

USING SIMULATION TO MOTIVATE SPEAKING SKILL IN BUSINESS ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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Abstract: *Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) should be intended for communicative functions. This implies that teaching English is to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills to communicate effectively. Language learning seems to occur most effectively when students have opportunities to use the language. The idea to use simulation in teaching English is considering students who are not motivated to study English in Business English class and it is meant to create interactive classes. Therefore, they are guided to create the situation where they can use the language. In fact, the students are claimed to master English either passively or actively for their future benefit after they graduate from their study. When they graduate they not only master their major study but also expert in using English for communication. In this article it is proposed some examples of simulation that are effective in business English classes; making business plan, conducting meeting, doing negotiation and presentation. To apply the simulation, the students are asked to make a role play. After the simulation is conducted, it is expected that the students are able to use the language interactively and creatively.*

Key words: *simulation, communicative functions, interactive, English for Specific Purposes, Business English, role play*

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching English for Specific Purposes, in this case is teaching Business English in Economic classes, is meant for communicative functions. Business English is usually required for non-native English speakers to learn in order to do business that will involve using the language and performing specific tasks related to their job. The Wikipedia encyclopedia defines Business English as "English especially related to international trade. It is a part of English for Specific Purposes and can be considered a specialism within English language". It means that much of the English communication that takes place within business circles all over the world occurs between non-native speakers. In these cases, the objective of the exercise is efficient and effective communication. The strict rules of grammar are in such cases sometimes ignored. Teaching Business English is focused more on activities rather than in writing.

Therefore, teaching Business English is different from teaching General English. The main difference is setting the context. For example, in teaching business English it is proposed some activities such as, to participate in meetings, negotiate and write email. Business English focuses on communications skills that can be used in the workplace and the skills one needs such as the following; to build a company, to do socializing, to make presentations, and to make negotiations.

Since teaching business English focuses on communications skills teachers of English should propose the effective and creative methods in teaching it. They must encourage the students to be active and willing to speak. In fact English teachers often face problems in encouraging students to speak English.

Teachers of English may experience the situation in which the students are unwilling to speak. There are, of course, many factors causing this problem. Students feel that they lack of confidence to speak as the result of not knowing what to say. Some others might

state that they are short of words to say in conversation. The rest might tell the teacher that the topic of the conversation is not interesting.

Zhao (1998) in his article also explained that students in class also experienced the poorest condition of speaking. This result from lack of speaking practice, but students, especially Asian students tend to be reluctant to speak English in class as well as after class. It is important for teachers to encourage and motivate them to speak English, especially in class.

Researchers (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, and Küpper 1989, as cited in Chamot 1993) have studied the results of language learning strategies that were taught to English learners in numerous different tasks, including vocabulary, listening, and speaking tasks. The outcomes of the studies reveal that language learning strategies are primarily of benefit for the speaking task (Chamot 1993). It is clearly attainable for learners to accomplish the goal of communicative competence by language learning strategies.

There are probably hundred ways to solve the above problems. Planning the lessons, preparing the material, adding some interesting media are some steps the teachers take to make the lesson more interesting and interactive. The teaching and learning process runs well. However, there still remain some problems in the result of English for Business Communication. Students are still unwilling to speak in the classroom.

It is expected that the students will be motivated to perform the task and activities as they are rooted from real life events. It is believed that the more authentic the material is the more motivated the students will be. The teachers are going to conduct an alternate way to encourage the students to be more active in speaking class by implementing simulation. In business classroom, the students will perform tasks and carry out activities such as building company, socializing, doing meeting, giving presentation, and negotiating

ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP)

In teaching English for specific Purposes, teachers should set the content and aims which of any course are determined by the needs of a specific group of learners. ESP is often divided into EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Further sub-divisions of EOP are sometimes made into business English, professional English (e.g. English for doctors, lawyers) and vocational English (e.g. English for tourism, nursing, and aviation). According to Dudley-Evans (2001) the characteristics of ESP are:

- ✦ ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of the learners.
- ✦ ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the specialism it serves.
- ✦ It is centered not only on the language (grammar, lexis, register), but also the skills, discourses and genres appropriate to those activities.

The characteristic of ESP is that teaching and materials are based on the results of a need analysis. Besides that ESP emphasizes on communicative skills and purposes (comprehension or productions purposes). It also contains knowledge and information about occupation or professional English.

Traditionally ESP courses were typically designed for intermediate or advanced adult learners. Nowadays many students can start to learn academic or vocational English at an earlier age and at a lower level of proficiency. Therefore, in teaching ESP the teacher should observe the learners' needs. The teacher themselves should have the depth knowledge of the subject matters. However they don't need to be an expert in a specialist area, they do need to have some awareness and feel for a particular vocational area. Bell (2002) advocates the three Cs for helping teachers to improve their knowledge and skills in a particular area of ESP. The following are the three Cs:

- + **Curiosity**
The teacher should be interested in the subject area and want to learn more.
- + **Collaboration**
Teachers should seek out subject specialists, show them their work and ask for their feedback.
- + **Confidence**
Confidence will grow as teachers explore the new subject matter, engage with subject specialists and learn from their learners.

. Thus, teaching Business English as one of sub-divisions of ESP has become increasingly important as with the spread of globalization and the use of English as the language of international communication increases. More and more people are using English in a growing number of occupational contexts. Teachers of English anticipate it and they introduce the need of Business English to their students.

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BUSINESS ENGLISH

Business English is English language especially related to international trade. It is a part of English for Specific Purposes and can be considered specific within English language learning and teaching. In Wikipedia it states that Business English means different things to different people. For some, it focuses on vocabulary and

topics used in the worlds of business, trade, finance, and international relations. For others it refers to the communication skills used in the workplace, and focuses on the language and skills needed for typical business communication such as presentations, negotiations, meetings, small talk, socializing, correspondence, report writing, and so on.

Business English is focused on operating a business and communicating in a business context. Good business English is clear, direct and unambiguous. It can also contain metaphors which can confuse people who are not familiar with their deeper meaning.

Business English has a unique vocabulary from the area of business in which it specializes, e.g. finance, accounting, management, etc. These areas of expertise contain many technical words that are not necessarily understood in everyday speech. If one reads business articles, it is important to have a business dictionary to help understand the meaning of words. A good way to learn about Business English is to read the business section of a newspaper. Read through articles and have a note to identify metaphors and non-literal language. However, in this article it suggests some ways how to communicate in business context.

SIMULATION

A simulation is similar to role play except that in a simulation the participants are free to take their own decisions and are not directed in any way by constraints laid down on a role card. For example, in a role play activity, a participant may be asked to take on the role of someone in the purchasing department who wants to buy a particular product while his partner may be asked to take on the role of someone in the marketing department who is very anxious to buy a different product. The role play task will discuss the products and use persuasive language. There will be no need for the participant to agree on one particular product by the end of the activity as the process of

talking and using persuasive language is the purpose of the activity. The activities that can be performed such as the following:

1. Building the company
2. Socializing
3. Doing meetings
4. Doing presentations
5. Doing business negotiations

It is clear that although role-play tasks and simulations are also different, simulations involve more participants. They take longer time than role-play activities. They are more suitable for more advanced learners as the language used is more advanced and complex. The focus is on general fluency rather than specific language functions. There are no constraints on how the participants behave. Each participant has a role (e.g. director, manager) but how they act out that role is completely up to them. Simulations take quite a lot of preparation but if they work well they can be used again in future classes.

TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH

In teaching Business English teachers should plan teaching the language and specific tasks related to Business English. However, it is just handing out vocabulary or certain expressions that are related to the world of Business. The teacher should learn how to prepare the students so they can properly use English in a business setting. The students are expected to gain their knowledge of business from the lesson. Some English learners will think that studying business English is studying about commerce while others will think differently. It can mean the language and communication skills, while for others can mean the language of international trade. For example, the teaching is for secretaries or economists they want to know and master English that is used for building company. One of the methods

that the teacher applies is building companies with the following steps.

First, the students are divided into groups. Each group consists of 5 students; one is a leader (manager), one is a secretary and the other three are the members. They act out like they are in a company and they make a group of discussion. They choose a leader for each group. In this part the leader as an imaginary manager holds a meeting and prepares to make a presentation for product presentation.

The second, the teachers give opportunities to practice by using simulation and students act out realistic scenarios of socializing and doing meetings. Doing socializing, for examples, they greet the audience and perhaps they ask how well they are. They may get to know by introducing each other before they start a meeting. Then, the students act out doing a meeting. Each group creates by itself a meeting with each secretary and members. Before they are introduced with some practical theories of how to make an effective meeting, the teacher presents some explanation and expressions for conducting a meeting and developing agenda. After that each group acts out a role play of conducting a meeting.

A. Conducting an Effective Meeting

Examples of how to conduct a meeting can follow the following activities taken from (<http://www.authenticityconsulting.com>):

1. They should know the process of meeting and selecting participants

- ✦ The decision about who is to attend depends on what you want to accomplish in the meeting.
- ✦ Don't depend on your own judgment about who should come. Ask several other people for their opinion as well.
- ✦ If possible, call each person to tell them about the meeting, it's overall purpose and why their attendance is important.

- ✦ Follow-up your call with a meeting notice, including the purpose of the meeting, where it will be held and when, the list of participants and whom to contact if they have questions.
- ✦ Send out a copy of the proposed agenda along with the meeting notice.
- ✦ Have someone designated to record important actions, assignments and due dates during the meeting. This person should ensure that this information is distributed to all participants shortly after the meeting.

2. Developing Agendas

- ✦ Develop the agenda together with key participants in the meeting. Think of what overall outcome you want from the meeting and what activities need to occur to reach that outcome. The agenda should be organized so that these activities are conducted during the meeting.
- ✦ In the agenda, state the overall outcome that you want from the meeting
- ✦ Design the agenda so that participants get involved early by having something for them to do right away and so they come on time.
- ✦ Next to each major topic, include the type of action needed, the type of output expected (decision, vote, action assigned to someone), and time estimates for addressing each topic
- ✦ Ask participants if they'll commit to the agenda.

B. Suggested Expression of Conducting Meetings

Suggested expressions of conducting a meeting can be as follows:

1. Thanks for coming everyone. I declare the meeting open.

2. Shall we move on?
3. We'll have to move on I'm afraid.
4. Has everyone got that?
5. What do you think of that, Mr...?
6. As I see it, we seem to be saying...
7. What exactly do you mean?
8. Could you explain us in detail?
9. So, what we've finally decided on is...

In using the expressions, the students can act out the presentation making. The students are given the expressions of presentations, after that they are asked to practice for the expressions of conducting meetings, making presentation, and negotiation. They create a production presentation. Presentations are communication situations where one person is speaking, while other listen (Frendo:2005). Presentations can be a small talk, informal meeting over a cup of coffee or giving a talk to an audience which the purpose to deliver ideas or to give information in the form of verbal language with the support of visual aids. The followings are some examples of the expressions of presentation taken from Jon Naunton in http://www.oup.com/word/elt/products/profile_jntalk.doc)

Thank people for coming

Good morning afternoon etc.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank you for coming here today

Beginning and Stating Objectives

Right Let's make a start.

Let's begin I'm going to begin by...

Organization

My presentation/talk is divided into three parts/sections..

I'd like to begin by...

I have four main points....

Introduce another speaker

I am going to/I'd like to hand you over/pass you over to Julian

who is going to talk you through/present
Annie will be telling you about...
Paul is now going to take over...

Recap previous speaker has said
Keith has given you an overview of...
We have just heard from Keith...
As Paul said...

Recognising knowledge
You are certainly aware./ As you know.
You've probably heard some of this before...

Moving to another topic
This brings me/us to the key issue ...
I'd now like to turn to
Now let's look at/consider...

Setting guidelines for questions
I'm happy to answer your questions at the end of my
presentation.
Please feel free to interrupt if you have any questions.
I'll deal with questions at the end of the talk...
I'll come back to that at the end if you don't mind

Summarizing
So to recap...
In conclusion...
I'd like to finish/wind up by saying...

After the students have practiced for the expressions of conducting meetings, doing presentation, they have to make simulation. Each group prepares a product presentation. After that they present their created product presentation. Samples of a product presentation can be seen in the scheme overleaf (Title: Life Insurance).

By presenting their imaginary product, the students are motivated to prepare their tasks and also prepare to speak how they

present their task. In this way they are forced to speak. The manager presents the product using power point presentation program and he /she divides the session in which each member presents each part. The secretary takes notes when there are questions. The member can have turn to speak by presenting each part.



1



2



3



4



5

Title: Life Insurance

Finally, students are doing simulation in making negotiation. The teacher gives explanation and notes about how to do negotiation. He or she provides practical theories and the examples of the language expression of negotiation. Then the students practice those expressions that the students should know, such as the following, which is taken from (<http://www.englishclub.com/business-english/negotiations-preparation.htm>)

1. Language to use for showing an agreement on a point:

- ✦ I agree with you on that point...
- ✦ You have a strong point there.
- ✦ I think we can both agree that...
- ✦ That's a fair suggestion.
- ✦ So what you're saying is that you...
- ✦ In other words, you feel that...
- ✦ I don't see any problem with/harm in that.

2. **Language to use for objection on a point or offer:**
 - ✦ If you look at it from my point of view...
 - ✦ I understand where you're coming from; however,...
 - ✦ I'm prepared to compromise, but...
 - ✦ The way I look at it...
 - ✦ The way I see things...
 - ✦ I'm afraid I had something different in mind.
 - ✦ That's not exactly how I look at it.
 - ✦ From my perspective...
 - ✦ I'd have to disagree with you there.
 - ✦ I'm afraid that doesn't work for me.
 - ✦ Is that your best offer?

3. **Language to use in closing**
 - ✦ It sounds like we've found some common ground.
 - ✦ I'm willing to leave things there if you are.
 - ✦ Let's leave it this way for now.
 - ✦ I'm willing to work with that.
 - ✦ I think we both agree to these terms.
 - ✦ I'm satisfied with this decision.
 - ✦ I think we should get this in writing.
 - ✦ I'd like to stop and think about this for a little while.
 - ✦ You've given me a lot to think about/consider.
 - ✦ Would you be willing to sign a contract right now?
 - ✦ Let's meet again once we've had some time to think.

In this phase, each group makes negotiation to the audience whether the audience agrees with the product presented. They can negotiate about the prices, the terms of conditions, contracts, and so forth. Each person in a group should have each part to respond to the audience's questions.

CONCLUSION

It can be said that simulation is an interactive and effective way to motivate the students' speaking skill in business English Class. It

can encourage students to communicate since they have tasks to perform activities. In performing the tasks the students must express their opinions by making business plan, conducting meetings, presenting their imaginary products, and making negotiation. All those activities must be acted out. Those may help students to motivate their speaking skill in business English Class. Those activities are not taught in just one class meeting they can be prepared for some meetings. The simulations of those four activities are able to encourage students to speak. They can not only practice speaking but they get the knowledge of business as well.

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