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Progetto KA101 **Learning and Leadership**
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Corso **Teaching Business English**
realizzato da **English Means Business**
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I docenti partecipanti
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Premessa: Il progetto Erasmus+ KA1 "Learning & Leadership" presentato dal nostro Istituto con la candidatura al finanziamento del piano di formazione in servizio del personale scolastico, prevedeva un corso di due settimane destinato ad un insegnante di lingua inglese sull'insegnamento del BE. L'istituto di formazione avvisava però con un ragionevole anticipo la cancellazione di tale corso. Il catalogo online di School Education Gateway proponeva un corso intensivo abbastanza simile della durata di una sola settimana. E' stato così possibile offrire l'opportunità a due insegnanti di frequentare il corso Teach Business English organizzato e gestito da Sara Holm di English Means Business.

Sin dalla prima lezione svoltasi il 5 marzo 2018 è stato chiaro l'ambiente di apprendimento sarebbe stato stimolante, grazie alla competenza e la professionalità di Sara Holm, tutor ed insegnante del corso. Ma anche la partecipazione di altre due partecipanti, insegnanti di Business English in situazioni e modi molto diverse di quanto si sviluppa nell'aula di in un istituto tecnico italiano: una realizza 'pacchetti' di incontri di BE online, l'altra collabora alla formazione del personale di diverse aziende nel territorio spagnolo. Lo scambio di esperienze è stato decisamente costruttivo e i contributi formali ben strutturati.

I temi fondamentali affrontati sono stati lo sviluppo di Needs Analysis e delle Core Skills, la scelta del materiale da utilizzare, la definizione specifica di un Course Plan – termine di seguito utilizzato anche con il significato di programmazione didattica, la coscienza e il rispetto delle diversità nella comunicazione internazionale. E' stato anche possibile consultare testi specifici su TBE e stilare una lista di siti utili per una didattica integrata di BE.

Una nota particolare deve essere dedicata alla sede del corso, cioè i locali del *Bath and County Club* di antica tradizione, e alla città di Bath, in cui il passato di rinomata località termale romana e centro commerciale medievale convive con il presente di sito dai tanti stimoli culturali.

Alla conclusione del corso è apparso chiaro che ai due docenti dell'I.I.S.S. 'Michele Foderà' che quanto appreso, sviluppato e utilizzato può facilmente essere adattato alle programmazioni didattiche e alle pratiche delle lezioni in aula o in laboratorio, per cui ci si appresta a condividere e disseminare le recenti acquisizioni con i docenti di lingue straniere del "Foderà-Brunelleschi".



The team of the Teaching Business English Course: Amy Sindicic from the USA, the British tutor Sara Helm, the Italian Angelo Mallia and Ilaria Castiglione, the Spanish Beth Camprubi.

TEACH BUSINESS ENGLISH

Introduction

From 5 to 9 March we took part in a one-week course at EMB in Bath, UK. Our teacher was Sara Helm, director and owner of the school, who kept us busy for five days in a very pleasant and absolutely motivating way.

Training was mainly on Business English, how to teach it, and on intercultural language as well.

What is Business English?

Generally speaking, Business English is the type of English used in business context, such as International trade, commerce and finance, insurance, banking and many office settings. It entails expectations of clarity, particular vocabulary, and grammatical structures. When using English for business context, it is usually important to be as clear as possible and leave nothing to interpretation.

What is the best syllabus to teach BE?

A Business English learning process can have different syllabi and their choice should always be negotiated with the students and the organizations offering such types of course.

By discussing the main issues with the students, you can decide on the main priorities together, identify what activities could be done to foster learner's autonomy. You should also agree on how process will be assessed and how you will be giving feedback.

The syllabus states the actions to be taken in order to achieve the aims and the objectives. It lists what is to be covered during the course and state an order. Obviously, both the course and the syllabus can be re-negotiated at any time.

A syllabus can therefore be organized in different ways. For example, it can be organized around

Topics:

Management

Finance

Technology

Banking and Insurance

Marketing and Advertising

Logistics

...

Business Skills or Core Skills :

Presentations

Negotiations

Meetings

Socializing

Introductions

Telephoning

Writing (Reports, Business letters, E-mails, ...)

Interviewing

...

Some of the above mentioned core skills such as can be split into two sub-skills:

Interviewing into Interviewing and Being Interviewed

Meetings into Leading Meetings, Participating Meetings, Taking Notes.

...

Tasks :

All the activities students have to do in order to achieve a specific objective.

Each task is like a matrix and it usually includes:

Lexis:

idioms,

expressions,

vocabulary

...

Functions:

agreeing,

disagreeing,

asking and giving explanations,

interrupting,

asking for opinions

...

Texts:

examples of authentic written and spoken texts

Grammar:

word order,

adverbial phrases,

if clauses,

verb tenses

...

Learning Strategies:

recording vocabulary

looking for information

...

Intercultural Skills :

awareness of different cultures

In Teaching Business English **Assessment** is crucial for the development and success of the course. Any teacher will want to know:

if your students are satisfied with the course;

if they are learning what they need;

if the organization can see the return on their investment.

Which Methodology, TTT, PPP or TBL ?

The most used methodology is TTT (Test Teach Test), which is an approach to teaching where the students first complete a task or activity without the help from the teacher. Then, the teacher plans and presents the target language. At this point the students do another task to practise the new language.

Another methodological approach is PPP (Presentation Practice, Production).

The teacher presents the target language and then gives the students the opportunity to practise it through very controlled activities. The final stage of the lesson gives the students the possibility to practise the target language in freer activities which bring in other language elements.

Task -based learning offers an alternative for language teachers. In a task-based lesson the teacher doesn't pre-determine what language will be studied, the lesson is based around the completion of a central task and the language studied is determined by what happens as the students complete it. The lesson follows certain stages:

Pre-task

Task

Planning

Report

Analysis

Practice

Task-based learning offers some clear advantages because the students are free of language control. In all stages they must use all their language resources rather than just practising one pre-selected item.

The Functional Language you should foster on your course plan

When meeting a client, a customer, a colleague in real situations/scenarios like a meeting, a fair or a conference it is unlikely that you will always be talking about business-related topics.

Sometimes, you will have to engage in what is called "Small Talk " which means:

talking about things that do not really matter too much.

In a " Small Talk " conversation, questions can vary from

“ How long have you been working for this company ? ”

to the unusual

“ Are you married ? ”

A question which turns out to be very appropriate to get to know different sides of the person you are talking to. And getting to know people may avoid negative influence in business relationships.

Why, then should you use “ Small Talk ”? Simply because

- friendly language can boost our ability to solve problems;
- it makes you pay attention to what is being said;
- it is a proof of respect towards other people - you show interest in them;
- it builds self-confidence;

It is said that some subjects like politics and religion must be avoided when talking with people you're not well acquainted with, while the weather or the region where the meeting is taking place can be 'neutral' themes to start a relationship. Small Talks are highly suggested in these situations: for definition very fast they may turn out in what is called “3-block speech”:

HOW DO YOU DO ?

1 2 3

FINE, THANK YOU!

1 2 3

A 3-Block Language can be the right start for a business conversation, especially in the British culture, and it helps conversation go deep further

on. Moreover Short sentences involve little grammar, which sometimes can hinder natural conversations:

No problem!

should sound better and more natural than

" *It is not a problem!* ",

which is more grammatically correct.

How to plan a perfect course.

Over the last few years companies are investing more and more on training their staff. Nowadays, people not only need to be able to speak English but they also need to develop a range of communicative language competences in order to be able to perform their job-related tasks properly. They usually link their English studies to their area of expertise and the attention more focused on language as a tool for communication rather than on language knowledge as an end in itself. So, if you want to provide them with the service they need it is necessary to know the organization that requests your services, its culture, its global situation. You will also have to get to know the participants of the course, their strength, their situations , their needs, their learning styles.

According to all these elements, flexibility becomes a priority, and that is particularly useful if you want to meet your learners' needs.

"A good syllabus for a business English Course plan should be structured like shelves at a shop, where you can select the items (" needs ") according to how the lesson is going through. You need to get constantly information from them and get the items you need ". " When teaching business English is worth exploring all the possible areas the students / workers/ managers are involved into ".

(Sara Helm – Director of EMB . Bath 5-9 March 2018.

In this sense Needs Analysis is a fundamental step in planning BE course, and it can be carried out through:

questionnaires

HR inquiries

information from the Training Department

Press (usually a company's website)

Questionnaire are the most relevant and direct, and they should not cover more than two pages. They can be structured differently and have a different content.

A pre-course questionnaire is for example, mainly based on the participants' expectations, on their language level. It is a useful source for a a course, which, nevertheless, should maintain a certain flexibility regarding the needs of the participants and the goal of the course itself.

A good questionnaire should contain basic information, such as:

Name, Age, Nationality, Company, Job title, Department ...

and it can be structured as a writing task:

“ Describe your current role in max 250 words ”

The importance of Interculture when teaching BE

It may appear that BE focuses entirely on language and skills development for the workplace. However, BE training should include an obvious intercultural aspect to realistically prepare students to function professionally in English.

Intercultural training cultivates an awareness and understanding of a person's own culture and other cultures. The underlying target of intercultural training is to foster international tolerance and consideration.

This is a prevalent feature of all fields of education nowadays, not just in language teaching.

As a basic review, culture signifies manners, customs and expectations of behaviour within a given society. It can also be identified with nationality and religion. In many cases, people can belong or function in more than one culture.

Intercultural awareness is directly linked to language teaching. After all, language is defined and developed by a culture. If students are learning a second, even third language, it would be a logical assumption to help them understand the culture of these languages — and how it can relate to the students' own culture. This is a reciprocal process which entails an exchange of cultural information — or an intercultural development.

Cross-cultural teaching creates a heightened sense of awareness and sensitivity. Our students incorporate these attitudes in learning BE. This is especially evident in the following general and specific skills and language aims.

General competence

- communication skills: clear speaking, active listening and high tolerance for ambiguity, dealing with other points of view
- understanding of different work styles
- building, leading and participating in teams

Specific business skills

- meetings
- presentations
- negotiations
- socialising

- telephoning
- business writing: emails, letters, reports
- job search related: CVs job applications, interviewing

From the point of view of both general competence and specific business skills, the target language involves:

- discussions
- brainstorming
- giving/handling feedback
- agreeing/disagreeing
- offering alternatives
- persuasion
- Compromise
- ...

Students should focus on the areas listed above. However, their intercultural effectiveness will be confronted with real-life business considerations such as:

- 1 What is the expected protocol at interviews and meetings?
- 2 Which negotiation strategies/language work and which do not?
- 3 How can I avoid costly and embarrassing cultural blunders?
- 4 How can I win the respect and confidence of international partners?

BE should develop intercultural awareness to help students address these questions of business etiquette or norms in dealing with foreign colleagues, clients and customers.



Fish and Chips as a classic (and tasty) English culture icon

BE lessons with intercultural awareness

Intercultural elements of BE can be addressed by designing materials which have a clear intercultural theme. For instance, your cultural background and related experience can give an authentic dimension to the materials you use or design. The students themselves are a rich source of intercultural input, both from their personal and professional background.

Coursebooks or pre-prepared seminar materials may already be presented in a certain cultural context, but this can be easily extrapolated into the students' own culture — or into those cultures they are familiar with. Moreover, the intercultural aspect of your lessons belongs in any classroom format whether it be a one-to-one or small group lesson or seminars and workshops.



Web search looking for useful links

USEFUL LINKS

An example of course plan:

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/Meetings%20Getting%20down%20to%20business_lesson%20plan.pdf

Other useful links:

Cambridge University Press

<http://www.cambridge.org/gb/cambridgeenglish/catalog>

Oxford University Press

<http://global.oup.com/?cc=gb>

Delta Publishing

<https://www.deltapublishing.co.uk/>

Macmillan Publishing EFL

<http://www.macmillanenglish.com/our-catalogue/>

Gov.UK

Very useful web service providing up-to-date advice and information of many aspects of life in the UK

A good source of realia

<https://www.gov.uk/>

Award-winning teaching with technology tutor!

Russell Stannard

<http://www.teachertrainingvideos.com/>

Super Warmer You Tube Videos

1 Trypp and Tyler

'In real life' series

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYu_bGbZiiQ&list=PLQgIdgpn4OtsAgIXVkiT2PakDXCEceiEo

2 A Millennial Job Interview

<https://youtu.be/Uo0KjdDJr1c>

Business News

1 BBC

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business>

2 Yahoo Business News

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/business.html>

3 Bloomberg

<https://www.bloomberg.com/europe>

4 Financial Times

<https://www.ft.com/>

5 The Economist

<https://www.economist.com/>

Business Studies and Economics Examination

1 BBC Bitesize GCSE - UK 14-16 year olds

<https://www.bbc.com/education/subjects/zpsvr82>

2 S-Cool Revision Website

<https://www.s-cool.co.uk/>

3 The Student Room - Forums / Advice

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/>

4 The Student Room - A Level Business Studies Study Aids

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=3446-a-level-business-studies>

EFL Business English

1 British Council Teaching English

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-adults/resources/english-business>

2 Onestopenglish Business English Bank

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/business/>

3 Onestopenglish Business English and English For Specific Purposes Bank

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/esp/>

4 Speakspeak Business English Vocabulary

<http://speakspeak.com/english-grammar-exercises/business-vocabulary>

5 British Council Learning English

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/business-and-work>

6 Australia Plus - The Business of English

<http://www.australiaplus.com/international/learn-english/the-business-of-english-series/>

7 World Service Business English

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/teachingenglish/talkingbusiness/>

8 Australia Plus - Business Matters

<http://www.australiaplus.com/international/business-matters/>

9 Australia Plus - The business of English

<http://www.australiaplus.com/international/learn-english/the-business-of-english-series/7388288>

10 English tutor online

<https://www.cambly.com/english?lang=en>

YOU TUBE

1 Tutor2u Videos on a great number of current business topics

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe83jLdZ3PuqVwAHe6B3U2A>

General EFL

1 Busy Teacher

<https://busyteacher.org>

2 Linguahouse

<https://www.linguahouse.com>

Interviewing

1 Different types of job interview - Target Jobs

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/interview-types>

2 Different types of interview - Monster

<https://www.monster.ca/career-advice/article/different-types-of-interviews-canada>

3 Types of interview in business Communication - Business Communication Coach

This is a look at different situations in which interviewing is used.

<http://bizcommunicationcoach.com/types-of-interview-in-business-communication-kinds-of-interview-sorts-of-interview/>

4 Star Technique - Reed Recruitment

<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/star-technique-what-you-need-to-know/>

5 Interview Techniques - Reed Recruitment

<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/interview-techniques>

Interview Tips

1 British Council

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/ielts>

2. The Muse.com

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/how-to-answer-the-31-most-common-interview-questions>

Recruitment Services

1 Monster

<https://www.monster.ca/career-advice/>

2 Reed

<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice>

Presenting

1 How to prepare and deliver a presentation - Roberto Cipolla, Department of Engineering, Cambridge University

A humorous set of slides whose simple presentation makes the tips self-explanatory

<http://mi.eng.cam.ac.uk/~cipolla/archive/Presentations/MakingPresentations.pdf>

2 10 Tips for more effective presentations, Lifehack

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/10-tips-for-more-effective-powerpoint-presentations.html>

3 Tips for creating and delivering an effective presentation

This includes some useful tips on using technology to present.

<https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/Tips-for-creating-and-delivering-an-effective-presentation-f43156b0-20d2-4c51-8345-0c337cefb88b>

4 Ten tips on how to make slides that communicate your idea, Ted Blog

YOU TUBE CHANNELS

1 Tutor2u Videos on a great number of current business topics

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe83jLdZ3PuqVwAHe6B3U2A>

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Useful Books:

Dynamic Presentations - Mark Powell – Cambridge Business Skills

English for Presentations – Marion Grussendorf – Oxford University Press

English for Marketing and Advertising – Sylee Gore – OUP

Cambridge English for Job Hunting Colm Downes – CUP

Cambridge English for Human Resources – Pat Pleridge - CUP

English for Telephoning__David Gordon Smith OUP

English for Emails - Rebecca Chapman - OUP

English for Negotiating - Birgit Welch - OUP

English for Meetings - Kenneth Thomson - OUP

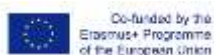
Market Leader – Sara Helm and Rebecca Utteridge – Pearson Longman

Intelligent Business - Skills Book - Christine Johnson, Irene Barral – Longman

Penguin Books: Test Your Professional English for

- Marketing - Simon Sweeney
- Business: General - Steve Flinders
- Secretarial - Alison Pohl
- Finance - Simon Sweeney

Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour - Richard R. Gesteland - Copenhagen Business School Press



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