

INTEGRATING ESP AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN TO ENHANCE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY FOR DIGITAL FOOD CONTENT CREATORS IN THE BAKERY INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This study explores the integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Instructional and Material Development (IMD) to enhance the English proficiency of a learner aiming to become a digital content creator in the bakery industry. The instructional design employed thematic modules, including “English Fun Tasks,” supported by multimedia learning (video, audio, and visual aids). Instruction was grounded in real-world bakery contexts to build vocabulary, fluency, and communicative competence across all language skills. Using a multimodal, task-based approach, the learner progressed significantly in lexical acquisition, confidence, emotional expression, and digital storytelling. The study affirms the pedagogical value of contextualized ESP courses tailored to specific professional domains, offering a replicable model for language learning in other vocational fields.

Keywords: Bakery Content, ESP, Food Vlogging, Instructional Design, Vocabulary Development

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has changed the landscape of the culinary sector by increasing the need for content creators who can communicate effectively in English on international platforms. Statistics show that the use of digital videos as a learning medium, such as food vlogs available on various social media platforms, has become common practice in vocational education, including the culinary sector. A study in Indonesia in 2023 found that food vlog projects in EFL classes improved self-efficacy, vocabulary mastery, and speaking skills among vocational food students (Yusuf et al. 2023). With the development of the internet enabling food culture to transcend national borders, proficiency in English has become an essential skill for professionals in the culinary and content creation industries (Murray and Christison 2011). A global study in the field of education states that digital technology used in learning applications or e-learning platforms significantly increases motivation and access to English-language materials for vocational students. (Ma'rifatulloh and Fajarina 2022).

Even though ESP has been established in some sectors like health and engineering, the shift towards digital domains, especially in online culinary content, hasn't been explored much in this field. For instance, digital storytelling in English has been shown to be successful in enhancing vocational students' fluency in the healthcare industry. However, lexical, pragmatic, and multimodal components that have not been thoroughly studied are necessary for digital food content producers like bakery reviewers, cake tutorial creators, or advocates of traditional bread. This creates a gap between general

ESP and CPU (Contextualised Professional Use) in the digital culinary domain (Istanto et al. 2024).

In this study, a needs analysis was conducted to identify participants' learning gaps, which included the need for specific vocabulary related to baking and food preparation, as well as the ability to communicate fluently and confidently with a global audience through social media. A needs analysis was done in this study to find out what participants lacked, like the ability to speak confidently and fluently in front of a global audience on social media or the need for specialised vocabulary related to baking and food preparation. Basturkmen emphasises that a thorough needs analysis is crucial in ESP to ensure that instruction is relevant and engaging for learners (Basturkmen 2014)

Previous studies have discussed ESP in a business context (Zhu and Liu 2014), hospitality (Ma'fiyah and Sumardiono 2023), as well as in health education (Istanto et al. 2024). There are currently very few studies on the use of ESP for food content creators, particularly in the baking and culinary industries. In the context of creating food content, very few studies have looked at how ESP can be used in conjunction with digital storytelling abilities or social media-based communication. This indicates a gap in the literature, especially amid the increasing popularity of digital culinary platforms and the vast global reach of food content today. The challenges identified include limited vocabulary, emotional hesitation in public communication, and the absence of structured materials tailored to the domain of bread and food content. These difficulties are consistent with the theory put forth by (Graves 1999) that ESP learners benefit most from instruction that is grounded in real-world applications and authentic tasks.

The author created a modular ESP program with a focus on using multimedia learning resources, integrating cultural content, and mastering specialized vocabulary in order to accomplish these goals. Authentic materials such as instructional videos and practical worksheets will be used to simulate real-life communication situations, in line with the task-based learning approach of (Istanto et al. 2024). This paper presents an ESP instructional design model that integrates task-based thematic modules with real-world digital content creation, offering an approach that can be replicated and adapted in other vocational contexts. This model addresses the linguistic and pragmatic needs of digital food content creators in the baking industry, an area that is still lacking in current literature, in contrast to existing ESP applications in business or hospitality fields.

This study's main goal is to investigate how vocational learners creating online food content can improve their digital communication and English proficiency through a customized ESP instructional design. This leads to the following research questions: (1) What are the specific language needs of digital content creators in the baking field? (2) How can task-based ESP modules be designed to effectively address these needs?

METHOD

This instructional project followed a design-based research (DBR) approach implemented across three structured sessions: January 18 (Cycle 1), January 23 (Cycle 2), and January 28, 2025 (Cycle 3). Each session corresponded to an evolving instructional focus, informed by continuous reflection, feedback, and redesign. The participant was a third-year university student who want to pursue her career in Content

Creator field focusing in Culinary and Food reviewing. She was selected based on her specialty in generating social media content for some adds.

Central to this approach was the use of carefully designed instructional materials under the Instructional and Material Development (IMD) coursework, including the “English Fun Tasks” worksheets. These materials integrated vocabulary drills, reading comprehension passages, structured writing prompts, and contextual grammar exercises to support the development of communicative competence. According to Nation and Newton (2009), language acquisition is most effective when learners are exposed to a variety of language modes—receptive and productive—within authentic and meaningful contexts. The inclusion of listening activities and cultural content (e.g., the history of bread and traditional foods) provided thematic depth and relevance, helping learners engage more personally with the language. Moreover, thematically consistent speaking and writing tasks allowed learners to practice language in ways that directly related to their goals in food content creation.

This learning sequence was intentionally designed to progress from comprehension-focused input (e.g., reading texts and video/audio comprehension) toward active language output (e.g., recipe narration and oral retelling), reflecting the principles of input-output interaction in language learning (Ellis, 2003). By combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements, the program aligned with the principles of multimodal learning, which Mayer (2009) suggests improves learner retention and cognitive engagement. Formative assessments were embedded throughout, including light quizzes, reflection prompts, and oral feedback loops to promote continual learner development. These assessments not only benchmarked vocabulary acquisition and fluency but also encouraged metacognitive reflection—an essential factor in adult and autonomous learning (Schmitt, 2010). The instructional model thus exemplified a task-based, learner-centered approach rooted in empirical language pedagogy, aimed at equipping learners with communicative tools for real-world, digital professional contexts.

Researcher Reflexivity and Trustworthiness

The researcher played a dual role as instructional designer and observer, engaging in ongoing reflection. Informal interviews and field notes captured evolving learner attitudes. Credibility was established via triangulation of data sources (e.g., journals, oral tasks, feedback). Ethical procedures included informed consent and pseudonymized reporting. Member checks were conducted post-session to verify interpretations of progress. This iterative design-refine-redesign process demonstrates how targeted ESP instruction—particularly when incorporating emotional, cultural, and narrative elements—can promote not just linguistic development but learner identity transformation in digital vocational contexts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents findings thematically and chronologically based on the three design cycles implemented in the instructional project. Each cycle focused on distinct learning goals, with evolving tasks and strategies grounded in participant feedback and pedagogical theory. Themes are supported with excerpts from participant reflections and instructional materials.

Cycle 1 – Vocabulary Development and Lexical Engagement

The first session focused on building culinary vocabulary. Using the “English Fun Tasks” worksheets, the participant encountered and practiced key terms such as “knead,” “ferment,” and “gluten.” Initially, she struggled to articulate these terms. “At first, I only knew the Indonesian words. ‘Ferment’ felt very strange,” she reflected in her journal. However, by the end of the session, her accuracy improved significantly. This supports Nation’s (2001) framework on deliberate vocabulary learning. The use of visual recipe cards and matching games helped reduce cognitive load and created a fun learning atmosphere.

Cycle 2 – Emotional Expression and Intercultural Awareness

In the second session, instruction expanded to emotional vocabulary and cultural contexts. The participant engaged in role-playing tasks and reflective journaling. She described baking experiences using affective expressions: “I felt anxious when I first baked alone, but later I was so proud.” These tasks improved expressive language skills and reduced emotional hesitation in English communication—an issue she mentioned in pre-session interviews. Exposure to global bread cultures (e.g., tortillas, naan) allowed her to compare practices: “Naan is like our roti canai, but fluffier,” she observed. This cycle supported intercultural competence development (Byram, 1997) and expressive depth (Dewaele, 2015).

Cycle 3 – Narrative Skills and Digital Production

The third session emphasized storytelling. The participant scripted and narrated a baking tutorial. Initially, she struggled to balance storytelling with technical accuracy. “I kept forgetting the ingredients when I tried to make it fun,” she admitted. To scaffold performance, the instructor introduced genre-based frameworks. This helped her produce a structured and engaging script for her final video. Her final output showcased fluency, technical command, and narrative cohesion, consistent with Hyland’s (2007) genre pedagogy.

What Worked and What Didn’t

The multimodal materials (videos, images, worksheets) boosted engagement, particularly in vocabulary and recipe narration. However, the cultural comparison task was too open-ended at first, leading to confusion. In response, the instructor added prompts and cultural examples. This iterative refinement embodies the DBR principle of responsive redesign. Participant reflections, such as “I learn best when I see it in video and then say it,” illustrate the importance of sensory-rich input. Mayer’s (2009) theory of dual-channel learning was confirmed, as visual aids enhanced comprehension and recall. However, journal reviews also showed that complex emotional vocabulary (e.g., “nostalgia,” “contentment”) needed more guided support.

This instructional intervention demonstrated strong evidence of success in enhancing the participant’s English vocabulary proficiency within the context of food content creation. The learner was exposed to an extensive bank of culinary terms through the “English Fun Tasks” worksheets, which served as structured yet engaging vocabulary acquisition tools as we can see in the figure 1. This targeted approach aligns with Nation’s

(2001) emphasis on deliberate vocabulary learning in domain-specific settings. The participant exhibited a marked improvement in the use of terms such as knead, ferment, gluten, and flatbread, which she initially struggled to articulate. These outcomes reaffirm Chien and Lin's (2016) findings that vocabulary development is most effective when the terms are directly connected to learners' occupational interests.

Beyond isolated vocabulary recall, the participant progressed to contextualizing the acquired language in writing and speaking tasks. She was able to describe processes, narrate recipes, and respond to customer scenarios using accurate and fluent English. This supports Ellis's (2003) theory of language internalization through meaningful output, particularly in task-based learning environments. Her written recipes, reflective journals, and content scripts demonstrated not only lexical growth but also syntactic variety and functional fluency—an indicator that the participant had begun to integrate English use into her identity as a digital content creator.

BREAD CROSSING IN THE WORLD

Flatbreads are among the most ancient types of bread, likely originating due to the simplicity of their preparation. Unlike raised breads, which require gluten for elasticity and structure, flatbreads are made from grains that either have low gluten or none at all. Each region adapts flatbreads to its local grains and culinary traditions. For instance, in India, a variety of flatbreads like naan and roti reflect the country's reliance on wheat and millet. In East Africa, flatbreads like chapati are wheat-based and versatile, complementing many dishes. In Ethiopia and Eritrea, injera is a unique flatbread made using fermented batter, giving it a spongy texture and tangy flavor. In Latin America, corn-based tortillas and arepas show the central role of maize in the diet.

Flatbreads are not just practical due to their simplicity but are deeply tied to cultural identities and culinary practices across the globe.

1 Circle the odd words and explain why they are different than the other.

1. Main ingredients of bread:
Flour Oil Water
_____ is odd because _____

2. Flatbread types in the world:
Injera Hamburger Naan Tortillas
_____ is odd because _____

3. Bread making instructions:
Mixed Bowled Kneaded Fermented
_____ is odd because _____

2 Answer the question according to the text.

1. What is bread primarily made from?

2. When did bread originate?

3. What type of grain is central to tortillas and arepas in Latin America?

4. Why are flatbreads considered some of the oldest types of bread?

3 Look at the Reading article, Match the word with the pictures.

Pour Shape Serve Cover

4 Put the pictures in the appropriate order, based on the text above by writing the letters in the column below

A B C D

1 2 3 4

Figure 1 Vocabulary Drill in Culinary terms

One notable finding was the participant's increased confidence in producing spoken content, especially for digital audiences. Initially hesitant to speak English publicly, she gradually transitioned into recording and narrating her baking experiences for imagined audiences on social media. This development echoes Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that lowering anxiety enhances language acquisition. Moreover, Hafner and Miller (2011) argue that digital storytelling projects foster learner ownership and investment, which likely contributed to the participant's improved performance. Her shift from passive learner to active content creator reflects an internalization of both language and learner autonomy.

The participant also demonstrated significant improvement in emotional articulation, a domain often underrepresented in vocational ESP courses. Tasks related to Unit 2 of the IMD module (figure 2), which focused on feelings and emotional vocabulary, allowed her to describe emotional states such as excitement, anxiety, and satisfaction during her baking experiences. According to Dewaele (2015), emotional expression in a second language is complex, requiring both linguistic and cultural competence. The participant's ability to reflect on her learning journey with affective

clarity showed that ESP programs, when well designed, can support both instrumental and expressive language functions.

Cross-cultural understanding also emerged as a strong theme. The inclusion of global bread cultures—such as injera from Ethiopia, naan from India, and tortillas from Mexico—enabled the participant to make linguistic and cultural comparisons with Indonesian bakery products. This thematic integration enhanced her intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997), equipping her to create content that resonates with diverse audiences. As Belcher (2006) argues, ESP must address not only workplace communication but also the sociocultural discourse practices relevant to learners' fields. By examining the origins, preparation methods, and symbolic meanings of different types of bread, the participant cultivated a narrative skill set essential for global storytelling.

WHAT WE FEEL?

Emotions and feelings are deeply connected, yet they play different roles in shaping our experiences. Emotions are instinctive responses to situations, such as fear when facing danger or joy when receiving good news, while feelings are the personal interpretations of these emotions, influenced by thoughts and past experiences. For example, two people may feel differently about a thunderstorm—one might find it exciting, while the other feels anxious due to a past bad experience. Understanding this connection helps us manage our emotions better, allowing us to respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. By recognizing our feelings and their roots, we can develop emotional intelligence, improve relationships, and navigate life's challenges with greater self-awareness and control.

4 Look and write the names of the basic emotion shown by emojis below, and explain when you will get that emotion

5 Present and share your emotion journal with your partner. Start with the template below

Date _____

Today, I Felt _____

When this happened to me, I felt _____

Figure 2 Emotional Expression Tasks

Another significant finding relates to the impact of multimodal instruction on retention and learner motivation. Tasks incorporated audio, video, written texts, and images to reinforce target vocabulary and grammar. This design mirrors Mayer's (2009) cognitive theory of multimedia learning, which suggests that dual-channel input (visual and auditory) enhances comprehension and memory. The participant reported feeling more engaged during sessions involving videos or visual recipes, which further supports Tomlinson's (2011) call for emotionally engaging, multisensory materials in language teaching. Her ability to remember and reuse phrases seen in videos or heard in audio clips points to the effectiveness of this approach.

Moreover, the course's emphasis on structured reflection and assessment enabled the participant to evaluate her own progress and adapt learning strategies accordingly. Weekly check-ins, short quizzes, and oral feedback created a loop of formative assessment that contributed to learning continuity and confidence building. Reinders (2009) emphasizes the importance of self-monitoring and metacognition in adult learning, particularly in ESP contexts where goals are highly individualized. The participant's ability to recognize gaps, revise her outputs, and integrate feedback is an encouraging indicator of emerging language learner autonomy.

Interestingly, the use of content-based instruction, particularly the cultural and emotional units, also fostered narrative competence—a valuable skill for content creators. As Hyland (2007) observes, ESP learners often benefit from genre-based instruction, which equips them with the conventions and structures needed to communicate within their target discourse communities. The participant's final script, which combined technical language with storytelling about her bakery internship, exemplified her ability to balance informative and narrative registers. This skill is especially important in digital platforms where audience engagement hinges on both clarity and relatability.

Finally, this case study highlights the reciprocal relationship between identity formation and language learning. The participant did not merely acquire vocabulary or pass assessments—she developed a professional identity as a bakery-focused content creator who could engage international audiences in English. This identity shift reflects what Norton (2013) calls "investment"—a learner's willingness to commit to language learning because of the value they associate with participation in specific social contexts. By scaffolding tasks that aligned with her goals and passions, the ESP course served as both a linguistic and personal empowerment tool.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the integration of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Instructional and Material Development (IMD) to address the language and communicative demands of vocational learners in the context of digital food content creation within the bakery sector. Anchored in a design-based research (DBR) framework, the project employed a cycle-based instructional model that systematically addressed learners' evolving needs across three thematic areas: technical vocabulary acquisition, emotional language articulation, and narrative competence for digital storytelling.

The Findings indicate that the participant demonstrated substantial gains in linguistic proficiency, including domain-specific lexical knowledge, expressive language use, and narrative fluency. Furthermore, the learner exhibited increased self-confidence and communicative autonomy, transitioning from a passive language user to an active digital content producer. These outcomes support key theoretical positions within second language acquisition, particularly Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis, Nation's (2001) principles of vocabulary learning, and Ellis's (2003) input-output interaction model. Theoretically, this research contributes to the growing body of literature in ESP and DBR by evidencing how multimodal, task-based instruction that embeds emotional and cultural content can foster learner identity, motivation, and autonomy. Practically, the study provides a replicable instructional blueprint for ESP course designers aiming to serve learners in specialized digital content domains, particularly those situated within vocational or creative industries.

Nevertheless, the study's single-case design imposes limitations on the generalizability of findings. While the qualitative depth of insight is notable, broader validation of the instructional model would benefit from further implementation across more diverse learner populations and contexts. Implications of the study suggest that ESP programs—especially those targeting vocational learners—should prioritize multimodal content delivery, emotional engagement, and real-world communication scenarios. Such

integration supports not only linguistic development but also the cultivation of professional identity and cross-cultural competence in global digital spaces.

Future research is encouraged to explore the scalability of this model in group-based settings, its long-term impact on learner trajectories, and its adaptability to multilingual and multicultural environments. Longitudinal studies would further illuminate how ESP instruction aligned with learners' professional goals may influence sustained language use and digital literacy.

In conclusion, this study underscores the transformative potential of a learner-centered, contextually grounded ESP approach. When designed responsively and implemented with pedagogical intentionality, such programs can empower learners to articulate their voices with confidence, authenticity, and cultural awareness within the global digital communication landscape.

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