



TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED MODEL OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN BUSINESS EDUCATION : THE ROLE OF BILINGUAL COMPETENCY AND PAIR INTERACTION

MENUJU MODEL TERINTEGRASI KOMPETENSI KOMUNIKATIF DALAM PENDIDIKAN BISNIS: PERAN KOMPETENSI DWIBAHASA DAN INTERAKSI BERPASANGAN

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62567/micjo.v3i3.2846>

Abstract

Communicative competence has become an essential competency for business education students in response to the growing demands of multilingual, multicultural, and technology-driven workplaces. However, previous studies have generally examined bilingual competency, collaborative learning, and communicative competence as separate constructs, providing limited understanding of their integrated relationships. This study aimed to develop an Integrated Communicative Competence Model for business education through the synthesis of previous empirical studies and recent international literature. A conceptual research design employing an integrative evidence synthesis approach was used to analyse empirical findings on bilingual competency, pair interaction, communicative competence, and professional readiness. The synthesis demonstrates that bilingual competency provides the linguistic and intercultural foundation for effective communication, while pair interaction functions as a collaborative learning mechanism that strengthens authentic communication practices. The interaction of these dimensions enhances communicative competence, which subsequently improves students' professional readiness and graduate employability in multilingual business environments. The proposed model contributes to communication studies by integrating bilingual competency and collaborative learning into a unified conceptual framework and provides practical guidance for curriculum development and communication-oriented learning in business education.

Keywords : Bilingual Competency, Business Education, Communicative Competence, Pair Interaction, Professional Readiness.



Abstrak

Kompetensi komunikatif menjadi salah satu kompetensi utama yang harus dimiliki mahasiswa pendidikan bisnis untuk menghadapi tuntutan lingkungan kerja yang multibahasa, multikultural, dan berbasis teknologi. Namun, penelitian terdahulu umumnya mengkaji kompetensi bilingual, pembelajaran kolaboratif, dan kompetensi komunikatif secara terpisah sehingga belum mampu menjelaskan hubungan antardimensi tersebut secara terpadu. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengembangkan Integrated Communicative Competence Model bagi pendidikan bisnis melalui sintesis hasil penelitian empiris terdahulu dan literatur internasional terkini. Penelitian menggunakan desain konseptual dengan pendekatan integrative evidence synthesis untuk menganalisis temuan empiris mengenai kompetensi bilingual, *pair interaction*, kompetensi komunikatif, dan kesiapan profesional. Hasil sintesis menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi bilingual berperan sebagai landasan linguistik dan interkultural, sedangkan *pair interaction* berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pembelajaran kolaboratif yang memperkuat praktik komunikasi autentik. Interaksi kedua dimensi tersebut membentuk kompetensi komunikatif yang meningkatkan kesiapan profesional serta daya saing lulusan dalam lingkungan bisnis multibahasa. Model yang diusulkan memberikan kontribusi teoretis melalui integrasi kompetensi bilingual dan pembelajaran kolaboratif ke dalam satu kerangka konseptual serta memberikan implikasi praktis bagi pengembangan kurikulum dan pembelajaran komunikasi dalam pendidikan bisnis.

Kata Kunci : Kompetensi Bilingual, Kompetensi Komunikatif, Pair Interaction, Pendidikan Bisnis, Kesiapan Profesional.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communicative competence has become one of the most important competencies in business education because graduates are increasingly required to communicate effectively in multilingual, multicultural, and technology-driven workplaces. Beyond technical expertise, employers expect graduates to demonstrate communication, collaboration, negotiation, and problem-solving skills that support professional performance in diverse organizational settings. Consequently, higher education institutions are challenged to develop communication abilities that integrate linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, and intercultural competencies rather than focusing solely on language accuracy (Mootoosamy, 2024; Faisal, 2025; Wang, 2025). Effective communicative competence has therefore become a key determinant of graduate employability and professional success in business environments (Arrabaca, 2026).

The increasing internationalization of business has reinforced the importance of **bilingual competency** as a strategic capability for university graduates. Business students are expected to communicate effectively in both their national language and English. Indonesian language competency supports logical reasoning and academic communication, whereas English competency facilitates access to international knowledge, intercultural collaboration, and participation in the global business community (Agustina et al., 2024; Arifuddin, 2025; Wang, 2025). Accordingly, communicative competence should be viewed as the integration of complementary bilingual competencies rather than the outcome of English proficiency alone.

In addition to bilingual competency, **pair interaction** has been widely recognized as an effective collaborative learning strategy for improving communication skills. Through structured interaction, students exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, provide feedback, and solve problems collaboratively, thereby strengthening both language proficiency and communication confidence. Recent studies indicate that interaction-based learning creates more authentic communication experiences than teacher-centred instruction and significantly enhances learners' communicative competence (Prasetya, 2024; Wang et al., 2025). Consistent with these findings, **Suhartina et al. (2025)** reported that pair



interaction improved English proficiency, classroom participation, and students' willingness to communicate.

Previous empirical studies also highlight the important role of bilingual competency in communication development. **Suhartina (2025)** found that Indonesian and English language competencies significantly improved students' speaking performance, while **Suhartina (2026)** demonstrated that English proficiency had a stronger influence on speaking ability, although Indonesian language competency remained essential in strengthening academic communication and communication confidence. Furthermore, **Suhartina and Zulkifli (2025)** reported that English proficiency contributed positively to students' professionalism and adaptive learning strategies, indicating that communication competence extends beyond classroom achievement to support professional readiness.

Although previous studies have confirmed the importance of bilingual competency, collaborative learning, and communicative competence, they have generally examined these variables independently. Existing research has focused on language proficiency, pair interaction, or professional development as separate constructs, providing limited explanation of how these dimensions interact to strengthen communicative competence in business education. This fragmented perspective indicates the need for a more comprehensive framework that integrates linguistic competence with collaborative learning and professional development.

Therefore, this study aims to develop an **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** for business education through the synthesis of previous empirical findings and recent international literature. The proposed model integrates **bilingual competency** as the linguistic foundation and **pair interaction** as the collaborative learning mechanism that jointly strengthen communicative competence and enhance students' professional readiness. The model is expected to provide both a theoretical contribution to communication studies and practical guidance for curriculum development and communication-oriented learning strategies in business education.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a **conceptual research design** using an **integrative evidence synthesis** approach to develop an **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** for business education. This approach synthesizes findings from previous empirical studies and relevant literature to explain the relationships among key concepts and construct a comprehensive conceptual framework (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The analysis was based on four empirical studies conducted at the School of Economics (STIE LPI Makassar), Indonesia, which examined bilingual competency, pair interaction, English proficiency, speaking performance, and professional learning outcomes among business students. To strengthen the conceptual framework, recent international literature published between 2020 and 2026 on communicative competence, bilingual education, collaborative learning, and graduate employability was also reviewed.

The synthesis was conducted in three stages. First, empirical and theoretical studies relevant to the research objectives were identified. Second, the principal findings of each study were compared to identify common themes and complementary relationships among bilingual competency, pair interaction, communicative competence, and professional readiness. Third, the integrated evidence was synthesized into a conceptual model explaining how bilingual competency and pair interaction jointly contribute to the development of communicative competence in business education.

Table 1. Sources of Empirical Evidence

Previous Study	Research Focus	Principal Findings	Contribution to the Integrated Model
Suhartina (2025)	Bilingual competency and	Indonesian and English competencies significantly	Establishes bilingual competency as the linguistic



Previous Study	Research Focus	Principal Findings	Contribution to the Integrated Model
	speaking performance	improved students' speaking performance.	foundation of communicative competence.
Suhartina (2026)	Language competency and speaking skills	English competency demonstrated a stronger influence, while Indonesian competency strengthened academic communication.	Reinforces the complementary role of bilingual competency.
Suhartina et al. (2025)	Pair interaction in EFL learning	Pair interaction improved English proficiency, communication confidence, and classroom participation.	Supports collaborative interaction as a key learning mechanism.
Suhartina & Zulkifli (2025)	English proficiency and professional learning	English proficiency strengthened professionalism and adaptive learning strategies among business students.	Connects communicative competence with professional readiness in business education.

Source: Developed by the authors through the synthesis of previous empirical studies.

Comparative thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes and conceptual relationships across the four empirical studies. The analysis focused on integrating complementary findings rather than evaluating individual studies, resulting in the development of an **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** that explains the roles of bilingual competency and pair interaction in strengthening communicative competence and professional readiness in business education.

Synthesis of Previous Empirical Evidence (Revised Version)

The development of communicative competence has become a major concern in higher education because communication skills are increasingly recognized as essential for academic success and professional performance. Contemporary studies emphasize that communicative competence extends beyond language proficiency to include interaction, collaboration, intercultural awareness, and strategic communication in multilingual environments (Mootoosamy, 2024; Faisal, 2025; Wang, 2025). Consequently, business education requires learning approaches that integrate language mastery with authentic communication experiences to prepare graduates for global workplaces.

One of the main determinants of communicative competence is **bilingual competency**. Students who demonstrate proficiency in both their national language and English tend to communicate more confidently and adapt more effectively to academic and professional contexts (Agustina et al., 2024; Arifuddin, 2025; Wang, 2025). This international evidence is supported by **Suhartina (2025)** and **Suhartina (2026)**, who found that Indonesian and English language competencies significantly improved students' speaking performance. While English proficiency showed a stronger influence on oral communication, Indonesian language competency remained fundamental in strengthening academic communication and communication confidence.

Besides bilingual competency, **collaborative learning** has consistently been identified as an effective approach for developing communication skills. Through pair interaction, students exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, provide feedback, and solve problems collaboratively, creating authentic communication experiences that improve both language proficiency and communication confidence (Prasetya, 2024; Wang et al., 2025). Similar findings were reported by **Suhartina et al. (2025)**, who demonstrated that structured pair interaction enhanced English proficiency, classroom participation, and students' willingness to communicate, confirming its effectiveness in strengthening communicative competence.



Recent studies also indicate that communicative competence contributes directly to **professional readiness**. Graduates with strong communication skills are better prepared to collaborate, present ideas, solve workplace problems, and adapt to multicultural business environments (Agustina et al., 2024; Idris et al., 2023; Arrabaca, 2026). Consistent with this perspective, **Suhartina and Zulkifli (2025)** reported that English proficiency strengthened students' professionalism and adaptive learning strategies, highlighting the importance of communication competence for career development.

Overall, previous empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that **bilingual competency**, **pair interaction**, and **professional readiness** are closely interconnected. However, existing studies have generally investigated these variables separately, providing limited explanation of how they collectively strengthen communicative competence in business education. This gap forms the basis for the present study, which proposes an **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** that combines bilingual competency and collaborative learning into a unified conceptual framework for developing students' communicative competence and professional readiness.

Development of the Integrated Communicative Competence Model

Recent studies suggest that communicative competence is a multidimensional capability integrating linguistic knowledge, intercultural awareness, collaborative interaction, and strategic communication required in multilingual learning environments (Mootoosamy, 2024; Wang et al., 2025). This perspective indicates that communication development in business education should combine language mastery with authentic collaborative learning experiences rather than emphasizing language proficiency alone.

International evidence consistently shows that **bilingual competency** provides the linguistic and intercultural foundation for effective communication, while **pair interaction** functions as an instructional strategy that enables students to apply language knowledge through discussion, feedback, and collaborative problem-solving (Agustina et al., 2024; Wang, 2025; Wang et al., 2025). Similar findings were reported by **Suhartina (2025, 2026)** and **Suhartina et al. (2025)**, who demonstrated that bilingual competency and structured pair interaction significantly improved speaking performance, communication confidence, classroom participation, and English proficiency among business students.

Furthermore, effective communication has become an essential competency for graduate employability. Communication skills, teamwork, adaptability, and intercultural understanding are increasingly recognized as key attributes required in contemporary business organizations (Agustina et al., 2024; Idris et al., 2023; Arrabaca, 2026). Consistent with these findings, **Suhartina and Zulkifli (2025)** reported that English proficiency strengthened professionalism and adaptive learning strategies, indicating that communicative competence contributes directly to professional readiness.

Based on the synthesis of previous empirical and theoretical studies, this study proposes an **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** consisting of four interconnected dimensions. **Bilingual competency** serves as the linguistic foundation, whereas **pair interaction** represents the collaborative learning mechanism that strengthens authentic communication practices. The interaction between these dimensions develops **communicative competence**, which subsequently enhances **professional readiness** and contributes to **graduate employability**. The conceptual relationships among these dimensions are presented in **Figure 1**.



Figure 1. Integrated Model of Communicative Competence in Business Education



Source: Developed by the authors based on the synthesis of previous empirical studies and recent international literature.

Figure 1 illustrates the proposed conceptual framework, emphasizing that bilingual competency and pair interaction function as complementary determinants of communicative competence. Through authentic collaborative learning, students continuously develop grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic communication competencies that strengthen professional readiness for multilingual and multicultural business environments. Accordingly, the model provides an integrated perspective for designing communication-oriented learning in business education.

Theoretical and Practical Implications (Revised Version)

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The proposed **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** contributes to the literature by integrating **bilingual competency** and **pair interaction** into a unified conceptual framework for business education. Previous studies have generally examined language proficiency, collaborative learning, and communicative competence as separate constructs. By combining these complementary dimensions, the present model provides a more comprehensive explanation of how communication skills develop through the interaction between language mastery and collaborative learning (Mootosamy, 2024; Wang, 2025; Wang et al., 2025).

From a practical perspective, the proposed framework offers guidance for curriculum development and teaching practices in business education. Learning activities should integrate bilingual communication with collaborative approaches such as pair discussions, presentations, case studies, and problem-based learning. These activities create authentic communication experiences that strengthen students' communication confidence, teamwork, problem-solving abilities, and professional readiness for multicultural workplaces (Agustina et al., 2024; Suhartina et al., 2025).



The model also provides implications for lecturers and higher education institutions in designing competency-based learning and assessment. Communication assessment should evaluate students' ability to present ideas, negotiate meaning, collaborate effectively, and communicate appropriately in academic and professional contexts rather than focusing solely on grammatical accuracy. Such an approach is expected to better prepare graduates for the communication demands of contemporary business organizations (Idris et al., 2023; Arrabaca, 2026).

Finally, this study provides a conceptual foundation for future research. The proposed model may be empirically validated across different universities, academic disciplines, and cultural contexts to examine its applicability and generalizability. Future studies are also encouraged to incorporate additional variables, including **digital communication literacy**, **intercultural competence**, and **artificial intelligence-assisted language learning**, to further refine the proposed framework and expand its relevance to contemporary business education.

4. CONCLUSION

This study developed an **Integrated Communicative Competence Model** for business education by synthesizing previous empirical studies and recent international literature. The findings demonstrate that effective communication is developed through the complementary interaction between **bilingual competency** and **pair interaction**, rather than through language proficiency alone. Bilingual competency provides the linguistic and intercultural foundation, while pair interaction creates authentic collaborative learning experiences that strengthen students' grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic communication abilities. Together, these dimensions enhance students' professional readiness and their capacity to perform effectively in multilingual and multicultural business environments.

The proposed framework contributes to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it offers an integrated perspective by linking bilingual competency with collaborative learning to explain communication development in business education. Practically, it provides guidance for lecturers and curriculum developers in designing learning activities that integrate bilingual communication with collaborative interaction to strengthen students' communication skills and workplace preparedness.

This study is limited to the development of a conceptual framework based on the synthesis of previous empirical evidence and has not yet been empirically validated. Future studies are therefore encouraged to test the proposed model in different higher education contexts to examine its applicability and generalizability.

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