

**English for Occupational Purposes: A Needs Analysis
of Fitness Club Cashier in Bali**

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Abstract

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In today's globalized service industry, English has become an essential tool for communicating with international clients. Nevertheless, many fitness staff still experience difficulties in using English effectively within professional workplace interactions. This study aims to analyze the English language needs of cashier staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club, Bali, from an applied linguistics perspective. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method using observation, interviews, and documentation to collect data from three cashier participants. The study focuses on identifying the types of English skills, communicative situations, and workplace expressions required in daily interactions, assessed across four dimensions: pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary range, confidence, and fluency. The findings reveal that speaking and listening are the most essential English skills required by cashier staff across four target communicative situations: greeting and welcoming members, explaining facilities and membership packages, answering member inquiries, and handling complaints. Through the ESP needs analysis framework of Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the study identifies staff necessities in these workplace interactions, highlights significant lacks in vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, confidence, and fluency, and reveals participants' wants for context-specific English training, particularly in workplace vocabulary, spontaneous interaction, and complaint-handling communication. This study contributes to the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) by providing empirical evidence and practical insights into language training for fitness industry staff in tourist-dense regions.

Kata Kunci:

*Bahasa Inggris untuk
Tujuan Khusus (ESP),
Linguistik Terapan,
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Bahasa, Industri
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Abstrak

Dalam industri jasa yang telah mengglobal saat ini, bahasa Inggris telah menjadi alat yang sangat penting untuk berkomunikasi dengan klien internasional. Meskipun demikian, banyak staf pusat kebugaran yang masih mengalami kesulitan dalam menggunakan bahasa Inggris secara efektif dalam interaksi profesional di tempat kerja. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebutuhan bahasa Inggris staf kasir di Macan Gading Fitness Club, Bali, dari perspektif linguistik terapan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi untuk mengumpulkan data dari tiga peserta yang berprofesi sebagai kasir. Penelitian ini berfokus pada identifikasi jenis keterampilan bahasa Inggris, situasi komunikatif, dan ungkapan di tempat kerja yang diperlukan dalam interaksi sehari-hari, yang dievaluasi berdasarkan empat dimensi: keakuratan pengucapan, keragaman kosakata, kepercayaan diri, dan kefasihan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa berbicara dan mendengarkan merupakan keterampilan bahasa Inggris yang paling esensial bagi staf kasir dalam empat situasi komunikatif sasaran: menyapa dan menyambut anggota, menjelaskan fasilitas dan paket keanggotaan, menjawab pertanyaan anggota, serta menangani keluhan. Melalui kerangka kerja analisis kebutuhan ESP (English for Specific Purposes) dari Hutchinson dan Waters (1987), penelitian ini mengidentifikasi kebutuhan staf dalam interaksi di tempat kerja tersebut, menyoroti kekurangan signifikan dalam kosakata, ketepatan tata bahasa, kepercayaan diri, dan kefasihan, serta mengungkapkan keinginan peserta akan pelatihan bahasa Inggris yang spesifik sesuai konteks, terutama dalam kosakata tempat kerja, interaksi spontan, dan komunikasi dalam menangani keluhan. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi bagi bidang Bahasa Inggris untuk Tujuan Khusus (ESP) dengan menyajikan bukti empiris dan wawasan praktis mengenai pelatihan bahasa bagi staf industri kebugaran di kawasan dengan kepadatan wisatawan yang tinggi.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, English has become the dominant lingua franca of international communication, widely used across professional service sectors to facilitate interaction between individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural

backgrounds. Over recent decades, English has grown increasingly prevalent in domains such as international business, diplomacy, and technology. However, Victoria et al. 2025 note that research and instructional approaches to English as a Lingua Franca have largely prioritized linguistic aspects over intercultural dimensions, leaving a gap between what is taught and what professional communication actually demands. In international service industries, English proficiency has become a significant advantage for effective client communication (Victoria et al., 2025). This is especially true in tourist-dense regions such as Bali, where service staff engage daily with international clients and are expected to communicate competently, confidently, and contextually in English.

In applied linguistics, the concept of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) emphasizes that language learning should be tailored to the specific needs of learners in their professional contexts. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define ESP as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions regarding content and method are based on the learners' reasons for learning, positioning needs analysis as the central mechanism through which instructional design is determined. Within this framework, language is not treated as an abstract system to be mastered in isolation, but as a functional tool through which professional tasks are accomplished an orientation that is particularly relevant in workplace settings where communication tasks are specific and goal-oriented.

The fitness industry is one of the rapidly growing service sectors that increasingly interacts with international clients. Staff members, including personal trainers and front-desk employees, are required to communicate in English when giving instructions, explaining programs, and responding to customer inquiries. These demands are particularly evident in fitness clubs operating in tourist-dense regions such as Bali, where daily interactions with international members require a consistent level of English communicative competence. Despite this growing communicative demand, staff members often face difficulties in using English appropriately due to limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, or insufficient training.

ESP is commonly categorized into two broad domains: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), the latter

of which is directly relevant to the present study. EOP is defined as a type of language instruction that trains individuals to perform on the job, using English to communicate in real professional contexts (Lamri, 2016). Fitness club staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club, whose daily communicative demands are shaped by direct interactions with international members, fall squarely within this domain and thus constitute an appropriate subject for EOP-oriented needs analysis.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) make a foundational distinction between two categories of needs: target needs, defined as what the learner needs to do in the target situation, and learning needs, defined as what the learner needs to do in order to learn. Target needs are further subdivided into three components. Necessities refer to the language demands imposed by the target situation itself, what the learner must be able to do to function effectively in that context. In the fitness workplace, necessities include the ability to greet international members, explain membership packages, answer service inquiries, and handle complaints in English. Lacks refer to the gap between what learners currently possess and what the target situation requires the deficiency between existing proficiency and professional demand. Wants refer to the learners' own perceptions of what they need, which may or may not align with the objective demands of the situation. Together, these three components provide a comprehensive and multi-layered framework for understanding the English language needs of fitness club staff and directly inform the three research questions addressed by this study.

Several previous studies have investigated English language needs in sport, hospitality, and health service contexts, providing a strong foundation for the present research. In the sports education domain, Dariyanto et al. (2022) conducted a needs analysis among Sports Coaching Education students using an ESP framework, finding that speaking was the most critically needed skill, followed by reading and listening. This finding underscores the primacy of oral communication in sport-related professional settings (Dariyanto et al., 2022). In the hospitality sector, Utami (2024) examined English language needs at a vocational hotel industry program through a mixed-method approach, similarly concluding that speaking and listening were the most critical skills for front-line employees serving

international guests, while also identifying a significant curricular gap in that existing programs remained oriented toward general English rather than contextual, industry-specific communication (Utami, 2024).

The economic implications of English proficiency are further substantiated by Sianturi (2022), whose quantitative study statistically demonstrated that employees' English ability explained a substantial proportion of the variation in perceived service quality among hotel guests. This evidence positions English proficiency not merely as an academic achievement, but as a measurable driver of customer satisfaction a principle equally consequential in fitness club environments (Sianturi, 2022). In a more direct parallel to the present study, Wijayatiningsih et al. (2024) reported that a large majority of sports injury massage therapists lacked active English speaking ability despite holding undergraduate degrees in sports science, and that targeted ESP training yielded measurable improvement in communicative outcomes (Wijayatiningsih et al., 2024).

In operationalizing this framework, the present study assesses staff English performance across four dimensions that reflect the communicative demands of the target situation: pronunciation accuracy, referring to the clarity and intelligibility of spoken English; vocabulary range, referring to the breadth and appropriateness of words and expressions used; confidence, referring to the staff member's willingness and ease in initiating and sustaining English communication; and fluency, referring to the smoothness and natural flow of spoken interaction without excessive hesitation or breakdown. These four dimensions serve as the analytical lens across all data collection instruments and all four target communicative situations examined in this study.

Existing ESP studies have primarily focused on hospitality, tourism, educational sports contexts, and healthcare-related services. However, little attention has been paid to front-line communication in fitness clubs, particularly concerning the specific communicative situations, workplace expressions, and target needs required by cashier staff who interact directly with international clients. No study to date has specifically examined the English communicative needs of fitness club front-desk staff through the lens of necessities, lacks, and wants as

formulated by (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This gap represents a significant oversight, given that cashier staff serve as the primary point of contact for international members and are therefore central to the overall service experience.

Therefore, the present study aims to: identify the types of English skills most needed by fitness club cashier staff in their daily professional interactions; describe the communicative situations in which English is most frequently required; and determine the specific vocabulary and expressions essential for effective service delivery at Macan Gading Fitness Club. Situated in Kerobokan Kaja, North Kuta, one of Bali's most internationally frequented areas, Macan Gading Fitness Club constitutes a mid-scale establishment that reflects the general characteristics of the majority of fitness businesses operating throughout the island, thereby rendering it a highly relevant and representative site for scholarly investigation. The findings are expected to contribute to the field of English for Specific Purposes by offering empirical evidence from the fitness industry, while providing practical insights that can inform the development of targeted English language training programs.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design within the framework of applied linguistics, focusing on a single research site, Macan Gading Fitness Club, as a bounded institutional context. A descriptive approach was adopted in analyzing the data, aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of the English language needs of fitness club staff within their authentic workplace context, as qualitative inquiry is particularly suited to exploring how individuals experience and make meaning of communicative practices in professional settings (Creswell, 2017). This case study design allowed the researcher to examine specific communication patterns, language challenges, and professional demands as they naturally occur within this bounded context.

The fieldwork was conducted over a two-week period, during which the researcher was present at the research site on seven separate observation days, strategically distributed across both weeks to ensure that data collection captured a representative range of daily operational interactions. This distribution allowed the

researcher to observe recurring communicative patterns across different days and varying member traffic conditions. Saturation was determined by the recurrence of communicative patterns and expressions across observation days; by the final observation days, no new categories of language use or communicative difficulty emerged across the four target situations, indicating that the seven-day observation period was sufficient to capture the representative range of English language needs relevant to this study.

The study was conducted at Macan Gading Fitness Club, a fitness facility located in Kerobokan Kaja, North Kuta, Bali, that serves both domestic and international members. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, a technique that enables the researcher to identify individuals with direct and relevant experience related to the phenomenon under investigation. The participants comprised cashier staff who regularly engage in English communication with international clients, as their roles place them at the primary point of client contact within the facility. A total of three (3) participants were involved in this study, selected on the basis of their active roles in client-facing communication and their direct exposure to English language demands in the workplace. Although the number of participants was limited, the participants were selected based on their direct involvement in English-mediated workplace interactions. Demographic information of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Staff demographics

No	Staff	Gender	Last education	Age
1	Cashier A	Female	Senior High School	43
2	Cashier B	Female	Senior High School	40
3	Cashier C	Female	Senior High School	25

As shown in Table 1, all three participants are female cashier staff with a Senior High School educational background, ranging in age from 25 to 43 years. Their shared educational profile none of whom received formal English language instruction beyond the secondary level underscores the relevance of investigating their English language needs within a professional context that increasingly demands communicative competence with international clients.

Data were collected through three complementary instruments observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation to ensure a comprehensive and multi-perspectival account of the participants' English language needs. Across all three instruments, staff performance and language use were evaluated using four analytical dimensions: pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary range, confidence, and fluency. These dimensions served as a consistent framework for data collection, coding, and analysis throughout the study.

First, non-participant observation was conducted over two weeks to document naturally occurring English communication situations at the front desk of Macan Gading Fitness Club. Observational data were recorded manually through field notes and the observation checklist in real time; no audio or video recording was conducted during observation sessions, in order to minimize the Observer's Paradox and preserve the naturalness of front-desk interactions with international members. Observation focused on four target communicative situations identified as central to the cashier role: greeting and welcoming international members; explaining facilities and membership packages; answering member questions and handling inquiries; and handling complaints and service recovery interactions. For each situation, staff performance was assessed across the four communicative dimensions described above. An observation checklist adapted from Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) ESP needs analysis framework was employed to systematically record common sentences, expressions, and observable communicative behaviors in each situation.

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the three participants to elicit deeper insights into their perceived English language needs, communicative challenges, and professional language demands. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, the participants' first language, to allow them to express their perceived language needs, challenges, and wants with greater ease and depth, given their Senior High School educational background and limited English proficiency. Interview recordings were subsequently transcribed and translated into English by the researcher for the purposes of analysis and reporting, with back-translation checks performed to preserve the accuracy of meaning. Each interview

lasted approximately 30-45 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' informed consent to ensure accuracy during transcription. Interview questions were organized around the four communicative situations and probed participants' self-assessment across the four dimensions, as well as the specific expressions they most frequently relied upon or felt least equipped to produce.

Third, documentation was gathered in the form of written materials actively used within the fitness club, including member registration forms, social media content, and internal communication records. These documents served to triangulate findings by revealing the written English demands placed on staff beyond oral interaction, particularly in relation to the vocabulary and expressions encountered across the four target communicative situations.

Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis procedure, comprising six stages: familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Coding was conducted across all three data sources, with the four communicative dimensions serving as an organizing framework for the identification of patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This procedure yielded three principal themes directly corresponding to the three research questions: the English language skills most needed by cashier staff; the communicative situations in which English is most required; and the vocabulary and expressions essential for effective service delivery. The convergence of evidence across observation, interview, and documentary data ensured that findings reflect a coherent, grounded, and internally consistent account of participants' English language needs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This section presents the empirical findings of the study based on data collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentary analysis at Macan Gading Fitness Club. Data collection was conducted over seven selected working days between April 27 and May 10, 2026, during morning to afternoon operational hours (approximately 08:00 AM to 01:00

PM). All utterances cited below are reproduced as directly observed, without grammatical correction, to preserve the authenticity of the data.

Thematic analysis of the full dataset yielded three principal themes corresponding to the three research questions of the study: the English language skills most needed by cashier staff, the communicative situations in which English use is most required, and the vocabulary and expressions essential for effective service delivery. Within each theme, findings are analyzed across the four dimensions established in the methodology pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary range, confidence, and fluency applied consistently across observational, interview, and documentary evidence.

Finding 1: English Language Skills Most Needed by Cashier Staff

The first theme emerging from thematic analysis indicates that speaking and listening constitute the most critically needed English skills among cashier staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club, followed by reading and writing as secondary but increasingly relevant demands. This skills hierarchy was consistent across all four communicative situations and is substantiated by convergent evidence from all three data collection instruments.

Speaking

Speaking was the most frequently activated skill across all four communicative situations. However, staff performance in spoken English was consistently marked by limited vocabulary range, grammatical inaccuracies, reduced sentence complexity, and hesitation in spontaneous interactions. Analysis of observational data across the four dimensions revealed the following patterns: pronunciation of individual words was generally adequate for communicative intelligibility; vocabulary range was the most critically deficient dimension, particularly in situations requiring professional and technical terminology; confidence was variable, strongest in predictable routine exchanges and lowest in situations requiring elaborated explanations or complaint resolution; and fluency was consistently reduced by incomplete sentence production and filler expressions. The following utterances were directly observed during the data collection period:

“Hello! Welcome.... You want join gym?” (Cashier C, Greeting Situation, April 28, 2026, 08:15 AM)

Pronunciation of individual words was intelligible; however, sentence structure was grammatically incomplete and lacked the professional register expected in an internationally oriented service context.

“This gym have cardio area, weight training, and...toilet. All include in package.” (Cashier B, Explaining Situation, May 1, 2026, 10:40 AM)

Vocabulary gaps and telegraphic structure indicate limited productive range; the absence of membership-specific terminology (complimentary, included, facilities) reduced the informativeness and professional quality of the explanation.

“Sorry... I check first. Please wait.” (Cashier A, Inquiry Situation, May 6, 2026, 11:25 AM)

While communicative intent was conveyed, the utterance reflects reduced grammatical complexity and reliance on minimal expressions under communicative pressure, indicating a vocabulary and fluency gap in complex inquiry situations.

Interview data corroborated these observational findings. All three participants identified speaking as their most significant language challenge. Cashier A stated that formulating complete responses in real time was consistently difficult (interview, May 7, 2026). Cashier B reported experiencing a mental block when members posed unfamiliar questions (interview, May 8, 2026). Cashier C explained that she frequently relied on gestures and single-word responses when appropriate English expressions were unavailable (interview, May 4, 2026). These self-reports confirm the observational evidence and indicate that the speaking deficit is experienced subjectively as a persistent professional limitation by all three participants.

Listening

Listening was identified as the second most critical skill need, emerging as a consistent theme across all observational and interview data. Staff experienced systematic difficulty comprehending unfamiliar accents, rapid speech, and topic-specific vocabulary. The most frequently observed compensatory strategy,

produced by all three participants across multiple interactions throughout the observation period, was the following:

“Sorry, I don’t understand. Can you repeat please?” (Observed across all three participants, multiple sessions; first noted April 30, 2026, 09:45 AM)

The repeated use of this single compensatory phrase across all three participants and across multiple communicative situations indicates a systematic listening comprehension gap rather than isolated incidents of misunderstanding.

During an interview conducted on May 5, 2026, Cashier A explained that she could often identify individual words but struggled to construct meaning from complete utterances when members spoke quickly or used idiomatic expressions. This pattern reflects a gap between receptive word-level recognition and integrative sentence-level comprehension, which directly impairs the quality and accuracy of service interactions. Across the four dimensions, listening comprehension difficulties were most evident in the vocabulary and fluency dimensions, where unfamiliar terminology and rapid delivery consistently disrupted communicative flow.

Reading and Writing

Reading and writing emerged from the analysis as secondary but increasingly significant skill demands, particularly in digital and administrative service contexts. Cashier A reported misreading unfamiliar terms on membership registration forms (interview, May 6, 2026). Cashier B acknowledged frequently relying on auto-translation tools when composing WhatsApp replies to international members (interview, May 7, 2026). Documentary evidence collected on May 8, 2026 confirmed that staff regularly encountered written English in registration forms, social media content, promotional materials, and internal communication records. These findings indicate that English language competence in the contemporary fitness workplace extends beyond face-to-face oral interaction to encompass written and digital communication demands that are directly embedded in daily operational tasks.

Finding 2: Communicative Situations Requiring English

Four primary communicative situations were identified through observation as the core contexts in which cashier staff used English daily. Each situation presented distinct patterns of language use and communicative difficulty.

Greeting and Welcoming Members

Greeting interactions were the most predictable and rehearsed of the four situations. Standard opening phrases were produced with relative consistency across participants. The following utterances were observed:

“Good morning! Welcome to Macan Gading Fitness Club. How can I help you?”

(Cashier A, observed on April 27, 2026, at 08:05 AM)

“Hello! Welcome.... You want join gym?”

(Cashier C, observed on April 30, 2026, at 09:12 AM)

Cashier A demonstrated the strongest performance in this situation. Cashier C’s greeting attempts were notably shorter and incomplete. During interviews conducted between May 4 and May 8, 2026, all three participants reported feeling most comfortable in greeting situations due to the repetitive and predictable nature of opening exchanges. However, they acknowledged that unfamiliar requests or unexpected follow-up questions frequently disrupted communication.

Explaining Facilities and Membership Packages

This situation was identified as the most linguistically demanding. Staff consistently used simplified and telegraphic structures when describing membership options. The following utterances were directly observed:

“Monthly member get free locker and... ehm... towel service.”

(Cashier B, observed on May 1, 2026, at 10:35 AM)

“We have cardio area, weight training, and... toilet. All include in package.”

(Cashier A, observed on May 4, 2026, at 11:10 AM)

All three participants identified this situation as the one in which they felt least confident. During an interview conducted on May 5, 2026, at 12:20 PM, Cashier C explained that although she understood the gym facilities in detail, she found it

difficult to explain them clearly in English, particularly when members requested comparisons between membership tiers.

Answering Member Inquiries

Answering inquiries was the most frequently occurring communicative situation during the observation period. Staff demonstrated adequate responses to simple factual questions but experienced difficulty handling complex or multi-part inquiries. The following contrast illustrates this pattern:

“The gym open from seven AM until nine PM every day, including weekend.”

(Cashier A, adequate response to a simple question, observed on April 29, 2026, at 09:30 AM)

“Sorry... I check first. Please wait.”

(Cashier A, response to a complex pricing inquiry, observed on May 6, 2026, at 11:25 AM)

During an interview conducted on May 7, 2026, at 12:35 PM, Cashier B stated that she often became confused when members asked unexpected questions. Cashier C admitted during an interview on May 8, 2026, at 12:40 PM that she occasionally pretended to understand in order to avoid requesting repetition multiple times.

Handling Complaints

Complaint interactions occurred least frequently but carried the highest communicative stakes. Relative to other situations, staff demonstrated slightly stronger performance by relying on formulaic apology expressions. The following utterances were observed:

“I’m sorry for the problem. I will check for you right now.”

(Cashier A, observed on May 5, 2026, at 12:05 PM)

“Sorry for inconvenience. I will call the staff to help you.”

(Cashier B, observed on May 8, 2026, at 11:47 AM)

However, when complaints required more complex explanations or negotiated solutions, staff members reported during interviews conducted between May 5 and May 8, 2026, that they would typically call a senior colleague to handle the interaction, effectively withdrawing from the communicative situation.

Finding 3: Vocabulary and Expressions Essential for Service Delivery

The third theme identifies the situation-specific vocabulary and expressions that are both professionally essential and systematically underperformed by cashier staff. This theme emerged from the convergence of observation checklists, interview responses, and documentary evidence collected across the full observation period. Table 2 presents a consolidated overview of essential expressions per communicative situation alongside corresponding staff performance notes.

Table 2. Essential Vocabulary and Expressions by Communicative Situation

Situation	Essential Expression Identified	Staff Performance Notes
Greeting & Welcoming	“Welcome to Macan Gading Fitness Club.” “How can I help you today?” “Is this your first visit with us?”	Partially known; delivery characterized by pauses and incomplete sentence production. Cashier C produced shortened, grammatically incomplete versions of standard greeting phrases.
Explaining Facilities & Membership	“We offer monthly, quarterly, and annual membership options.” “The package includes unlimited access and complimentary towel service.” “The registration fee is IDR...”	Largely absent from productive repertoire. Staff consistently substituted with telegraphic structures (e.g., ‘All include in package’), omitting key membership and pricing terminology.
Answering Member Inquiries	“The gym is open from 07:00 AM to 09:00 PM, seven days a week.” “Could you please repeat that?” “Let me check that information for you.”	Factual frames used inconsistently; comprehension management strategies used as primary compensatory tool. Complex inquiry frames absent.
Handling Complaints	“I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience.” “I will look into this matter immediately.” “Allow me to offer you a complimentary session.” “We will ensure this does not happen again.”	Only basic apology expressions consistently produced. Resolution-oriented language (solution offers, follow-up assurances) absent from all three participants’ repertoires.

Across all four communicative situations, a consistent pattern was identified: staff productive repertoire was restricted to high-frequency, globally familiar expressions acquired through repeated workplace exposure, while situation-specific professional vocabulary including membership tier terminology, pricing language, benefit descriptions, and resolution-oriented complaint expressions remained systematically absent. This vocabulary gap directly

constrained staff capacity to provide detailed, professional, and contextually appropriate service explanations to international members, and constitutes the most concrete and actionable language learning need identified by the study.

Discussion

The three themes identified through thematic analysis directly address the three research questions of the study and are interpreted through the ESP needs analysis framework proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). The first theme addresses the initial research question concerning the English language skills most needed by cashier staff. The second theme responds to the question about communicative situations in which English is most frequently required. Meanwhile, the third theme addresses the question regarding vocabulary and expressions considered essential in supporting service quality. Within this interpretive framework, each theme is examined based on three target needs components formulated by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), namely necessities referring to language demands arising from the professional context, lacks referring to the gap between current abilities and professional requirements, and wants referring to the learners' own perceptions of their language needs. Table 3 presents an explicit mapping of the findings onto these three components across all four communicative situations, positioning the theoretical framework as the primary analytical lens guiding the discussion that follows.

Table 3. Mapping of Findings onto Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) ESP Needs Analysis Framework

Communicative situation	Necessity (Target Demand)	Lack (Current Gap)	Want (Learner Perception)
Greeting & Welcoming	Ability to greet, inquire membership status, and offer assistance in professional English	Incomplete sentence production; hesitation; shortened and grammatically inaccurate expressions	Staff want longer, more natural greeting phrases to project greater professionalism
Explaining Facilities & Membership	Ability to explain membership tiers, facilities, pricing, and service benefits accurately in English	Absence of technical vocabulary (quarterly, registration fee, complimentary); telegraphic structures used as substitution	Staff want targeted vocabulary training for membership and facility descriptions

Answering Member Inquiries	Ability to respond accurately to varied member questions, including complex and multi-part inquiries	Adequate for simple factual queries; breakdown on complex or unexpected questions; compensatory avoidance (pretending to understand)	Staff want structured practice with spontaneous question-answering and clarification strategies
Handling Complaints	Ability to apologize, explain, offer solutions, and provide follow-up assurance in service recovery situations	Only basic apology formulae available; resolution-oriented language absent; complex complaints delegated to senior colleagues	Staff want confidence-building exercises and complaint-resolution language training

English Language Skills Required by Cashier Staff

The findings of Theme 1 demonstrate that speaking and listening constitute the core language necessities for cashier staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club. This finding directly aligns with Dariyanto et al. (2022), who similarly identified speaking as the most critically needed skill among Sports Coaching Education students, and with Utami (2024), who found speaking and listening to be the most critical skills for front-line hospitality employees serving international guests. The convergence of these findings across sport, hospitality, and fitness service contexts suggests that the primacy of oral skills is not idiosyncratic to the present research site, but reflects a broader pattern in front-line, client-facing occupational settings where English is used primarily for real-time spoken interaction rather than written communication. This result directly confirms Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) argument that ESP instruction must be grounded in target needs rather than general English proficiency, as the communicative demands observed were uniformly task-specific, time-pressured, and embedded in authentic service interactions.

In terms of speaking, observation data revealed that staff performance across all four communicative situations was consistently marked by limited vocabulary range, grammatical inaccuracies, incomplete sentence production, and hesitation. These difficulties collectively indicate that cashier staff possess only partial communicative competence in spoken English. Within the needs analysis framework, these deficiencies constitute lacks the measurable gap between what the professional context requires and what staff currently possess. Cashier C's

greeting utterance ('You want join gym?') and Cashier B's explanation ('All include in package') exemplify this gap: the communicative intent was conveyed, but the register, grammatical accuracy, and vocabulary range fell short of the professional standard expected in an internationally oriented fitness service context. The self-reported accounts from all three participants further confirm that this gap is experienced as a persistent professional limitation, constituting a want for improved speaking competence aligned with the objective lacks identified through observation.

Listening emerged as the second major necessity. The repeated use of the single compensatory phrase 'Sorry, I don't understand. Can you repeat please?' across all three participants and multiple interactions reveals a systematic listening comprehension gap. Cashier A's explanation that she could recognize individual words but struggled to construct meaning from complete utterances indicates a gap between lexical recognition and integrative comprehension a lack that is particularly consequential in services encounters where accurate understanding of member needs directly determines service quality. This finding reflects both a necessity (effective listening is an inescapable requirement of the cashier role) and a documented lack (observed comprehension performance consistently fell below the demands of authentic service interactions).

Reading and writing represent secondary but increasingly significant necessities in the contemporary fitness workplace. This secondary but growing demand for written and digital English competence echoes the curricular gap identified by Utami (2024), who found that existing hospitality training programs remained oriented toward general English rather than the specific, contextual communication tasks demanded by the workplace a mismatch that appears equally relevant to the fitness industry context examined here. The reliance on auto-translation tools for WhatsApp communication and the misreading of registration form terminology constitute lacks in the written and digital communication domain. As Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasize, ESP instruction should be based on actual workplace language use; the scope of language training for fitness staff must

therefore incorporate digital and written communication tasks alongside oral skills development.

Communicative Situations and the Four Dimensions of Performance

The findings of Theme 2 identify four communicative situations that constitute the target situations in the ESP sense of the real-world contexts in which English must be used for specific professional purposes. Analysis of staff performance across these situations using the four dimensions reveals a consistent pattern: performance was strongest in the most predictable and formulaic situation (greeting) and weakest in the most linguistically complex (explaining facilities and membership packages), with answering inquiries and handling complaints presenting intermediate levels of challenge.

In greeting interactions, the moderate-to-adequate performance observed across all four dimensions suggests that repeated exposure to formulaic expressions can partially compensate for limited productive competence. This supports Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) argument that ESP learners in occupational contexts frequently rely on fixed expressions in familiar, predictable situations. However, the communication breakdown that occurred when interactions deviated from routine exchanges confirms that familiarity with formulas does not constitute the communicative adaptability required in authentic service environments. The lack in this situation is therefore not primarily phonological but structural: staff lacked the capacity to extend beyond memorized scripts when member-initiated exchanges departed from anticipated patterns.

The situation of explaining facilities and membership packages was the most linguistically demanding across all four dimensions. The vocabulary lacks identified in this context were particularly acute: key professional terms including quarterly membership, registration fee, complimentary towel service, and unlimited access were systematically absent from productive use, reducing explanatory utterances to telegraphic structures that failed to meet professional service standards. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that vocabulary selection in ESP must be highly contextualized and directly connected to learners' professional tasks. The present findings provide empirical support for this principle: it is not

general vocabulary that cashier staff lack, but domain-specific professional terminology directly required by their occupational roles.

In answering member inquiries the most frequently occurring communicative situation a performance split emerged that is analytically significant within the needs analysis framework. Staff demonstrated adequate performance on simple factual questions, indicating that the necessity for basic information delivery is being partially met. However, the pronounced deterioration in performance on complex or multi-part inquiries, including Cashier C's self-reported avoidance strategy of pretending to understand, reveals a communicative lack that extends beyond vocabulary into the domain of interactional strategy and confidence. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) emphasize that ESP instruction should prepare learners for real communication rather than isolated grammatical exercises; the present findings indicate that training specifically addressing spontaneous question-answering, clarification strategies, and comprehension management constitutes a professional necessity for cashier staff.

Complaint-handling interactions demonstrated the most critical gap between necessity and current competence across all dimensions except pronunciation. Staff consistently produced basic apology formulae a necessity in any service recovery situation but the absence of resolution-oriented language, including solution offers, accountability statements, and follow-up assurances, represents a significant lack in strategic communicative competence. The systematic pattern of delegating complex complaints to senior colleagues, observed across all three participants, reflects not merely a vocabulary gap but a deeper deficit in confidence and communicative agency in emotionally sensitive service encounters. This finding affirms Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) contention that ESP instruction in occupational contexts must address the full range of communicative functions required in the target situation, including those involving interpersonal negotiation and service recovery.

Vocabulary and Expressions: The Specificity Principle in ESP

The findings of Theme 3 reinforce the specificity principle that is central to Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) ESP framework: language instruction is most effective when vocabulary and expressions are directly connected to learners' professional tasks and communicative situations. Across all four situations, staff productive repertoire was restricted to high-frequency globally familiar expressions, while professionally specific vocabulary membership tier terminology, pricing language, benefit descriptions, and resolution-oriented complaint expressions remained systematically absent.

This pattern of vocabulary absence constitutes the most concrete and actionable lack identified by the study. It indicates that the necessary vocabulary for professional service delivery at Macan Gading Fitness Club is not a matter of improved general English proficiency, but requires targeted lexical instruction organized around the specific communicative demands of each situation. The wants expressed by participants in interviews for vocabulary training focused on membership and facility descriptions, for practice with spontaneous interaction, and for complaint-handling language are directly aligned with the objective lacks identified through observation, confirming the coherence of the ESP needs analysis framework as an instrument for designing fitness industry language instruction.

Implications for ESP-Based Language Training

Collectively, the findings confirm Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) view that language learning becomes more effective when closely aligned with learners' target needs and workplace realities. The communicative profile of cashier staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club is characterized by partial competence adequate pronunciation and formulaic expression in predictable situations, but consistent deficiencies in vocabulary range, grammatical complexity, confidence, and strategic communicative competence across more demanding professional contexts. These deficiencies map directly onto the lacks identified across all four communicative situations and all four analytical dimensions, and are reinforced by the wants expressed by participants through self-report.

These findings have direct implications for the design of ESP-based English training programs for fitness industry staff. Such programs should prioritize speaking and listening practice organized around the four authentic communicative situations identified in this study, with particular emphasis on domain-specific vocabulary instruction for membership and facility explanations, structured spontaneous question-answering practice, comprehension management strategies, and complaint-handling and service recovery language. Simulation-based activities replicating the four target communicative situations would provide the most contextually relevant instructional framework, directly addressing the necessities, lacks, and wants systematically identified through needs analysis.

These implications are further supported by Wijayatiningsih et al. (2024), who demonstrated that targeted ESP training produced measurable improvement in the communicative outcomes of sports injury massage therapists who, despite holding relevant undergraduate qualifications, lacked active English speaking ability. This precedent suggests that the vocabulary and situational gaps identified among cashier staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club are similarly addressable through structured, context-specific ESP intervention, rather than requiring general English remediation.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the English language needs of cashier staff at Macan Gading Fitness Club through the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Three principal themes were identified through thematic analysis, corresponding to the three research questions of the study. The first theme addressing the English skills most needed revealed that speaking and listening are the most essential skills required in daily workplace interactions, with reading and writing emerging as secondary but increasingly relevant demands in digital and administrative contexts. The second theme addressing the communicative situations requiring English use identified four core situations (greeting and welcoming members, explaining facilities and membership packages, answering member inquiries, and handling complaints) and demonstrated that staff performance across

all four analytical dimensions was strongest in predictable, formulaic situations and weakest in linguistically complex situations requiring elaborated vocabulary, interactional flexibility, or service recovery language. The third theme addressing essential vocabulary and expressions revealed a systematic gap between the professional vocabulary required by each communicative situation and what staff were able to produce, with domain-specific terminology consistently absent from productive repertoire across all four situations.

Analyzed through Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) needs analysis framework, the findings demonstrate that cashier staff face consistent necessities in all four communicative situations and that their current competence, characterized by limited vocabulary range, grammatical inaccuracies, hesitation, and low confidence, does not yet meet these necessities. The lacks identified across all four dimensions are directly reflected in the wants expressed by participants: vocabulary training specific to membership and facility descriptions, practice with spontaneous question-answering and clarification, and confidence-building and complaint-resolution language. These findings confirm that English competence in the fitness industry is not limited to general communication ability but requires context-specific language skills directly connected to authentic workplace situations.

Based on these findings, the study recommends the development of ESP-based English training programs specifically designed for fitness industry cashier and front-desk staff, prioritizing speaking and listening practice, workplace-specific vocabulary instruction, complaint-handling strategies, and simulation-based communicative activities reflecting authentic service interactions. Future studies are recommended to involve larger participant groups and broader institutional settings including personal trainers, customer service staff, and fitness consultants in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of English language needs across the fitness industry sector.

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