



## English for Hospitality Industry: A Case Study of English Language Needs in Three-Star and Four-Star Hotels in Dhaka

Md. Rashed Islam Shikder <sup>1\*</sup> , Abu Yousuf Musa <sup>2</sup>, Naiem Al Amin <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering (NFE) Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHLS) Daffodil International University [DIU] Daffodil Smart City, Dhaka, Bangladesh*

<sup>2</sup> *Department of English, Metropolitan University, Sylhet, Bangladesh*

<sup>3</sup> *Institute of Skill Development, State University of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh*

Received: 2025/06/29

Accepted: 2025/11/09

**Abstract:** The hospitality industry in Bangladesh is expanding rapidly, with three-star and four-star hotels in Dhaka increasingly serving international guests. In this regard, English language proficiency has become a crucial skill for hotel employees to ensure effective service delivery and guest satisfaction. However, English language training is still largely neglected, leaving employees with communication barriers that hinder their professional performance, as well as the quality of their overall service. This study adopts a case study approach, focusing specifically on four well-established hotels in Dhaka city to investigate the English language needs of their employees. Using a mixed-method design, data were collected from 26 participants through semi-structured interviews and online survey questionnaires, representing key operational divisions such as front desk, room service, and customer relations. Findings reveal that speaking and listening skills are the most important yet challenging skills for employees because these are directly tied to guest interaction. Employees also showed a considerable interest in structured English courses in workplace contexts, with a special focus on vocabulary in the area of hospitality and communicative tasks. The study contributes to the field by providing empirically grounded recommendations for an industry-oriented ESP syllabus with practical implications for hotel authorities, curriculum designers, and policy makers for strengthening workforce competence. These findings also contribute to the field by moving beyond general assumptions to provide actionable recommendations for improving professional competencies and guest satisfaction within this particular industry context.

**Keywords:** Needs Analysis, Hospitality Industry, Hotel Employees, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Language Skills.

\* Corresponding Author.

Authors' Email Address:

<sup>1</sup> Md. Rashed Islam Shikder (rashedshikder2015@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup> Abu Yousuf Musa (abuyousufmusat@gmail.com),

<sup>3</sup> Naiem Al Amin (naim.alamin1@gmail.com)



## Introduction

Needs analysis is a systematic approach to identify the language skills required for a specific context or purpose (Putri et al., 2018). In the context of the hotel industry, needs analysis can help to identify the specific language skills required for different roles in the hotel, the communication challenges faced by hotel staff and the training needs and preferences for language training among hotel staff (Firharmawan & Andika, 2019). In this study, the researchers intend to do a needs analysis of the English language by hotel staff. The researchers conducted the study on the employees of four hotels in Dhaka city, where international guests come frequently.

The hospitality industry refers to a broad category of businesses and services that are focused on providing customer service and experiences related to travel, tourism, and leisure (Ismail Azlan et al., 2022). The main objective of the hospitality industry is to provide customers with a comfortable and enjoyable experience, often through providing accommodation, food and beverage services, and entertainment (Al-Jufri et al., 2024). This industry includes a variety of businesses such as hotels, restaurants, bars, cafes, resorts, and other related service providers. From all the subsections of the hospitality industry, this study was conducted focusing on the three-star and four-star hotels in Bangladesh.

The hospitality industry is a significant contributor to the global economy and effective communication plays a crucial role in delivering high-quality services (Nurdiana, 2024). Hotel staff members need to communicate effectively with guests, colleagues, and other stakeholders to ensure smooth operations and positive guest experiences (Akter et al., 2017). Bangladesh is a developing country and it has some products like readymade garments, jute and jute manufactures, leather and leather manufactures, which have high demand in the international market. It also has some tourist spots, cultural and traditional festivals, which attract foreigners to visit this country. So, the hotels in Bangladesh are experiencing a good number of foreigners (Bhowmik et al., 2024).

As English is the most common lingua franca, it can serve communication purposes throughout the world (Shieh, 2012). This needs analysis is done on the employees of four hotels, which are situated in the heart of Dhaka city and known as the business hub of Bangladesh. Many foreigners check into the hotels for business purposes every day (Akhy & Roy, 2020). So, the staff of the hotels need to have a good command of the English language to serve the purpose of day-to-day communication with the guests. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a needs analysis of the English language skills required by hotel staff to perform their respective roles effectively.

This case study is deliberately limited in scope to the employees of four three-star and four-star hotels in Dhaka city. It does not seek to apply the results to the overall Bangladeshi hospitality sector, but instead gives a deep context-based insight into the linguistic needs of these specific hotels. This target population of employees enables the study to reflect the reality of communication in the workplace in a very clear and specific way. In so doing, the study provides localised evidence that can inform the design of tailored ESP courses to hotel staff in Dhaka and is also able to provide implications to other comparable urban hospitality settings, without extrapolating the findings to other hotels than those examined.

### *Objectives of the Study*

The main objectives of the study are:

- 1) Assessing the current level of English language proficiency among the hotel staff.
- 2) Identifying the specific language needs for different roles in the hotel industry.
- 3) Understanding the types of communication skills required for effective job performance.
- 4) Identifying the common communication challenges faced by hotel staff members.
- 5) Determining the training needs and preferences for language training among hotel staff members.

### *Significance of the Study*

Effective communication in the hotel industry is important for delivering high-quality services and ensuring guest satisfaction (Cunha, 2024; Tagah et al., 2024). In today's globalised world, hotel staff members need to be proficient in English to communicate with guests from different countries and cultures (Firharmawan & Andika, 2019). This needs analysis will help hotel management teams to identify the language training needs of their staff and provide targeted training programs to improve their English language skills. Moreover, this will help to enhance the overall quality of services provided by hotels and contribute to the success of the hospitality industry.

ESP has broadly examined language needs in service industries. This paper offers a localised case study to explore the requirements in the English language by employees in a sample of hotels in Dhaka. By addressing the specific communicative needs of this working environment, the research will be able to determine the specific linguistic skills and issues that employees encounter and provide an understanding of how training in English can be more effectively designed according to the professional role of the employee. Moreover, this

will help to enhance the overall quality of services provided by hotels and contribute to the success of the hospitality industry.

### ***Research Questions***

The following four research questions were used to guide the needs analysis:

- Q1.** What is the current level of English language proficiency among hotel employees?
- Q2.** What are the specific language needs for different roles in the hotel industry?
- Q3.** What are the types of communication skills required for effective job performance in the hotel industry?
- Q4.** What are the common communication challenges faced by hotel staff?
- Q5.** What are the training needs and preferences for language training among hotel staff?

### **Background of the Study**

In this part, the researchers provided an overview of the hotels, the usage of English in Bangladeshi hotels and information about the customers who regularly check into the hotels.

#### ***Background of English in Bangladeshi Hotels***

English is widely used in franchise hotels that cater to customers from different countries. The use of English is crucial for effective communication between hotel staff members and guests, as well as for internal communication among staff members from different departments (Munusamy & Kaliappen, 2023). In recent years, the demand for English-speaking hotel staff has increased due to the growing number of international tourists and businessmen visiting Bangladesh.

#### ***Information about the Hotels***

There are a variety of hotels in Bangladesh, ranging from budget to luxury hotels. Some of the well-known international chain hotels in Bangladesh include the Westin, Marriott and Radisson, offering a range of services. There are also many locally owned and operated hotels in Bangladesh, particularly in major cities such as Dhaka, Chittagong, and Sylhet. This needs analysis was done in four hotels in Dhaka city, which are rated four-star and three-star hotels.

#### ***Information about the Customers***

Bangladesh attracts a range of customers, including business travellers and tourists. Business travellers often stay in international chain hotels located in major cities such as

Dhaka and Chittagong (Masum et al., 2024). They are typically seeking accommodations that are close to business districts and have access to conference facilities. Tourists, on the other hand, often seek accommodations that are close to popular tourist destinations such as Cox's Bazar, Sylhet and Sundarbans. Customers in Bangladesh come from a variety of countries, including India, China, the United States and the United Kingdom. Therefore, hotel staff need to be able to communicate effectively in English to serve the needs of their diverse customer base.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

The theoretical framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Needs Analysis refers to the underlying principles, theories, and concepts that guide the process of identifying the language needs of learners in specific professional or academic contexts. The theoretical framework for ESP needs analysis was provided by Hutchinson and Waters in their book "English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-Centred Approach" (1987). Hutchinson and Waters defined ESP as "an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p.19).

The needs analysis in ESP is a crucial step that helps identify the language needs of the learners and the context in which they will be using the language. Hutchinson and Waters proposed a **three-stage needs analysis framework**:

- ***Target Situation Analysis***: This stage involves analysing the learners' target situation, which includes identifying the specific language functions, communicative needs of the learners, skills, and tasks that the learners will need to perform in their professional or academic contexts.
- ***Present Situation Analysis***: This stage involves analysing the learners' present situation, which includes assessing their current language proficiency, their prior knowledge of the language, and their experience with language learning. This stage also involves identifying the resources available to the learners, such as textbooks, technology, and other materials.
- ***Analysis of the Learning Context***: This stage involves analysing the learning context, which includes identifying the cultural, social, and institutional factors that may affect the learners' language learning. This stage also involves identifying the roles and responsibilities of the learners and the teachers, and the assessment and evaluation criteria that will be used to measure the learners' progress.

In summary, Hutchinson and Waters' framework for ESP needs analysis provides a systematic approach to identifying the specific language needs of learners in a given context. By analysing the learners' target situation, present situation, and learning context, educators can design language learning programs that are relevant, meaningful, and effective for the learners.

## **Literature Review**

The hotel industry is an international sector that demands efficient communication with guests from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. English has emerged as the lingua franca of the hotel industry. Thus, the proficiency of hotel staff is an inseparable part of guest satisfaction.

### *Needs Analysis*

According to [Al-Sobh \(2016\)](#), needs analysis can assist in ensuring that language acquisition programs are effective and meet the specific needs of hotel staff members. Needs analysis refers to the process of data collection, which is meant to guide the formulation of a curriculum to be used by a certain group of learners ([Wickramage & Gunasinghe, 2024](#)). [Hutchinson and Waters \(1987\)](#) viewed target and learning needs; target needs involve necessities, lacks, and wants for particular learning objectives. Whereas, learning needs refer to learners' needs to learn.

### *Growth of Tourism Sector in Bangladesh*

The hospitality and tourism industry in Bangladesh is currently seeing its growth, driven by its rich cultural heritage and natural landscape. In spite of encountering challenges, including inadequate infrastructure and marketing strategies, this sector is recognised for its contribution to economic development, job creation, and foreign currency earnings. From 2009 to 2018, the tourism sector contributed approximately 4.4% to Bangladesh's GDP, generating around USD 1,157 million ([Hossain & Wadood, 2020](#)). Promoting sustainable tourism practices and enhancing customer satisfaction, people who are rendering tourists are playing a pivotal role ([Hossain et al., 2025](#)).

[Talukder et al. \(2024\)](#) conducted research that mainly focuses on shaping policy in educational institutions and found that this sector offers abundant job opportunities for skilled employees. The study, however, suggests that the educational institutes need to align with the demand of the market and train students in technology.

### *English Language Skills Training*

Training in English language skills can help hotel staff members improve their communication skills and provide high-quality services to guests. Several studies have evaluated the effectiveness of English language skills training programs for hotel staff members. For example, [Prabowo et al. \(2025\)](#) carried out a study finding the significance of the English language in increasing guest satisfaction and career improvement of hotel staff in Indonesia. Their study- the quantitative analysis of hospitality students- suggests the need for adapting a communicative approach, incorporating industry-specific training, and early practical experience.

[Munusamy and Kaliappen \(2023\)](#) found that the English language is not only necessary for host-guest interaction in hotels, restaurants and travel, but also in the development of a tourist-friendly environment. As the study was split into two parts, the second part emphasised the role of universities to facilitate English-speaking employment in the tourism sector.

Understanding the importance of English language acquisition, [Manalastas \(2023\)](#) conducted a study on graduating students of the hospitality sector to identify the effectiveness of self-assessment in learning the English language. The findings showed that there was no correlation between being actually competent in the English language and rating themselves higher than their actual competency. On the other hand, the influential factors like anxiety, motivation, and fear affected their learning progression.

[Vicente \(2025\)](#) recommended that English be taught to students of the hospitality industry, keeping two philosophies in mind: teaching them by using a multilingual approach and practical skills. Learning to serve guests in multiple languages can help companies to grab more customers, essentially adding more revenue.

Other studies have focused on the development of specific language skills for hotel staff members. For example, [Li \(2015\)](#) developed a task-based English language training program for hotel staff members in China. The program focused on developing specific language skills required for different roles in the hotel, including front desk staff, food and beverage staff, and housekeeping staff. The study found that the task-based training program was effective in developing the specific language skills required for each role.

Effective communication is essential for delivering quality service in the hospitality industry. In this context, English language proficiency has become a crucial skill for hotel employees ([Ranasinghe, 2024](#)). Studies have shown that hotel employees who are proficient in English are better equipped to handle customer inquiries, complaints, and requests

(Lee, 2016; Cho, 2017). Moreover, English proficiency enables employees to communicate effectively with colleagues from different departments, improving coordination and teamwork (Liu & Wang, 2015).

English language proficiency also has a significant impact on guest satisfaction and loyalty. Research has shown that guests are more likely to return to hotels where employees are able to communicate with them in English (Kim & Han, 2016). Additionally, guests perceive hotels with English-proficient employees as more professional and competent (Kim & Han, 2016; Cho, 2017).

Effective communication in the hospitality industry requires a range of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Studies have shown that listening and speaking skills are the most critical for hotel employees (Lee, 2016; Liu & Wang, 2015). Hotel employees must be able to understand guests' requests, answer questions, and provide information about hotel services. Additionally, employees must be able to speak clearly and politely to guests, creating a positive impression of the hotel.

Yasmin et al. (2016) conducted a study in Pakistan to analyse the needs of English language students of hotel management and examine if the current teaching material matched students' needs. Their findings show that students and professionals need particular lexis of the hospitality industry and related syntax to perform certain routine functions. In terms of proficiency, listening and speaking were the most used skills.

Sermsook et al. (2021) carried out a case study based on hotel staff in Thailand. Their research focused on scrutinising problems and needs for enhancing English language skills to serve in the tourism industry. Around 200 employees participated in the study who shared the necessity of listening and speaking, along with writing skill, to execute certain tasks.

Firharmawan and Andika (2019) found similar importance of speaking and listening skills in their study at Meotel Hotel Kebumen. Another significant result they revealed is that the English language is mainly used for three purposes: to give services, to give information, and to give help. The problem they identified is the limitation of vocabulary, a lack of sufficient grammar, and not being able to understand fast speaking.

Syaifudin (2024) conducted qualitative research on students of hospitality in Indonesia. He involved 93 students in the study to find needs, lacks and wants of the hospitality industry. The study suggests that students prefer acquiring speaking skills despite all the skills being important. Students share their concern that the language course should align with their career and professional development.

Kenjayeva (2023) carried out a mixed-method study on the students of the tourism and hospitality department who belong to Kazakhstan. Their main aims were to find out what level of proficiency students have right now and how much their proficiency influences their academic and professional readiness. The results show that the level of proficiency is unequal and mixed. Moreover, they found that learning English plays a critical role in their future career trajectory.

Chilingaryan (2020) pointed out that English holds the most significant role in the tourism and hospitality sector. To teach this language, following the procedures of needs analysis is a must. If a teacher finds out who the learners are, what their needs are and how language will be used, it will be easier to teach English for the teacher.

After analysing the literature, a tremendous gap has been found where emphasis on developing English skills in the Bangladeshi hospitality sector has been put. Whereas other tourism-driven countries like Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Indonesia are harnessing the English skills of hotel workers, Bangladeshi hotel authorities and educationists are overlooking the issue. Nevertheless, some enthusiasts are making an effort to enable the workers' communication skills, contributing to GDP boosting and highlighting Bangladeshi culture without doing proper research. This study, therefore, aims to underscore a crucial English language skill scenario among three-star and four-star hotel employees.

## Methodology

This research involves an exploratory case study: a flexible research approach that can use a little-known idea like this ESP study (Swedberg, 2020). Qualitative and quantitative data are the foundation of analysing the linguistic needs of hotel staff in Dhaka city.

To prioritise in-depth insights, a purposive sampling strategy was employed as a means of data collection. Purposive sampling, as Campbell et al. (2020) note, can improve the rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research.

Although it gathered data from a small population, the total number of participants was 26 employees. Of those, 22 operational staff and 4 higher authority members contributed to formulating the result of this study. Quantitative data were collected through online surveys, whereas qualitative data were gathered by incorporating interviews with higher officials.

The data analysis procedure follows thematic coding of interview data, while quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics. The reason for utilising thematic analysis in qualitative data is because of wider acceptance (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

However, descriptive statistics allow for complementing qualitative data by showing percentages, mean value and other numerical measures (Naeem et al., 2023).

The study involves a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative tools to gather comprehensive notions about the phenomenon. The research deploys both qualitative and quantitative methods to scrutinise their attitude and present situation towards the English language. The quantitative data were collected through an online survey, especially from those who are directly involved in communication with clients. Moreover, qualitative data were gathered through interviews from the higher authority responsible for staff's English skill development.

A total of 26 participants from four different hotels participated, as a heterogeneous sampling was deployed in the study. Most of the participants, 22 employees, are from operational departments, including front desk, food and beverage, and housekeeping who contributed by providing data in an online survey, while three Human Resource officers and one marketing head engaged in semi-structured interviews.

### *Sampling*

The researchers have used Heterogeneous purposive sampling for collecting data. When researchers desire to examine a variety of cases that are all relevant to a particular phenomenon or situation, they employ this method (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A total of four hotels agreed to participate in data collection as they were in their peak season. 22 participants from various departments, including the front desk, food and beverage, housekeeping, three HR officials and one marketing head, participated in the whole process.

**Table 1.** Participants of This Research

<b>Designation of participants</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Tools</b>
Human Resource Officers	3	<b>Interview</b>
Marketing Head	1	<b>Interview</b>
Other Employees	22	<b>Online Survey (Google Form)</b>

### *Design of Tools for Conducting the Study*

The researchers have used two tools for conducting this particular study: (i) An Online Survey Questionnaire for hotel employees and (ii) Interviews with the higher authorities of the hotels.

### Online Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire, consisting of 24 questions divided into 4 criteria, evaluated participants' background, English competency, language needs, and prioritised learning materials. The data collection was accelerated through Google Forms disseminated by HR departments.

**Section 1** (Q. 1-3) reveals the background information of the participants.

**Section 2** (Q. 4-8) measures the current English language proficiency of the participants.

**Section 3** (Q. 9-16) demonstrates participants' needs and the areas where they are supposed to improve their English language skills.

**Section 4** (Q. 17) presented the types of materials they prefer in order to learn the English language.

### Interviews with the Higher Authority of the Hotels

To collect qualitative data from the hotel's higher authority, the researchers planned to conduct one-to-one semi-structured interview sessions with them. Interviewing is a well-known mode of communication that works well as a versatile research tool (Miller & Crabtree, 1999). According to Kvale (1996), the usual qualitative interview is a structured, one-on-one 'professional conversation' that seeks to gather descriptions of the interviewee's opinions. The researchers were able to reach three HR officers from three hotels and one Marketing Head. **Hotel A** is a four-star, renowned hotel in Bangladesh, which is situated at the heart of Dhaka city. **Hotel B**, **Hotel C**, and **Hotel D** are all three-star hotels and are renowned for their amazing service as well. The reasons for conducting this interview session with them were to know the current states of their employees, to what extent they use English and their level of proficiency, their lack of English skills, and whether the authority offered any English course to them previously, or if they have any needs for these courses and all.

Apart from surveys and interviews, a diagnostic exam was administered to assess employees' vocabulary, grammar, reading skills, and syntactic knowledge, focusing on pinpointing strengths and weaknesses in their language skills. Moreover, before conducting the study, a pilot study was needed to test the instruments of the study. After completing the piloting, some questions were fine-tuned to adjust to the needs of the study. Eight participants from different hotels participated in that pilot study.

## Data Analysis

A descriptive and interpretive procedure of data analysis is carried out in this research. By following three interrelated models, need analysis was conducted, which included (1) necessities (target-situation analysis), (2) lacking (deficiency analysis), and (3) wants (subjective needs analysis). Qualitative and quantitative data are presented separately, generated from the survey and interviews. In this section, data collected from the survey and interview sessions are analysed thematically.

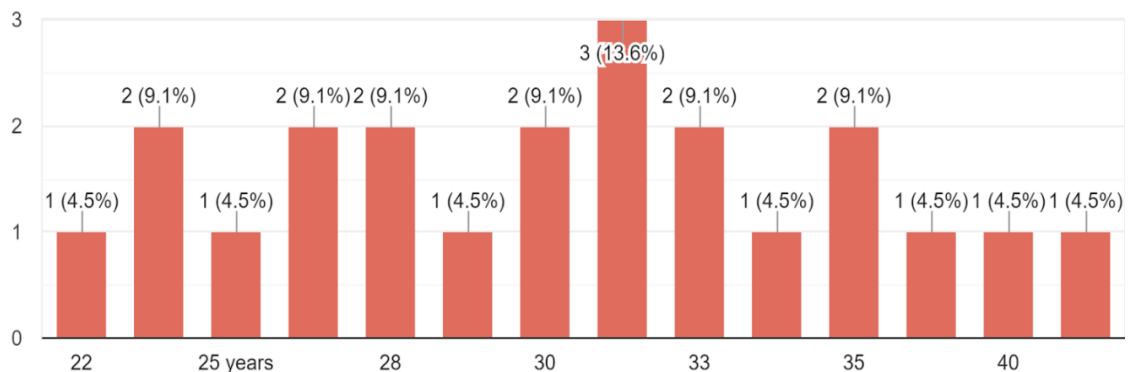
### Survey Questionnaire Data

#### Background Information of the Survey Participants

First of all, the researchers wanted to know about the participants' current state and their background information. They were asked five questions in this regard. The participants were asked to share their current age and how long they have been working here. *Figure 1* shows the employees' current age. It is found that all the employees are aged between 22 and 40 years old. Moreover, the maximum numbers of participants are between 30 and 40 years old (13 participants).

What is your age?

22 responses

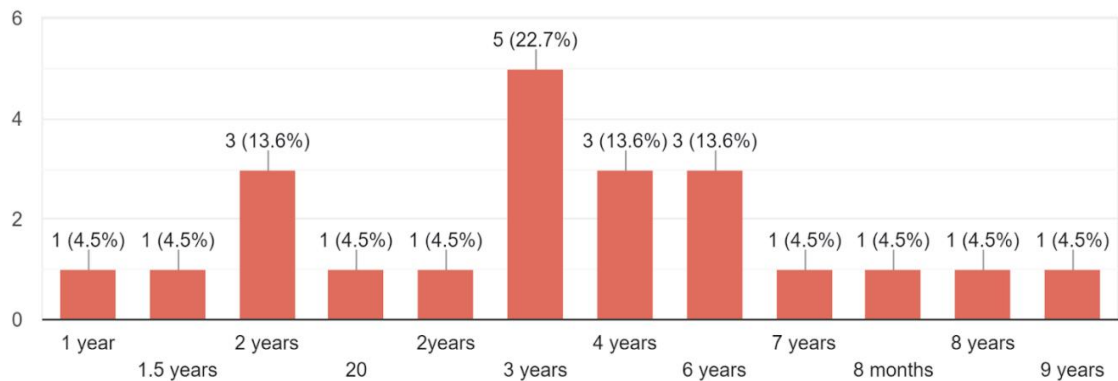


**Figure 1.** Employees' Current Age

*Figure 2* demonstrates how long employees have been working here. It is found that many of the employees have recently joined the service. On the other hand, there are some employees who have been working in this sector for more than four years. Among the 22 participants, the highest number, five participants (22.7%), have three years of working experience. Besides, the researchers found a participant who has twenty years of working experience in the hotel industry.

How long have you been working here?

22 responses

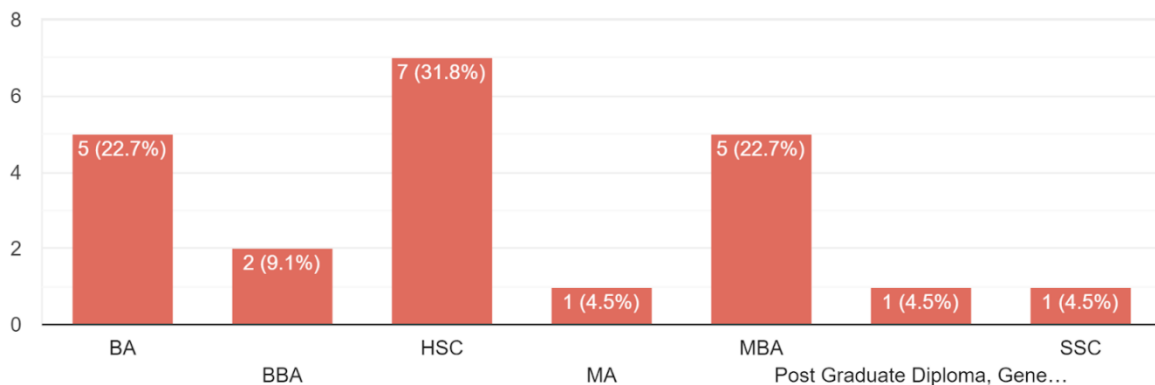


**Figure 2.** Employees' Working Experiences

*Figure 3* shows the educational background of the participants. It is shown that most of the employees came from business backgrounds, and they have completed their BBA degree (5 participants) and MBA degree (5 participants). Some of the employees have completed their graduation in Arts (5 participants).

What was your last educational degree?

22 responses



**Figure 3.** Educational Background of the Participants

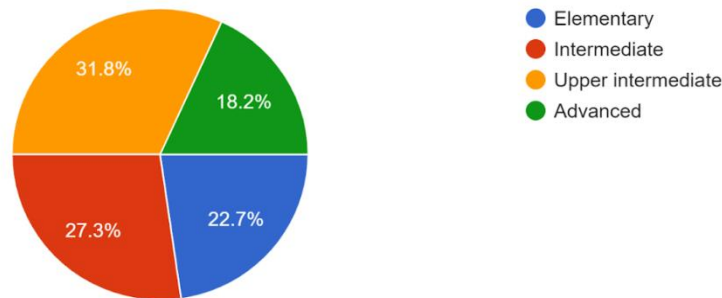
### Participant's Current Language Proficiency

To know about the current proficiency level in English, the participants were asked some questions. *Figure 4* reported that among the 22 participants, 22.7% of employees have elementary proficiency in English. Moreover, 27.3% have intermediate proficiency, 31.8% have upper intermediate, and 18.2% have an advanced level of proficiency, respectively.

Most of the employees who are working as Front Desk Officers or Receptionists mentioned that they have upper-intermediate level proficiency, which is ranked high.

What is your current English proficiency level?

22 responses

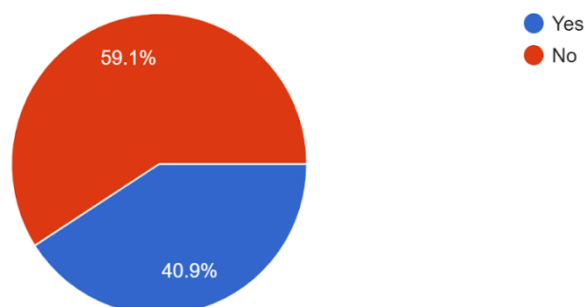


**Figure 4.** Participants' Current English Proficiency Level

The employees were asked whether they had taken part in any English course previously. *Figure 5* demonstrates that among the 22 participants, 13 participants (59.1%) have joined any English course previously, and 9 participants (40.9%) have not taken any English course before. It is notable that some employees mentioned a few coaching centre names, such as Saifur's, Minhaz's English, Mentors' etc., who offer English courses, and they did English courses there in the past.

Did you take any course on English language?

22 responses



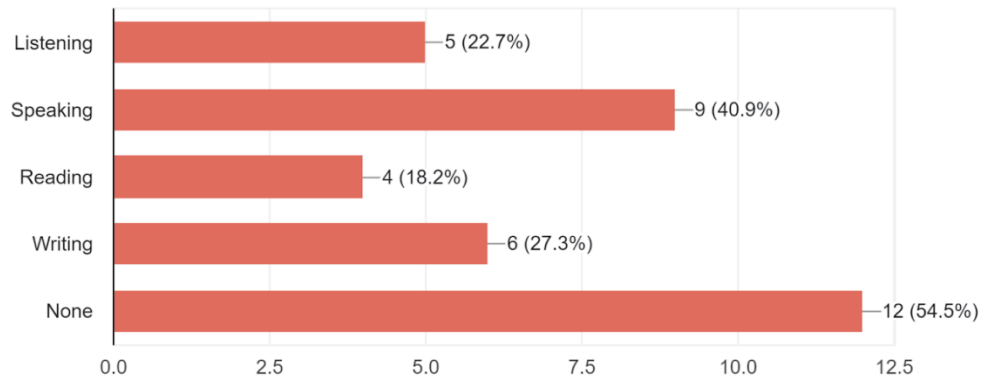
**Figure 5.** Participation in English Course

Again, the employees who had attended an English course before (13 participants) were asked about which skills were focused on most in the previous course they attended. *Figure 6* shows that 9 participants (40.9%) thought the course was mostly speaking-focused. The

second highest focused skill was writing (27.3%). The hotel employees have to write many reports and emails on a daily basis.

Which skills were focused on most?

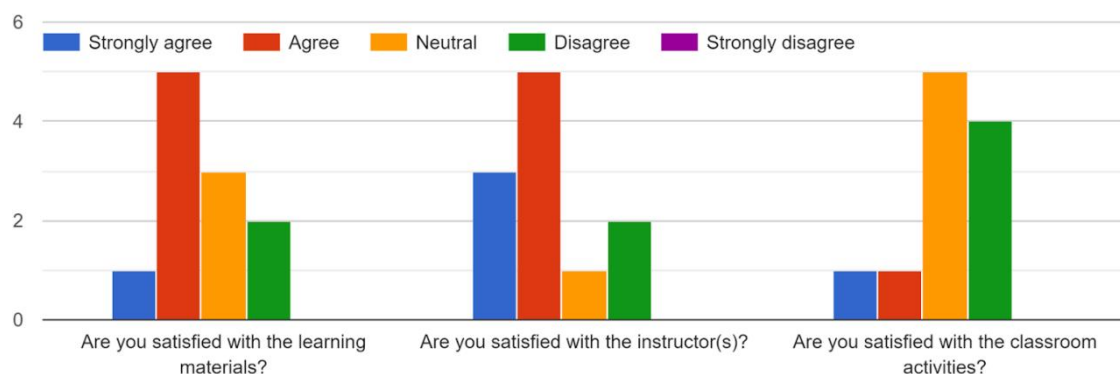
22 responses



**Figure 6.** The Skill-Focused Course (Previous)

Figure 7 shows that among the 11 respondents, 5 participants agree with the statement that they are satisfied with the learning materials. Furthermore, 5 participants also agreed that they are somewhat satisfied with the course instructors. On the contrary, most of the participants (9 participants) remained neutral or dissatisfied regarding the classroom activities.

Please select the below options about your previous English course(s).

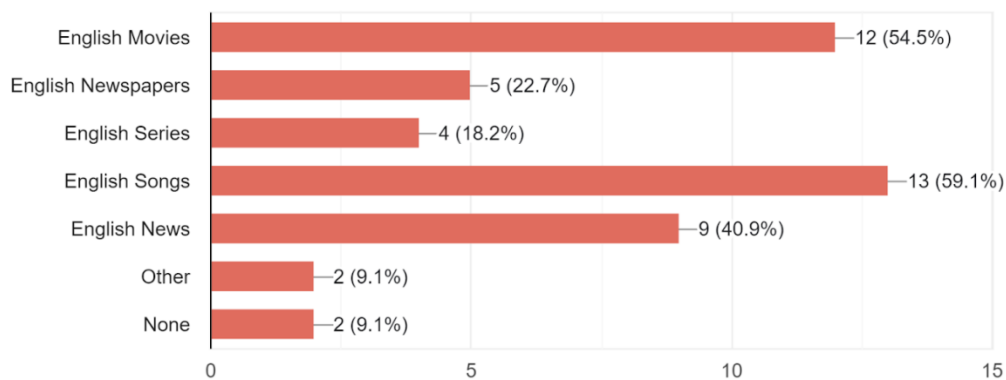


**Figure 7.** Learners' Satisfaction (Previous Course)

After that, the 22 participants were asked about what types of English content they consume in everyday life. The highest number of participants has an interest in listening to English songs (13 participants), which is 59.1%. A similar amount of data (12 participants) was found in terms of watching English movies (54.5%). Two participants reported that they do not consume any of this content.

What type of English content do you consume in your leisure time?

22 responses



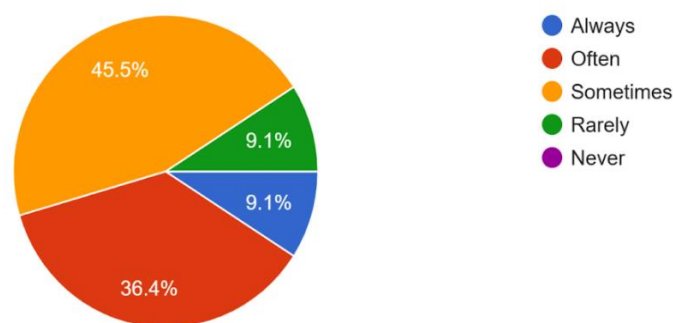
**Figure 8.** The Types of English Content They Consume

### English Language Needs of the Participants

According to *Figure 9*, 45.89% of the employees use English sometimes in their workplace. This is the highest number of participants (10 participants). After that, 36.4% of employees use English often in the workplace. This is a huge amount also. It indicates that there is significant use of English in the hotel area. Notably, no one ever responded to this question.

I use English in my workplace

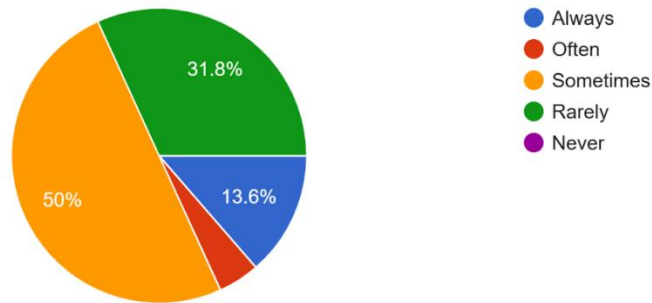
22 responses



**Figure 9.** Uses of English in the Workplace

While the employees were asked about the use of English with the local guests, they were somewhat negative. As English is the second language of Bangladesh, most people prefer Bangla over English in local community communication unless the guest uses English first. 31.8% of participants replied that they use English rarely with local guests.

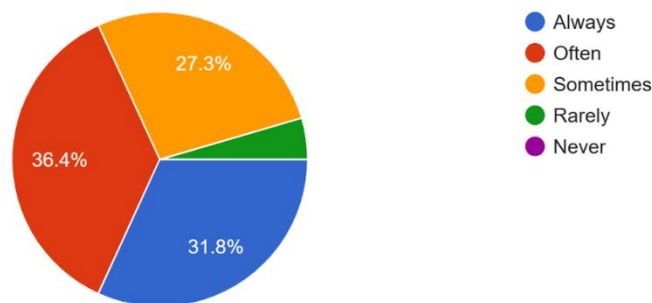
I interact with local guests in English  
22 responses



**Figure 10.** Interaction with Local Guests in English

On the other hand, *Figure 11* demonstrates that most of the participants use English when the guests speak it first.

I frequently interact with guests who speak English  
22 responses

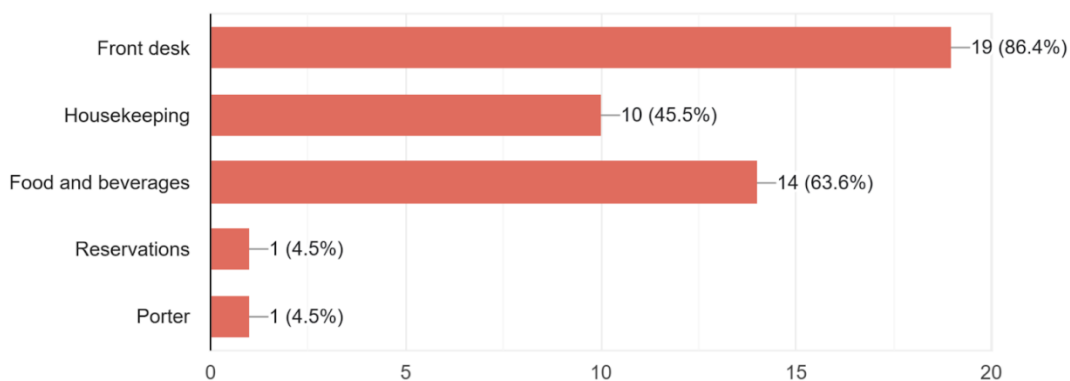


**Figure 11.** Interaction with English Guests

The participants were asked which specific areas of the hotel where English is mostly needed. In reply to this question, 86.4% of the participants (19 employees) agreed that in the 'Font Desk,' English is mostly needed. The second highest response rate is 63.5%, which is 'Food and Beverages' section. Moreover, employees who work in the housekeeping, reservations and porter sections also use English.

What are the specific areas of the hotel where the English language is most needed?

22 responses

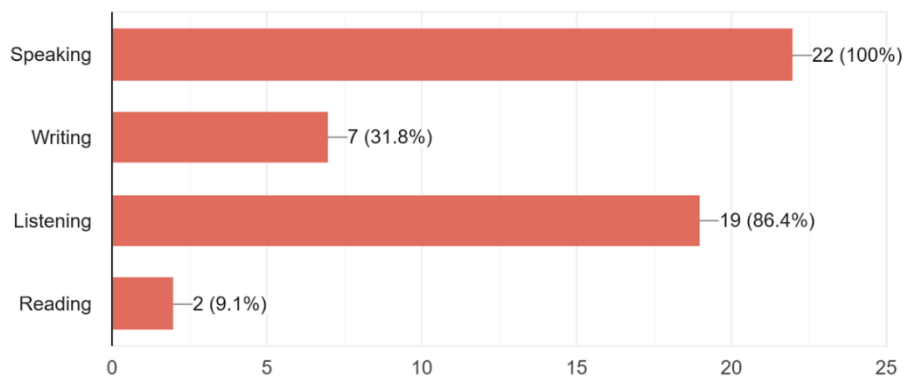


**Figure 12.** Usages of English in the Different Sections of the Hotel

*Figure 13* and *Figure 14* show the English skills needed most by hotel employees and the activities in the hotel where English is mostly used. According to *Figure 13*, all the participants agreed that speaking skills are needed most.

The skill(s) I need most

22 responses

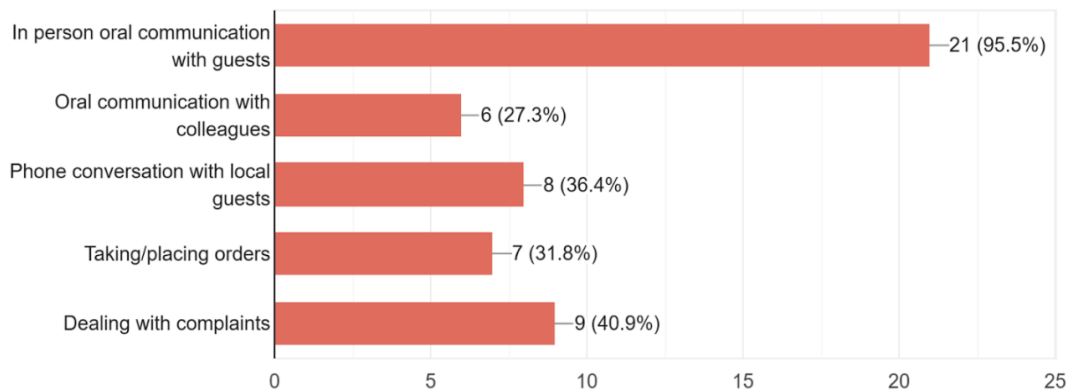


**Figure 13.** Mostly Used Language Skills

Also in *Figure 14*, 95.5% of employees stated that oral communication with guests is a frequent activity in the hotel. Furthermore, 40.9% of employees said that dealing with complaints is another common activity where English speaking and listening skills are needed most.

The kind of activities where I use English most

22 responses

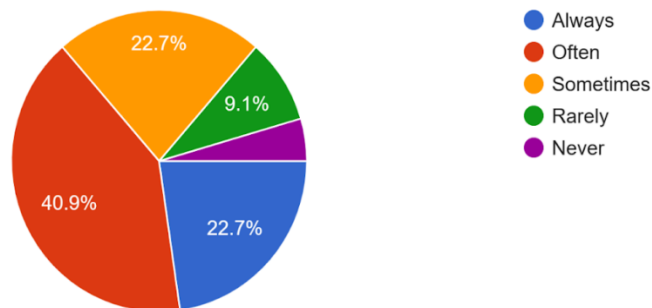


**Figure 14.** Activities Where English Is Needed Most

Regarding the challenges in English communication, *Figure 15* shows that 49.9% of the participants often face difficulties while communicating with guests in English. In addition, 22.7% always face challenges in English communication.

I face challenges while communicating with guests in English

22 responses

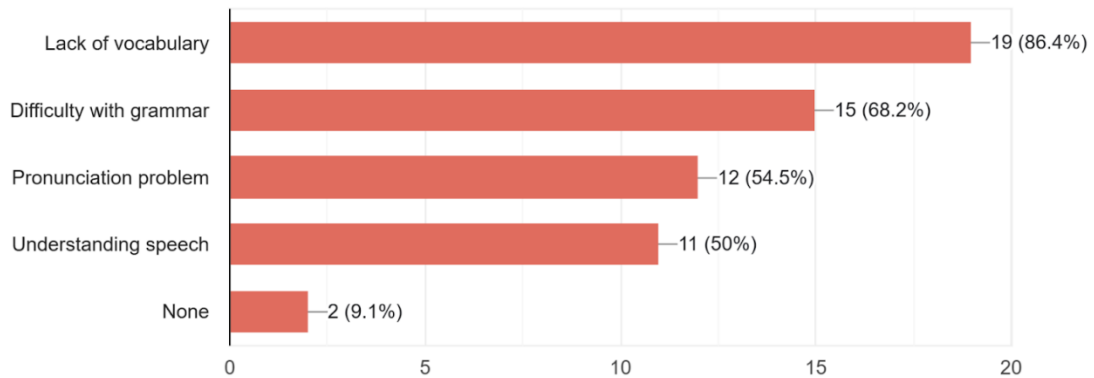


**Figure 15.** Challenges in Communicating English

*Figure 16* indicates that most of the employees (86.4%) have the issue of lack of vocabulary, and 68.2% of employees face grammar-related difficulties while communicating in English.

What are the specific challenges you face when communicating in English with guests?

22 responses

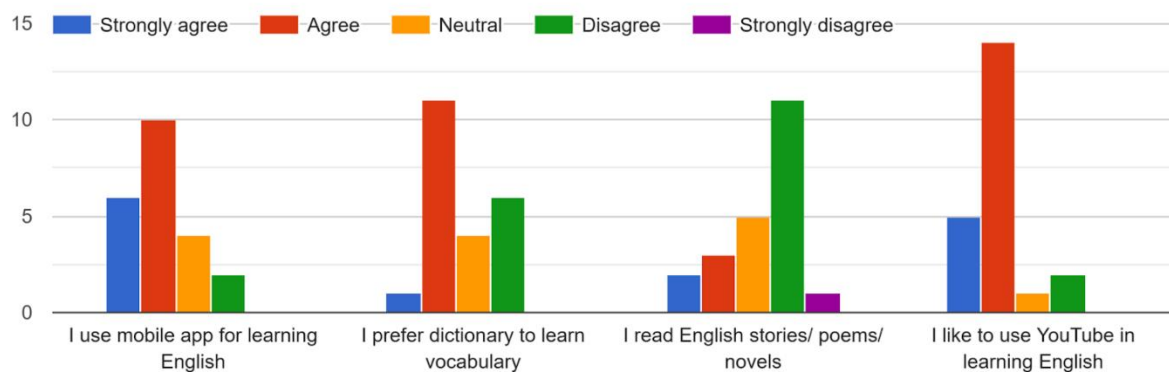


**Figure 16.** Specific Challenges in Communicating English with Guests

## Learning Materials

Figure 17 demonstrates the use of learning materials by the employees. The number of participants using YouTube as a language learning material is quite high (19 participants). In contrast, it was found that a very small number of participants showed their interest in reading English stories, poems and novels (5 participants).

Kindly select every statement carefully which indicates to what extent the statement is appropriate according to you.



**Figure 17.** Using Mobile Apps, Dictionary, English Books and YouTube as Learning Materials

### *Interview Data*

#### **Background Information of the Interview Participants**

Four hotels were selected and approached to conduct interview sessions with the higher authority of the hotels. Hotel A is a four-star, renowned hotel in Bangladesh, which is situated at the heart of Dhaka city. Hotel B, Hotel C and Hotel D are all three-star hotels and are very famous for their amazing service as well.

#### **Interview with Hotel A**

Marketing Head of Hotel A was interviewed. As Hotel A is a four-star hotel. After talking with the Head of Marketing, it was found that they have many foreign guests who come to Bangladesh on a regular basis, and they are native English speakers. He mentioned that although the Front Desk Officers are quite good at English conversation, the rest of the employees' lack of speaking skills. They do not have any specific English courses to offer them. Some of the employees do enrol in general English courses by themselves.

#### **Interview with Hotel B**

Hotel B is a three-star hotel that is also situated in Dhaka city. The HR manager has shared much information regarding them, according to the questions asked by the interviewer. The Manager mentioned that their employees lack the ability to communicate English with foreign guests. Specifically, they have a lack of in speaking and listening skills. Moreover, they do not have any specific English courses for those employees. Therefore, ESP courses are much needed for them.

#### **Interview with Hotel C**

Hotel C, a three-star hotel, is also located in Dhaka city and is crowded with foreign guests. In the interview session, the HR Assistant Manager informed that most of the foreign guests come from China, Japan, South Africa, Nigeria, and India. They come to Bangladesh for their business purpose and stay at this hotel. Consequently, the employees of this hotel, more specifically, the front desk staff and housekeepers, have to use English with them. But sometimes they face a struggle to understand the guest's needs properly. As a result, they need a comprehensive, specific English course for their betterment. According to him, speaking and listening skills should be the topmost priority.

### Interview with Hotel D

Finally, after interviewing the HR Manager of Hotel D, the researchers got some insights. In this hotel, there are many Indian guests who always visit here, who come to Bangladesh for business purposes. They do not use Bangla or Hindi; rather, they use English. Some of the hotel staff at Hotel D do not understand English properly. According to him, for this reason, they need a proper English course. However, the hotel's HR Manager said that the employees do not have that much time to practice and learn English.

### Findings and Discussion

The needs assessment largely consists of the participants' professional responsibilities, educational backgrounds, and increasing interaction with interactional guests. Despite having a degree in hotel management and a school certificate, the language proficiency of these individuals varies and often does not align with their academic achievements. The study focused on collecting data from various departments, including the front desk and food and beverage, where effective communication is essential.

This case study shows that speaking and listening skills are the most important and the most demanding skills for hotel employees as they directly relate to responding to guests at the front desk, in-room service, and customer relations. The case study shows the needs in context and the more general ESP theories, especially the idea of [Hutchinson and Waters \(1987\)](#) of modifying the language instruction to accommodate the immediate professional needs of learners. The reason why communicative competence is in high demand during oral communication is due to the global trends recorded in the hospitality industry studies, in which the quality of services is highly connected to language proficiency and intercultural communication. Moreover, the fact that the employees showed interest in the structured English language courses designed to meet the needs of hospitality proves the theoretical approaches to needs analysis that focus on the alignment of training with the realities of the workplace.

According to the participants, although English is not widely used among colleagues, it becomes mandatory to interact with foreign and local clients who prefer to communicate in English.

As Bangladesh is becoming an increasingly popular destination for tourism, business, and education, hotel employees largely depend on English to carry out their responsibilities. They mostly use English when it comes to face-to-face interaction and over the phone conversation to reserve rooms, offering food, managing housekeeping and resolving

customers' complaints. These operations demand proficiency in both comprehending different accents and responding appropriately.

Speaking and listening held the most significant role in this context. Employees need to interact clearly and deal with situations with a professional approach, especially at the front desk, where customers get their first impression of the hotel by talking to them. Higher authorities of hotels recognise the importance of proficient English speakers in boosting customer satisfaction and gaining big revenue. Misconduct or inability to deal with complaints successfully can lead to customer dissatisfaction and business loss.

The data shows a disparity in terms of English proficiency of the participants, despite all coming from a homogeneous educational background. However, the diagnostic test result shows that the majority of the participants fall into the intermediate or upper-intermediate level.

While some have enrolled in coaching centres for primary language development, others claimed dissatisfaction with previous courses, especially with monotonous classroom activities. Still, their educational histories indicate a readiness and willingness to learn English tailored to their work needs.

Participants demonstrated a strong willpower to learn targeted lexical resources related to hospitality, including names of equipment, food items, and service-related jargons, which will make them sound professional. Moreover, they also want to leverage their speaking competency and listening comprehension, especially for handling diverse accents and guests with limited English. Additionally, learners wanted to improve cultural sensitivity to avoid offending international clients and to better understand global customer expectations. As small mispronunciations can result in confusion or a poor impression, accurate pronunciation was noted as quintessential.

When it comes to learning strategies and materials, employees demonstrated a preference for mobile-assisted language learning, especially through platforms like YouTube, which they already utilise to consume English-related content. They prioritise interactive classroom environments with group and pair work, where all can engage in real-life activities and drills relevant to their job roles. However, due to tight work schedules, their learning process might be harmed. Both participants and stakeholders agree that a compact, three-month course would be beneficial, focusing mainly on speaking and listening skills and incorporating flexible, relevant learning materials.

Although the case study only focuses on four hotels in Dhaka, the findings are tentatively applicable to similar environments in the Bangladeshi hospitality sector and other

urban environments in developing economies. These difficulties include the lack of institutional resources to support English training, dependence on a handful of vocabulary, and inability to communicate with guests in real time, and are not specific to these hotels but could be indicative of wider structural problems in the industry. Nevertheless, since it is localised, the results cannot be applied to all the hotels in Bangladesh. They are rather a point of departure and formulation of context-sensitive ESP courses and policy recommendations that may be modified in the same hotel setting without overlooking the fact that the language needs of different institutions, regions, and hospitality industry categories may differ.

To conclude, an effective ESP course for hospitality employees should incorporate skill-inclusive, context-focused, and flexible to the learners' work schedules. Emphasising communication skills, cultural awareness, and tech-based learning tools will tap into their core needs and assist them in performing their roles more effectively in an increasingly globalised industry.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the result of the case study, a few practical steps are proposed here for teaching in such a context. These recommendations are composed to the needs of the employees studied and are not intended as a general model for the wider hospitality industry.

### ***Key Recommendations***

The following are the recommendations for improving the English education for the hotel employees.

### **Learning Settings and Instructor**

Learners who are from the middle-aged group and workers need a supportive and motivating learning environment. By emphasising building rapport, offering individualised feedback, and fostering a sense of community where they are valued, teachers in adjacent hotel contexts may yield the highest benefit. Such a perspective can reduce learners' anxiety, enhance confidence and encourage them to participate regularly.

### **Designing Materials**

As the employees will join class after a long work shift, the course content should be attractive, professionally related, and directly pertinent to their workplace. The content can play a pivotal role in spurring the continuation of course, resulting in a proficient English-

speaking host. Inclusion of hotel and restaurant-specific vocabulary through gamification, role play, case studies and simulations can provide a better opportunity of harnessing guest handling. The materials- the textbook, multimedia resources, worksheet- should be developed or collected from authentic sources (Fitria, 2022).

### **Regarding Practice**

Although the employees have little time to go back to the lesson at home, the instructors should emphasise rehearsing what they have been taught. In that case, the teacher can assign them various tasks like filming their roleplay, giving a demo to their higher authority, and taking feedback from guests about their communication skills. However, self-monitoring - keeping a journal, using a diary, or a calendar- can enhance their pace of learning.

### **Feedback and Assessment**

Feedback, which is considered the backbone of learners' improvement, can be provided in several ways: peer feedback, instructor feedback, and higher authority feedback. While instructors can offer continuous and instant correction to learners' mistakes, coworkers may contribute by monitoring their improvement and giving feedback. Moreover, assessment can take place in different phases of the course. Among the two types of assessments, continuous assessment is more impactful than summative assessment.

### **Implications for Future Research**

These recommendations represent the needs of the employees from specific hotels in Dhaka, but further study can explore how such a model can be modified and adopted in targeted training areas. Future research trajectory can include long-term effectiveness of incorporating authentic materials, feedback mechanisms and reflective practices in sustaining employees' English language growth.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This research has been carried out while maintaining all ethical issues. Since various sensitive issues, such as the organisation's reputation, and the subject's personal data, are involved, data collection and analysis have been completed carefully. It is always a significant concern to adhere to all ethical processes during data collection. This research has followed all four parameters that have been set by the Committee of Publishing Ethics (CoPE) (Committee on Publication Ethics 2006, 2018). According to this standard guideline,

four ethical considerations should be maintained when conducting research, and without following those processes, the paper or any work would not be publishable. This needs analysis report has also met the criteria developed by [Denzin and Lincoln \(2011\)](#).

## Conclusion

The hospitality sector plays a tremendous role in Bangladesh's economy, and developing English-speaking skills is a focal point for enhancing service quality and attracting foreign tourists. This case study of selected three-and four-star hotels in Dhaka revealed a remarkable gap between employees' current competence and the needs of their professional roles. Results from collected data highlight the need for a targeted English language course designed specifically for hotel employees in similar contexts. As listening and speaking skills are directly applicable to daily guest interaction, such a course should prioritise developing these areas mostly. While the recommendations indicate the specific needs of the participating hotels, they also offer directions for comparable organisations in Dhaka seeking to strengthen their employees' interactive abilities and, ultimately, the quality of service delivered to international visitors.

## References

- Akhy, A. A., & Roy, M. (2020). *Socio-economic impacts of accommodation on tourism development: Bangladesh perspective* (pp. 51–71). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003007241-7>
- Akter, H., Akhtar, S., & Ali, S. (2017). Tourism demand in Bangladesh: Gravity model analysis. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, 65(3), 346–360. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/275672>
- Al-Jufri, N. H., Nasa, R., & Mayaputri, V. (2024). English needs by hotel receptionists in Sikka: An analysis of English for hospitality. *Contemporary Education and Community Engagement (CECE)*, 1(1), 79–87. <https://doi.org/10.12928/cece.v1i1.987>
- Al-Sobh, M. A. (2016). An investigation of the English language needs of hotel employees in Saudi Arabia. *Arab World English Journal*, 7(1), 67-79.
- Bhowmik, D., Hasan, S., & Nafi, S. M. (2024). Guest insight regarding service quality in hotels: An empirical study from Bangladesh. *Journal of Digital Marketing and Communication*, 4(1), 46–61. <https://doi.org/10.53623/jdmc.v4i1.454>
- Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: Complex or simple? Research case

- examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 25(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Chilingaryan, K. (2020). English for specific purposes in the hospitality industry. In *Proceedings of ADVED 2020–6th International Conference on Advances in Education* (pp. 15-10). International Organisation Centre of Academic Research. <https://doi.org/10.47696/adved.202019>
- Cho, Y. J. (2017). English language training for hotel employees in Korea: an analysis of current practice and needs assessment. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 20, 57-68.
- Committee on Publication Ethics. (2006). Code of conduct and best practice guidelines for journal editors. <https://publicationethics.org/resources/code-conduct>
- Committee on Publication Ethics. (2018). Core practices. <https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Cunha, M. N. (2024). Enhancing customer retention through effective communication and staffing strategies in room division departments: Insights from the hospitality sector in Algarve. *RCMOS - Revista Científica Multidisciplinar O Saber*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.51473/rcmos.v1i2.2024.793>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Firharmawan, H., & Andika, A. (2019). Needs and problems in English for hospitality industries: A case study of the hotel employees at Meotel Hotel Kebumen. *Journal of English Language Learning*, 3(2), 318833.
- Fitria, T. N. (2022). Using authentic material and created material (teacher-made) for English Language teaching (ELT): Benefits and limitations. *JADEs Journal of Academia in English Education*, 3(2), 117–140. <https://doi.org/10.32505/jades.v3i2.4674>
- Hossain, B., & Wadood, S. N. (2020). Potential unexplored? Tourism and economic growth of Bangladesh. *Journal of Tourismology*, 4(2), 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.26650/jot.2020.6.1.0031>
- Hossain, M. S., Hussain, M. N., Ahmed, T., Gain, N., & Islam, M. A. (2025). The role of travel agencies and tour operators in the development of the tourism sector: An Empirical study on Bangladesh. *American Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 3(1), 67–77. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ajth.v3i1.4587>

- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ismail Azlan, N. M. N., Yusuf, N. K., Panah, E., Soopar, A. A., & Norazizan, M. H. (2022). English language needs among services sector employees in Malaysia's New Norm. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences*, 12(9). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v12-i9/14655>
- Kenjayeva, B. (2023). English language proficiency among students of tourism and hospitality industry. *Bulletin of the International University of Tourism and Hospitality*, 2(2), 89–96. <https://doi.org/10.62867/3007-0848.2023-2.08>
- Kiger, M. E., & Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical Teacher*, 42(8), 846–854. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159x.2020.1755030>
- Kim, K. J., & Han, S. (2016). A study on the improvement of English language education for hotel employees in Korea. *Journal of Distribution Science*, 14(2), 57-63.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Sage.
- Lee, J. Y. (2016). A study on English language education program for hotel employees in Korea. *Journal of Distribution Science*, 14(10), 43-52.
- Liu, C. Y., & Wang, Y. M. (2015). A survey of the English language needs of hotel employees in Taipei. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 5(10), 792-795.
- Li, Y. (2015). A survey on the language training for hotel employees in Guangzhou. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(10), 2089-2096.
- Manalastas, A. K. M. (2023). Communicative competence in a global hospitality workplace: Assessment of English language competency of Bshm graduating students. *SEAQIL Journal of Language Education*, 2(2), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.70046/sjle.2.2.1-7>
- Masum, M. Y., Mia, M. N., Islam, M. S., Ahmed, G. M. S., Amin, A., Milon, M. N. U., & Hossain, R. (2024). Poverty alleviation through tourism development in Bangladesh: Theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 10050-10064. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i5.4045>
- Miller, W. L., & Crabtree, B. F. (1999). Depth interviewing in B. F. Crabtree and W. L. Miller (eds.). *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Munusamy, P., & Kaliappen, N. (2023). English for tourism and hospitality purposes. In *Springer international handbooks of education* (pp. 1–13). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3895-7\\_18-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3895-7_18-1)

- Naeem, M., Ozuem, W., Howell, K., & Ranfagni, S. (2023). A step-by-step process of thematic analysis to develop a conceptual model in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231205789>
- Nurdiana, N. (2024). Teaching English to food and beverage staff: Problems, challenges, and possible solutions. *English Journal Antartika*, 2(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.70052/eja.v2i1.325>
- Prabowo, B. A., Wijoyo, T. A., Jabbar, U. A., & Putri, J. A. (2025). The perception of d3 hospitality students at stiepari semarang on the importance of english proficiency in hotel and restaurant careers: A quantitative study. *Esteem Journal of English Education Study Programme*, 8(2), 75–88. <https://doi.org/10.31851/esteem.v8i2.18471>
- Putri, N. E., Kher, D. F., Rani, Y. A., & Ramli, A. J. (2018). English for specific purposes: English language needs in hospitality and travel industry. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education (IJMURHICA)*, 1(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v1i1.8>
- Ranasinghe, R. M. S. K. (2024). Enhancing curriculum development through needs analysis: A case study of a second-year university English language teaching programme in Sri Lanka. *Vidyodaya Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9(2), 234–245. <https://doi.org/10.31357/fhss/vjhss.v09i02.15>
- Sermsook, K., Nakplad, R., & Jantawong, L. (2021). Problems and needs analysis of English for tourism industry: A case of hotel staff in Phang Nga Province, Thailand. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 4(3), 73–82. <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1993.04.03.319>
- Shieh, W. (2012). *Hotel employees' perception on their workplace english use: An example from Taiwan*.
- Swedberg, R. (2020). Exploratory research. In *Cambridge University Press eBooks* (pp. 17–41). <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108762519.002>
- Syaifudin, M. (2024). Needs analysis of English learning skills for students of hospitality study program. *Linguistic English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, 7(2), 444–455. <https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v7i2.8550>
- Tagah, F. R., Takaendengan, M. E., & Lumettu, A. (2024). Optimizing employee communication skills to enhance service quality in the front office department of radisson blu hotel Bali Uluwatu. *Jurnal Sains Terapan Pariwisata*, 9(3), 194–204. <https://doi.org/10.56743/jstp.v9i3.430>

- Talukder, M. B., Hoque, M., & Das, I. R. (2024). Opportunities of tourism and hospitality education in Bangladesh: Career perspectives. *I-manager's Journal on Management*, 18(3), 21-34. <https://doi.org/10.26634/jmgt.18.3.20385>
- Vicente, M. (2025). Language and communication training in hospitality education. *Articulator Gazette*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.62596/art.rjdw752>
- Wickramage, U. C., & Gunasinghe, M. P. D. (2024). Syllabus revision; A needs analysis study. *South Florida Journal of Development*, 5(2), 525–530. <https://doi.org/10.46932/sfjdv5n2-009>
- Yasmin, M., Sarkar, M., & Sohail, A. (2016). Exploring English language needs in the hotel industry in Pakistan: An evaluation of existing teaching material. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 28(4), 202–213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2016.1226846>