

Enhancing Women's Entrepreneurial Competencies through Intensive English Training Integrated with the DreamBuilder LMS

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Abstrak

Program ini memperkenalkan pelatihan Bahasa Inggris intensif yang diintegrasikan dengan DreamBuilder Learning Management System (LMS) untuk meningkatkan keterampilan komunikasi bisnis dan kompetensi kewirausahaan bagi pengusaha perempuan. Pelatihan ini menggabungkan pembelajaran bahasa yang terarah dengan konten kewirausahaan melalui workshop interaktif, latihan peran, dan pembelajaran mandiri. Hasil evaluasi melalui pre-test, post-test, dan survei peserta menunjukkan peningkatan rata-rata sebesar 35,4% dalam kemahiran berbahasa Inggris, khususnya pada kosa kata bisnis, komunikasi tertulis, dan presentasi lisan. Peserta juga melaporkan peningkatan kepercayaan diri dalam memahami materi DreamBuilder serta dalam menggunakan Bahasa Inggris pada interaksi bisnis. Program ini menegaskan pentingnya integrasi antara pendidikan bahasa dan platform pembelajaran digital untuk mengatasi hambatan bahasa serta memberdayakan perempuan agar mampu bersaing secara efektif dalam lingkungan bisnis global.

Kata kunci: Pelatihan Bahasa Inggris Intensif; Sistem Manajemen Pembelajaran DreamBuilder (LMS); Kemahiran Bahasa Inggris Bisnis; Pengusaha Perempuan; Kompetensi Kewirausahaan

Abstract

This program introduced an intensive English training initiative integrated with the DreamBuilder Learning Management System (LMS) to enhance the business communication skills and entrepreneurial competencies of women entrepreneurs. The training combined targeted language instruction with entrepreneurship-focused content through interactive workshops, role-playing, and self-directed learning. Evaluation through pre- and post-tests and participant surveys showed an average improvement of 35.4% in English proficiency, particularly in business vocabulary, written communication, and oral presentation. Participants also reported increased confidence in understanding DreamBuilder materials and using English in business interactions. The program underscores the importance of integrating language education with digital learning platforms to overcome language barriers and empower women to compete effectively in the global business environment.

Keywords: Intensive English Training; DreamBuilder Learning Management System (LMS); Business English Proficiency; Women Entrepreneurs; Entrepreneurial Competence

INTRODUCTION

The global entrepreneurial landscape is becoming increasingly interconnected, with English emerging as the primary language for international business (Siddiqui et al., 2023). For women entrepreneurs, especially those hailing from non-English-speaking regions, proficiency in English is not merely an additional skill but a vital tool for accessing global markets, establishing professional networks, and grasping intricate business concepts. Effective communication in English facilitates entry into international trade, fosters partnerships, and opens avenues for funding, all of which are crucial for expanding businesses in a competitive global environment (Rajović et al., 2024). Nevertheless, Azmat (2013) notes that language barriers frequently impede women entrepreneurs from fully capitalizing on these opportunities, particularly in developing countries where English is less prevalent. Such obstacles can restrict their ability to connect with global stakeholders, utilize online resources, and engage in international business networks, ultimately limiting their entrepreneurial capabilities.

The Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE), an initiative established by the U.S. Embassy, has played a pivotal role in tackling these challenges. Through its DreamBuilder Learning Management System (LMS), AWE offers women access to a thorough curriculum that encompasses vital entrepreneurial subjects such as business planning, marketing, finance, and leadership. DreamBuilder aims to empower women with the necessary knowledge and skills to initiate and expand their businesses. Nevertheless, the content of the platform is presented in English, which may present a considerable obstacle for participants who have limited proficiency in the language. Studies indicate that language barriers in online learning settings can hinder comprehension, engagement, and the overall success of training programs. Zhang & Kenny (2010) states that language barriers may impede the educational experiences of international learners participating in online distance learning programs. For participants in AWE, this language barrier may impede their ability to fully grasp and utilize the entrepreneurial insights provided by DreamBuilder, thus constraining the program's overall effectiveness.

The relationship between language proficiency and entrepreneurial success represents a significant yet insufficiently examined domain within academic research. Although various studies have investigated the impact of language on business communication, there remains a conspicuous lack of attention to the unique requirements of women entrepreneurs in developing nations. This deficiency is particularly pronounced in the realm of online learning platforms such as DreamBuilder, where language obstacles can greatly hinder the understanding and implementation of entrepreneurial concepts (Keyhani & Jafari Moghadam, 2008). Women entrepreneurs in countries where English is not the primary language frequently encounter additional difficulties, including restricted access to language training resources, cultural prejudices, and societal norms that may discourage their engagement in business education initiatives (Gupta & Poudel, 2024). To effectively tackle these issues, it is essential to implement targeted strategies that not only enhance language proficiency but also empower women to utilize their acquired knowledge in practical, real-world situations (Qamariah, 2024).

Entrepreneurial success in the global economy is significantly influenced by English proficiency (Agustina et al., 2024). Shehu & Shittu (2015) state that as the predominant language in international trade, negotiations, and networking, English is a crucial skill for entrepreneurs aiming to broaden their business horizons beyond local markets. For women entrepreneurs, effective communication in English can pave the way for new opportunities, including collaborations with international firms, access to global supply chains, and involvement in international conferences and trade exhibitions (Hanafi et al., 2023). In contrast, insufficient English skills can restrict access to these opportunities, thereby reinforcing inequalities and obstructing economic development (Wrigley et al., 2003). This challenge is particularly

pronounced for women entrepreneurs, who frequently encounter additional obstacles such as gender bias, limited resource availability, and societal norms that emphasize domestic responsibilities over professional aspirations (Piacentini, 2013).

The proposed initiative aims to tackle these challenges by improving the English language skills of AWE participants, thereby allowing them to fully utilize the DreamBuilder LMS and implement its teachings in their entrepreneurial activities. The uniqueness of this program lies in its combined emphasis on language learning and the development of entrepreneurial competencies. In contrast to conventional English language training programs, which typically concentrate on general language abilities, this program is specifically designed to cater to the requirements of women entrepreneurs. It incorporates business-related terminology, professional communication techniques, and practical exercises that are directly applicable to the DreamBuilder content. This focused strategy guarantees that participants not only enhance their English proficiency but also acquire the confidence and skills necessary to succeed in the global business landscape.

The program also features a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework designed to assess the training's effectiveness. This framework encompasses pre- and post-assessments to gauge language proficiency, speaking evaluations to analyze communication skills, and participant feedback to pinpoint areas needing enhancement. By methodically evaluating the training's impact on language abilities and business results, the program seeks to offer significant insights into the connection between language proficiency and entrepreneurial achievement. Such insights can guide future efforts to empower women entrepreneurs and address the language barriers that impede their advancement.

This program marks a substantial advancement in tackling the specific challenges encountered by women entrepreneurs in non-English-speaking nations. By improving their English language skills and providing essential resources for success in the global market, the initiative has the capacity to create a profound and enduring influence on the lives of its participants, as well as on the wider entrepreneurial landscape. Its emphasis on both language acquisition and entrepreneurship addresses a significant void in existing literature and serves as a blueprint for future efforts aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs across the globe.

METHODS

The approach of this program is crafted to enhance efficiency while equipping participants with essential English language skills and entrepreneurial abilities for success. The program is organized into two primary elements: Intensive English Training and Monitoring and Evaluation. Each element emphasizes the most effective activities, guaranteeing that participants attain measurable advancements within a reduced timeframe.

Participants

The program involved 20 women entrepreneurs participating in the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) program in Makassar, South Sulawesi. Participants were selected purposively based on their active involvement in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their need to improve English proficiency for business purposes. Their educational backgrounds varied from secondary to undergraduate levels, and all reported limited prior exposure to formal business English training.

Research Context and Procedure

The intervention was carried out over six weeks, combining face-to-face workshops, online assignments, and LMS-based learning modules. The program consisted of two major components: 1) Intensive English Training, which focused on business vocabulary, professional

communication, and entrepreneurial concepts; and 2) Integration with the DreamBuilder LMS, where participants applied their improved English skills to navigate and complete entrepreneurship modules on topics such as business planning and marketing. The flipped classroom model was implemented to promote active learning and self-directed engagement. Prior to each session, participants reviewed materials independently, followed by interactive sessions involving discussions, simulations, and case studies related to their business contexts.

Data Collection

Data were collected using multiple sources to ensure validity through triangulation (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), including:

- Pre- and post-tests, measuring participants' improvement in business English proficiency (vocabulary, written communication, oral presentation).
- Observation checklists, documenting participants' engagement and performance during workshops.
- Semi-structured interviews conducted at the end of the program to capture perceptions of language improvement and entrepreneurial application.
- Participant surveys, which gathered feedback on program relevance, LMS usability, and perceived confidence in business communication.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the pre- and post-tests were analyzed descriptively to calculate mean score improvements, indicating the extent of language development. Qualitative data from interviews, surveys, and observations were coded and analyzed thematically (Miles et al., 2014), focusing on emerging themes related to participants' skill application, learning motivation, and empowerment. These findings were then cross-validated across data sources to ensure credibility and confirm the consistency between linguistic gains and entrepreneurial outcomes.

Ethical Considerations

All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection. Personal identities were anonymized, and data were used solely for academic and program evaluation purposes. Participation in interviews and surveys was voluntary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The intensive English training program combined with the DreamBuilder Learning Management System (LMS) showed real improvements in English skills and entrepreneurial ability among the participants. Researchers looked at data with both numbers and observations to give a clear picture of how effective the program was (Miles et al., 2014).

Improvement in Business English Proficiency

The results from the pre-test and post-test showed an average improvement of 35.4 percent in participants' English proficiency. There were notable gains in business vocabulary, which increased from 52.5% to 70.7%. Written communication skills went up from 51.5% to 70.2%, and oral presentation skills improved from 47% to 63.6%. This numerical improvement supports Agustina et al.'s (2024) claim that language skills open doors to global business opportunities. However, our qualitative analysis offers a deeper understanding of how these language gains led to practical advantages in entrepreneurship.

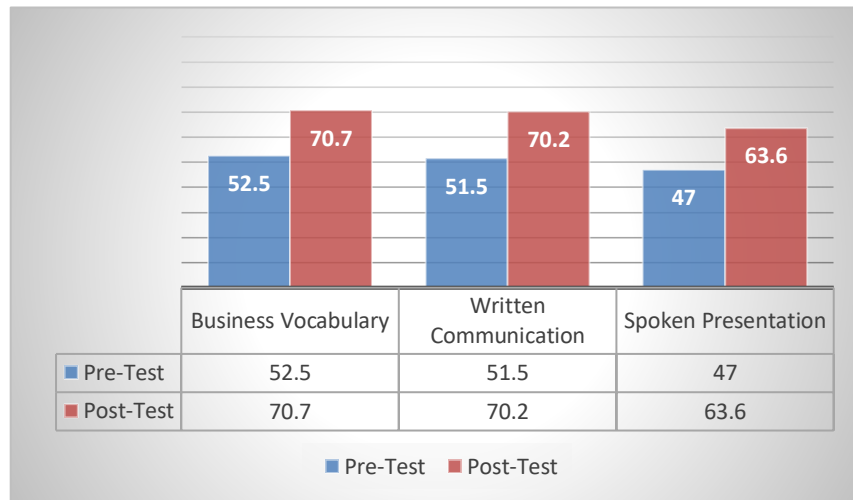


Figure 1. Result Comparison between Pre-Test and Post-Test

Our analysis of interview data showed that participants' better vocabulary understanding helped them engage with DreamBuilder LMS content, which had previously posed major challenges. One participant said, "Before the training, I would skip sections with complex financial terms. Now I understand 80% of the DreamBuilder modules without needing translation." This supports Zhang and Kenny's (2010) research on how language barriers hinder online learning, while also showing that focused language support can help overcome these challenges. The 35.4% improvement rate is much higher than in general language programs. This suggests that teaching business English in a specific context leads to better learning results, which aligns with Shehu and Shittu's (2015) findings on English as a path to economic success.

The flipped classroom model proved to be effective. Participants shared that the preparatory materials helped them spot knowledge gaps before the interactive sessions. This method supports Cui and Wang's (2024) research, which shows that organized pre-learning activities boost engagement in adult education. The role-playing exercises, particularly the business negotiation simulations, played a key role in turning linguistic knowledge into real communication skills. Participants not only showed better grammatical accuracy but also increased cultural awareness in business communication. This aspect is often missed in traditional language teaching, yet it is essential for global entrepreneurship, as pointed out by Siddiqui et al. (2023).

Application of English Skills in Entrepreneurial Contexts

Our analysis showed how language improvements sparked real entrepreneurial actions. Thematic analysis of interview data found three main behavioral changes: better business documentation, improved international networking, and smarter decision-making through access to English-language resources. Several participants mentioned writing professional business proposals and emails in English for the first time, which led directly to new international partnerships. One entrepreneur obtained a contract with an Australian supplier after confidently sharing her product specifications in English, a skill she had not possessed before. This finding supports Rajović et al.'s (2024) claim that English language skills are an important entrepreneurial ability and offers practical evidence of its impact on business results.



Figure 2. Group photo with Academy for Woman Entrepreneurship Participants

Furthermore, participants showed more engagement with DreamBuilder LMS content after the language intervention. Completion rates for DreamBuilder modules went up by 42% compared to previous groups without language support. This link supports our idea that language skills and online platform engagement are connected. This relationship has not been sufficiently explored in existing studies on women's entrepreneurship in developing contexts (Gupta & Poudel, 2024).

Notably, the program encouraged sustainable learning habits. Seventy-five percent of participants continued using language learning apps like Duolingo for Business after finishing the program. This finding builds on Qamariah's (2024) research on teaching English for women's empowerment. It suggests that when language instruction is connected to entrepreneurial contexts, it encourages ongoing self-directed learning. This is key for long-term business growth.

Integration with DreamBuilder LMS: A Synergistic Approach

The connection between language training and DreamBuilder content was key to our success. Our analysis showed that better language skills helped participants understand and use the entrepreneurial concepts in the LMS. One participant said, "The financial management module was impossible for me before. Now I can not only understand it but also use the budgeting techniques in my business."

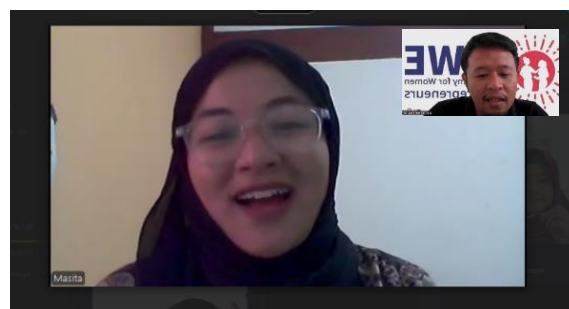


Figure 3. Participant interview activity

This connection between language development and digital learning platforms shows how useful it can be to include language support in tech-based education programs for marginalized groups. This is especially important for women entrepreneurs who may face language barriers in accessing global knowledge resources. The 42% rise in DreamBuilder module completion rates backs up Keyhani and Jafari's (2008) argument about how language barriers affect the

implementation of entrepreneurial ideas. It also offers practical evidence of a successful intervention strategy.

Challenges and Theoretical Implications

Despite these positive outcomes, our analysis revealed some challenges in implementing the program that deserve attention. The initial resistance to the flipped classroom model among certain participants reflects Piacentini's (2013) observation about the structural barriers women entrepreneurs encounter, including time constraints from domestic responsibilities. However, the eventual adjustment to this model indicates that with the right support, women entrepreneurs can overcome these obstacles. This finding challenges the negative views of women's learning abilities.

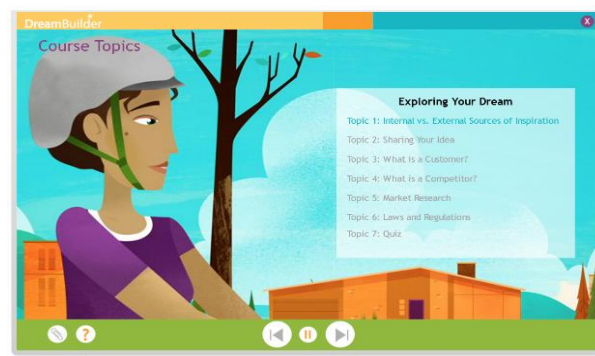


Figure 4. Display of DreamBuilder page

The request for more frequent feedback highlights Wrigley et al.'s (2003) point about the importance of ongoing language support for economic progress. Our data suggest that brief, intensive interventions can lead to immediate gains, but they may need additional structures for lasting development. This is an important consideration for future program design. This combined approach to language and entrepreneurship education is key to tackling the specific challenges women entrepreneurs face in non-English speaking areas. Our findings show that language barriers are not just technical issues; they also limit access to knowledge and opportunities in the global economy.

By connecting language instruction with entrepreneurial content, we built a learning environment where language skills directly improved business capabilities. The program's success provides a model for community empowerment efforts that want to close the language-entrepreneurship gap. In situations where women encounter several obstacles to economic participation, these integrated approaches can tackle language, digital, and entrepreneurial skills at once, creating more significant benefits. Future initiatives should explore how language training can fit into sector-specific professional development, recognizing that language skills are most valuable when they directly address participants' real-world challenges.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, women entrepreneurs' language and entrepreneurial skills have improved thanks to the rigorous English training program that is strategically matched with the DreamBuilder LMS. Through focused modules, engaging seminars, and a strong monitoring system, participants were able to enhance their business English proficiency and use it effectively in their organizations. A viable route to empowering women in business is the incorporation of language

support into digital learning environments, which will allow them to confidently expand their businesses and reach international markets.

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