspective and boosts their communication skills. Consequently, students are better equipped to articulate China's narrative and present an authentic, multifaceted, and holistic image of the nation to the world (Chao, 2023).

Under the backdrop of China's successful entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, the importance of English in the business sector has surged (Wang et al., 2015). This trend prompted the Ministry of Education to establish undergraduate business English programs in 2007, which are now offered by over 400 higher education institutions (Dai & Liu, 2016). The Belt and Road Initiative, launched in 2013, further amplified this need by boosting global trade and emphasizing interdisciplinary development based on English (Ruan, 2019). These developments highlight the crucial role of English as a bridge in international business communication within China's education system. Its practical application has shifted from merely examining learners' language proficiency to fostering cross-cultural competency (Hu et al., 2024). Given the increasing demand for multi-talents in China, reforms in teaching business English at universities have become crucial.

Since late 2018, under the background of the new liberal arts reform, Chinese universities have emphasized interdisciplinary education to cultivate high-quality talents (Zhang et al., 2024). This reform provides theoretical support for breaking down the traditional barriers between humanities majors and other disciplines (Zhou, 2023). In response, local universities are redefining their foreign language programs to serve as the foundation for developing professionals with a diverse knowledge base that spans both the social sciences and natural sciences (Cheng, 2022). By integrating digital and information technologies (ICTs) into the curriculum, these institutions are advancing interdisciplinary research in foreign languages and are committed to constructing robust interdisciplinary teams dedicated to teaching and research (Guo, 2022). This commitment is a response to the increasingly interconnected and technologically driven world. The impact of business English has expanded in China as it has evolved into a new discipline, indicating a notable development in language education.

While researchers have conducted various studies related to business English teaching previously, Zhao et al. (2017) identified key issues in Chinese educational research articles, including a lack of rigour and systematic literature reviews, unclear research designs, and insufficient practical recommendations. These flaws potentially weaken the studies' theoretical base and limit their practical utility. To address this gap, the current study employs a systematic literature review and content analysis to comprehensively assess the status of empirical research in China's business English program.

It delves into the teaching research trends within business English, aiming to understand the current achievements and identify emerging development patterns. The following are the research questions (RQs) to be addressed in the study.

- RQ1: What are the characteristics of the development of business English teaching across different research stages in China?
- RQ2: Which areas of interest do the reviewed studies emphasize?
- RQ3: What research approach, instruments and primary data source were used in business English teaching research carried out in China?
- RQ4: What is the future research direction for business English teaching in the Chinese higher education context?

Research Methodology

The systematic review process adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, which consist of four stages, known as identification, screening, eligibility, and included (Page et al., 2021), as shown in Figure 1. Using electronic databases, relevant studies were meticulously selected from reliable journals. Given the diverse literature on ELT and business English instruction, the primary focus of this research was to retrieve empirical studies related to China's business English teaching. This approach aimed to ensure the comprehensive inclusion of potential articles directly or indirectly related to this topic.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection procedures adhere to the PRISMA guidelines, as displayed above in Figure 1. Further details are illustrated as follows.

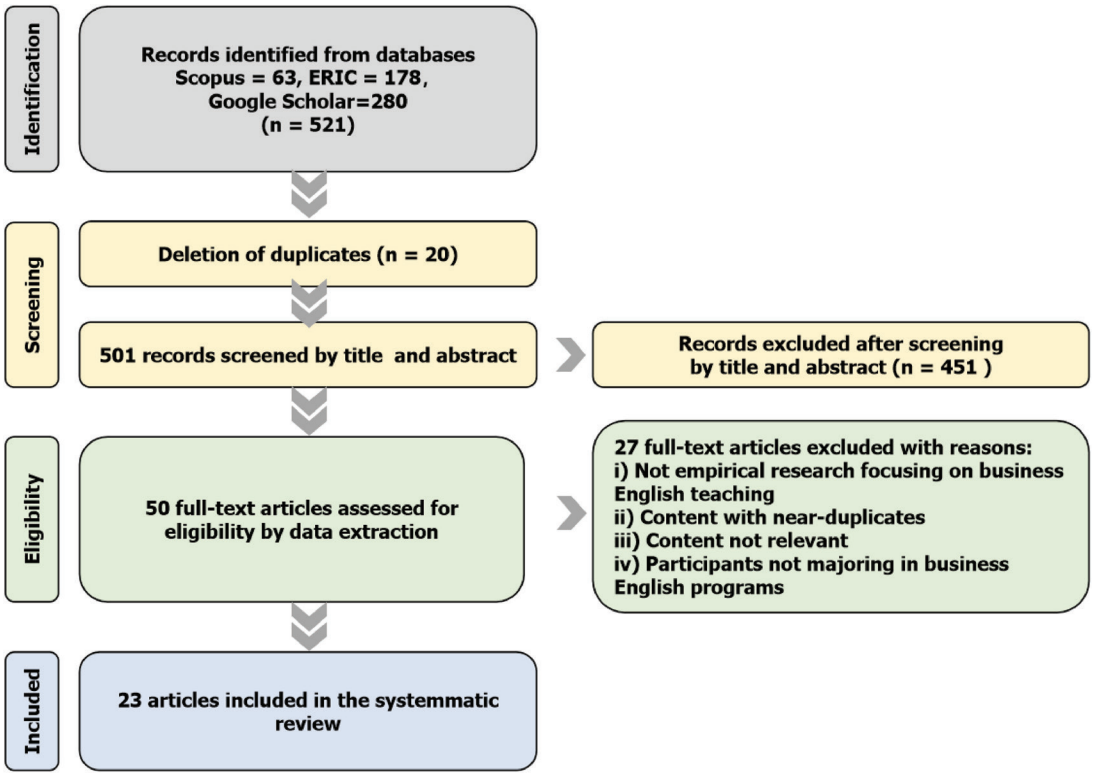


Figure 1 *Flow diagram of the PRISMA systematic review.*

Identification Phase

In the initial stage of selecting literature for the review, three databases were chosen: Scopus, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Google Scholar. These databases are commonly utilized for systematic reviews (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020). The justifications are also given that business English is a specialized subfield of ESP, requiring targeted resources. While Web of Science (WoS) excels in citation metrics and high-impact journals, it may not offer the field-specific relevance needed for business English studies. Databases like Scopus and Google Scholar provide more comprehensive coverage, including a broader range of scholarly outputs. Additionally, ERIC offers targeted collections focusing on pedagogical approaches, industry-specific communication, and corporate language use, making it a more suitable choice for China's business English teaching research.

Over the past decades, research publications related to the teaching of business English in China have steadily increased. To identify relevant publications from 2007 to 2023, it is important to consider that business English was formally recognized as an independent major by China's Ministry of Education in 2007 (Ruan, 2019). By 2023, research in this area had stabilized, with several notable publication trends emerging in response to its development under the Belt and Road Initiative and the new liberal arts educational reform. Therefore, a specific search string was employed (see Table 1). Although similar studies have focused on ESP disciplines, this study primarily concentrates on business English teaching in China, targeting language skills instruction within the business English domain, which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Consequently, only publications related to business English teaching and language skills were considered. This search yielded a total of 521 records within the databases.

Table 1 *Search string used for article identification*

Database	Search string
Scopus ERIC Google Scholar	"English for Specific Purposes" OR "ESP" OR "business English major" OR "Chinese business English teaching" OR "business English skills" OR "business English speaking" OR "oral business English" OR "business English listening" OR "business English writing" OR "business English reading"

Screening Phase

After the articles were identified from these three databases, the screening phase began. The first step of this phase was to eliminate duplicate articles appearing in more than one database. Based on the initial screening, 20 duplicate articles were removed, leaving 501 articles for further selection. These 501 articles were screened based on their titles, abstracts, and keywords, with a requirement that they be related to business English and language skills (Page et al., 2021). The primary reasons for exclusion were mainly twofold. First, many articles were excluded due to a non-teaching focus. These articles did not address teaching practices or language skills instruction. For example, studies on business communication theories or general business culture were deemed irrelevant because they lacked a clear connection to pedagogical approaches or classroom applications. Second, articles were excluded if they were based on a non-Chinese context. While these studies might have valuable insights, they did not directly contribute to the understanding of business English teaching practices specifically within China. Excluding these 451 articles allowed the study to focus on publications specifically addressing business English teaching in China. The remaining 50 articles were then screened using the inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Table 2).

Table 2 *Inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the screening phase*

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Studies published between 2007 and 2023	Studies published before 2007
The participants in the study were students majoring in business English at the tertiary level	Not focused on participants from higher education institutions
Full-text and peer-reviewed research articles from journals	Conference proceedings, review articles, book chapters, reports
The text was written in English	Text not written in English
Empirical studies conducted in Chinese contexts	Empirical studies not conducted in Chinese contexts
Related to business English teaching, and language skills acquisition (listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills)	Not related to business English teaching, and language skills acquisition (listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills)

Eligibility Phase

The third phase involved assessing the eligibility of 50 shortlisted full-text articles. This process included reading the papers in detail and selecting those that aligned with the following inclusion criteria outlined as follows: (a) the study included relevant information about business English teaching, (b) the study included relevant information about language skills aspects, and (c) the study included relevant information about its research methodology. Following this process, 23 studies that met the selection criteria were considered for the final extraction based on the research questions.

Inclusion Phase

This systematic review focuses on empirical research on business English teaching and its role in language skill acquisition. The results show that 10 articles were from Scopus, 12 articles from ERIC, and one article from Google Scholar. The purpose of these studies is related to the empirical research of business English teaching and language skills teaching in Chinese universities.

Coding Scheme Development

Content analysis is a research method that systematically codes and categorizes data. It is widely used in systematic reviews for the systematic classification and analysis of qualitative data (Burla et al., 2008). In this study, content analysis was applied to all 23 selected publications to identify key themes and patterns. The process involved the following steps. The initial coding process involved the first author reading through the publications several times to identify key themes and concepts, capturing the raw data without imposing preconceived categories. To ensure the robustness of the identified themes, the first author consulted with the other co-author, who has experience in the field of ELT and qualitative analysis. The co-authors reviewed the initial themes and provided feedback on their relevance and accuracy. Additionally, for further validation of the identified themes, two external experts with relevant experience in qualitative research and ELT were consulted. Both experts reviewed the themes and provided their comments to ensure consistency and reliability (Brod et al., 2009). To ensure the reliability of the data analysis, intercoder reliability checks were conducted (Cofie et al., 2022). These agreed-upon themes were then used to categorize and analyze the data.

Quality of Selected Studies

To assess the quality of the empirical evidence, each selected paper was read carefully and scored on a scale of 1 to 3 using the five dimensions proposed by Connolly et al. (2012), with 3 representing high quality, 2 representing medium quality, and 1 representing low quality. Each paper could score a total of 5 to 15 points. This framework evaluates: (1) the alignment of the research design with the research question; (2) the appropriateness of the research methods and analysis; (3) the generalizability of the findings; (4) the relevance of the research focus area; and (5) the credibility of the research findings. All included papers met the acceptable criteria for these five dimensions.

Data Analysis and Results

Overall, a systematic review encompassed 23 relevant papers (see Table 3). These studies collectively involved 2953 student participants, including 64 postgraduates and 2889 undergraduates majoring in business English in the context of Chinese higher education. The research was conducted by various institutions across three countries, encompassing both public and private sectors. These papers address a range of issues related to teaching business English in China.

Table 3 *Overview of selected papers*

Author(s) & publishing year	Title	Sample size	Research affiliation
Wu (2012)	An empirical study on needs analysis of a college business English course	120 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Zhu & Zhang (2013)	An empirical study on the curriculum construction of business English for international trade based on the case of GDUFS	100 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Chen & Intaraprasert (2014)	Reading strategies employed by university business English majors with different levels of reading proficiency	926 undergraduates	Thai public university
Dai & Liu (2016)	An empirical study on business English teaching and development in China - a needs analysis approach	226 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Gao et al. (2016)	Qzone weblog for critical peer feedback to improve business English writing: A case of Chinese undergraduates	6 undergraduates	Malaysian public university
Zhu et al. (2016)	Research on the education system of business English courses based on the case of GDUFS	68 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Deng et al. (2016)	The integration of intercultural business communication training and business English teaching	190 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Chen (2017)	Corpus-aided business English collocation pedagogy: An empirical study in Chinese EFL learners	23 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Li (2018)	Influence of computer-aided instruction model on business English writing teaching effect	93 undergraduates	Chinese private university

(*Continued*)

Author(s) & publishing year	Title	Sample size	Research affiliation
Martyn (2018)	Integrating content and language in business English teaching in China: First-year students' perceptions and learning experience	72 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Zhou (2018)	On building a specialized Chinese English / English Chinese electronic dictionary for Chinese business English learners	254 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Lu & Zhu (2019)	An empirical study on postgraduate education of business English in China	64 postgraduates	Chinese public university
Yue & Wang (2019)	Teaching approach of theory-centered course for freshmen of business English major: A case study of "research methodology" course	163 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Guo & Zhou (2019)	The analysis of the problems in the business English teaching assessment system and suggestions for improvements	128 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Xu (2020)	Applying MALL to an EFL listening and speaking course: An action research Approach	61 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Chen (2021)	An empirical study on the application of frequent quizzes to business English courses	45 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Xu et al. (2021)	Characteristics and effectiveness of teacher feedback on online business English oral presentations	24 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Zhang (2021)	Construction and implementation of a new intelligent teaching model of business English based on constructivism	96 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Xiao (2022)	Flipped-learning approach in a business English translation course in a Chinese independent college	26 undergraduates	Chinese private university
Simpson et al. (2022)	Business English students' multifaceted and contradictory perceptions of intercultural communication education (ICE) at a Chinese university	8 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Sun & Asmawi (2023)	The effect of presentation-assimilation-discussion (PAD) class model on Chinese undergraduates' business English writing performance	50 undergraduates	Malaysian public university
Mu & Yu (2023)	Developing intercultural competence in college business English students: A study of innovative teaching in China	65 undergraduates	Chinese public university
Li & Modehira (2023)	Optimizing business English learning among freshmen in a private university in China with BERIUVE	145 undergraduates	Thai private university

Characteristics of the Development of Business English

Figure 2 illustrates the annual count of papers related to selected China's business English teaching research. The general trend indicates a rise in the number of publications over time. It is noted that there was no increase in publications (n = 2) before 2014. A more significant rise in publications (n = 5) is evident between 2014 and 2016. Since 2018, there has been a noticeable and consistent increase in the number of publications (n = 15).

Figure 3 highlights the dominant role of public universities in research, with 17 papers authored by researchers affiliated with public universities in China, followed by two from Malaysia and one from

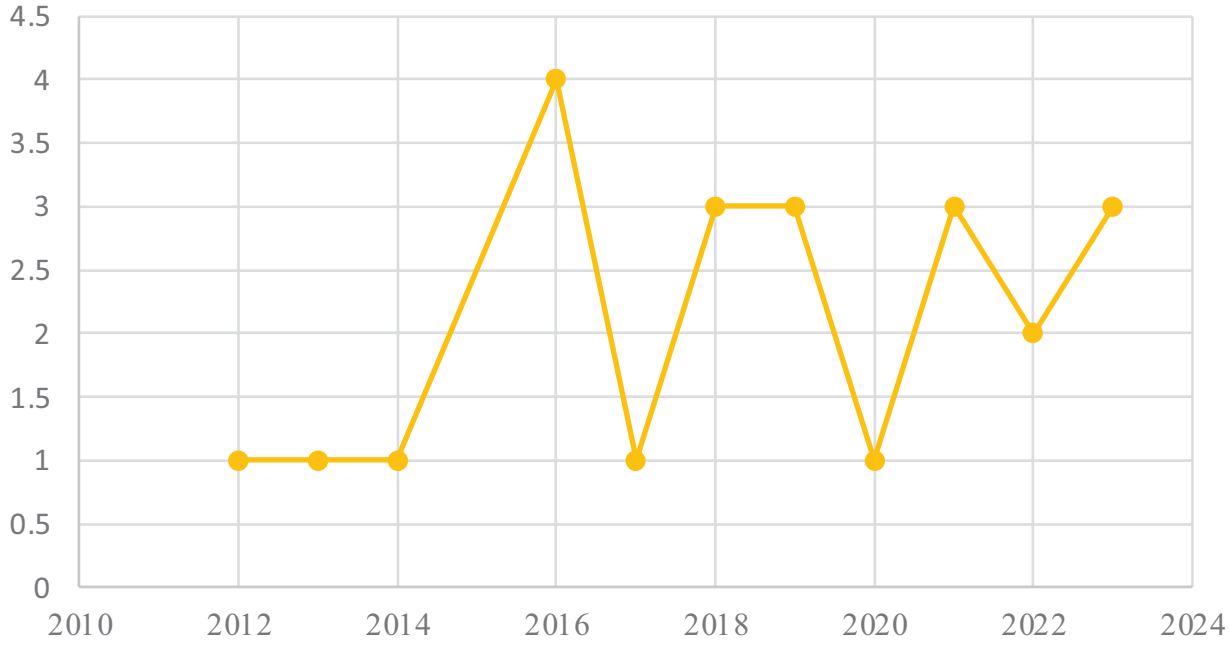


Figure 2 *Publishing year of reviewed papers.*

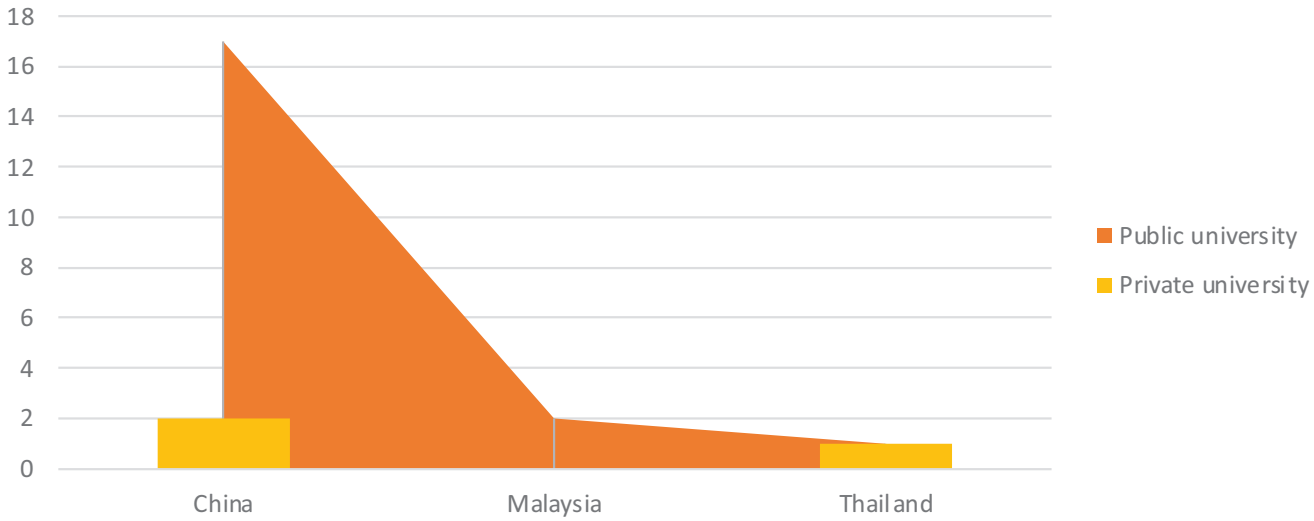


Figure 3 *Research affiliation of the first author in reviewed papers.*

Thailand. In contrast, only two papers were authored by researchers from private universities in China, with one from Thailand and none from Malaysia. This suggests a strong reliance on public university research in China, while the private sector plays a much smaller role.

Research Instrument and Data Sources

Given the data sources extracted from various studies, researchers utilized diverse data sources (see Figure 4). Specifically, these primary data sources included questionnaires, interviews, documents (e.g., reflective journals and feedback) and observations, involving participants ranging from small groups to entire classes, across multiple schools.

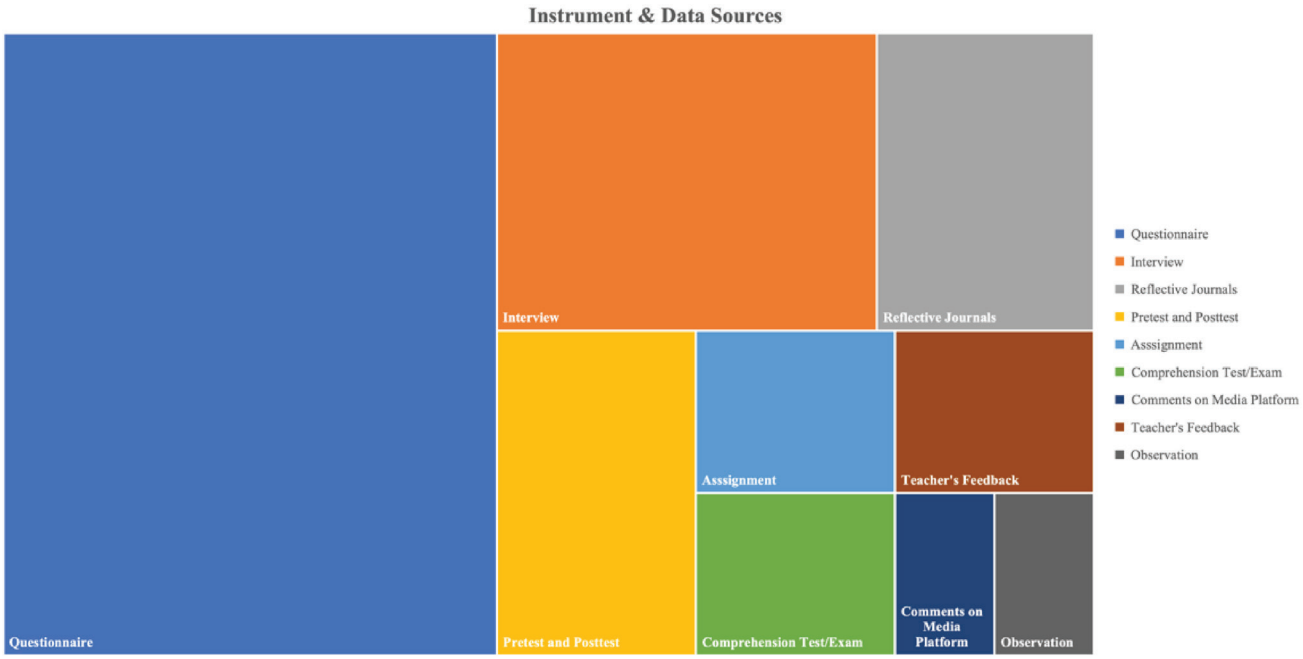


Figure 4 *Summary of instruments and data sources utilized in reviewed papers.*

The study designs predominantly employed cross-sectional research with Chinese business English students as participants. Questionnaires were the most common data source, with 19 studies utilizing them. Interviews (7), reflective journals (4), and pre- and post-tests (4) followed. Additionally, other data collection methods included student assignments (2), exams (2), online platform comments (1), teacher feedback (2), and observations (1).

Areas of Research Interest

Figure 5 presents the areas of research interest of the selected 23 studies. When reviewing these studies, the total number of research interests identified may exceed 23, as a single paper can address multiple research interests. Given this, the most popular area of research interest is curriculum development, with seven studies. This is followed by teaching methodology, with six studies; second language acquisition, with five studies; needs analysis and intervention strategy, with four studies each; assessment in language learning and technology/mobile-assisted language learning, with three studies each. The least popular areas of research interest are teaching effectiveness, with only one study, concerns about business English research in Chinese private higher education, and student experience, with only two studies each.

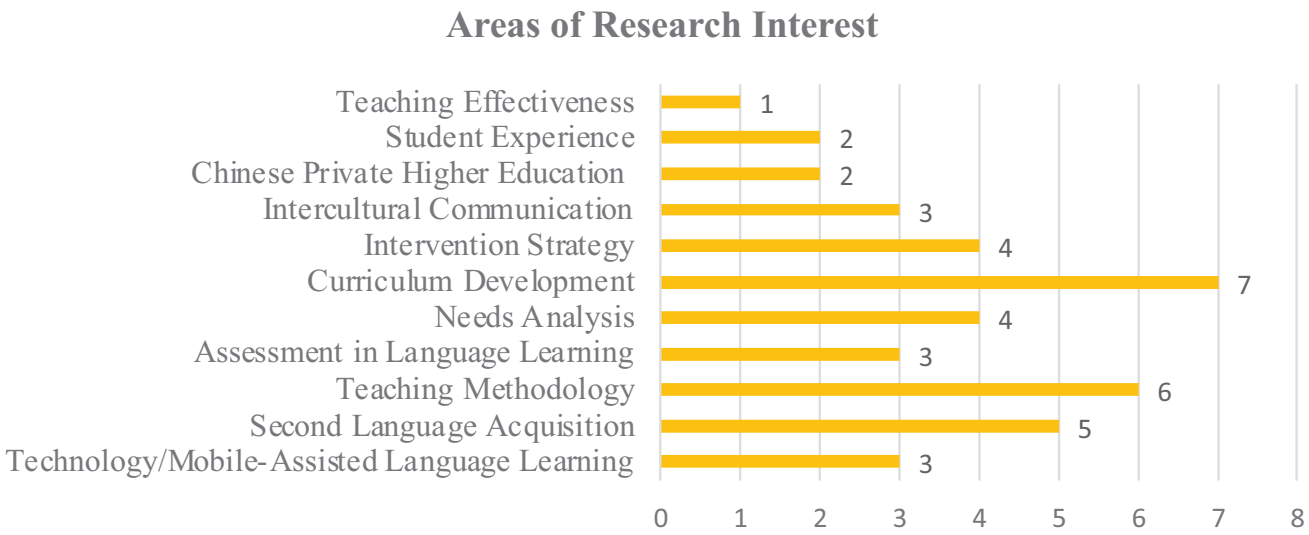


Figure 5 *Summary of research interest areas focused in reviewed papers.*

Research Approach and Data Sources

Figure 6 presents the research approaches used in the 23 selected studies. The majority of the studies (61%) employed a quantitative approach (14 studies), followed by seven mixed-methods studies (29%) and two qualitative studies (9%). This indicates that most researchers prefer to use quantitative methods to conduct their research.

In various research approaches, the sample size was categorized according to Kline's (2005) criteria: small (<100), medium (100–200), and large (>200). Table 4 reveals that approximately 60.9% of all studies fell into the small sample category, with participant counts ranging from 6 to 190. Additionally, qualitative studies typically employed small sample sizes, typically ranging from 6 to 8 participants in these 23 selected studies.

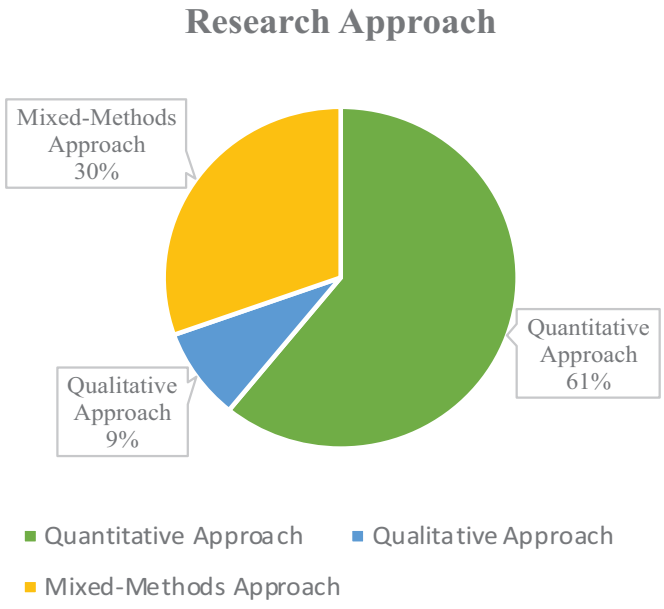


Figure 6 *Summary of research approach used in reviewed papers.*

Table 4 *Sample size by research approach*

Research approach (n = 23)	Sample size		
	Small (<100)	Medium (100–200)	Large (>200)
Quantitative approach	5	6	3
Qualitative approach	2	/	/
Mixed-methods approach	7	/	/
Total	14	6	3

Future Research Agenda

After conducting content analysis using recommendations extracted from reviewed literature, it was found that only 13 studies explicitly specified their recommendations. The relevant trends for the future research agenda in the field of business English teaching in China, spanning from 2007 to 2023, have been summarized and can be observed in Figure 7. Upon consolidating and emerging similar topics, two distinct thematic trends for the future research agenda (see Table 5) are identified as follows: teaching reforms of business English teaching, and research methodology and setting.



Figure 7 *Word cloud (https://www.wordclouds.com) on summarized trends for future research agenda.*

Table 5 *Thematic trends for future research agenda*

Main themes	Sub-themes
Teaching reforms of business English majors	*Technology integration *Refinement of teaching models and approaches *Curriculum and assessment reforms *Instillment of intercultural consideration for business English teaching *Professional development and student support
Research methodology and setting	*Longitudinal studies and empirical studies *Concerns on business English teaching research in a private institution

Discussion

This study provides a systematic review of studies carried out on the Chinese business English teaching at the tertiary education level from 2007 to 2023. The PRISMA framework, which consists of four stages, was utilized to choose the relevant papers for rigorous review. The 23 papers that fulfilled the selection criteria were subsequently coded. The key findings that emerged from the analysis of these studies, based on the results, are elaborated in the following sections.

Discussion of RQ1: What are the Characteristics of the Development of Business English Teaching Across Different Research Stages in China?

The number of yearly publications can serve as a profound indicator of the level of progress within a specific field over a set period. It is indicated that there was a notable increase in research activities. These characteristics of business English teaching in China can be classified into three stages.

Stage 1: Steady Start (2007–2013)

In 2007, when the business English program was officially introduced, business English, as an interdisciplinary university program, represents a curricular reform in China' education system amidst the rapid development of international exchanges, resulting in a minor increase in the number of publications. This could be because business English was just starting to be recognized as a major at Chinese universities. However, as declared by Zhu et al. (2016) that since 2002, there has been a consistent increase in the number of papers, research projects, and publications dealing with business English. Despite this growth, high-quality research outputs remain relatively scarce. During the initial developmental stage, it reflects the early efforts to understand the specific linguistic requirements and educational needs of learners in business-related fields, with the aim of informing the design and implementation of effective curriculum frameworks (Wu, 2012; Zhu & Zhang, 2013). According to Ruan (2019), the number of universities and colleges in China officially approved by the Ministry of Education to offer a major in business English has increased to 293 since 2007. During this stage, the quality of research was largely foundational in nature. Although the number of studies was limited, they laid the groundwork for subsequent progress in the field.

Stage 2: Rapid Growth (2014–2017)

A significant surge in publications became evident around 2014, which may correlate with the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013. This initiative likely heightened the imperative for Chinese business sectors to engage with global partners. Furthermore, business and economics are closely intertwined, exhibiting robust interdisciplinary ties with fields such as education (Cao & Alon, 2020). This initiative aims to cultivate talents who can communicate effectively on a global scale and possess international literacy in business fields. Language proficiency is considered an indicator of language mastery, including a range of attributes essential for improving the language itself and its social context of use. Having effective business English communication is essential for commercial success. However, poor language skills, inappropriate communication, and other related factors may result in significant revenue losses for a capable global company (Ismail & Lim, 2023). Based on the reviewed papers published between 2014 and 2017, the research primarily focused on language skills acquisition, including reading and writing, as well as the onset of technology integration. Additionally, there was exploration of the concept of intercultural communication to be integrated into business English teaching for enhanced teaching effects (Chen & Intaraprasert, 2014; Gao et al., 2016; Deng et al., 2016; Chen, 2017). As Ai et al. (2018) noted that with China's economic growth over the past decades, a great amount of Chinese business activities are facing challenges of international development. There-

fore, it emphasizes the practical application of acquired knowledge in both school life and future career growth, necessitating strong language skills from students, especially in the context of China's current efforts to strengthen international collaborations and greatly benefit the company's growth and development.

Stage 3: Stable Development (2018 and Onwards)

Since 2018, foreign language education in Chinese higher education has gradually integrated into the era of new liberal arts construction, there has been a marked and consistent rise in the number of publications. In the field of business English, research has continuously expanded its scope, delving into the essence of business English teaching and bridging theory with practical instruction. This has led to fresh trends in teaching approaches. Researchers have also consistently published papers in this area. For instance, studies by Martyn (2018), Yue and Wang (2019), Zhang (2021), and Sun and Asmawi (2023) reflect a re-exploration of existing teaching theories in business English teaching. Their goal is to enhance the quality of business English instruction, ensuring students develop essential professional competencies and core literacy to meet the demands of technological and social advancements. By continually updating teaching content and promoting pedagogical reforms, they align with the principles of new liberal arts development (Zhou, 2023).

Moreover, the integration of information technology with the liberal arts has become an international trend, and the construction of foreign language education also needs such integration. As the reviewed papers revealed that Li (2018), Xu (2020), and Xu et al. (2021) have begun to apply information technology to enhance the teaching of business English, particularly in the learning of language skills. Furthermore, the concept of digital humanities has been explored within the context of a new liberal arts background in foreign language education (Chen & Liang, 2023). For instance, Chen (2017) conducted research on corpus-assisted business English teaching aimed at helping students better understand the specialized terminology used in business contexts. In addition to these elements, the practice of intercultural communication should also be integrated in accordance with the requirements of the new liberal arts curriculum. Among the papers reviewed, those by Simpson et al. (2022) and Mu and Yu (2023) have been noted for emphasizing this dimension in business English teaching. This is corroborated by Wang (2022), who confirms that within the context of the new liberal arts, students should develop abilities in critical thinking and cross-cultural communication.

In addition, it is intriguing to note that, as highlighted in Figure 3, the development of new liberal arts disciplines also promotes research in business English at private universities. During this period, only two Chinese private universities had their research on business English included in these 23 reviewed papers. Further supporting this trend, the studies conducted by Li (2018) and Xiao (2022) focused on enhancing crucial literary skills in business English, specifically translation and writing. This phenomenon could be attributed to various factors. It could be assumed that public and private universities often have different access to research resources. Research conducted at public universities may be more likely to receive government grants or funding from other public sources, thereby enhancing the feasibility and scope of research projects (Hu et al., 2023). There is a several academic collaborations between Chinese and foreign universities, encompassing both public and private institutions (Chen & Intaraprasert, 2014; Gao et al., 2016; Sun & Asmawi, 2023; Li & Modehira, 2023). This collaboration can be explained by several key factors. First, China's Belt and Road Initiative, which promotes cross-cultural exchange and economic cooperation, has significantly strengthened the connections between universities in China and those in participating countries (Peters, 2020). Second, the increasing number of Chinese students pursuing higher education abroad, especially in countries along the Belt and Road, has driven foreign universities to develop research initiatives focused on Chinese business English programs (Zhao et al., 2023). This trend is further supported by Xinhua (2025), which

notes that China plans to broaden its academic exchanges and enhance cooperation in education and research on a global scale in the future, thereby intensifying such collaborative efforts.

Discussion of RQ2: Which Areas of Interest do the Reviewed Studies Emphasize?

Numerous studies have highlighted the significance of business English teaching in the curricular reform of foreign language education in China. They have portrayed it as an engaging interdisciplinary undergraduate program that enhances linguistic skills and content knowledge related to business. However, the quest for the best practices in business English teaching continues, as researchers explore ways to address students' needs, teaching effectiveness, technology-aided language learning, learning experiences, language acquisition and curriculum development.

Evidence gathered from China's business English teaching was the focal point of the research. Nearly all relevant studies demonstrated that business English-related research seeks possibilities for curriculum development and teaching methodology. As mentioned earlier, these studies underscored either needs analysis or intervention strategies. The effects of varying aspects with different focuses on business English teaching were captured in studies (Wu, 2012; Dai & Liu, 2016; Sun & Asmawi, 2023; Mu & Yu, 2023; Li & Modehira, 2023), which presented an exploration ranging from preliminary to experimental research on language learning outcomes in business English teaching. Among these studies, an in-depth one conducted by Sun and Asmawi (2023) probed the effects of the presentation-assimilation-discussion (PAD) teaching model on business English writing. In contrast, research on business English postgraduate education is scarce, with only Lu & Zhu (2019) exploring this theme. Some research focused on other aspects of learning or desirable skills, such as assessment in language learning (Guo & Zhou, 2019) and learner experience (Martyn, 2018). However, these topics tended to be less prevalent in the research agenda compared to curriculum development. The research conducted by Gao et al. (2016) and Qi and Hu (2020) focused on the acquisition of business English language skills through technology. They found that learners had a positive attitude towards the use of information technology, particularly in improving their writing and listening skills. The learners also expressed overall satisfaction with the course. In the realm of business English teaching, the importance of intercultural elements has been highlighted in several studies. Deng et al. (2016) delved into the challenges of teaching intercultural competence and proposed principles for its integration. Simpson et al. (2022) scrutinized students' diverse perspectives on intercultural communication education, discussing a range of topics including opinion diversity, critical reflection, and the debate over native vs non-native teachers. In a successful intervention, Mu and Yu (2023) developed intercultural competence among university students, leading to improvements in attitudes, knowledge, skills, and awareness. Chen and Intaraprasert's study (2014) illuminated the diversity within business English teaching by examining the reading strategies of university students majoring in business English across different proficiency levels. They discovered that students with higher reading proficiency tended to employ reading strategies more frequently and effectively than their peers with moderate or lower proficiency. This finding suggests a variation in how students approach reading tasks based on their proficiency, underscoring the diverse landscape of business English educational practices.

In summary, the established research interests represent a significant shift in teaching methodologies and research priorities within China's business English teaching. Notably, these trends align with the evolution of business English teaching and ESP disciplines globally, where curriculum reform, teaching assessment, technology-enhanced instruction, and student-centered learning are garnering widespread attention (Dou et al., 2023). These trends indicate a broader alignment with international practices, heralding a positive impact on business English teaching in China. By equipping Chinese business English graduates with skills and knowledge that match societal demands, these trends hold the potential to enhance their competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Discussion of RQ3: What Research Approach, Instruments and Primary Data Source were used in Business English Teaching Research Carried Out in China?

In this study, business English undergraduates constituted the primary data source due to the research objectives. The research approach used in 23 reviewed studies is predominantly quantitative, as evidenced by 61% (14 out of 23) of the studies employing this method. This suggests a preference among researchers for quantitative methods, which offer objectivity, replicability, generalizability, and precision (Mills & Gay, 2016). However, the mixed-methods approach was also utilized in 30% (7 out of 23) of the studies, indicating an appreciation for the comprehensive insights that the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods can provide. Lastly, qualitative methods were used in 9% (2 out of 23) of the studies, underscoring their value in yielding an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena, particularly those involving human behavior and experiences. These findings can be justified that quantitative methods are favored for their objectivity and ability to produce generalizable results, which are crucial for fields like business English research that require broad applicability. Additionally, structured data collection and statistical analysis in quantitative research are more straightforward and less time-consuming than mixed or qualitative methods, appealing to researchers with limited resources or tight deadlines. The use of quantitative methods was predominant, but the inclusion of mixed and qualitative methods highlights the diversity of research approaches. These varied methods are chosen based on research questions, data nature, and researcher goals, thereby enhancing the depth of research and effectively tackling specific concerns (Hu et al., 2024).

Due to varying research objectives, the instruments used in these studies exhibited slight differences. For quantitative data collection, which typically involved a medium to large number of participants (see Table 4, Kline, 2005), common tools included questionnaires, evaluation tests for intervention implementation, and quantified language proficiency assessments. Qualitative research, on the other hand, predominantly relies on interviews and documents (such as assignments and reflective journals), with usually a small number of participants involved in case-based studies (Hainey, 2016). Some innovative data acquisition methods were also employed, such as analyzing online interaction records extracted from social media in studies (Gao et al., 2016) to evaluate students' critical peer feedback in their business English writing. While most research adhered to traditional data collection methods, an increasing number of reviewed papers adopted a mixed-methods approach. This approach combined quantitative and qualitative data sources (typically questionnaires and interviews) to provide a comprehensive understanding of specific research interests. However, whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, rigor and appropriateness are paramount (Creswell, 2008). This implies that research designs should be carefully considered to ensure the collection of reliable data to demonstrate whether relevant issues of business English teaching can effectively address the research questions posed. This is exemplified by these 23 reviewed papers, quantitative investigations are utilized as the optimal measure for needs analysis using questionnaires (Wu, 2012; Dai & Liu, 2016), qualitative methods are employed to explore perceptions towards certain phenomena with a small number of participants (Simpson et al., 2022), and mixed-methods approaches are suitable for testing the effects of implementing proposed intervention strategies in language acquisition (Sun & Asmawi, 2023; Li & Modehira, 2023).

Discussion of RQ4: What is the Future Research Direction for Business English Teaching in the Chinese Higher Education Context?

Between 2007 and 2023, research in the field of business English within Chinese universities has progressively deepened. Driven by national policies and directives from the China's Ministry of Education, business English teaching has continuously evolved, undergoing reforms and transformations to align with emerging trends. Throughout this period, there has been a phased increase in the number

of published research articles. Although the number of publications declined after reaching a peak in 2016, it has remained at a relatively high level. Moreover, looking ahead to the future interest areas of research in business English teaching, viable and potential research directions have been identified from these reviewed articles. These directions are discussed with a focus on the teaching reforms of business English majors and the research methodology and setting.

Above all, teaching reforms in business English majors aligns with the goals of China's 14th Five-Year Plan for English language education. It is crucial for shaping effective pedagogy and preparing students for global career growth and to cultivate innovative talents (Liu et al., 2024). In other words, they involve updating and improving the way business English is taught to better meet the needs of students and the demands of the global job market. Beyond traditional educational technology, social media platforms can serve as valuable tools for technology-assisted language learning (Hu et al., 2024). For example, research by Gao et al. (2016) shows how online blogs can enhance students' writing skills through critical peer feedback. Future studies could conduct comparative analyses using online blogs and social media platforms like WeChat to assess their impact on students' writing abilities. Secondly, regarding teaching methods, future studies can optimize and innovate within existing models. Although the flipped classroom model has matured and its effectiveness in business English courses has been demonstrated by Xiao's (2022) empirical research, combining artificial intelligence (AI) with teaching could further enhance instruction. For example, developing and piloting an AI-enhanced flipped classroom model in a business English course could provide valuable insights. This could be achieved by implementing a pre-and post-test design to measure student performance and conducting surveys to gather feedback on the effectiveness of AI tools. Additionally, teaching content should go beyond language proficiency and business knowledge. As international communication grows, intercultural communication becomes a critical topic. Therefore, it is essential to design a curriculum that includes modules on intercultural communication. This should emphasize not only foreign cultural awareness but also the cultivation of local values, a core aspect of foreign language education in China (Chen et al., 2023; Hu et al., 2024). Lastly, continuous professional support is indispensable for both teachers and students. These areas warrant further exploration in future research to ensure ongoing updates and strengthening of the macro-level theory and practical research in the entire field of business English teaching.

When it comes to research methodology and setting, which is second theme extracted from the reviewed papers. It is recommended that scholars must prioritize research methods for trustworthy findings. Despite all papers focusing on empirical studies, preliminary analyses dominate discourse. Yet, understanding business English goes beyond these discussions alone. To advance, rigorous empirical evidence is crucial. For example, mixed-methods research offers an alternative avenue while exploring quasi-experimental approaches can enhance teaching and drive reform (Mills & Gay, 2016). Moreover, qualitative researchers are encouraged to expand their horizons beyond the prevalent interview methodology. In addition to interviews, they should enrich their data sources by observing language learners' natural performance in classroom or workplace settings. While interviews may be susceptible to social desirability bias and tend to show consciously processed information, observations offer a unique advantage (Kaushal, 2014). They capture authentic behavior and uncover effects that the interacting parties themselves may not even recognize. It is also evident that the reviewed papers in the field of quantitative studies emphasize the necessity for conducting extensive, large-scale research studies focused on business English teaching to assess the broader applicability and validity of the findings obtained (Polit & Beck, 2010). Besides that, longitudinal studies in business English teaching are scarce. Most focus on surveys and interventions, overlooking post-effects. Conducting longitudinal research requires collaboration between practitioners and researchers, posing challenges for some confined to specific work environments (White & Arzi, 2005). Moreover, there is a notable gap in studying business English teaching in Chinese private universities, despite their significance in China's higher

education. Although the government has implemented relevant policies in recent years, only two selected publications have examined undergraduate programs in the private sector, indicating a major research gap. To address this, comparative studies between public and private universities should be conducted to identify differences in curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and student outcomes. Engaging with private university stakeholders will provide policymakers with insights into the unique challenges and opportunities in the private sector, informing more effective curriculum and teaching strategies (Fan, 2020).

Implications

Considering this background, this study highlights several implications for the teaching and learning processes in business English teaching. First, practitioners could benefit from the study, for example, business English teachers can draw insights from this review when designing language skill-based courses or another relevant curriculum. By tailoring their teaching methods based on student needs, teachers can offer adaptive support at different stages of business English teaching. In other words, incorporating cross-cultural knowledge into instructional design, blending it with local culture and values, aligns business English teaching with international standards while deepening students' understanding of their own culture. Moreover, practitioners continuously assess students' disciplinary and future employment needs. Balancing academic learning with practical skills required by society is crucial to avoid suboptimal educational outcomes due to a lack of real-world experience. As a multidisciplinary field in higher education, business English should foster both language proficiency and business knowledge. Guiding students to take responsibility for their learning, enhancing their grasp of subject matter, and overcoming obstacles to understanding tasks and problem-solving methods are essential.

Limitations

This study also has certain limitations that point to potential areas for future exploration. One limitation is the exclusion of conference proceedings and book chapters. Conference proceedings were not selected for the review due to their lower impact compared to regular publications such as journal articles (Zhang & Glänzel, 2012). Book chapters were excluded because they typically focus on theoretical discussions rather than empirical studies, which was the primary interest of this research. Although book chapters undergo a rigorous review process and have several merits, their content did not align with the specific focus of this study. This could have left out significant scholarly contributions in the field of business English teaching in China. However, Zhang's work (2017) titled *Learning business English in China: The construction of professional identity* is recommended for further reading. As noted in reviews by Subero-Saenz (2019), Shi and Cheng (2018), and Planken (2018), the book's scope extends beyond its core audience, making it a valuable resource for those studying other business languages and second language acquisition.

Secondly, this systematic review was primarily based on articles sourced from databases predominantly used in the English-speaking world. This study did not consider databases such as the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), which indexes a significant amount of literature on Chinese business English teaching and its local development. This limitation, however, presents a promising opportunity for future research, especially for comparing research trends reflected in literature in different languages, primarily Chinese and English, and for identifying new directions for ESP research, especially business English teaching. These findings are expected to generate more interest and awareness about the experiences of various stakeholders in ESP contexts.

Thirdly, since the search terms and databases considered in this review were limited, some relevant studies might have been missed, the review was confined to publications in English. To mitigate bias,

the researchers also searched for Chinese equivalents of the English terms, acknowledging the existence of established English education journals in Chinese. However, these searches did not provide significant additional insights compared to the English-language literature. As Liu et al. (2018) noted, journals with a large number of articles in languages other than English tend to have lower impact factors. This is because non-English articles are generally cited less frequently, leading to a lower overall impact for the journal. While Chinese publications could have provided additional insights into business English teaching research in China, English remains the predominant language for scholarly communication.

Conclusion

The detailed review mentioned above provides preliminary insights into the evolution of Chinese business English programs within higher education in China. Notably, this review specifically focuses on research conducted between 2007 and 2023. The current study supports the progress made in the development of business English teaching in China. However, further research is needed to ensure robust recommendations for the rapid and steady growth of business English programs within the context of ESP. A more extensive review of literature from the domains associated with business English teaching in China might have provided a more nuanced understanding of the intricate nature of ESP and revealed a wider variety of empirical methods to study it. While most of these studies were authored by researchers, they reflect diverse theories and methodologies concerning interdisciplinary education, especially the in-depth research on ESP in Chinese contexts. Subsequent research could enhance this study's findings by more thoroughly integrating the contributions of ESP from other pertinent fields.

References

Ai, B. B, Wang, L. F., & Zhang, J. (2018). Using English as economic capital in a Chinese–Australian workplace: Implications for teaching business English in China. *Journal of Teaching in International Business, 29*(4), 272–288. https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2018.1557095

Alshayban, A. (2022). Teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) to Saudi Arabian banking employees. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly, 27*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2022.27.01

Brod, M., Tesler, L. E., & Christensen, T. L. (2009). Qualitative research and content validity: developing best practices based on science and experience. *Quality of Life Research*, 18, 1263–1278. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-009-9540-9

Burla, L., Knierim, B., Barth, J., Liewald, K., Duetz, M., & Abel, T. (2008). From text to codings: Intercoder reliability assessment in qualitative content analysis. *Nursing Research, 57*(2), 113–117. https://doi.org/ 10.1097/01.NNR.0000313482.33917.7d

Cao, M., & Alon, I. (2020). Intellectual structure of the belt and road initiative research: A scientometric analysis and suggestions for a future research agenda. *Sustainability, 12*(17), Article: 6901. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12176901

Chao, J. (2023). The visual politics of Brand China: Exceptional history and speculative future. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy, 19*(3), 305–316. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41254-022-00270-6

Chen, J., & Intaraprasert, C. (2014). Reading strategies employed by university business English majors with different levels of reading proficiency. *English Language Teaching*, *7*(4), 25–37. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v7n4p25

Chen, L. (2017). Corpus-aided business English collocation pedagogy: An empirical study in Chinese EFL learners. *English Language Teaching*, *10*(9), 181–197. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n9p181

Chen, L., & Liang, Z. (2023). Research on the development path of "Digital humanities literacy" for college English learners under the background of new liberal arts construction-taking the course "English speech" as an example. In SHS Web of Conferences (Vol. 179, p. 01004). EDP Sciences.

Chen, P. (2021). An empirical study on application of frequent quizzes to business English courses. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *11*(8), 936–941. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1108.09

Chen, S., Zhang, Y., & Li, R. (2023). A Study on undergraduate English program modes in China. *Education Sciences, 13*(12), 1241. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13121241

Cheng, J. S. (2022). Interdisciplinary education of foreign language majors in Chinese local universities under the background of new liberal arts. *English Language Teaching, 15*(3), 38–47. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n3p38

Cofie, N., Braund, H., & Dalgarno, N. (2022). Eight ways to get a grip on intercoder reliability using qualitative-based measures. *Canadian Medical Education Journal, 13*(2), 73–76. https://doi.org/10.36834/cmej.72504

Connolly, T. C., Boyle, E. A., Hainey, T. Macarthur, E. & Boyle, J. M. (2012). A Systematic literature review of empirical evidence on computer games and serious Games. *Computers and Education, 59*, 661–686. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.03.004

Creswell J. (2008). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage.

Dai, G. Y., & Liu, Y. (2016). An empirical study on business English teaching and development in China--A needs analysis approach. *Higher Education Studies*, *6*(2), 142–153. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/hes.v6n2p142

Deng. J. Z., Zhu, W. Z., & Dimond, E. E. (2016). The integration of intercultural business communication training and business English teaching. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(2), 77–83. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n2p77

Dou, A. Q., Chan, S. H., & Win, M. T. (2023). Changing visions in ESP development and teaching: Past, present, and future vistas. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, Article; 1140659. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1140659

Fan, G. R. (2020). Changes in educational institutions in China: 1978–2020: Analysis of education policies and legal texts from a national perspective. In G. R. Fan, & T. S. Popkewitz. *Handbook of education policy studies: Values, governance, globalization, and methodology.* Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.

Galante, A. (2014). Developing EAL learners' intercultural sensitivity through a digital literacy project. *TESL Canada Journal*, 53–53. https://doi.org/ 10.18806/tesl.v32i1.1199

Gao, X. W., Samuel, M., & Asmawi, A. (2016). Qzone weblog for critical peer feedback to improve business English writing: A case of Chinese undergraduates. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, *15*(3), 131–140.

Guo, H. X. (2022). The exploration and practice of integration and innovation in foreign language education in universities under the background of new liberal arts – A case study of English and American literature teaching. *Foreign Language Learning Theory and Practice*, 178(2), 112.

Guo. G. H., & Zhou, C. (2019). The analysis of the problems in business English teaching assessment system and suggestions for improvements. *English Language Teaching*, *12*(8), 44–53. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n8p44

Gusenbauer, M., & Haddaway, N. R. (2020). Which academic search systems are suitable for systematic reviews or meta-analyses? Evaluating retrieval qualities of Google Scholar, PubMed, and 26 other resources. *Research Synthesis Methods, 11*(2), 181–217. https://doi.org/110.1002/jrsm.1378

Hainey, T., Connolly, T. M., Boyle, E. A., Wilson, A., & Razak, A. (2016). A systematic literature review of games-based learning empirical evidence in primary education. *Computers & Education*, 102, 202–223. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.09.001

Hu, H., Li, F., & Luo, Z. (2024). The evolution of China's English education policy and challenges in higher education: analysis based on LDA and Word2Vec. *Frontiers in Education, 9*, Article: 1385602. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1385602

Hu, M., Guo, C., Wang, Y., & Ma, D. (2023). Quantitative evaluation of China's private universities provincial public funding policies based on the PMC-Index model. *PLoS One*, 18(12), e0295601. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0295601

Ismail, D. A. A., & Lim. S. P. (2023). The impact of English language on business communication in Asia: A scoping review. *LSP International Journal, 10*(1), 91–102. https://doi.org/10.11113/lspi.v10.19583

Kaushal, K. (2014). Social desirability bias in face to face interviews. Journal of Postgraduate Medicine, 60(4), 415-416. https://doi.org/10.4103/0022-3859.143989

Kline, R. (2005). *Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling (2nd ed.).* New York Guilford.

Li, H., & Modehiran, P. (2023). Optimizing business English learning among freshmen in a private university in China with BERIUVE. *International Journal of Sociologies and Anthropologies Science Reviews*, *3*(6), 57–68. https://doi.org/10.60027/ijsasr.2023.3347

Li, X. (2018). Influence of computer-aided instruction model on business English writing teaching effect. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (Online)*, *13*(3), 197. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v13i03.8396

Liu, F., Hu, G.Y, Tang, L., & Liu, W. S. (2018). The penalty of containing more non-English articles. *Scientometrics*, 114, 359–366. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-017-2577-6

Liu, N., Feng, Z., & Wang, Q. (Eds.). (2024). *Education in China and the world achievements and contemporary issues*. Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press.

Lu, X. M., & Zhu, W. Z. (2019). An empirical study on postgraduate education of business English in China. *Higher Education Studies*, *9*(4), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v9n4p1

Martyn, E. R. (2018). Integrating content and language in business English teaching in China: First year students' perceptions and learning experience. *English Language Teaching*, *11*(8), 86–102. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n8p86

Mills, G. E., & Gay, L. R. (2016). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. Pearson.

Mu, Y., & Yu, B. (2023). Developing intercultural competence in college business English students: A study of innovative teaching in China. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *92*, Article: 101747. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.101747

Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L, Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Jeremy, M. G., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., … Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *Systematic Reviews, 10*(89). https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71

Peters, M. A. (2020). China's belt and road initiative: Reshaping global higher education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 52*(6), 586–592. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2019.1615174

Planken, B. (2018). Learning business English in China: The construction of professional identity, Zuocheng Zhang, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke (2017), 10.1007/978-3-319-59291-6_1, ISBN: 978-3-319-59290-9. *English for Specific Purposes, 50*, 113–115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2017.12.003

Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2010). Generalization in quantitative and qualitative research: Myths and strategies. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 47*(11), 1451–1458. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2010.06.004

Rafiq, K. R. M., Hashim, H., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). Sustaining education with mobile learning for English for specific purposes (ESP): A systematic review (2012–2021). *Sustainability, 13*(17), Article: 9768. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179768

Ruan, B. Y. (2019). A brief exploration of the development of business English major in China-challenges and opportunities. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 9*(10), 1293–1300. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0910.05

Sarkis-Onofre, R., Catalá-López, F., Aromataris, E., & Lockwood, C. (2021). How to properly use the PRISMA Statement. *Systematic Reviews, 10*(1), 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-021-01671-z

Shi, X., & Cheng, X. (2018). Learning business English in China: The construction of professional identity. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 41*, 77–79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2018.06.007

Simpson, A., Dervin, F., & Tao, J. (2022). Business English students' multifaceted and contradictory perceptions of intercultural communication education (ICE) at a Chinese University. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *25*(6), 2041–2057. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1840508

Subero-Saenz, Á. (2019) Developing professional identity among Chinese business English students Zuocheng Zhang. Learning business English in China: The construction of professional identity (2017), Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 277 pp., ISBN-978-3-319-59290-9 (HBK). *ESP Today, 7*(1), 108–112.

Sun, L., & Asmawi, A. (2023). The effect of presentation-assimilation-discussion (PAD) class model on Chinese undergraduates' business English writing performance. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *14*(1), 57–69. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1401.07

Wang, H. N., Smyth, R., & Cheng, Z. M. (2015). The economic returns to proficiency in English in China. *China Economic Review*, *43*, 91–104. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2017.01.004

Wang, X. H. (2022). An action research on infusing moral and political education into college English teaching from the perspective of new liberal arts. *English Language Teaching, 15*(4), 39–46. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n4p39

White, R. T., & Arzi, H. J. (2005). Longitudinal studies: Designs, validity, practicality, and value. *Research in Science Education,* 35, 137–149. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-004-3437-y

Wu, Y. (2012). An empirical study on needs analysis of college business English course. *International Education Studies*, *5*(2), 216–221. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n2p216

Xiao, Z. (2022). Flipped-learning approach in business English translation course in a Chinese independent college. *English Language Teaching*, *15*(2), 61–66. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n2p61

Xinhua. (2025, January). China unveils blueprint for building strong education system by 2035. The State Council The People's Republic of China. https://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202501/20/content_WS678d85c6c6d0868f4e8eef83.html

Xu, Q. (2020). Applying MALL to an EFL listening and speaking course: An action research approach. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-TOJET*, *19*(4), 24–34.

Xu, Q., Chen, S., Wang, J., & Suhadolc, S. (2021). Characteristics and effectiveness of teacher feedback on online business English oral presentations. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, *30*(6), 631–641. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-021-00595-5

Yue. S. W, & Wang, X. F. (2019). Teaching approach of theory-centered course for freshmen of business English major: A case study of" research methodology" Course. *English Language Teaching*, *12*(3), 191–199. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n3p191

Zhang, H. (2021). Construction and implementation of a new intelligent teaching model of business English based on constructivism. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *11*(11), 1492–1498. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1111.19

Zhang, L., & Glänzel, W. (2012). Proceeding papers in journals versus the "regular" journal publications. *Journal of Informetrics, 6*(1), 88–96. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2011.06.007

Zhang, W., Zhong, X., Fan, F., & Jiang, X. (2024). Unlocking the creative potential of Chinese new liberal arts: The role of interdisciplinary education, knowledge integration, and metacognitive awareness. The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 33, 1175–1186. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-023-00788-0

Zhang, Z. C. (2017). *Learning business English in China: The construction of professional identity*, Palsgrave Macmillan.

Zhao, J., Beckett, G. H., & Wang, L. L. (2017). Evaluating the research quality of education journals in China: Implications for increasing global impact in peripheral countries. *Review of Educational Research, 87*(3), 583–618. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654317690813

Zhao, W., Osman, M. N., Omar, S. Z., & Yaakup, H. S. (2023). The cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese international students in Malaysia: A systematic review. *Asian People Journal, 6*(1), 66–81. https://doi.org/10.37231/apj.2023.6.1.391

Zhou, H. (2023). The current situation of new liberal arts construction in universities and compared with China and the West. *The Educational Review, USA, 7*(7), 1025–1030. https://doi.org/10.26855/er.2023.07.033

Zhou, Z. (2018). On building a specialized Chinese-English/English-Chinese electronic dictionary for Chinese business English learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *9*(4), 840–848. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0904.23

Zhu, W. Z, & Zhang, C. (2013). An empirical study on the curriculum construction of business English for international trade based on the case of GDUFS. *English Language Teaching*, *6*(4), 19–28. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n4p19

Zhu. Z. G., Lin, L. L., & Zhu, W. Z. (2016). Research on the education system of business English courses based on the case of GDUFS. *Higher Education Studies*, *6*(2), 127–141. http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/hes.v6n2p127