

Student-based evaluation on the pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies of ESP teachers

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Abstract

This research examines the pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers teaching Business English in the context of Outcome-Based Education (OBE). It aims to evaluate students' perceptions of teachers' competencies and to identify areas of requiring improvement to support effective learning outcomes. A mixed-method approach was employed, involving a survey to 310 undergraduate students enrolled in Business English course. The questionnaire consisted of Likert-scale items to capture quantitative data and open-ended questions to elicit qualitative insights into students' learning experiences. Quantitative data were analysed descriptively to identify trends and mean scores across competency domains, while qualitative responses were analysed through thematic analysis to uncover recurring patterns and critical issues. The results show that generally teachers' pedagogical, personal, and social competencies are very good, but the professional competencies received the lowest score because the materials suitability with students' ability is perceived as low and online classes were dominant. Qualitative data further revealed teachers' monotonous teaching methods, lack of interactivity, and limited communication responses. These findings emphasize the need to increase teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies through ESP training, needs analysis, materials development, and interactive teaching strategies to ensure effective learning in accordance with the demands of OBE Curriculum.

Keywords: ESP teachers, student-based evaluation, competencies

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Introduction

Evaluating teachers' professional, pedagogical, social, and personal competencies in the implementation of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) Curriculum is crucial because the success of OBE stages – from learning outcomes planning, syllabus design, learning process, to assessment – largely depend on the teachers' ability to align learning outcomes with planning, instruction, and assessment (Biggs, J. & Tang, [2011](#)). Without having professional, pedagogical, social, and personal competencies, curriculum implementation may become formal rather than outcome-oriented, reducing student achievement and curriculum effectiveness (Harden, [2007](#)). Evaluating these four competencies is particularly urgent in the context of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) in non-English departments, where instruction must be tailored to students' disciplinary needs and future career competencies (Basturkmen, [2010](#)).

In higher education contexts, having professional competency is critical as teachers need to adapt to changes (Shankar et al., [2020](#)). Previous studies have hinted the lack of professional competence among ESP teachers (Iswati & Triastuti, [2021](#); Kırkgöz & Dikilitaş, [2018](#); Pei & Milner, [2016](#)). They lack subject knowledge of students' related field that makes them less confident in teaching. They also lack training in how to design an ESP course and develop teaching materials to fulfil students' specific needs. As a result, ESP courses are conducted without proper needs analysis. Meanwhile, possessing

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a competency to conduct need analyses is crucial for ESP teachers (Basturkmen, [2025](#); Bożena Górską-Poręcka, [2013](#)).

Teachers' pedagogical competency, which refers to their ability to teach and engage students effectively, is crucial as it can greatly impact students' learning outcomes (Channa & Sahito, [2022](#)). Effective teaching affects students' learning (Purwanti & Vania, [2021](#)). Higher education General English (GE) teachers often face considerable challenges when they teach ESP, that might be due to their lack of pedagogical competency. Their inadequate content knowledge and dependence on informal learning activities indicate their limited pedagogical competencies that are important for their development (Han et al., [2021](#)). A study undertaken by Khazaei ([2020](#)) revealed a gap in ESP teachers' pedagogical competency as students rated it poorly. Similarly, a study carried out by Weng ([2023](#)) showed the lack of pedagogical competency among novice EAP (English for Academic Purposes) teachers, which affects their identity construction. They are also less consistent in pedagogical thinking because of their changing belief in teaching and learning (Tajeddin & Bolouri, [2023](#)). ESP teachers' pedagogical competency is crucial as teaching should be relevant to students' future careers (Mustaqimah et al., [2025](#)).

Excellent social competency is needed for building a conducive educational environment, indicated by teachers' ability to make a good relationship with their students. This competency is reflected through empathy, emotional regulation, and effective communication (Agrawal et al., [2024](#); Brandao De Souza & Jacomuzzi, [2025](#)). The lack of this competency is often caused by the lack of training, which impacts teachers' ability to create a supportive, interactive learning atmosphere (Çelik et al., [2018](#); Ebersöhn et al., [2014](#); Iswati & Triastuti, [2021](#)). Thus, they feel less competent and confident when teaching. Teachers' inability to support students' learning development due to confusion and despair can impact their social competency (Ebersöhn et al., [2014](#)). An issue that also impacts teachers' social competency is classes that are often too large, making it difficult for teachers to create a meaningful engagement with students. Therefore, addressing social competency through evaluation is crucial. A previous study undertaken by Najjarpour ([2025](#)) suggests that professional development programs for ESP teachers need to place strong emphasis on equipping them with social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies, particularly in the context of large classes. In large-class settings, teachers face greater challenges in managing diverse socio-emotional needs, maintaining student engagement, and fostering positive classroom interactions. Therefore, integrating SEL training into ESP professional development is essential to help teachers effectively navigate the complex socio-emotional dynamics commonly found in large classrooms (Najjarpour, [2025](#)).

It is also essential that teachers have personal competency, so that they can be effective and inspiring in performing their roles (Nasirova, [2025](#); Shankar et al., [2020](#)). Teachers' personal competency refers to the teacher's stable personal qualities—such as integrity, maturity, self-discipline, responsibility, and ethical behavior—that enable them to become positive role models and maintain professional conduct in educational settings (Republic of Indonesia, [2005](#)). This competency emphasizes not only learned skills but also essential qualities to make an individual perform successfully (Helmold, [2021](#)). Discipline, ethical conduct, and role-model behaviour are important qualities that teachers must possess. Discipline reflects teachers' responsibility, and modelling discipline to students is important (Fatchurahman et al., [2021](#)). Similarly, promoting students' discipline is necessary (Rahmawati et al., [2025](#)). Ethical competency is teachers' ability to see ethical problems, have ethical analysis ability, understand ethical principles, and possess a strong character to respond to ethical conclusions (Jurkiewicz, [2014](#)). Teachers play a crucial role in demonstrating a role-

model behavior as their personal ethos considerably affect student learning, personal growth, and ethical reasoning (Koskinen et al., [2020](#))

Pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies are essential elements needed to shape students' experiences in learning and making the teaching-learning process successful. A lack in these qualities will hinder the achievement of the targeted learning outcomes. Therefore, a comprehensive evaluation of the four competencies becomes crucial to identifying teachers' weaknesses, strengthening their performance, and making sure their teaching is more meaningful and relevant to students' needs. End-of-course evaluation from students can serve as a true mirror for teachers' reflection, which reveals their strengths and weaknesses objectively.

Despite the growth of ESP teaching research, studies that investigate ESP teachers' pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies from students' perspectives are still underexplored in the Indonesian context. This research strives to fill this gap. Therefore, this study aims to examine students' perceptions of ESP teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies to identify strengths and weaknesses in their teaching performance and provide insights for improving ESP instruction and teacher professional development.

Despite the growth of research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching in Indonesia over the last two decades, investigations specifically examining ESP teachers' pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies from students' perspectives remain underdeveloped. Previous studies in the Indonesian context have predominantly focused on ESP needs analysis, materials development, and curriculum design (Fadlia et al., [2022](#); Fitria, [2022](#); Guntoro, [2021](#); Putra et al., [2025](#); Santoso & Sanjaya, [2025](#)), offering valuable insights into how ESP programs are structured. A smaller number of studies have explored teacher beliefs and instructional practices in ESP settings (Chang, [2014](#); Dang et al., [2024](#); Yang & Wyatt, [2021](#)), yet these often emphasize teacher self-reports or classroom observations rather than students' evaluations of teacher competencies. Moreover, research that investigates teachers' broader professional and personal competencies — such as their ability to integrate industry-relevant skills, adapt instruction to diverse learner needs, or foster social engagement — is particularly scarce. In contrast to these strands of research, studies that center on students' perceptions of ESP teachers' pedagogical effectiveness, professionalism, interpersonal attributes, and social roles are notably limited or fragmentary in the Indonesian literature. This indicates that while the topic has begun to attract scholarly interest, it has not yet reached full developmental progress in terms of conceptual depth, empirical coverage, and multidimensional analysis. Therefore, this study seeks to address this underdevelopment by critically examining ESP teachers' competencies through the lens of students' perspectives, contributing to a more holistic understanding of teacher quality in ESP contexts in Indonesia.

Method

This section informs the research design, respondents, research instrument, and data analysis technique.

Research Design

This research employed a mixed-method descriptive design using a survey method. This approach was employed to obtain a picture of students' evaluation on teachers' performance, using a questionnaire consisting of five-scale responses and open-ended questions.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were 310 students at the Management Study Program of a private university in Yogyakarta, who voluntarily participated in evaluating their teachers' performance (there were five teachers). They took Business English classes in the even semester of 2024. To ensure honest evaluation, the participation was anonymous. The five teachers who were evaluated had ESP teaching experience of 5-10 years.

Instrument

Data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Form, as it allowed easier distribution process and could reach more respondents. There are two types of instruments: Likert scale questions which resulted in quantitative data to measure students' evaluation on teachers' performance, and open-ended questions to provide qualitative data in the form of comments. The questionnaire was distributed to all classes at the end of the semester by five teachers who taught Business English classes. To ensure objective evaluation, students were not required to reveal their names.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed to count the frequency, percentage, and the mean of each scaled item. Meanwhile, the qualitative data gained from the open-ended questions were analysed thematically by reading, coding, categorizing, and interpreting them. The analysis results were then presented in tables and narration.

Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the results of evaluating teachers' five competencies: pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. The quantitative data are presented and discussed, strengthened with the qualitative data gained from interviews.

Teachers' Pedagogical Competencies

Students' perceptions of their teachers' pedagogical competencies are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Teachers' pedagogical competencies

Item	Statement Summary	Mean	Interpretation
1	The teachers explained lessons clearly and systematically.	4.30	Very Good
2	The teachers used appropriate teaching methods.	4.32	Very Good
3	The teachers motivated students to learn.	4.36	Very Good
4	The teachers provided opportunities for interaction and discussion.	4.35	Very Good
5	The teachers evaluated learning fairly.	4.33	Very Good
6	The teachers gave constructive feedback.	4.36	Very Good
Average		4.34	Very Good

The table shows the average score of ESP teachers' pedagogical competency (4.34 out of 5), which means that students' evaluation on their teachers' performance is very good. The results indicate that students perceive their teachers' pedagogical competency as being well-prepared, methodically competent, and able to make conducive learning atmosphere. It might be due to the teachers' adequate experience in teaching that subject. This finding is in contrast with earlier studies (Elgindi et al., [2025](#); Iswati & Triastuti, [2021](#)) which report the lack of teachers' pedagogical competencies in

teaching ESP. However, this finding corroborates with Mustaqimah et al. (2025) who found that ESP teachers demonstrated pedagogical competencies of designing meaningful learning experiences to ensure that students' English skills is applicable in real-world contexts, which is relevant to their future career. Despite the generally good results of students' evaluation of teachers' pedagogical competencies, some negative comments are found, such as the following:

"The learning method is boring" (R24)

"The teacher is only lecturing, it lacks variety"(R105)

"The type of assignment in each meeting is similar"(R212)

These findings indicate the need for improvement in teachers' pedagogical competencies. It implies that the employed teaching approach cannot involve students actively nor can it stimulate their motivation to learn, affecting the quality of overall learning outcomes. Relying on a monotonous lecturing method and a repetitive assignment reflects a limited employment of interactive learning strategies such as discussions, problem-based learning, collaborative learning, or technology use that is relevant to ESP contexts. This finding confirms earlier studies (Hadie et al., 2018; Ko et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2015) which found that conventional lecturing is often perceived negatively as it gives less opportunity for students' active participation and decreases knowledge retention. The lack of learning variety also indicates the less optimal adaptation to students' various learning styles and the limited effort to connect the learning materials with students' needs. Therefore, this finding suggests the need to increase teachers' pedagogical competency by employing various teaching techniques, designing meaningful and varied assignments, and creating a dynamic learning atmosphere to stimulate sustainable student engagement and learning motivation

Teachers' Professional Competencies

Concerning the teachers' professional competence, [Table 2](#) shows the following data.

Table 2. Teachers' Professional Competencies

Item	Statement Summary	Mean	Interpretation
7	The teachers mastered the course material.	4.27	Good
8	The teachers connected the material to real-world contexts.	4.23	Good
9	The teachers used relevant resources and updated materials.	4.25	Good
Average		4.25	Good

ESP teachers' professional domain obtained a mean score of 4.25, categorized as good. This dimension evaluates teachers' mastery in developing ESP contents, understanding learners' needs, and their ability to link English lessons with topics related to students' field. This domain score is the lowest of all the four domains, so it is essential to improve teachers' professional competence (Suryanto, 2025). Some students suggested that the teachers give more real examples when teaching, those that are closely relevant to students' field. Some also hoped that the materials are up to date with the latest trends in business and management. This finding is in line with Mudra (2025) who suggested that ESP teachers must always make sure that their teaching materials and professional knowledge fit with students' fields. In addition, Nuryanti (2025) highlights that professional competency in teaching ESP needs not only mastery in linguistic aspect, but also understanding about work-related practices and technology-enhanced instructions. Therefore, to sustain professional competency teachers must

engage with industries, collaborate with content experts, and use technology that can support authentic tasks. Regarding the qualitative data, some students wrote:

“The materials are not adjusted to students’ current ability” (R256),

“Out of 12 meetings, 10 meetings are conducted online” (R16)

“There are only 2 face-to-face meetings during the semester.” (R74)

“The teacher mostly conducted the class online.” (R115)

The findings regarding the inappropriateness of materials with students’ ability and the dominance of online classes indicate a weak lesson planning and commitment in conducting face-to-face classes. This finding resonates a study undertaken by Apatiga & Vu (2022) which revealed that poorly developed instructional materials can affect student performance, especially when the material is difficult for students’ ability. This implies that students’ learning outcomes will suffer if the materials are not adjusted with students’ abilities. The finding regarding students’ complaints about online classes indicates that they prefer to have the traditional face-to-face classes in which they can have more opportunities to communicate and collaborate. This finding corroborates previous studies which reported students’ limited opportunities to learn in an online environment, thus they score online courses lower than the face-to-face ones (Bergstrand & Savage, 2013; Tasić & Stamenković, 2024).

The inappropriate materials show the lack of needs analysis so that the contents are not relevant with students’ competence, while the minimum on-site meetings can lower the quality of interaction, engagement, and feedback in ESP learning. This finding implies the need to enhance teachers’ professional competency by adjusting the materials to students’ level of English competence and ensuring the consistency of on-site class schedule so that the learning process can be more effective, interactive, and relevant to students’ needs.

Teachers’ Personal Competencies

Evaluating the teachers’ personal competency includes three aspects: discipline and responsibility, behavior and attitude, and integrity and sincerity. As presented in Table 3, ESP teachers’ personal competency dimension received the highest mean score (4.42). It means that students value their teachers as highly ethical and have very good integrity and behavior. Some students added that the teachers were friendly, disciplined, patient, and respectful, accommodating a conducive learning atmosphere.

Table 3. Teachers’ Personal Competencies

Item	Statement Summary	Mean	Interpretation
10	The teachers demonstrated discipline and responsibility.	4.44	Very Good
11	The teachers showed a role model in behavior and attitude.	4.40	Very Good
12	The teachers maintained integrity and sincerity in teaching.	4.43	Very Good
Average		4.42	Very Good

Those positive qualities can stimulate psychological safety and enhance students’ active participation in learning. This finding resonates Gutiérrez et al. (2023) who claimed that higher level of teacher credibility can support student engagement and affect students’ academic achievement. In the context of an Islamic university where this study was conducted, teachers’ positive qualities may also reflect Islamic and education values. Teaching is not merely transferring skills and knowledge but also

demonstrating moral and spiritual values through attitude and behavior. The high score of teachers' personal competency indicates that although technology is massively used in today's teaching trend, personal integrity remains crucial. However, there were some negative comments that demand attention:

"The teacher is not assertive to students" (R07)

"She is too lenient."(R129)

"The teacher needs to be strict in managing the class." (R280)

"The teacher often changes the schedule." (R34)

The findings regarding teachers' lack of assertiveness, being too lenient and weak in enforcing discipline, and frequent schedule changes indicate the weakness in personal competency. Teachers' lack of assertiveness corresponds with a study undertaken by Rosas et al., (2025) which highlighted difficulties faced by teachers when trying to be assertive in the classroom due to students' disrespectful behavior. Less assertive teachers can make students become dominant and antisocial, affecting collective cohesion and social skills negatively (Martínez et al., 2016). Although these findings do not represent all ESP teachers in the institution, the lack of assertiveness can affect undirected interaction, decrease teachers' authority, and make students disobey restrictions and neglect learning procedure. Besides, frequent schedule changes indicate planning instability which can disrupt students' preparedness, decreasing effectiveness and comfort in learning process. The findings imply the need to improve teachers' competencies in managing the class assertively, consistently, and professionally, and ensuring class schedule. By strengthening those aspects, teachers will be able to create a learning environment that is in order, conducive, and values students' time and commitment.

Teachers' social competencies

Students rated the teachers' social competencies at 4.40 or in a very good category. This domain evaluates teachers' communication skills, empathy, collaboration, and ability to make good relationships with students. Some comments emphasized that the teachers were approachable, communicative, and open to discussion, implying good interpersonal rapport. This finding supports a study conducted by Li & Xu (2025) which implied that teachers' ability to promote authentic communication (a social skill) is crucial for student engagement and satisfaction.

Table 4. Teachers' social competencies

Item	Statement Summary	Mean	Interpretation
13	The lecturer communicates effectively with students.	4.39	Very Good
14	The lecturer is open and approachable.	4.40	Very Good
15	The lecturer builds good relationships and teamwork.	4.41	Very Good
Average		4.40	Very Good

The high score of this social aspect suggests that teachers exemplify humanistic communication that stimulate involvement and inclusiveness. Despite the high results of the quantitative data, there are some negative comments:

"Less responsive to WhatsApp messages." (R48)

"Sometimes does not respond (through WA messaging) to the issues related to quizzes." (R184)

“Less interactive.”(R190)

“Needs more two-way speaking communication.” (R55)

The findings above indicate the low social competencies, especially in interpersonal communication and teachers’ social presence during the learning process. This might be due to some factors such as heavy workload, too many classes to teach, less systematic communication platforms, or teachers’ limited time and priority in responding to students’ messages. Teachers probably set a limitation of technology use outside teaching hours, as it can increase stress and burnout. As Jian & Zhou (2025) suggested, overuse of technology outside work hours make teacher-student communication less effective. The lack of interactive activities during the learning process could be due to teachers’ focus on lecturing rather than facilitating learning through interactive activities such as pair work or group work. Online classes can also limit interactivity and intensive communication as found in earlier studies (Kanjanapongporn, 2023; Kaufmann & Vallade, 2021), which highlighted teachers’ difficulties when delivering materials that promote interactive and engaging activities during online classes.

The findings imply that teachers need to improve responsiveness and communication, providing a two-way communication platform to respond to students’ queries regarding assignments. By improving these aspects, a more supportive and collaborative learning environment is likely to take place, and students will eventually feel heard and be actively involved in the learning process.

Conclusion

This research shows that generally, students’ evaluation of ESP teachers’ pedagogical, professional, personal and social competencies is very good. Pedagogical competencies received high score, but students’ comments about the monotonous teaching methods strongly demand the need for various teaching strategies that are interactive. On the other hands, professional competencies obtained the lowest score due to the inappropriateness of materials to students’ ability and the dominance of online teaching, thus lesson planning needs to be more relevant and consistent. Personal competencies are the most outstanding domain which reflect teachers’ integrity and good role modelling although some students highlight the importance of assertiveness and schedule consistency. Social competencies also received a very good result, but the lack of communication responsiveness and two-way interactions leaves a room for improvement. The results of this study imply that institutions need to strengthen and facilitate competency development programs for teachers, particularly for the pedagogical and professional competencies through training in ESP course design, needs analysis, materials development, and interactive learning strategies. Besides, enhancing instructional communication and classroom management to be more consistent is important to ensure effective learning quality. These findings offer opportunities for sustainable improvement in ESP teaching so that it is relevant to students’ needs and the demands of OBE Curriculum.

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