Teaching of Business Communication

(ENG516)

VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY OF PAKISTAN

Table of Contents

Lesson No.	Lecture Title	Topics	Pg. No.
Lesson No. 01	**ESSENTIALS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-I**		
	What is Business Communication?	001	09
	Origin of Business Communication	002	10
	Scope of Business Communication	003	11
	Development Business Communication	004	11
	Important terms in Business Communication and ESP, EAP, EOP, EMP, ERPP	005	12
	Approach not Product	006	13
Lesson No. 02	**ESSENTIALS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-II**		
	The Business English Learner	007	15
	The Teaching Context	008	16
	The Business English Teacher	009	17
	Language in Context	010	17
	Teaching Business English	011	18
	Rationale of the Course	012	19
Lesson No. 03	**TEACHING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-I**		
	Linguistic Competence	013	20
	Discourse Competence	014	21
	Intercultural Competence	015	21
	Approaches to Teaching English	016	22
	Communicative Language Teaching	017	22
	Task Based Learning	018	23
Lesson No. 04	**TEACHING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-II**		
	Dealing with Professional Content – the Contentious Issue/Organization in Business	019	25
	Evolution of Management /Division of Labor	020	26
	Key issues in Management/Business Sectors	021	27
	Language of Business: Grammar, Vocabulary	022	27
	Communication Skills in Business: Accuracy, Fluency, Effectiveness	023	28
	Communication Skills in Management: Leadership, Team Building, Delegation	024	29
Lesson No. 05	**NEEDS ANALYSIS-I**		
	What are Needs? What are Target Needs?	025	31
	Current and Target Situation – the Gap	026	32
	Learning Needs	027	33
	Necessities, Lacks, Wants	028	34
	Analyzing Learning Needs	029	34
	Uniqueness of Learning Situation	030	35

Lesson No. 06	**NEEDS ANALYSIS-II**		
	Communication Needs	031	36
	Main Priorities	032	37
	Pedagogical Needs	033	38
	Language Styles	034	38
	Business Needs	035	39
	Main Priorities	036	40
Lesson No. 07	**DESIGNING A COURSE-I**		
	Aims	037	41
	Setting Objectives	038	42
	Smart Objectives	039	43
	Teaching and Business Objectives	040	44
	Performance (Behavioral) Objectives	041	44
	Program Outline and Trainee Briefing	042	45
Lesson No. 08	**DESIGNING A COURSE-II**		
	Syllabus Components	043	46
	What is to be Covered and in what Order, the Language	044	47
	Using a Grid/Framework	045	47
	Syllabus Components (Slide)	046	48
	Organizing the Syllabus: Difficulty, Familiarity, and Need	047	48
	Sample Course Outlines	048	49
Lesson No. 09	**DESIGNING A COURSE-III**		
	Negotiating the Syllabus	049	51
	Using Learners' Input	050	51
	Negotiating Priorities	051	52
	Using the Syllabus	052	52
	Managing Logistics: Practical Considerations	053	53
	Instructions: Course title, Venue, Duration	054	54
Lesson No. 10	**SELECTING AND DEVELOPING MATERIALS-I**		
	Scope of Materials and Equipment	055	55
	Ready-made Materials	056	56
	Authenticity: Real World/Teaching Purpose	057	57
	Tailor-made material – Generating/Adapting	058	57
	Using Corpora	059	58
	Learner as Resource	060	59
Lesson No. 11	**SELECTING AND DEVELOPING MATERIALS-II**		
	Framework Materials	061	60
	Course Books	062	60
	Criteria for Course Books	063	61
	Using Course Books	064	61
	Supplementary Materials	065	62
	Teacher-made Supplementary Materials	066	63
Lesson No. 12	**SELECTING AND DEVELOPING MATERIALS-III**		
	Authentic materials: Definition and Use	067	64
	Types and Sources	068	65
	Selection and Adaptation of Authentic Materials	069	65
	Using Authentic Materials for Developing various Skills	070	66
	Using Role-Plays and Simulations	071	67
	Using Case Studies	072	68

Lesson No. 13	**TUTORING A COURSE-I**		
	Stages of Lesson Planning	073	69
	Stage One	074	69
	Stage Two and Three	075	70
	Stage Four and Five	076	71
	Stage Six	077	71
	Lesson Evaluation	078	72
Lesson No. 14	**TUTORING A COURSE-II**		
	Learning Styles	079	73
	Classification of Learning Styles	080	73
	The Four Learning Styles	081	74
	Learning Strategies	082	75
	Learning Styles and Strategies	083	75
	Teaching of Strategies	084	76
Lesson No. 15	**TUTORING A COURSE-III**		
	Giving Feedback	085	77
	The Evaluators	086	77
	Trainee Evaluation	087	78
	Evaluating the Course	088	78
	Guidelines for Giving Feedback	089	79
	The Timing of Giving Feedback	090	79
Lesson No. 16	**MANAGING ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM-I**		
	One to One or Group Training	091	80
	Dealing with Individuals	092	81
	Teaching or Training	093	81
	The Classroom as Bridge	094	82
	Training Styles	095	82
	Sharing Control	096	83
Lesson No. 17	**LANGUAGE FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION-II**		
	Clarity	097	85
	Conciseness	098	85
	Accuracy	99	86
	Ethics	100	86
	Organization	101	87
	Avoiding Biased Language	102	87
Lesson No. 18	**BUSINESS ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE SKILLS**		
	Speaking Skills	103	89
	Listening Skills	104	89
	Reading Skills	105	90
	Writing Skills	106	91
	Vocabulary	107	92
	Grammar	108	92
Lesson No. 19	**TEACHING BUSINESS SPEAKING SKILLS-I**		
	Socializing	109	94
	Story-telling/Meet the Guest	110	95
	Small talk, in Pairs, Small Groups	111	95
	Telephoning: Standard Lexical Phrases, Survival Strategies	112	95
	Structure of Telephone Conversations	113	96
	Speaking on the Phone	114	96

Lesson No. 20	**TEACHING BUSINESS SPEAKING SKILLS-II**		
	Presentations	115	98
	Structure: Openings	116	98
	Structure: Main Body, Conclusion	117	99
	Language for Presentations	118	99
	Preparing for Presentations	119	100
	Practice of Presentations	120	101
Lesson No. 21	**TEACHING BUSINESS SPEAKING SKILLS-III**		
	Business Meetings	121	102
	Language in Meetings	122	103
	Activities: Role-play, Simulations	123	104
	Teaching Negotiations	124	104
	Stages in Negotiation	125	105
	Language and other Negotiating Skills	126	106
Lesson No. 22	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-I**		
	Business Writing: The Process	127	107
	Prewriting	128	107
	Writing	129	109
	Rewriting	130	109
	The Context of Writing	131	110
	Activities for Practice	132	110
Lesson No. 23	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-II**		
	Letters	133	112
	Reasons for Writing Letters	134	112
	Components of Letters	135	112
	Optional Components	136	113
	Types of Letters	137	114
	S Formats of Letters	138	114
Lesson No. 24	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-III**		
	Memos/Emails	139	116
	Reasons for Writing Memos	140	116
	Why is email Important	141	117
	Criteria for Writing Emails	142	118
	Reasons for Writing Emails	143	118
	Techniques for Writing Effective Emails	144	119
Lesson No. 25	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-IV**		
	Short, Informal Reports	145	120
	Types of Report	146	121
	Criteria for Writing Reports: Organization	147	121
	Development	148	122
	Audience	149	122
	Style	150	123
Lesson No. 26	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-V**		
	CVs / Resumes	151	124
	Components of a CV	152	124
	Functional/Chronological Resume	153	125
	Ethical Considerations	154	125
	Effective Resume Style	155	125
	Methods of Delivery	156	126

Lesson No. 27	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-VI**		
	Proposals	157	127
	Criteria for Proposals	158	127
	Abstracts, Introduction	159	128
	Discussion	160	128
	Conclusion and Recommendations	161	129
	Glossary, Works Cited, Appendices	162	129
Lesson No. 28	**TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-VII**		
	Long, Formal Reports	163	130
	Components: Front Matter	164	130
	Components: Abstract/Introduction	165	131
	Components: Discussion	166	131
	Components: Back Matter	167	132
	Research in Long Reports	168	133
Lesson No. 29	**USING THE INTERNET TO TEACH BUSINESS ENGLISH**		
	Technology and Business English Teaching	169	134
	Technology as Communicative Space	170	135
	Using the Internet to Teach Business English	171	135
	Language Learning/Publisher's Resources	172	136
	Web Quests	173	136
	E-learning in Practice	174	137
Lesson No. 30	**AREAS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-I**		
	Areas in Business Communication	175	139
	Business English for Management	176	140
	Business English for Administration	177	140
	Business English for Customer Services and Distribution	178	141
	Business English for Marketing	179	142
	Business English for Finance	180	143
Lesson No. 31	**AREAS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-II**		
	Legal English	181	144
	Teaching Legal English	182	145
	Aviation English	183	145
	Comprehension and Negotiation of Meaning	184	146
	Cognitive Load, Politeness and Mitigation	185	147
	Teaching Aviation English	186	148
Lesson No. 32	**AREAS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-III**		
	Business for Medical Purposes – EMP for Doctors	187	149
	EMP Course Content and Activities	188	149
	EMP Research and Publication	189	150
	Materials in EMP	190	151
	EMP – For Nursing	191	152
	Linguistic Content of Tasks and Activities	192	153
Lesson No. 33	**AREAS IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-IV**		
	Business English for Academic Purposes	193	154
	Purposes and Descriptions	194	154
	Genre Descriptions	195	155
	Teaching of English for Thesis Writing	196	156
	English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP)	197	157

	Curriculum of ERPP	198	158
Lesson No. 34	**TEACHING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN DISTANCE-I**		
	Distance Learning	199	159
	Advantages of Distance Learning	200	160
	Disadvantages	201	160
	The Role of Teacher and Teaching Materials	202	161
	Giving Feedback	203	161
	Designing Courses	204	162
Lesson No. 35	**TEACHING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN DISTANCE-II**		
	Teaching by Telephone	205	163
	Practical Tasks	206	164
	Language for Telephoning	207	164
	E-learning Possibilities	208	165
	Learning Platforms	209	165
	Using the Internet for Teaching Business Communication	210	166
Lesson No. 36	**TEACHING BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN DISTANCE-III**		
	Traditional Distance Education	211	168
	Teaching Business in Distance	212	168
	Teaching Business Communication Online	213	169
	Assessment in Distance Teaching	214	170
	Feedback in Distance Teaching	215	171
	F2F Interaction	216	171
Lesson No. 37	**HOW TO INCLUDE INTERCULTURAL TRAINING-I**		
	What is Culture?	217	173
	Multiculturalism	218	173
	Culture and the Teaching of Business English	219	174
	Defining Terms for Multicultural Audience	220	174
	Guidelines for Multicultural Communication	221	175
	Ethnocentrism	222	175
Lesson No. 38	**HOW TO INCLUDE INTERCULTURAL TRAINING-II**		
	What is Intercultural Training?	223	177
	Cross Cultural Communication	224	178
	Problems in Cross Cultural Communication	225	178
	Dividing society into Individualistic and Collectivistic tic and Collectivistic	226	179
	High Context Verses Low Context	227	180
	Deconstructing Low and High Context Societies	228	180
Lesson No. 39	**HOW TO INCLUDE INTERCULTURAL TRAINING-III**		
	5 Areas of Potential Difference: Is Silence Golden?	229	1812
	Conversational Routines	230	182
	The Face of Politeness	231	183
	How to Ask for Things: Requests	232	183
	Power Differentials in Family	233	184
	Equality and Hierarchy in the Workplace	234	185
Lesson No. 40	**HOW TO INCLUDE INTERCULTURAL TRAINING-IV**		
	Confucianism and Communication patterns in East Asia	235	186
	Time, Power Distance, Uncertainty and Avoidance	236	186
	Masculinity versus Femininity, Long Term Orientation,	237	187

	Universalism versus Particularism		
	a. Neutral versus Emotional b. Specific versus Diffuse c. Status d. Relationship with Nature	238	187
	Verbal Non Verbal/Paralanguage	239	188
	Company Culture	240	188
Lesson No. 41	**HOW TO INCLUDE INTERCULTURAL TRAINING-V**		
	Generating Discussion	241	189
	Understanding Own Culture	242	189
	Increasing Awareness	243	190
	Cultural Shock/Rules of the Game	244	191
	Managing Cross Cultural Conflicts	245	191
	Critical Incidents	246	192
Lesson No. 42	**ASSESSMENT IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-I**		
	Assessment and Evaluation in Business Communication Teaching	247	193
	Principles of a Test	248	193
	Summative and Formative Assessment	249	194
	Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment	250	195
	Testing Learners	251	195
	Testing Speaking Skills	252	196
Lesson No. 43	**ASSESSMENT IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-II**		
	Testing Reading Skills	253	197
	Testing Writing skills	254	198
	Task Based Test	255	198
	Commercially available tests.	256	198
	Backwash effect	257	199
	Item Types	258	200
Lesson No. 44	**ASSESSMENT IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-III**		
	Choosing a Test	259	201
	Using Computers	260	201
	Evaluating: Using Feedback and Observation	261	202
	Peer and Self Feedback	262	202
	Reflective Practitioner	263	203
	The Customers' Perspective	264	204
Lesson No. 45	**CURRENT TRENDS**		
	Context of Globalization	265	205
	Changed Needs	266	205
	English for Academic Purposes: EAP and ERPP	267	206
	Methodologies and Materials	268	207
	Cross-cultural Awareness	269	208
	Growing Professionalism	270	210

Lesson 01

ESSENTIALS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Topic– 001: What is Business Communication?

The communication which takes place at the workplace, in the educational setting, corporate office, or in a government job is called business communication and is basically carried out in the English language. It is taught under various names - Business English and Business Communication or Business Communication Workshop. We will be using the terms Business Communication and Business English interchangeably during the course of these lectures.

Communication takes an important place in the modern workplace. Business companies and government departments have to carry out internal communication and external communication. The globalized nature of modern businesses makes it imperative to communicate internationally with multinationals and TNCs, for various purposes – like selling, persuading, negotiating, informing and presenting. So a successful business today, depends for its success on individuals who are good and effective communicators. The teaching of business English has therefore attracted increasing interest and awareness in the last two or three decades. As the realization about its importance grows, business English course books and other teaching and learning materials are proliferating and almost all the undergraduates who study business, trade, finance, IT, commerce engineering, or medicine have to take some courses in business English communication. The term Business English/Communication is used to cover the English taught to a wide range of in-service, professional people, and pre-service students in full-time educational programs preparing for a business career.

Business communication has to be seen in the overall context of ESP. It is most definitely the current growth area in ESP which, in the two or three decades, has attracted increasing interest and awareness. Business English shares important elements with ESP - needs analysis, syllabus design, course design, material selection and development etc. Business English or business communication is a rapidly growing field within the area of English Language Teaching (ELT) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Business English appeared as a course program on the ELT scene in the late 70s. It has been shaped by ELT and non-ELT forces. Its course content and pedagogical practices combine English, business and teachings, and it has received contributions from ELT methodologies, management disciplines and communication studies.

The two components of a Business English course are language knowledge which reflect the formal aspects of grammar, vocabulary and sound system and communication skills in which we activate this knowledge to transmit messages through different channels, for example, oral channels like presentations, meetings, telephoning or in written documents such as letters and reports. Language knowledge reflects what we know of language and communication skills means how to use that knowledge.

The distinction between general and business English is not so clear. Although the objectives of both are the same, that is, developing the accuracy, fluency and effectiveness of the target language in the students; however, the context is different. In general English, one learns the basics, the mechanics of grammar, composition and vocabulary. In business English you build upon what you learned in general English, focusing on business situations, which require clarity, logic and presentation styles that are dominant in business communication. Business communication courses are also marked by professional content, management skills and cultural awareness. It is generally thought that having certain knowledge of general English is a prerequisite to start learning business English. This does not mean that one needs to be fluent in English to start studying business English. There are business English course books which are designed for different levels of knowledge of English learners. Business communication courses do focus on language skills; however, this focus may take place in specific teaching situations. Besides this, there is also a specific corpus, a particular context and a specific communication. Therefore, its methodology also differentiates it from general English.

Topic - 002: Origin of Business Communication

The teaching of business communication is not a coherent movement but grew out of the converging of a number of trends, which are as follows:

a. The post WW-II world has been dominated by two trends – the importance of commerce and technology, which generated the demand for a unifying language and because of various factors, one being the power of the USA, this role fell to English. As English became the accepted international language, non-native workers and students needed it for functional and academic purposes.

b. Oil crisis of 1970s resulted in a massive flow of funds and Western expertise into the oil-rich countries. English language became a big business and commercial pressures began to exert their influence, and demand on the English teaching profession for cost effective courses.

2. Revolution in Linguistics: At the same time, the traditional method of teaching formal aspect of language was replaced by tailored courses which covered how language was used in actual communication. Traditionally, the aim of linguistics was to describe the rules of English. However, new studies shifted attention away from formal aspects of language to how language is used in an actual life. This led to the awareness of the following:

- The differences in written and spoken language.
- The difference between the language of commerce and the language of engineering.
- The language needs of different groups are different.
- Also that if language varies from one situation of use to another, it should be possible to determine the features of specific situations and then make these the basis of learner's courses.

3. Developments in educational psychology also influenced the rise of ESP, by focusing on the learner, and by emphasizing the central importance of the learners and their attitude towards language. Learners were seen to have different needs and interests, which influenced their motivation and effectiveness of learning and the need to develop courses in which relevance to the needs and demands of the learners were kept paramount. The assumption underlying of this was that the clear relevance of the English course to their needs would improve the learners' motivation and thereby make learning better and faster.

Topic- 003: Scope of Business Communication

Business English and General English courses are based on imparting language knowledge and communication skills, but in the context of professional content, they move to specialist and professional communication. So the difference in business English trainers and general English trainers is partly related to language and partly to communication. The language to be produced and practiced in the business English class reflects the professional/specialist background of the learner(s) rather than knowledge of formal aspects of language. The channels of communication to be developed and practiced reflect the professional world of presentations, meetings and telephoning rather than general communication in social discussions and listening.

The professional content provides a theme or setting related to professional functions, such as marketing, or financial dealings. Business English teaching needs contexts to develop language knowledge and communication skills of learners. If the theme is marketing, then the purpose is to use the content to activate learning, not to teach about marketing which is the job of the management consultant not the language trainer.

Management Skills: Four areas have always stood out in management: planning, leading, organizing and controlling. Leadership and team building are essentials of management skills and they require effective communication skills.

Cultural Awareness: Culture defined as a set of shared values can be seen at the level of a company, department and a team. Shared values are an important factor in enhancing the togetherness of the members, thereby improving their performance. Effective communication is at the heart of creating cultural understanding within a company.

The legitimate scope of business English teachers is to design and deliver courses which aim to increase the language knowledge and communication skills, management skills, cultural awareness and professional context.

Topic- 004: Development of Business Communication

Communication has been influenced by a variety of disciplines – linguistics, general language, e - learning and teaching and management training. One area that has been important in the development of ESP is EST (English for Science and Technology). The development and growth of ESP started in 1960s and has undergone five main phases of development:

Phase 1: The Concept of Special Language: Register Analysis. In 1960s and early 1970s, the basic principle was that each field has its own particular register. Specific registers were to be analyzed to identify their grammatical and lexical features to be used in teaching materials. The aim was to make the syllabus as relevant as possible to learners' needs, giving high priority to language forms that students were likely to meet in Science studies. However, there was very little that was distinctive in the sentence grammar of Science English, except a tendency to favor certain grammatical forms, like the simple present tense, passive voice and nominal compounds. This meant that there was nothing which was not present in General English (Ewer and Latorre 1969).

Sees the language at sentence level

Phase 2: Rhetorical or Discourse Analysis. In this phase, attention was given to language above the sentence level, how sentences were combined in discourse to produce meaning. The aim was to identify organizational patterns in texts, to specify the linguistic means by which these patterns were signaled, and used to make the ESP syllabus.

Phase 3: Target Situation Analysis/Needs Analysis. In this phase the aim was to take existing knowledge and to set it on a more scientific basis, by establishing procedures for relating language analyses to learner's need for learning, by analyzing the target situation and then identifying the linguistic features of that target situation.

Phase 4: Skills and Strategies. In this phase, the attempt was to look below the surface to consider the thinking process that underlies the language use. The principle idea behind the skills-centered approach is that underlying all language learning are common reasoning and interpreting.

Phase 5: Learner-centered Approaches. They emphasized the leaner and his needs at the center of a course design. The developments in educational psychology influenced the field of ESP, awareness about learners' needs and new ideas about language and learning through a language centered approach.

Topic- 005: Important Terms in Business Communication and ESP, EAP, EOP, EMP, ERPP

To appreciate the scope of BE, it is important to be familiar with some of the terms which are used in the field. For this, it will be useful to look at the relationship between different categories of English language teaching in the form of a tree, named the ESP tree (Hutchinson) which shows that ESP is an umbrella term used for various branches of ELT. The tree represents some of the common divisions made in ELT. The top most branches show the level at which individual ESP courses lie. So, we have English for Medical Studies, English for Technicians, English for Economics, English for Secretaries, English for Psychology, English for teaching, etc.

The lower level shows the two common branches of ELT, i.e. whether the learner wants English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or for Vocational Purposes (EVP), also called EOP or VESL (Vocational English as a Second Language). This is of course not a clear cut distinction as people who work and study simultaneously, might need English for vocational purposes as well as for academic purposes.

At the next level down, it is possible to distinguish ESP courses by the general nature of learner's specialisms. Three large categories are usually identified here: EST (English for Science and Technology), EBE (English for Business and Economics), and ESS (English for Social Sciences). This last one is not uncommon as it is generally thought to differ from the General English taught in humanities. Business Communication teaching would also lie at this level.

As we go down the tree, we see that ESP is just one branch of ESL and EFL, which are themselves the two main branches of English Teaching in general. ELT in turn is one variety of the many possible kinds of language teaching. The tree of course cannot survive without its roots and at the roots which nourish the ESP tree are communication and learning. Besides the terms shown in the ESP tree, it would be useful to be familiar with the following terms:

(ESBP) English for Specific Business Purpose

(EGBP) English for General Business Purposes: targets those learners who have lack of working experience (pre-experienced or low-experience)

EMP (English for Medical Purposes)

EST (English for Science and Technology)

EBE (English for Business and Economics)

ESS (English for Social Sciences)

ERPP (English for Research Publication Purposes)

EAP (English for Academic Purposes)

EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes)

EGP (English for General Purposes)

EAL (English as an Additional Language)

ESAP (English for Visual Arts Study)

EOP (English for Occupational Purposes)

EVP (English for Vocational Purposes)

VESL (Vocational English as a Second Language)

Topic- 006: Approach not Product

Having looked at all these branches of English language teaching in the ESP tree, how can we distinguish between Business Communication and other forms of language teaching? The analogy of the tree has helped to show us what Business Communication teaching is not:

1. Business Communication teaching is not a matter of teaching a 'specialized variety' of language. The fact that language is used for a specific purpose does not imply that it is a special form of language different from other forms. Although there are some distinctive features of Business Communication, like providing a context of use which the learner is likely to meet in a target situation, but these differences should not make us ignore the far larger area of common ground that underlies all English domains, in fact all language uses.

2. Business Communication is not just a matter of business words for business students or about business communication skills for business students. There is much more to communication than the surface features of a vocabulary which we read and hear. It is also about how to use that language in appropriate situations.

3. Business Communication teaching is not different in kind from any other form of language teaching. Though the content may be different, there is no reason to suppose that the processes of learning should be different for the BC learner than for the General English learner. In other words, there are no special

methodologies for the business communication class. The methodologies used are those which can easily be applied in any other language class.

Business Communication has to be seen as an approach not a product since business communication is not the teaching of a particular language nor does it consist of a particular type of methodology or material. It should be taken as an approach to language learning which is based on the learner's need.

As for learners' needs are concerned, the question to be asked by Business Communication teachers, as all ESP teachers is: Why does this learner need to learn a foreign language? Once the initial need is identified, other questions will follow from it, some of which will relate to the learners themselves, some to the context of learning and others to the nature of the language in which the learner will need to operate. But the whole analysis derives from the initial identified need on the part of the learner to learn a language.

Business communication teaching, like all ESP teaching, then is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning. Dudley Evans and John's (2000), definition for English for specific Purposes, can be applied to Business Communication teaching as well. They say that it is related to specific disciplines, and is designed to meet specific needs of the learner. The tree of ELT has shown that all language teaching is primarily concerned with communication and learning. So, Business Communication should be seen not as a particular language product but as an approach to language teaching which is directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning.

Lesson 02

ESSENTIALS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Topic- 007: The Business English Learner People interact and communicate with each other all over the world for various purposes, using English, the international lingua franca. Millions of people use English for their business activities. Business is about buying and selling or, more broadly, exchanging and exploiting resources and capabilities. It uses the language of commerce, finance and industry for providing goods and services. It is about cooperation, negotiation, and conflict. It is about persuading and understanding, power and control, explaining and finding solutions to problems. In short, Business English is communication with other people within a specific context. For some learning, English is a necessary part of their jobs, for others, it is investment which brings money, status and financial reward. Some have specific needs, and some just want to improve their English. Some would be at the end of their careers and others would be starting. Despite these differences, it is possible to group together learners according to the following categories:

1. According to Experience

a. A

a business career; a university student, or even a secondary school student. Because of their lack of experience they would often need the teacher to provide a window on the business world.

b. Job experienced knows a lot about business and their own jobs, and often have very precise ideas about what they need from a Business English course. In contrast to the pre-experienced learner they do not need the help of the teacher to understand the business world.

c. The third category, the general business-experienced falls between the two categories, those who have a certain amount of job experience but who are learning English in order to move into a new job or for a specific purpose.

2. Level in the Organization's Hierarchy: Learners at different levels in a company often have different approaches to business English learning. Senior managers might wish to focus on specific skills like presenting or negotiating, or wish to have one to one lessons because of their status in the company, while junior might not have specific needs or might not be able to influence how their training is managed.

3. According to National Culture: Different cultures have different traditions and values regarding learning and education. Sometimes, students have to be split into groups and separate classes may be arranged, say for Chinese, Iranian, Arab students in language schools, e.g. the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, might arrange separate classes for its Arab or Chinese students, so that different styles of communication do not interfere with the learning process.

4. According to Need: Some learners have very specific needs for which they want help from the teacher. They may be about to join a multinational project or they may need help in answering a company telephone hotline, or they might want to describe their company's product to a new customer. Other learners might have a general aim to improve their English because it seems the right thing to do, and they

need a less focused course. Other learners might have particular roles, like secretaries, accountants, technicians.

5. According to Language Level: Sometimes learners might be grouped together because they have roughly the same language proficiency, "beginners', 'advanced', or 'level three', depending on how well they can pass in a placement test or fit in with a predetermined criteria.

Topic- 008: The Teaching Context

Educational Institute: Young adults are typically taught Business Communication in an institutional education environment, such as a school, university, or apprenticeship scheme. If they are in a tertiary education environment, teaching is determined by preparations for written assignments for grading purposes and by the needs and assessment requirements of the educational establishment. In some cases, the students will also attend other (non-language) classes in English.

Learners in such institutions normally start with certain expectations or feelings about the class. They may expect the teacher to be an expert on the business world as well as a language expert and may feel that learning English is not as a high priority as other subjects. Classes are large with learners having widely disparate language levels and skills. Because such groups usually do not know exactly how they will be using their English in future, it can be difficult to focus on specific target needs. The great advantage, of course, is that it is often easier for teachers to cover areas which may not be possible in a more constrained in-company group.

Private Language School: It can be part of franchises or chains, and sometimes, they are small organizations run by one or two people. The teaching may take place in the school's own premises, or the teacher may be expected to travel to the customer's location. The customers may be anything from private individuals trying to improve their English in order to apply for a job, right up to large corporations with employees all over the world. In some countries, schools are required (or can volunteer) to submit to outside inspection; such schemes are designed to ensure that certain standards are maintained.

In-company: In-company teaching involves working at the client's premises, and can vary from a couple of hours a week to a full-time job. It offers a very different experience from working in an educational establishment, for at least two reasons: the learners are not only operating in their workplace already, but they will often have a much better idea of why they need English.

Teachers who work full-time in a company will get to know the company's needs very well. They will normally be using their own training materials, and will also have access to resources such as the company intranet. Sometimes the trainer will be invited to attend meetings, do work shadowing (accompanying an employee doing their normal job, and giving feedback as necessary), or help out with written documents. After a few years, the trainer can become indispensable.

1-to-1: 1-to-l (private lessons with one teacher and one student) is quite a common arrangement in business English teaching. It can involve preparing a learner for a specific project, coaching over a longer period, checking or helping with presentations, correspondence, reports, and so on. Sometimes, a person joins a company without sufficient language skills, and needs to be brought up to speed very fast. Sometimes a learner at a management level prefers the idea of 1-to-l. 1-to-l learners are normal highly motivated (they would not be prepared to find the time or pay the money otherwise).

Topic- 009: The Business English Teacher

In most other fields of teaching, the teacher knows more about the subject than the learner, but in Business English, the relationship can be more symbiotic - the teacher knows about language and communication, but the learner often knows more about the job and its content. Business English teachers need to be able to make informed decisions about language and language learning. They also need credibility, professionalism, and an awareness of the business world. Above all, they must be able to adapt to a particular teaching context and be willing, themselves, to learn. Within the field of Business English, many teachers call themselves trainers, coaches, or even consultants.

Teacher as a Trainer: A Business English teacher works in the world of business, where trainers are common. There is a fundamental difference in approach - a teacher is traditionally seen as someone whose task is to educate someone so that they can have more chance at succeeding in life (the exact objectives may be fairly loose). A trainer, on the other hand, is someone who is required to change a person's behavior or ability so that they can do a specific job. Training is job-oriented, while teaching is person-oriented.

Teacher as a Coach: A coach is someone who can help the learner take advantage of the learning opportunities in their own working environment. It involves helping the learner to better understand his or her own strengths and weaknesses, and plan accordingly. This is related to the concept of learner autonomy, where the learner takes full responsibility for his or her learning.

Teacher as a Consultant: A consultant is an expert who is brought in because his or her skills or know-how are not available in the organization. In Business English, this expertise can include the ability to analyze communication and communication needs or to recommend a training supplier. Many freelance teachers operate as consultants; they market themselves in order to gain access to a potential client, they discuss contracts, they carry out needs analysis, they interact not only with the learners, but also with those who make the decision to pay for language training services, and they evaluate training delivery and outcomes.

Topic- 10: Language in Context

The languag[illegible] what some people might call everyday English. But if it is used by a business person within a business context, it becomes business English. So the exchanges might be a business person visiting a supplier's factory, and they might be between two colleagues discussing an important deadline.

But some groups of people use language in other ways too, ways that are not as familiar to outsiders. They use specialist words to make communication, within the group, easier and more efficient. Every profession does this (indeed, one defining feature of a profession is that it has its own linguistic identity). People use specific language to communicate in specific contexts. Business communities are not different. Accountants use the language of accounting (specific lexis) to talk about accounting matters (specific context). Sales engineers use specific language to discuss their product specifications with their customers. These are both business communities, but they probably wouldn't understand each other's specialist vocabulary. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a term often used to describe language that is inaccessible to people who are not members of a particular language community.

Business English is an umbrella term for a mixture of general everyday English, general Business English, and ESP. It is not limited to words or phrases that only appear in some special business world. For example, a quick glance at the language of advertising soon shows a wonderful variety of metaphorical language, such as, *health drink with more muscle*.

Yet there are some other things which make business English distinctive. Firstly, business people do a variety of things with language; they socialize, predict, analyze, negotiate, buy, write, persuade, compromise, telephone, compete, market, sell, produce, interview, train, travel, plan, investigate, deal, advertise, explain - the list is endless. These are done in a specific business context, and for business aims. But skill in using business English is not limited to the words and the language used. Presenters use certain techniques to get their message across as do negotiators and telephone operators. Business English users need to know the words, but they also need the skills in order to do their job. So business English is used together with business communication skills.

Secondly, the English used in international business is not necessarily the same English that native speakers use. It is a lingua franca. It may even be considered a new type of English which has developed and is developing to meet the needs of its users. People whose first language is English do not necessarily speak this language. There is much discussion among academics about what such a language might be like. No one really knows. The important thing to remember is that the language the learners need may share only certain characteristics with the teacher's own version of English.

Thirdly, although we know a lot about how people interact and the sorts of things they say to each other, there are many areas of Business English or ESP where there is not much reliable information on what people actually say. A good example of this relative lack of information is in the matter of small talk. Small talk is the simple throwaway line we might offer when we meet someone in the corridor, or the seemingly banal discussion about the weather. Such conventional polite exchanges might be vitally important to the business English learner who needs to build good business relationships, but not much is known about how they work.

Learners might need to learn everything from general English, to general business English, to a particular type of English (British English, US, International), to an ESP, or a mixture of all of these. And they need to be able to use this language successfully across a range of different cultures and alongside a range of different business skills, and in a wide variety of contexts, and with a wide variety of interactants. They need English to do business, not just to talk about business.

<u>Topic- 11: Teaching Business English</u>

Various reasons account for the growing awareness about the need for teaching Business Communication - increased trade/commerce activities, globalization, faster means of travel, growth of ICT, internationalization of education, social media, etc. This is accompanied by an acceptance of English as a lingua franca by almost all nations of the world. This was hastened by certain political events, like the Post WW II scenario, the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War. The teaching of English communication has been influenced by a variety of disciplines, including linguistics, general language learning and teaching, educational psychology and management training.

The teaching of English has focused more on the linguistic approaches, concentrating on the linguistic aspect of Business Communication, and on language centered approaches. However, with the realization that language teaching should fulfill the role of real communication in real life situations, the shift was towards a learner -centered approach. The ESP approach provides opportunities to the learners to acquire English naturally in context.

English Communication is about language use, the issue of communicative competence is important. Perhaps the most influential models have been based on work done by Hymes in the 1960s, Canale and Swain in the 70s, and Bachman and Palmer in the 80s. The basic argument, which arose out of dissatisfaction with earlier teaching approaches, is that there are various components which need to be considered when discussing language skills, of which knowing about language is only one. Language learners also need to be able to use the language in real-life situations. Various ways of dividing communicative competence into its component parts have been discussed over the years, with teachers being particularly interested in the teachability of such components. Business English teachers need to focus on three key components in particular: linguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence.

Topic- 12: Rationale of the Course

Business Communication courses are compulsory courses in most of the Pakistani universities. They are taught to students of engineering, IT, management, mathematics, science, accounts and finance, and medicine. Mostly, it is taught as General English in the first semester and then for two semesters under various names as Report Writing, BC Workshop and Business Communication focusing on the four language skills and some technical aspects of business writing. The emphasis in most of the cases is on the theoretical aspects and not on actual language use in real life situations. They are graded courses and affect students CGPA. However, teachers use a course book, usually a readymade material to teach them which is not relevant to local contexts. Classes are large with students from various disciplines and various academic backgrounds and abilities. Motivation is low as students do not see how and where they would use the content. This course aims to teach/train teacher how to teach Business Communication. Books that are usually used are Gerson and Gerson, Guffy and Babcock, and others authored and complied by Indian writers. They are not effective because the needs of the students are not met. Also sometimes students focus more on their core courses and consider the business communication course as not really relevant to their overall aims.

These undergraduates are young degree students who have no background knowledge or experience in the business world. The students view it as just another module in their Social Sciences which they just have to pass in order to get it out of the way of their core subjects, which are more important for them. Usually students cannot communicate in spoken as well as written English. As B.C. teachers, our purpose is to give them the language knowledge and communication skills through which they can achieve proficiency in different areas. It is mostly taught as general English which does not serve the purpose. Most universities have fixed General English modules and they are taught to all students with a view that "One fits all".

Lesson 03

TEACHING OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-I

Topic- 013: Linguistic Competence

Teaching of Business Communication has been influenced by a variety of disciplines, including linguistics, general language learning and teaching and management skills. Because Business English is not only about language, but about language use, it is worth first considering the issue of communicative competence. Business English teachers need to focus on three key components in particular: linguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence.

Linguistic competence is shown in the use of the basic elements that go together to form a language, such as vocabulary, grammar, phonology. One of the key influences on business English teaching in recent years has been our deepening understanding of the role of lexis (words and patterns of words) and its relationship with grammar (the way the words and patterns follow rules). The traditional distinction between the two is becoming more and more blurred as we find out more about how the language system works.

Words can be divided into three types:

1. Lexical (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs)
2. Functional words (determiners, pronouns, modals, prepositions, coordinators)
3. Inserts (yeah, well, ouch)
4. Multi-words: sentence headers
5. Phrasal words: start off, bring up
6. Collocations: small print, black and white. They collocate with words as well as adjectives.
7. Idioms: 'We've missed the boat', 'pulling someone's leg'
8. Colligation: Words occur in particular grammatical patterns, e.g. letter of application, letter of complaint, but not market of Europe, or market of France, etc.

Another development was the realization that spoken and written language can be very different forms which are acceptable in one type of grammar might not be acceptable in another. Learners need to understand that when they use written grammar rules in conversational speech, their language may sound unnatural and stilted.

Spoken Grammar: Hesitations, repetitions, ellipses, tags, discourse markers, it is not only what is said, but how it is said that is of interest to business English learners. Phonology is about how we use our voices to make the sounds of utterances. We use stress, rhythm, and intonation (sometimes called prosody) to convey meaning. Chunking involves grouping words together, with a pause, or a change in pitch, or a lengthening of a syllable to signal the end of the chunk. Combined with stress, intonation, and rhythm, chunking can alter the way the listener understands the message.

Topic- 014: Discourse Competence

Linguistic competence deals with elements of language at a basic level, and tends to focus on language out of context, focusing on isolated chunks of language. Discourse competence, on the other hand, deals with language in use, although it is important to note that the word discourse can be used in a variety of ways by language professionals.

Discourse is used to describe how people interact with each other within context. This includes negotiations, correspondence, presentations, service encounters, and meetings. In this sense, business discourse refers to the spoken and written communication that is found within the world of business. The participants in the discourse have to communicate within different contexts. Different discourses require different strategies, registers, genres - spoken or written. There are many ways to analyze spoken discourse. One of these is conversation analysis, which is a sociological approach used to analyze the way people interact with each other in talk, for example, the concept of turn-taking. Conversations also have opening and closing sequences. The business communication learner needs to have an understanding of the discourse situations which he/she will face in the business world. This would involve the formal as well as the informal domain of officialdom and socializing. It is important to use appropriate written and spoken language here.

Topic- 015: Intercultural Competence

The Business Communication learner will have to be familiarized to the intercultural aspect of communication. In the globalized world of today where international education, business and tourism has been made easier through cheaper and faster means of communication, there is need for the business communicator to be culturally sensitive. Businesses are carried out with multinational companies and TNCs. At the computer interface as well, culturally sensitive language is required. Culture has to do with attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values. It is influenced by a multitude of factors including environment, society, gender, family, age, and ethics. It is learned, not inherited through genes. It manifests itself in interaction between people, and is continually changing. Some cultural differences are superficial, and are relatively simple to deal with. It is easy to see that people may dress or eat differently, for example cultural differences are not always so obvious. The iceberg model is often used to demonstrate how much of culture is hidden. Like an iceberg with most of its bulk unseen below the surface of the water, these hidden aspects can cause problems if we are not aware of them and don't know how to deal with them.

There are different types of cultures. National culture takes as its reference point the concept of the politically bounded nation state. This is not the same as ethnicity, which is used to refer to groups having the same language, history, religion, or race. A nation may be composed of different ethnic groups, and ethnic groups do not always observe national borders. Organizational or corporate culture describes the specific behaviors and values found in organizations. So, for example, a young company with twenty employees which sells groceries via the internet is likely to have a very different way of doing things compared to an older, more traditional engineering company which has been in existence for over a hundred years, and which has more than 300,000 employees scattered in different parts of the world. Professions also have their own distinct cultures. We might expect doctors and musicians to behave in certain ways, even when they come from very different national cultures. Even members of the group of people who use English as a lingua franca share certain characteristics with each other, because they have something in common. People can belong to different cultures at the same time; for example, an engineer in an American company may share many of the values of other employees in the same company, but in some ways has more in common with an engineer in a German company than, say, a secretary in the American firm. Stereotypes are generalizations which are often used to simplify and categorize other cultures, and by extension of the people in those cultures. We often use them to try and understand a new situation or unfamiliar behavior (for example, it may be useful to know about the importance of ‘face’, i.e. people’s feelings about their own worth, self-respect, and dignity - in Asian countries), but there are limitations to their usefulness. One major problem is that stereotypes do not allow for exceptions to the norm. So we think that (and act as though) all members of a particular group behave in a certain way, and make no allowance for individuals in that group. Intercultural competence, then, includes the ability to deal with, and be sensitive to, differences in how other cultures do things. From a business point of view, the aim might even be to recognize and utilize those differences in order to create something which adds value for the business or its customers.

Topic- 016: Approaches to Teaching English

Through the years, various approaches have been used to teach foreign languages. Each one of them had a learning philosophy behind them. The grammar translation method was based on the teaching of the classic languages. Proponents held that languages are best learnt by focusing on the written texts, on the cultural aspect and the practice of grammatical phrases, vocabulary and writing. Listening and writing were emphasized and speaking and reading were ignored, the teacher was the center of the learning process and learners were passive recipients of knowledge. A reaction against this method was seen in the shape of the Behaviorist Philosophy which was of the view that learning was basically habit formation which depended on repetition, drill practices and followed the pattern of conditioned response which was stated as follows:

Audio lingual method

Stimulus - Response- Feedback (positive/negative)

Various other methods were also followed, like Suggestopedia, Total Body Response,

CBI (Content Based Learning)

Topic- 017: Communicative Language Teaching

Teachers have used models of real-world communication and perspectives on society to inform what happens in the classroom. The theorists’ emphasis on communication has led to a widespread enthusiasm for the approach known as communicative language teaching (CLT), which aims to develop learners’ ability to use language to communicate. CLT is not a precise term and can mean different things to different people. However, there are some underlying principles commonly shared. First of all, language is seen not just as a set of linguistic items to be learned, like words or grammar, but it also involves language in use via functions such as interrupting, or agreeing and disagreeing (functions are ways of describing what a speaker is trying to achieve at each stage in a communication activity). When considering functions, we are focusing on how we use a language, as opposed to what we know about a language. Another key aspect of CLT is that languages are learned while using them, with an emphasis on real-life situations. Meaning takes precedence over form. Fluency can take precedence over accuracy. It is often argued that there are two basic forms of CLT, a weak and a strong one; both forms are used in business English classrooms. The weak form of CLT focuses on what is to be learned. A typical approach here is PPP, where language is presented, practiced using a variety of different activities, and finally produced through some sort of communicative activity. A variation on this is the deep-end approach, where learners are asked to perform a task that makes demands on their competence in using language, and then their performance is diagnosed, leading to a focus on the specific language items. Another alternative suggested by Michael Lewis is to create a learning cycle which starts with observation, followed by hypothesis and experiment (OHE). Harmer's ESA model suggests that a teaching sequence can be divided into three components where the learners engage emotionally with the situation, study the language, and then activate it. All these approaches focus on what is to be learned.

Strong form how it is to be taught

Topic- 018: Task based Learning

The task-based approach aims at providing opportunities for learners to experiment with and explore both spoken and written language through learning activities which are designed to engage learners in the authentic, practical and functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Learners are encouraged to activate and use whatever language they already have in the process of completing a task. The use of tasks will also give a clear and purposeful context for the teaching and learning of grammar and other language features as well as skills. Task-based learning stimulates a natural desire in learners to improve their language competence by challenging them to complete meaningful tasks.

A strong form of communicative language teaching focuses on how learning takes place; in other words, it argues that language is learned via the negotiation of meaning in real communication. People learn by using the language to achieve a specific outcome. The theory is that people do not learn in a neat, pre-ordained fashion, so deciding what language items to focus on is not an effective way to teach. It may be much better to provide the right input and atmosphere, which allow learning to take place at the individual's own pace and in response to their needs.

In the Business English classroom, this is often done via tasks, which are activities where the focus is primarily on using language to do something. It is the outcome of the task which is important, just as in the business world; the language is a means to an end not an end in itself. Traditional language exercises focus on learning language rules. The theory is that language is learned via the interaction; the learners learn by doing the task. Many researchers claim that task-based learning, coupled with judicious feedback allows learners to pay some attention to form is the most productive way of learning a language.

The great advantage for the Business English learners is that the language produced while doing a task can be immediately relevant. The disadvantage is that it is often difficult to predict exactly what will happen during a task, which can make them difficult to plan or assess. For the less experienced teacher, there may also be a feeling of loss of control. In addition, some tasks can be completed with a minimum of language input from the participants, which makes them not necessarily the best way to provide maximum exposure to a useful language.

Yet even though CLT in one form or another is used worldwide, there are some problems with it. However the requirements to use the language in real communication may not work well with a very large group of learners or with learners whose own educational and cultural background presupposes that the teacher is the only one who speaks. Likewise, not all non-native English teachers feel comfortable with a method like CLT that can at times requires native speaker levels of competence. Classrooms and cultures across the world may have their own, more appropriate way of doing things which takes into account local expectations and needs. Teachers have to pick and choose the approach best suited to their own experience and teaching style, what resources they have available, and the particular learning needs.

Lesson 04

TEACHING OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION-II

Topic- 019: Dealing with Professional Content – the Contentious Issue/Organization in Business

A contentious issue in teaching of Business Communication is the amount of professional content in the course design. How much content should be language-focused and how much should be business-focused. Whereas the language teacher's focus is language teaching for which the business content provides a backdrop. Business is not their domain and professional activities are a just a back drop against which language knowledge is developed. However a contrary view is offered by training organizations and in-company training departments, who through experience of working with clients assume that knowledge of the company, can be acquired over time.

The language teacher has to fulfill the role of a business trainer of an area about which they have no knowledge. The Business Communication teacher will have to be familiar with the different types of organizations in the business world, management and management activities, the key functions in business, the main sectors in which businesses operate.

Difference in Philosophy and Approach: Business English is not a clearly defined subject of instruction, rather an umbrella term for a range of program driven by learner's needs. What is clear though is that language teachers are not content specialists. They cannot be expected to provide management training within the guise of language training.

Role of teacher is as a language developer

The Role of the Language Teacher in the Business Classroom: At one end of the continuum are courses which focus on language teaching (focusing on language development within a framework of business oriented vocabulary). On the other end, programs which combine content, language and communication to develop learners' language knowledge and communication skills. The BC teacher is not a management, financial expert but rather a knowledgeable generalist, able to tap into learner's expertise and use it as a resource in the development of the course. For a course for finance managers who need to develop their language knowledge and communication skills for handling communication and exchanges on professional matters, the content may include balance sheets and profit and loss statements. The course prepared for them, depending on their needs and the trainers' skill may include the following: Developing language knowledge (professional communication skills, specialist language knowledge, and professional language skills) within the context of general business and financial topics. Key issues for reflection are:

- Personal/professional targets along the cline
- Methods for achieving them
- Organization in Business
- Types of companies: public/private, etc.
- Management and management activities: The key functions in business organizations (departmental)
- The main sectors in which businesses operate

Topic- 020: Evolution of Management/Division of Labor

Management science is an evolving field. An understanding of underlying business principles will help the business communication teacher to better orientate their courses to meet the needs of their students. Notwithstanding hierarchical orders of individual organizations, all students will be involved in the management of resources –time, money, materials and people.

Definitions of management and three management approaches are as follows:

1. Scientific Management: (Taylor 1856-1915) is based on the following principles:

- Management as a science, best method
- Scientific selection of workers, so that each worker would be given responsibility for which he/she is best suited
- Scientific education and development of the worker
- Intimate, friendly relations between the worker and management

2. Classical Organization Theory (Henri Fayol 1841-1925) is based on the recognition of the human factor in management and on managerial behavior. He believed that management is not an inborn talent but a learnt skill. He divided business operations into six interdependent and related functional areas:

- Technical
- Commercial
- Financial
- Security
- Accounting
- Managerial

Superimposed on these was his view of what management was about and what skills are needed by the manager: These skills are:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Commanding
- Coordinating
- Controlling

3. Behavioral Movement: Managers get frustrated that people do not behave in predicted ways. The social sciences of psychology and sociology provide insights into human behavior in the workplace, resulting in the Human Relations Approach" - how to deal with people in organizations by addressing their social needs. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of man's needs, the behaviorists tried to establish a link between what motivates the 'social man' to work – his lower level needs are to be met before his upper level needs are addressed. Later researchers argue for the needs of the 'complex man'. The work of Behavioral scientists, together with Human Relation Theorists, has been very influential in forming the discipline of modern management.

The three schools of management, all continue to exert influence on management thought today, and coexist as management science continues to evolve. The findings have helped managers become more sensitive/ sophisticated in their dealing with colleagues and subordinates. They continue to offer insights into current management concerns such as leadership, team building, delegation and communication.

The Division of Labor: The Business English teacher needs to be familiar with how the companies are organized, besides knowing about their legal organization and their management practices. These practices are translated into company hierarchy, which gives insight into the organization of the business world. The organigram (company flowchart) is a top-down representation of power flowing through levels of management, from senior management to middle and junior/lower level management.

Topic - 021: Key issues in Management/Business Sectors

The structure of business organizations, the hierarchy, and working are areas about which the business English teacher should know. It is also useful for the business communication teacher to know something about the key issues which managers and their teams have to face, which depend on the functions which it has to perform. The following areas are helpful starting points to explore different management interests and concerns:

- General Management
- Administration
- Customer Service
- Distribution
- Finance
- Legal
- Personnel
- Production
- Marketing
- Purchasing
- Research and development
- Sales

The Business Communication teachers' knowledge about these would help them to know learners' needs and to design courses for them. Useful vocabulary needed in them is given in Nick Brieger. Other important areas are:

- Leadership To inspire
- Team Building Too harness synergies
- Delegation

To share, empower

Topic - 022: Language of Business: Grammar, Vocabulary

The job

So we will look at grammar and vocabulary needed for business communication in this section. Grammar is described as:

- The rules and conventions of a language shared by a group of native speakers
- The structures of the categories of language

Grammatical accuracy is in most cases given. Another dimension variation is the variety, e.g. Australian, British or American. There are no language categories specific to Business Communication which uses all the language forms, grammar, and vocabulary of General English.

Vocabulary represents the main building blocks of functional meaning in language.

Business English has its own vocabulary shown as the following:

- Specialist --- Specialist
- Specialist---- non-specialist
- Non-specialist ---- Specialist
- Generalist ---- Generalist

Specialist ----Specialist: This presupposes a need for a range of vocabulary dealing with shared professional issues. The precise lexical items required will depend on the topic under consideration. However, it is possible to predict the range of vocabulary needed to treat topics within key management areas and depends on the topic under discussion.

Specialist----non-specialist/Non-specialist---Specialist: To be effective, today's multi-faceted manager needs to be able to operate in own team and multi-disciplinary workgroups and contexts, needs business vocabulary of own area but others as well.

Generalist---- Generalist: Wider context in which professionals communicate outside the strict confines of corporate offices and board rooms. Successful business depends on successful relationships. So the social side of business communication must not be ignored – the ability to converse about economic, social, environment and personal issues. This requires its own set of vocabulary. So besides context-driven and topic driven vocabulary, there is need for general purpose vocabulary. Long lists might be daunting for the learner, so should be served in reasonable chunks.

Topic - 023: Communication Skills in Business: Accuracy, Fluency and Effectiveness

Accuracy is black and white. In vocabulary, the use of a word is either right or wrong in a certain context, but in pronunciation it is more difficult to point out the flaw in terms of approximating a native-like pronunciation.

This does not apply to [illegible]e are looking at a cline with zero competence at one level and native like competence on the other. In the middle are many levels of competence. The same is true of effectiveness, which in professional communication is different from fluency. So with accuracy, it is right/wrong and with fluency and effectiveness is more/less. Speed and effort of speaking are also factors which matter. *No criteria to judge fluency*

General English courses tend to develop the accuracy as well as effectiveness of communication in learners. Factors which influence effectiveness are: impact of delivery, variety of media, and conciseness of communication, but there are no absolute rules of effectiveness which can be measured. They include behavioral features, gestures, eye contact, use of local variety, etc.

So we have listed the objectives – accuracy, fluency and effectiveness of Business Communication and these require different knowledge and skills. We will look in more detail at the professional communication skills listed below. All learners will agree that these skills are central to the communication of today's business profession. And many trainees will see the usefulness of attending BC courses to improve these skills.

Topic 024: Communication Skills in Management: Leadership, Team Building, Delegation

It is important for the Business Communication teacher to know the basics of management skills involved in business and the role of language and communication in leadership, team building, and delegation.

Leadership: Leadership is not a new concept. What is new is the emerging interest in business leaders. With business assuming a more central role in society, there is more recognition of how business leaders contribute to the health and wealth of their nations. And with this what are the traits, managerial qualities and attributes of those who lead. The Early Trait Models look at personal characteristics of leaders, holding that leaders are born, not made. Behavioral approaches focused on what leaders do or do not do rather than who they were. Behavior can be taught, so leaders can be made. Context Based Models favor the view that context or situation plays an important role in the making of a leader, according to the following:

- Delegation
- Communication
- Motivation of subordinates
- Task completion

Leadership and Communication

Leadership is not a new concept. Business occupies a more central role in society as business leaders play an important role in the health and wealth of a society. For the purposes of business English teachers, it is useful to note the importance attributed to leadership in today's business circles; and understand the background to the debate about innate characteristics versus learned skills. However, it is important for the business communication teacher to think about the implications of language and communication in effective leadership.

Team Building and Communication

Team building involves the combining and integrating the talents, skills and energies of individual employees to solve problems and achieve goals and objectives which might be difficult or impossible to achieve by management and individual efforts alone.

For the purposes of business English teachers, it is useful to note the importance attributed to team-building and understand the procedures involved in effective team-building. It is also important for the business communication teachers to think about how language and communication are used in effective team-building. Effective communication is central to the processes involved in:

- Achieving the commitment of all team members.
- Defining the mission and vision of the business and then sharing those with the staff.
- Sharing the decision making process with the staff.
- Running and sharing participatory staff meetings.

Our role is to train English users in the appropriate language and communication tools to accomplish successfully the processes needed in effective team building.

Delegation: Delegating tasks involves appropriate communication to delegate tasks by explaining tasks, listening for reservations, concerns and feedback, getting their agreement and commitment, sharing feedback on delegated. Delegation is a contentious area. Some managers don't like to delegate their work to others thinking that it would reflect poorly on their own skills. On the contrary, a poor delegation often means poor managerial skills. For some delegation comes naturally, for others it is a skill which has to be learnt.

Factors in delegation include, policy, organization, procedures and techniques, technology and leadership, effectiveness and motivation. Delegation can result in the advantages of specialization, freedom from managers, a system of training and a defined pattern of responsibilities. To be effective, delegation demands full passing and acceptance of authority and responsibility, an accepted and workable system of control and freedom for the subordinate within the accepted terms of reference

Delegation and Communication: At the core of delegation are what to delegate and to whom. However the conceptual elements involved in what and who to delegate to need to be matched by communication skills if the delegation itself is to be effectively communicated. For the business English teacher, it is useful to note the importance attributed to delegation in large organizations, and to think about the skills required to communicate the delegation and to ensure the feedback system for information is well carried out. Effective communication is central to the process involved in explaining the tasks to the people to whom you are delegating, understanding their reservations and concerns, getting their agreement and commitment and sharing feedback on the progress of delegated tasks.

Lesson 05

NEEDS ANALYSIS-I

Topic- 025: What are Needs? What are Target Needs?

The difference between Business English (BE) and General English (GE) courses is basically that Business English aims to fulfill the needs of business and management students. What are these needs? The basic aim of a needs analysis is to collect and examine critically, information about the current situation (where the students are at present) and the target situation (where they would like to be at the end of the teaching).

Needs analysis, carried out to establish the "what" and the "how" of a course, is the first stage in Business Communication course development, followed by curriculum design, materials selection, methodology, assessment, and evaluation. However, these stages should not be seen as separate, but as proceeding in a linear fashion. They come at the pre-course stage. The teacher needs to know the needs of the learners so that the objectives of the course may be decided. Business English learners have more precisely defined needs than general English learners and these needs should be incorporated in the course objectives. It is useful to see the needs analysis stage as consisting of three separate but linked elements:

- The range of communication and language required in the learner's present of future profession.
- The current ability of the learner in terms of language and communication.
- The actual objective of the training program .

In order to find this we need to address the following questions:

- What type of information do we need to get?
- How can we get this information?
- How can we translate this information into course objectives?

The scope of Business English has been summarized as developing language knowledge and communication skills:

- General Language Knowledge
- Specialist Language Knowledge
- General Communication Skills
- Professional Communication Skills

Sometimes this needs analysis is minimal, and simply consists of a series of brief questions which give the teacher a rough idea of the needs of the group. But at other times a needs analysis can be a more substantial proposition. A large-scale needs analysis (sometimes called a language audit) can be designed to look at an organization and work out its strengths and weaknesses in terms of communication in English. All levels of the company will normally be involved, and the aim will be to build up a picture of the current situation, and balance that against strategic goals as well as short-term needs. The process may include gathering information about future markets, customers, suppliers, and even competitors. Clearly in any company, there will be major budgetary implications, in terms of the expense of data collection and analysis, and of interpreting it to decide the way forward. Issues to be addressed could include the level of language competence certain post-holders should have, how language competence might figure in recruitment policies, the evaluation of current language training providers. The language audit might be a key stage as an organization develops and maintains a language strategy, allowing it to deal effectively with language problems in various markets and supply chains is an important step in course design and a hall mark of BE courses as of all ESP courses. It directly influences all decisions regarding: syllabus, materials, methodology, and evaluation.

Topic - 026: Current and Target Situation – The Gap

The basic aim of a needs analysis is to collect and examine critically information about the current situation (where the students are at present) and the target situation (where they would like to be at the end of the teaching). This is the training gap. Understanding the difference (the training gap) between these two situations leads to the course design (syllabus, methods, constraints, learning strategies, and so on). First, we need to be clear whose needs we are talking about - the learner's, or those of the company or organization which is paying for the training. Sometimes the school, university, or training provider is also a factor. Also, there is often a difference between a learner's perceived needs and felt needs. The former represent the view of the other stakeholders in the equation, such as the teacher, the sponsor, and the co-workers. In a sense, these are the 'experts', who can identify needs based on their own experience and knowledge. The felt needs are those needs which represent the learner's perspective.

Another way of looking at needs is to think about them in terms of what and how we might teach. Can we translate needs into a list of products which we as teachers deliver to the learner? This could be a list of language items, for example, or a list of skills, such as giving presentations or asking questions in meetings, or should needs be seen in terms of the process of delivery, with the emphasis on how the learning takes place? Here we are talking about the training as seen from the individual learner's perspective:

- How does a particular learner learn?
- What affective factors need to be considered?
- What methods should I be using?

As ever in language teaching, the answer probably draws on both perspectives. There are several possible ways of looking at needs analysis, but what is important is to appreciate what a needs analysis does. It does not produce a sharply defined list of things to do in the classroom. Indeed, the more we find out about our learners' needs, as inevitably happens as a course progresses, the more difficult it can seem to meet those needs. What a needs analysis does is offering a chance to focus on those areas which are more relevant to the learner or the company. It provides a series of snapshots, none of which gives the complete 'truth', but all of which contribute to our understanding. The more snapshots we take, the better our understanding.

The needs analysis differentiates a general English course from a course for specific purposes. On certain courses, it can also be used as a justification for what happens. A needs analysis is unique to a specific training situation. There is no standard model of needs analysis, and there is no 'single best way' to do it. A needs analysis is not an objective exercise; it entails exercising judgment and finding compromises to make the best use of resources in a particular teaching context. It is about working with learners to decide on the best way forward. At the end of all this effort, it is still inevitably vague in parts. This vagueness can be a problem with a sponsor or learner who is paying for something well defined, and is getting something that looks a little bit rough around the edges. A teacher working with companies must be aware of this, and must be able to produce a needs analysis which is businesslike and efficient, while at the same time being realistic and not making promises that cannot be met, particularly regarding what language teaching is and what it can achieve.

Tied to this is the problem of using ELT jargon; part of our job as teachers is to make sure that we speak the same language as those who are paying for the training (sponsors). Learners and sponsors may have other views of what the teacher's 'role' is, for example, or what the word 'grammar' means. Conflict can be avoided by regular consultation, clarification, and negotiation.

During a needs analysis teachers gain access to some often quite private or sensitive information, which might need to be handled with care. Business English teachers are often required by their customers to sign some sort of confidentiality agreement, and teaching institutions may be subject to regulatory constraints on how they manage information (such as Data Protection Acts and privacy laws). There may also be ethical questions to consider. Is all the information gathered really necessary? Who has access to the information? What will the department head be told about their employee? Was the employee made aware of this at the time the data was collected? Is the teacher competent enough to use this information in order to make decisions which could affect people's careers?

Needs analysis, then, is rarely a clear-cut thing: a tidy needs analysis, the result of which prescribes course design, which in turn dictates materials design, is more likely to be encountered in textbooks than in real life. Real needs analysis is dynamic, and messy. It doesn't end until the course is over, and even then decisions have to be made about what to do with the information gathered. But it is also the best way we have to produce a focused course. A needs analysis in its most basic form is essentially a blend of information-gathering activities which use a variety of different perspectives. However, simply collecting data is not enough - it is in the interpretation and use of this data where the needs analysis really makes its power felt.

Topic - 027: Learning Needs

The Business Communication course designer has to consider the following question: 'What does the expert communicator need to know in order to function effectively in this situation'? The answer to this question may be recorded in terms of language skills, strategies, subject knowledge etc. But analysis does not show how the expert communicator learnt the language items, skills and strategies that he/she uses. So it is naïve to base a course design on the target objectives, because more important are the actual tools needed to acquire these skills. An example of this can be seen in the matter of choosing a text.

If preparing a course of Systems for engineers, we give them the usual texts which are long and boring in the Business Communication class, it would not be effective learning. The motivation which they have for their area might not be carried over to the Business Communication class. So this text does not serve their learning needs. It would be appropriate to look for texts which are interesting and humorous, in order to generate motivation to learn English, for example, James B. Herbolich's box kite project (1979), in which Engineering students at a Kuwaiti university had to make a box kite and then to write a manual for constructing it. It is interesting to consider how this activity reflects the target situation needs and how far the needs of the learning situation. The Herbolich's project reminds us that learners are people. They might be learning about machines but they are not word crunching machines which too many approaches to ESP seem to imply.

Topic- 028: Necessities, Lacks, Wants

A needs analysis has to see what learners need to use in practical life, e.g. Pedagogical needs, communication needs, and academic needs. Targeted needs are an important "umbrella term" used for a number of distinctions, in the target situation in terms of Necessities, Lacks and Wants.

a. Necessities: We call 'necessities' the type of need determined by the demands of the target situation. Necessities are needs determined by the target situation, what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation, e.g. a business person may need to understand business letters to communicate effectively at sales conferences, to get the necessary information from sales catalogues and so on. S/he will also need to know the linguistic features – discoursal, functional, structural, and lexical – which are commonly used in the situations identified. To get this information is easy, i.e., by observing these situations.

b. Lacks: You also need to know what the learner knows already, so that you can then decide which of the necessities the learner lacks. One target need would be to read texts in a particular subject area. Whether or not the learners need instruction in this will depend on how they can do it already. The target proficiency in other words needs to be matched against the existing proficiency of the learners. The gap between the two can be referred to as the learner's *lacks*.

c. Wants: So far we have looked at target needs objectively with no active role by the learners. But learners too have a view of what their needs are - their *wants*. We have stressed that it is the awareness of the need that characterizes the ESP situation. Awareness is a matter of individual perception. Leaners may have a clear idea about the 'necessities' of the target situation; they will certainly have a view as to what they *want*. It is quite possible that the learners' views will conflict with the perception of other interested parties: course designers, sponsors, and teachers.

So in any course the need is what Hutchinson says: to give what the learner lacks. One should also know what the learner knows already so that what he/she lacks can be determined. The gap between the target proficiency and existing proficiency is called the learners' "lack". A main part of a communication needs analysis is finding out how good the learners' language use is, what is their current communicative competence? Using of placement tests which have validity, face validity, authenticity, reliable, is important. Wants are learners own view of what they "want" from the course, which might be in conflict with the course and the instructor's perceptions of learners' necessities and lacks.

Topic- 029: Analyzing Learning Needs

Learning needs can be analyzed by using different tools to collect a series of snapshots which allow them to compare a target situation with the current situation, thus leading to a focused course. After gathering information through forms, questionnaires, interviews, observation tests etc. the teacher has to analyze learners' needs. The data acquired does not produce a sharply defined list of things to do, so it becomes more difficult as the course progresses. A needs analysis provides a series of snapshots which contribute to our understanding. It differentiates a General English course from ESP course and provides a justification for what happens during the course. It also provides provision for modifying the course as it progresses, and can be used for subsequent courses.

Analyzing learning needs includes looking at the learners' profile. Where will the Business English course take place and when will the course take place, are also part of analyzing needs. Analyzing learning needs includes looking into learners' purpose in taking this course. Is it to enter a job or for higher education? How do learners actually learn and what are the resources which are available to the teacher and learners to achieve success in the course?

Topic- 030: Uniqueness of Learning Situation

A needs analysis is unique to a specific training situation. There is no single best way to do it, no hard and fast rules. It entails exercising judgment and finding compromises to make the best use of resources in a particular teaching context. It is about working with learners to decide on the best way forward. At the end of all this effort, it is still inevitably vague in parts. This vagueness can be a problem with a sponsor or learner who is paying for something well defined, and is getting something that looks a little bit rough around the edges. A teacher working with companies must be aware of this, and must be able to produce a needs analysis which is businesslike and efficient, while at the same time being realistic and not making promises that cannot be met, particularly regarding what language teaching is and what it can achieve. Tied to this is the problem of using ELT jargon; part of our job as teachers is to make sure that we speak the same language as those paying for the training (sponsors). Learners and sponsors may have other views of what the teacher's 'role' is, for example, or what the word 'grammar' means. Conflict can be avoided by regular consultation, clarification, and negotiation.

Sometimes it is a problem for the teacher to satisfy the administration and company. So he/she has to make it business like and efficient, while at the same time remaining realistic and not making any promises that cannot be met, particularly what language teaching is and what it can achieve. Finding out the needs also depends on the class type. It might be an individual course, an open group (more or less homogeneous): or an open group (a public group, which draws its participants from a wide audience). Easier to find needs of the first two groups while more difficult with the third group.

Ethical questions include confidentiality, consent, and effect on careers. During a needs analysis teachers gain access to some often quite private or sensitive information, which might need to be handled with care. Indeed, business English teachers are often required by their customers to sign some sort of confidentiality agreement, and teaching institutions may be subject to regulatory constraints on how they manage information (such as Data Protection Acts and privacy laws). There may also be ethical questions to consider. Is all the information gathered really necessary? Who has access to the information? What will the department head be told about their employee? And was the employee made aware of this at the time the data was collected? Is the teacher competent enough to use this information in order to make decisions which could affect people's careers?

The needs analysis has to be flexible and ongoing. The components of the needs analysis can be seen as a cyclic fashion informing the whole. A needs analysis in its most basic form is essentially a blend of information-gathering activities which use a variety of different perspectives. However, simply collecting data is not enough - it is in the interpretation and use of this data where the needs analysis really makes its power felt.

Lesson 06

NEEDS ANALYSIS-II

Topic - 031: Communication Needs

Before we start teaching a course there is certain information which we need to have in the shape of needs analysis which includes communication needs, business needs and pedagogical needs of learners and teachers. Information is of two types. First: Target situation and types of discourse. Second: Current competence – to find the gap – on which depends the syllabus objectives.

Different types of communication situations give rise to different types of communication needs. A modern organization uses a range of communication channels - traditional like letters and reports and the telephone as well as modern like the internet, intranet, fax, instant messages etc.

To analyze comm [illegible] about what the learners of the course will need to do in English. For example, learners working in a business organization may need to be able to use the telephone with English- speaking clients, or they may need to travel to other countries in order to sell their product. Students in a BE course would need to be able to write assignments in their core courses area. Students engaged in research would need writing skills to write their dissertation.

Needs analysis also aims to find out the different areas and styles of discourse that learners might engage in. This will not only give a better idea about the target situation, but will also address the teacher's own need to understand what the learners actually do with the language. Communicative competence has several layers, of which language is only one.

A variety of tools can be used, including questionnaires, interviews, and observation. Many schools provide teachers forms and charts to carry out needs analysis. Commercially available tests are also used to carry out needs analysis. Charts are useful because they allow teachers to compare their subjects' current communicative ability and target needs, and thus find the gap. They also help in placing learners in the most appropriate group. Advantages can be that such materials can be turned out from photocopier at a short notice and they give a useful insight into learners' communicative needs. They provide a snapshot which can build a composite picture of learners' current needs. However, a possible disadvantage is that they are in the target language, which is the target language they are intending to learn, so the teacher might not get an accurate or clear picture of learners' needs as might have been gathered if the chart/questionnaire were in their own language. However, such questionnaires can be translated and adapted to suit a specific teaching context.

Relatively brief, standardized forms such as those discussed might be useful to observe students' needs but they are not sufficient to give the whole picture about learners' needs. Further details and information is sought through observation and interviews during lessons. If the teacher can get direct access to the workplace or a class in progress, it is very useful to identify the gaps and needs. However, the observation is not very effective to administer which needs careful planning. However, it is not very useful as people do not talk, problem of coordination, lack of written materials, and issues of confidentiality exist. In face-to-face interaction or while observing a meeting, teachers can seek answers to previously thought out questions.

Topic - 032: Main Priorities

The other main part of a communication needs analysis is finding out the current communicative competence of learners. One common tool for this is a placement test, which is a test designed to provide a comparison with other learners (or with known standards or benchmarks) so that learners can be placed with others having similar needs and ability. Characteristics of a placement test are:

Validity: in that it should test what it is designed to test.

Face validity: Face validity is to be credible to the learner, if we give a grammar test to a learner who is interested to improve presentation skills, the prospective learner may start to question our judgment.

Authenticity: Tied with this is the question of authenticity, that the test should reflect the target language, and the way it is used (this is why a placement test should, ideally, follow the target situation analysis).

Reliability: It should be reliable so that if different testers do the same test, the result should be the same; likewise if the learner took the test two days later, they should get the same result.

Besides suiting the requirements of the learners' specific situation, other characteristics are that should be quick, and easy to administer. International tests are available for purchase and on the internet. Disadvantage is that they are tied to using particular course book or doing a particular course (they check the point at which the person can join the course). Others test with reference to guidelines and standards, such as the standards provided by the CEF (Common European Framework) or ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages). These tests are often adequate for assessing receptive language skills such as listening and reading, and can be used to get a rough idea of a level, but will not test people for specific job requirements. It is arguable how well they test productive skills. Most placement tests ignore intercultural competence completely.

Task-based assessment are useful in this regard, as use knowledge gained from the target needs analysis so that a task can be designed which reflects the real-life situation. For example, if business English learners are expected to give presentations at their job places, they can be asked to give one. It will normally be necessary to produce a list of points which need to be looked at during the assessment. Depending on the level and the language competence of the interviewer and interviewee, such an interview can be in English or another language, or a mixture of both.

Diagnostic tests are used where the intention is to diagnose any weaknesses. Sometimes, they may be specifically drawn up for the company or organization involved. The results can be checked against a list of proficiency or can-do statements, such as those used by the CEF or ACTFL. Such tests are available to test the proficient, independent and basic user. They allow teachers to compare their subjects' current communicative ability, target needs, and find the gap, to help in placing learners in the most appropriate group.

Topic- 033: Pedagogical Needs

Pedagogical needs, which exist as a result of the teaching situation based on three main aspects. These are teacher's needs, needs of learning situation or the learning environment and learning needs or learning styles of learners.

Teacher's Needs: What happens in the classroom is influenced to a very great extent by the trainer's own style, experience, and needs. An important part of a needs analysis depends on teachers' basic assumptions about teaching and learning. The BE teacher is basically a language expert, not a specialist in the core area, having experience in teaching general English. When teaching business English, the teacher has to adapt his/her learning style, and use strategies which can be passed on to learners. Being a reflective practitioner and having self-knowledge about own learning style is important. Teachers' role can be of trainer, coach and consultant.

A means analysis is a description of the training environment: what is available in terms of equipment, materials, facilities, and time. Means analysis normally produces lists which have an important bearing on the cost of the course and distribution of responsibilities. It entails looking at matters of coordination, availability, timings and preparation. Means analysis involves reflecting on key issues and personal/professional targets along the cline and methods for achieving them. Needs analysis is about making ongoing evaluations.

Topic- 034: Language Styles

Learning success depends on a number of factors. There are a number of different ways to look at learning styles. One is based on the findings of research into brain function, that the right and left sides of the brain play different roles in how we process information. Depending on which side of their brain is dominant, there are the 'left-brain' learners who tend to analyze, and to be logical and objective. They may prefer traditional lectures, reading, and clearly structured classroom activities and 'Right-brain' learners tend to be more impulsive and informal, and may appreciate the use of graphics and role-play activities to enhance their learning.

Learning styles are related to NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming), which is a collection of techniques, models, and theories based on how the mind works and how people behave and communicate. NLP has been useful to some business English teachers because of the insight it gives into various communication skills such as building rapport, non-verbal communication, active listening, and so on, but it can also help our learners understand how they perceive the world, and what affects that perception.

Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory provides another way to compare learners' learning needs, suggesting eight different types of intelligence: Bodily-Kina-esthetic, Intrapersonal, Sensitive
Interpersonal, Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Visual-Spatial, and Naturalist.
Sensitive to others Ability to use language Sensitive to shapes colors

Teachers can look at their learners in terms of these intelligences, and draw conclusions as to what learning styles and strategies might be most suitable. Of course, trainers will develop their understanding as the course progresses. So, for example, a learner who appears to function well in intrapersonal intelligence might benefit from activities which allow time for quiet self-study, and a person who is strong in logical-mathematical intelligence might benefit from activities which analyze language structures. The trainer does need to be sensitive to the fact that learners have different needs, and that something can be done about it.

Learning styles are also influenced by the culture of the learners. In many Asian contexts, for example, the teacher is seen as an expert, whose job is to tell students what to do or what 'the right answer' is. This can cause problems when a teacher trained and experienced in Western learning environments sees his or her role as a facilitator, encouraging learners' autonomy, whereas the learners expect something completely different.

Topic- 035: Business Needs

Understanding business needs is of critical importance for a BE teacher. A provider of language training must consider the needs of the sponsor, who may be a company, or a head of department, or the HR (Human Resources) manager. All of these have certain perspectives on what the learners will need to cover on a course. It is important to make it clear to sponsors and heads that their needs are recognized and will be addressed, while remaining realistic about what is promised. Businesses are interested in getting something worthwhile for their money. A company pays for training or an institution hires a teacher because it feels that the investment will lead to some sort of profit, be it more motivated workers, more effective negotiators, better presenters, managers, or high achieving students.

One way for the teacher is to understand business needs and learn about the company. This means doing some research. Ideally, this is done before starting to meet people. Corporate clients are favorably impressed if the trainer or language school they are dealing with knows something about the company's product, the market, and its size. With the internet, this is relatively easy to do but there are also limitations. Reading an annual report will give one perspective, but such documents are designed to tempt investors. Websites which are open to the public may not have all the details a teacher needs. At this stage, some basic information is needed, so that when we enter the company and start talking to people, we can demonstrate our professionalism and ask the right questions.

Business English teachers needed to understand the various business functions of those involved. The perspective of the engineering department will be very different from that of people in the financial department. Product information is also important. The engineers who build mobile phones will have a very different perspective from the one we may have as a user. They will be interested in materials, technical specifications, and so on. The financial people will be more interested in the last auditors' report, and next week's balance sheet.

Company's hierarchy is important to be understood and the level of learners in the company hierarchy is also relevant. A high-level manager in a multinational corporation will not have the same needs as a person on the shop floor, even if they both have the same marks in a language placement test. The high level manager needs would be perhaps to polish his presentation skills, and he/she might be in apposition to dictate their needs, while the shop-floor person might need to have sales needs. Stakeholders are the people who have some sort of stake or interest in the English training, and could include learners, the sponsors, the HR department, the head of departments whose employees the trainer will be working with. A key stakeholder will be the person who triggered the course in the first place. . The teacher will want to discuss reasons and possible outcomes for the innovation in as much depth as possible. These meetings are also a chance to fill in the gaps in knowledge about the company, and as pointers for further research. Teachers will also use these meetings to find out exactly what the company is expecting them to provide.

Understanding the business situation where the learner will be using the language is also important, i.e. the target situation. Gathering information is not always easy. There may be issues of confidentiality, and it might be that people simply do not want the teacher present when they are meeting customers. Work shadowing is one way to get around this problem, and is an excellent tool for getting to understand a company's and/or learner's needs. Here the teacher simply stays with a person for an agreed length of time, and observes everything that person does. A variation is to include teaching and feedback at opportune moments.

Topic- 036: Main Priorities

Main priorities in a practical needs analysis, showing how the various interrelated factors have been considering can be seen in some examples, which show that a target situation analysis was carried out, considering communication needs in terms of learners areas and discourse and a means analysis, taking into account facilities as well as placement of learners looking at the level of learners, class size and location.

Example 1 shows notes written, after an initial meetings, by a business English teacher who is about to start her first course with pre-experienced students in a university. This teacher has made an excellent start, but will probably prefer to wait until she meets the students before she can design the course in any great detail. During this first lesson, she will want to have activities which allow her to assess the students' spoken interaction, as well as some sort of questionnaire which will tell her more about the students' own perspectives. She will want to negotiate and alter the needs as the course progresses. She has used interviews with the dean, and students, covered the target situation analysis (where the students will be using the target language according to their core areas i.e. finance, production, sales, marketing) and the discourse they will face at the workplace (presentations, analyzing information, attending meetings etc.).

When the decision maker about the course design is the sponsor as well, he/she is very clear about needs of learners. For example, a copy of a report is submitted by a freelance teacher for a language school to a company. In this case, the sponsors already have firm ideas about what they want the course to look like. Unlike the previous two examples, this somewhat formal report has been written so that someone else can take over the running of the course. Some of the key course design decisions already appear to have been made, which partly reflect the priorities and conditions laid down by the sponsor, Mr Lambada. This report illustrates once again the difficulty of making a clear divide between information gathering, and course design: in practice, the two are often inextricably linked.

Needs analysis should not be seen as an entirely objective procedure, as Hyland reminds us, 'Needs analysis is like any other classroom practice in that it involves decisions based on teachers' interests, values, and beliefs about teaching, learning and language.' Sothe needs analysis is preparatory and ongoing. It is the foundation of any business English course. It considers different tools that teachers can use to collect a series of snapshots, which allow them to compare a target situation with a current situation, thus leading to a focused course.

Lesson 07

DESIGNING A COURSE-I

Topic- 037: Aims

Designing a Business English course is a matter of making a series of decisions based on information gathered during a needs analysis about learners' communication, business and pedagogical needs. The next step is to interpret that data, design a course program and choose appropriate materials. A needs analysis has a direct influence on course design – the development of syllabus, materials, methodology and evaluation. A useful place to start is to decide on the course aims and objectives: what we (and others) want out of the course.

Course design is the process through which the raw data about a learning need is interpreted in order to produce a series of teaching learning experiences, aiming to lead the students to a particular state of knowledge. Care is needed as there is no one-to-one transfer from needs analysis to course design as there is conflict between learner needs and learner wants. There are external constraints (like classroom facilities/time) that will restrict what is happening.

Aims for a Business English course are general statements about why the course is happening. What are the overall aims which the course aims to achieve? A certain degree of specificity is required in designing a BE course, therefore pedagogically it comes under the umbrella of ESP. Related to this specificity is the choice of the content, the language to be used and taught, and the training style. Content, (which has to be related to the area) Language (discourse used in the area), communication (effective as per requirement of workplace) as well as the training style will depend on the initial needs analysis Aims of a course depend on a large degree to the approach which is taken for a course design. Various approaches have been used to design courses. The language centered course design (most familiar to teachers, simplest) draws a direct connection between needs analysis of the target situation and course contents. The learner is used as a means to identify the target situation. Instead of teaching the whole area as in a general English course, only the restricted area is taught and the learner has no further role to play. It seems logical as it aims to start with the learner's needs, proceeds through various stages of analysis to syllabus, to materials and then evaluation.

However, it covers only a restricted area of language to be taught to learners unlike in GE. Learners' needs are not catered at all. It seems learner–centered but actually after using the learner to identify the target area, it ignores the learner. It fails to recognize that learners are people and that learning is not a systematic process, causing the belief that learning itself is systematic. Learning is internally-generated and not an externally–imposed system. Analysis and presentation of language data items in a systematic manner will not result in a systematic learning. It takes a rigid and inflexible view of the procedure of a course design and doesn't allow any reconsidering along the course and the teacher is locked into a relentless process. Any procedure should have flexibility, feedback channels and error tolerance. Another thing which is important in teaching is that material should be interesting, something which is not always met in a language centered course design. Thus language centered needs analysis is only at the surface level - it is in fact a learner-restricted approach.

Skills centered course design aims to help learners to develop skills and strategies which will continue to develop after the course (the basic hypothesis is that underlying any language behavior are certain skills and strategies which the learner uses to produce or comprehend certain behavior), to make learners better processors of linguistic information, not to provide a corpus of linguistic knowledge. It views language in terms of how the learners' mind processes it, rather than an entity in itself. It sees the learner as a 'user' of language rather than a 'learner' of the language, and states its 'objectives' in general terms so that learners learn at least something.

The Learner Centered approach sees learning as totally dependent on the learner. Learning is seen as an internal process, with learners' previous knowledge and motivation playing a dominant role. Learning should be seen in the context in which it takes place. This approach sees learning as totally determined by the learner. However, instead of learner centered approach, a "Learning centered approach" is more useful as it seeks to maximize the potential of the learning situation. The learner is not the only factor in the learning situation. It holds the nature of the target situation, will determine the course design.

<u>Topic- 038: Setting Objectives</u>

Objectives are more specific than aims, break up the aim into smaller elements of learning so that the outcomes are better understood, are written in precise terms. Stakeholders, sponsor of a course, will want to look at these objectives too, and may assist in writing them. There are various ways in which objectives can be made. Objectives can be made for individuals/groups, for low/high level learners as: for different areas like, 'effective professional communication for managers'.

Setting objectives for an individual course is an ideal situation for a tailor-made course. Individual's needs provide the trainee the opportunity to have a customized program and allow the teacher to go at his/her own pace, time, content and approach.

For 'Business Communication in English' for open group course or a *public group*, participants come from a wide audience and from a wide range of areas. In such a general BE course or executive English course participants will come from perhaps, geographical, corporate and professional areas. The trainer needs to be careful to fulfill the diverse objectives of such a group and have them agree on the objectives.

Close group course should be more or less a homogenous group of learners. Learners may be from same company, same professional function, same department, easiest in terms of objectives. Objectives can be made for meeting skills/ negotiation skills, presentation skills, writing skills, telephoning etc.

Objectives are not written in stone to be slavishly followed. It is an ongoing, interactive process. A learning centered approach will allow the designer to add and amend the course at any stage. Reflective practice is particularly important. The teacher and trainer keeps on thinking about ways of improving practice and incorporating these into future objectives. To be negotiated in beginning and during the course, regular feedback sessions will bring out trainees' strengths and weaknesses.

Topic- 039: Smart Objectives

Many organizations are increasingly using the SMART and SMARTER acronym within goal setting and performance appraisal in management environments. The use of SMART objective is not limited to business and performance management, indeed SMART possibly started in the world of personal development. SMARTER is an acronym to help in the writing of objectives, which can be for managing performance or for developmental purposes. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound, to specify what they need to achieve, answering six questions: Who? What? Where? When? Which? Why?

A specific objective has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific objective you need to answer the six "W" questions: Who: Who is involved? What: What do I want to accomplish? Where: Identify a location. When: Establish a time frame. Which: Identify requirements and constraints. Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal. Instead of saying: "Awareness of …" it should be "Learners will be able to speak about the ..." Rules of conciseness and correctness should be applied.

Measureable objectives measure whether objectives are met or not. They establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each objective you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the feeling of achievement that drives you on to continued effort required to reach your objective. To determine if your objective is measurable, ask questions such *how much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?* If the objective is measurable, it means that the measurement source is identified and we are able to track the actions as we progress towards the objective. Measurement is the standard used for comparison. Measurements (and the visible progress) go a long way to help us to know when we have achieved our objective.

Achievable objectives see whether set objectives are achievable and attainable in terms of abilities, realistic facilities and logistics. When you identify objectives that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. The objective needs to be attainable by you based on the skills you have and the constraints imposed.

Relevant objectives in terms of leading to the desired results and relate to needs analysis, what is their current communicative proficiency and what they should be at the end of the course. This means two things; that the goal or target being set with the individual is something they can actually impact upon or change and secondly it is also important to the organization, and is relevant to what the organization is trying to achieve. The manager has to decide these objectives by considering the wider picture.

Time-bound Objectives are concerned with timely completion: When do you want to achieve the set objectives? When will we accomplish/ complete this objective? In the objective somewhere, there has to be a date (Day/Month/Year) for when the task has to be started (if it's ongoing) and/or completed (if it's short term or project related). Time-bound means setting deadlines for the achievement of the objective. Deadlines need to be both achievable and realistic. If you don't set a time, you will reduce the motivation and urgency required to execute the tasks. Agreed time frames create the necessary urgency and prompts action.

Topic- 040: Teaching and Business Objectives

Teaching or training objectives, unlike performance objectives, do not normally specify what the learner will be able to do at the end of the course. They are designed to give the teacher useful guidelines, and they may use technical words which learners may not be familiar with. Students writing their own objectives can be discussed with teachers in terms of how relevant and achievable they are.

In practical terms, it is often difficult to describe objectives for language or business communication skills with the desired precision, and sometimes such skills are hard to quantify and measure. It is also important to remember that the business objective may be quite different. For negotiation training, for example, the real business objective may be to negotiate successfully, in order to maximize the company's profits in a new market (the aim). The outcome of the course can be seen in terms of:

- What has been learned (focusing on the learner)?
- Changes in the workplace or business results, resulting from the training (focusing on the business).

Practical constraints in making these objectives need to see whether they are achievable, as well as to keep in mind that people might have different objectives and how lack of attendance will affect the objectives.

Topic- 041: Performance (Behavioral) Objectives

There are different ways to express objectives, depending on the context. Most business English courses use performance (behavioral) objectives in terms of what the learner is expected to do, under what conditions, and to what level or standard. Such objectives use words like:

Will learn…

Will be able to…

Making objectives has to consider such questions as what learners would be able to do, how they would be able to perform, and at what level. It is important to know the current performance of learners. Assessing entry levels are important for two reasons. First it is the mostly, widely asked question by learners - How is my English? Secondly assessing a trainee's entry level is a prerequisite for course design. In other words, course objectives minus current ability should indicate/be equal to the course outline. It helps in designing the course, as course objectives minus current ability means course outline.

However, it is difficult to find a satisfactory assessment method to assess competence, as assessment is an area fraught with difficulties. There are no agreed criteria to scientifically assess what we teach. Our aim is to assess competence based around accuracy of language knowledge, fluency and effectiveness of communication). Accuracy can be tested objectively, whereas in fluency and effectiveness assessment, we rely on our subjective judgment. All evaluation must keep a balance between objectivity and subjectivity. Assessment at the entry level can be done through formal tests. Correct use of language, through listening and reading comprehension, writing skills, controlled or semi-controlled speaking can be used.

Topic- 042: Program Outline and Trainee Briefing

Just as the data gathered at the stage of needs analysis provides an input for setting the course objectives, the course objectives are the starting point for agreeing on the course outline. There is need to agree on the length of time to be allocated for each element, the type of input and output for each element as identified in the objectives, ways of working with the group, including the type of approach to be used by the teacher. All of these are not fixed and can be reconsidered or negotiated as the course proceeds and the teacher becomes more aware of learner's needs and styles of learning.

Length of time for each objective depends on individual courses where the trainer can adapt according to the wishes of the learner. For group courses, some kind of consensus has to be reached between the participants. Also the trainer has to keep in mind how much time is to be devoted to each element. Input and Output: Input refers to the materials to be used in the class. These can be raw materials, such as print, video, audio not developed for the course or published material specifically developed for the BE classroom. Output refers to the themes and activities used in the class for communication practice.

Provision of Materials: Trainees may have been asked to bring material from their own areas which can be used for lesson development and practice. On the other hand, they may rely on the trainer to provide material form the organization's resources whether raw or published.

Ways of working: Refers to the role of trainer and trainees, how will they work together to achieve their objectives. This includes trainees' expectations from the course and the trainer's expectation of the trainees, in terms of who will be responsible for what in the classroom, for preparing inputs/outputs, what type of preparation is expected outside the class, preparation/homework.

Trainee briefing: Developing competence in a foreign language requires effort, commitment and discipline. All language learners want to improve their competence in the foreign language – in terms of accuracy, fluency and appropriacy or a combination of them. However, many would have been out of the language learning environment and despite having clear objectives, would not have reflected on the procedures needed to achieve them. It is useful to allocate some time to stress the importance of study and practice to achieve competence.

Lesson 08

DESIGNING A COURSE-II

Topic- 043: Syllabus Design

Once the aims and objectives are established, the next step is to define a learning plan or a course syllabus. A syllabus is a document which says what should and will be learnt. Once we know what we want the course to achieve, we can move on to thinking about the syllabus. Why do we need a syllabus? One view says that the disadvantage of a syllabus is that it curbs the creativity of teachers and students. The disadvantages outweigh the advantages: some important content might be left, may result in significant gaps, let alone the prohibitive amount of work for the teacher.

Language is complex, we need to break it down into manageable units. In deciding the constituent parts of language, a syllabus provides a practical division of language, assessment, and activities. Having a syllabus gives confidence to teachers and learners by making the language learning task appear manageable. It also has a cosmetic role (students/sponsors want some reassurance that their investment of time and money will be worthwhile), showing that some effort has gone into its making. This is especially true of commercial sponsors.

A syllabus provides a criterion for material selection, defining the kinds of texts to look for and the type of materials to develop. Success or failure to achieve the state of knowledge can be tested. A syllabus provides a visible basis for testing. It gives a road map to the teachers and students - a visible goal and the means to achieve it. Uniformity is an essential condition for any institutionalized activity such as education and a syllabus is one way in which this standardization is achieved or at least attempted.

It is a list which specifies all the things that are to be taught in the course, for which the course was designed, e.g. whether it is designed for beginner levels, for 2nd semester students, for IT students and so on. It is comprehensive, covering these points, aims, objectives, texts, activities, evaluation methods. The actual contents may be content items (words, structures) or process items (methods, tasks).

It is an ordered document, having items that are easier and essential in the beginning and difficult and less important later, or according to need. It has explicit objectives stated usually at the beginning, on the basis of which the components are selected and ordered.

Another characteristic is that it is a public document, and is available for scrutiny to teachers, administration, parents, and other stakeholders. The composers of the document are answerable to the target audience for the quality of the document.

Teachers should be aware that adult learners want their learning to be relevant to them, pay attention to things that will benefit them, learn best when they know why they should learn, and find it easier to learn when you start with what they know before moving to the unknown and when you move from simple to complex. As a result, the syllabus is usually negotiated with the students and the organization. By discussing these issues with them, the main priorities can be decided together, you can identify what activities could be done to foster learner autonomy, you can agree on how progress 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 objectives. It lists what is to be covered during the course and states an order.

The syllabus can be re-negotiated at any time. Sometimes, in the middle of a course, a student asks for help because he/she needs to prepare a presentation for an unexpected trip. It usually is a very dynamic syllabus and you need to be flexible enough to adapt to new and changeable circumstances.

Topic- 044: Syllabus Components

Business English students need to communicate within a certain context, so the syllabus must reflect the discourse they are confronted within their workplace. For efficiency, teachers must ensure that the exposure to useful language is not random. So, the course designer's job includes finding the most common language forms that will help the learner to communicate and planning when and how the learner will encounter them. Students in the corporate finance field and usually have to present figures and results in English, so including the following components in the syllabus, are important:

- Dealing with numbers and figures
- Describing trends
- Corporate finance vocabulary
- Understanding and producing financial reports
- Giving presentations

Content items are words, structures, topics and process items like tasks, methods. Syllabus components should reflect topics, themes, situations and define types of assessments, and design learning activities and tasks. The syllabus should provide contact information to the instructor, list office hours (virtual office hours if possible, which includes tome spend in marking), and state the current academic term. It should include the authors and titles of prescribed books, list all assignments, quizzes exams, include course schedule, departmental requirements. The learning activities and tasks which help learners develop their communicative competence – linguistic, socio-cultural and pragmatic.

Those language items are selected which the learner needs to know and concentrate on the content and the meaning of the interactions. A syllabus can be organized in various ways: According to topic, task or around activities, such as presentations, negotiations and telephoning.

Topic- 045: What is to be Covered and in what Order

The course objectives point to what we want the course to achieve. Once we know what we want to achieve, we can move on to thinking about the syllabus. A syllabus is, essentially, a list of what is to be covered and in what order. The course should focus on the language needed. In Business English teaching the focus should be on using language to perform tasks, not just to talk about it. Most Business English learners needed to be able to communicate within a certain context, so the syllabus must reflect the discourse that the learner will face in the workplace.

The language needs to be learnable, and according to the level of the learners. Learning must be achievable in the time provided, e.g. it is unrealistic to suggest that a complete beginner will be able to take part in complex negotiations after a week's teaching.

The syllabus provides an ordered structure for what is to be covered. It places the selected language into orderly, manageable chunks, with both the content and the order matched to the learners and their situation.

Topic- 046: Using a Grid

A useful technique is to use a grid or framework in making a syllabus. A grid or framework sets out the aims and objectives, followed by all the elements that we believe are necessary for someone to be able to meet those objectives. The main components of this framework are based on the competencies identified as: Linguistic competence (Language based)**,** Discourse competence (identification of possible discourse learners will encounter, specialist knowledge) and Intercultural competence (communication needs in international business/educational environment).

The syllabus will take into account not only what is to be learnt but how it is to be learnt and how it will be assessed in terms of achieving course objectives, using the guidelines offered by communicative language teaching and the insights gained through the needs analysis. Grids normally consist of a combination of the following components, sometimes called threads, because they weave through the course and could be seen as holding it together:

- Grammar (e.g. tenses, word order, verb patterns, relative clauses)
- Lexis (e.g. vocabulary, idioms, expressions, collocations)
- Pronunciation (e.g. intonation, rhythm, stress, chunking)
- Functions (e.g. complaining, agreeing, persuading, explaining)
- Business skills (e.g. presenting, negotiating, telephoning, socializing)
- Topics (e.g. finance, marketing, production, management)
- Learning strategies (e.g. learning styles, recording vocabulary, preparing for a test)
- Situations (e.g. assisting visitors, checking into a hotel, running a meeting)
- Texts (e.g. examples of spoken or written discourse)
- Language skills (e.g. reading, writing, listening, speaking)
- Intercultural skills (defining, comparing culture)
- Storyline approach (materials have characters for the storyline)
- Tasks (learners use language to do something and achieve an outcome

At the end, there is a column for methodology and timings.

Topic- 047: Organizing the Syllabus, Familiarity and Need

Syllabus components can be organized in various ways, from simpler to more complex, grammar tense, simpler starter sentences, sign and sign posting in presentations.

Determining the order of the syllabus can be done in different ways. A common way is to put the simple things first. For example, a grammar tense which appears straightforward (e.g. present simple) may be taught before a concept that appears to be more complex (e.g. modal verbs). Standard phrases for starting a telephone conversation are taught and practiced before moving on to more complicated role-plays involving their use in a real phone call. Signposting language in presentations is taught before asking learners to put an introduction together. Further practice on introductions might be done before asking learners to give a presentation.

Familiarity might also be a guideline. It might make sense for learners to cover familiar situations or topics before unfamiliar ones. For example, it is probably easier for a learner to give a presentation on his or her own job than on something which might be less familiar (or perhaps conceptually more challenging), such as business ethics or politics

The syllabus can be organized according to learners' needs. If the course is going to take several months, it might be wise to cover areas of a higher priority first, e.g. receptionists might benefit from telephone training-before letter-writing skills because this need is perceived to be more immediate.

Another reason for organizing syllabuses in a certain way is that sometimes certain language items seem to hang naturally with specific topics or functions - so conditionals are often coupled with negotiations, or talking about the future is coupled with making arrangements. The need for variety and balance in teaching might also influence what activities are chosen.

Finally, it is useful if the syllabus can be divided into teaching blocks which have their own aims or objectives, and which can fit logically into the time available. Often such blocks have a standard format and incorporate different types of activities which allow flexibility and change of pace in order to meet the needs of a particular group.

The syllabus can also be organized into units. In course books, the syllabus is organized into blocks often called units, each of which has a logical or thematic coherence, even if the unit is not necessary to be completed in one lesson. One unit may lead on to the next, or there may be flexibility with the order in which they are used, but there is normally some continuity between units. Modules, in contrast, are normally independent blocks which can be put together in various ways to create a course; many schools and teachers have ready-to-go modules on specific communication skills. The teacher simply has to select the relevant modules for a particular group.

Topic- 048: Sample Course Outlines

Course outlines depend on the type of courses and organization of the course. Register analysis can be carried out to find language forms which students would meet. Corpora of relevant vocabulary can also be used. Types of syllabi could be grammatical, lexical, grammatical/lexical, situational, topic based, functional/notional, and mixed or multi strand, procedural, process. Organization is by:

- Topic: (texts would be taken from the learners' specialist area – Biology texts for Biology students)
- Related area: (discourse related to that professional and business area)
- Vocabulary: (particular idioms, registers, specialist terms
- Grammatical structures: (some structures are used more in some fields e.g. (Scientific texts use compound nouns, passives, conditionals, modal verbs, etc.
- Activities

Structural organization:

- Scenario
- Typical interactions (structures used in them)
- Grammatical structure

Organized around skills and strategies:

- To improve skills and activate learners' preferred strategies
- Performance (Using job ads, examining job needs, personal evaluation)

Sample course outline is based on a class from a commercially available book called: "In-company Intermediate" by Mark Powell. Students will use English at present and in future. The focus is on texts (spoken and written) which provide ample opportunity for learners to focus on the types of discourses and communication skills they will need. Topics are meeting skills, negotiation, socializing networking in conferences. The course gives learners a chance to focus on specific language items, in this case grammar and lexis. The more authentic material would be needed for this.

Steps for designing a course of Business English helps your students bridge the English skills gap.

- Identify students' needs.
- Define program goals and objectives of the instruction.
- Syllabus design.
- Identify topics, themes, situations.
- Design learning activities and tasks.
- Define types of assessments.
- Select suitable material.
- Course delivery.
- Program evaluation.

Lesson 09

DESIGNING A COURSE-III

Topic- 049: Negotiating the Syllabus

The syllabus can be changed during the course. With most classes, often the best way to identify what should be included in a course is for the teacher to sit down with the learners (and other stakeholders) and negotiate the syllabus. This has the major advantage that the learners are usually much more motivated because they have helped design what is to be done. The syllabus can be negotiated at any time - indeed, the teacher and learners can re-negotiate as the course progresses. Sometimes, there are practical issues which influence what actually happens, such as availability of video equipment, or the teacher's own expertise and experience. Sometimes, it may be necessary for the teacher to guide the discussions so that the end result is achievable, or meets a sponsor's aims.

Generating the Syllabus through Learners: Many activities can be devised for negotiating the syllabus can be used on day one of a course, for example the following: What the group wants - the teacher gives learners a sheet. They fill in the first two questions on their own, and then pass the sheets round so that everyone can see what their colleagues want and do not want and can understand that different people want different things. The sheets are then used as a basis for the third question, the answer to which is, in effect, the syllabus and which will have to be some amalgam of the differing priorities that have surfaced. The learners come to know that what happens is actually a compromise. Getting them to sign at the bottom of the page is a useful way to remind them that they are part of the success of the course. These sheets can be used to review the course later:

- What I want from this course
- What I don't want from this course
- What the group wants from this course
- Name:..................
- Date:.....................
- Signature:...........................

Negotiating priorities - this time, the aim is to guide learners towards a possible syllabus by suggesting possible options. A variation on this is to give learners different options during the course: do they want to do this or that next week? Teachers might allow learners to develop their own tasks and activities. For example, if the course is covering presentation skills, the learners could make decisions about the topics of their own presentations, or the length, or the criteria for success. Such an approach emphasizes the need for consensus and compromise, which are important elements in group work.

Topic- 050: Using Learner's Input

Since the learners are the main stakeholders in the process, their input is crucial. It gives insight to the teacher about the pace of the course and course content. The teacher can give the class a questionnaire to fill questions about their own preferences, and then pass the sheets around so that everyone can see what their colleagues want and do not want and can understand that different people have different needs. This information is then used as the basis for a third question, the answer to which is in effect, the syllabus as generated by the group. It will be an amalgam of the different priorities that have surfaced. Generating the syllabus in this way brings home to the learners that what may happen is actually a compromise. Getting them to sign at the bottom of the page is a useful way to remind them that they are part of the success of the course. These sheets can be used to review the course later. Learners' priorities can change as the course progresses, especially in longer courses. They may come to know their strengths and weaknesses and needs. An in-service student can request to be given presentation practice as he might have to give one at his workplace. Similarly a student of the seventh or eighth semester who needs to write his final project would want a special space given to report writing skills. They are specialists in their area, though the teacher is the language specialist.

Topic- 051: Negotiating Priorities

Questionnaires can be used by the teacher to get suggestions of students to refine objectives. This time, the aim is to guide learners towards a possible syllabus by suggesting possible options. The teacher can ask what they want to do this week and the next week, what they want to do in the given week, how much time they want to spend on each module, or the criteria for success. Tasks and activities can also be chosen, e.g. the topics for their presentations. Such an approach emphasizes compromise and consensus which are important in group work.

Another way to negotiate the syllabus is to work on the existing objectives and refine them to suit the needs of a particular class. Content items can be changed, added or removed. A sample objectives document, based on pre-course discussions between employees of two companies, can be shared with students. They can look at the list which is a mixture of communication skills and specific content relevant only to the people concerned. The teacher can then raise questions to reconfirm this particular learner group's priorities, their needs of professional content and whether they want to add, remove or change any item.

Topic- 052: Using the Syllabus

The use of syllabus varies according to teaching context, country and institution. The human factor and individual characteristics are also factors as are resources, human and material, and the teaching approach. Where there are ample materials and resources to draw up a detailed syllabus, teachers may find it useful to work mainly from it as the basis of their teaching, using specific materials. In affluent settings, teachers may be allowed to complete freedom in designing their course program; in such cases the syllabus may be ignored or be non-existent. And teachers would have the freedom to draw their own new, independent program, based on their preferences and needs. With an experienced, competent and creative teacher and mature learners, such a program could be an exciting unique teaching/learning experience.

However, the disadvantages in most contexts outweigh the advantages. It means a prohibitive amount of work for the teacher. There might be some gaps in content. In a situation where the target language is not the second language (spoken outside the classroom) it may seriously impair learning. There is a lack of clear structure. Teachers and students both do not get a sense of progress, and evaluation of learning outcomes is difficult. Where only one book can be afforded by the students, it can act as the syllabus (particularly if recommended by the same authority which drew up the syllabus). In some contexts, even one book per student is an unknown luxury, then the teacher can base the course on the course-book or syllabus or a combination of the two. Here the syllabus is a source of information as well as reassurance for teachers who are not confident of their own experience and knowledge of the target language and situation.

Topic- 053: Managing the Logistics: Practical Considerations

Logistics of the learning environment also has a critical role to play, in that, learners and teachers all need to be aware of where they need to be, what they are to do, and have access to the resources they need in order to do it. Course design is not only about deciding what to include in the syllabus. There are many practical considerations which can influence what happens. A means analysis is a description of the training environment - what is available in terms of equipment, facilities and time, and perhaps more importantly, what is not? One significant aspect is what materials are available. Means analysis normally produces lists which have an important bearing on the cost of the course. For example, let us assume that the teacher has been asked to run a course on presentation skills for a company. The training is to take place in a hotel. Questions such as who is going to provide the camera and multimedia projectors, what materials to use, whose photocopying facilities to use, and so on, have a direct impact. Points that should be thought about during the means analysis are as follows:

- What facilities are available (e.g. rooms, seating, location, refreshments)?
- What equipment is available (e.g. board, flipchart, cameras, and projectors)?
- How much time is available to design the course and prepare materials?
- How much time is available for training?
- What is the availability of suitable materials?
- What time of the day will learners be available?

For most teachers in schools, such issues will probably be coordinated by administrative staff, but some teachers, particularly freelancers, will often be heavily involved in administration. Simple things like a broken monitor or shoddy materials, an electric socket which doesn't work can easily ruin a course, however well the syllabus has been thought out. Similarly, issues such as costs and budgets may have a significant influence on the course design; using an expensive 5-star hotel provides a very different learning experience to using a small classroom in the depths of a private language school or a spare conference room in company offices. Business English learners expect a high level of professionalism in the way a course is run, and such professionalism can and should be designed into the course.

One decision which needs to be made is whether the teaching is to be intensive or extensive. In practice, in the world of business English teaching, the terms seem to be used differently by different organizations. Intensive training can be anything from a few hours a day, for a few weeks, to ten days in a hotel, working all day. Intensive training is often used where time is short and where there are specific performance objectives to achieve. It tends to be much more focused than extensive training, and is often more efficient in its use of time (no need to warm learners up every 90 minutes, for example). For many learners, intensive training leads to noticeable improvement. Often intensive training goes under the name of workshops or seminars, which aim to focus on specific topics. The other key advantage is that attendance is not normally a problem. Once the learner is committed to the course, he or she tends to stay.

Extensive training normally refers to regular but short sessions, such as two 90-minute sessions per week. This is typical of some in-company training, but also for pre-experienced groups such as business studies students who are doing English as one part of a course of study. The advantage is that such classes cater for those learners who cannot find time to take an intensive course. The disadvantage is that attendance and motivation can be a problem. Many courses combine the two types, for example, learners may attend 90-minute extensive classes once a week throughout the year, but also have a three-day intensive session every three months.

A third variation is to have part, or the entire course delivered at a distance. This mixture of face-to-face (F2F) and distance learning is sometimes known as blended learning; particularly where one of the media used is electronic. Distance learning brings an additional facet to the already complex business of course design. For all courses there are practical, logistical issues which need to be addressed beforehand. In some schools and organizations these are not the teacher's responsibility, but in many business English teaching contexts the teacher is the only representative of the training provider on site, be it in-company, in a hotel, or in some other hired venue. Even in a school classroom, the teacher needs to be well prepared and it would be wise to check practical aspects of course delivery beforehand. Business English learners can be critical and demanding customers.

Topic- 054: Instructions: Course Title, Venue and Duration

Another issue involved in syllabus design is pre-course instructions. Good instructions serve the purpose of providing relevant information, but also help to ensure that the learner arrives in the class motivated and eager. It also reflects the effort spend in planning the course which shows the professionalism of the course designer and planner. Checklists can be shared with learners, showing the following:

1. 'Code of conduct'- should be discussed with learners, perhaps in the first contact class. Rules made by students have a greater chance to be observed. These should be negotiated with learners on first contact. It breaks the ice putting the students on a comfortable footing with the teacher and other participants.

2. The Training Room - Arranged optimally as teacher/students will be spending their time here. The teacher should check the layout beforehand, furniture in rows, U-shaped Small groups? To set up and test equipment: e.g. video camera, Slide projector, Whiteboard pens. Shoddy equipment, a broken monitor can easily ruin the success of the course. Environment matters a lot for the success of a course - heating, ventilation, light, noise. A course conducted in a posh hotel will provide a different kind of experience than one conducted in the depth of a private school or the spare conference room of an organization. For group work, e.g. negotiations, the availability of other areas, lounge area, foyer is another aspect for course success.

3. The Venue - although the training room is key, it is not the only place where teachers and learners will spend their time. The teacher should sure that appropriate care is taken with planning for free time (social event for newcomers to build group rapport and get relaxed). Finally the teacher should know who the relevant people of the organization are and where to find them in case of a problem

4. Contingency plans - should be thought of in case anything goes wrong, e.g. interruptions, distractions, materials, or guest speakers who fail to arrive, venue problems (double booked, dirty, inappropriate food), illness.

Lesson 10

SELECTING AND DEVELOPING MATERIALS-I

Topic- 055: Scope of Materials and Equipment

After analyzing and determining the needs of learners, setting the objectives of the course and developing the syllabus, the next step is to select and develop appropriate materials to teach. There is a wide range of materials available to teach business English. Its scope includes all the stimuli used to develop knowledge of Business and Management skills, language forms and skills in communication. The scope of the materials is wide, they can include inputs which stimulate the learners, facilitate the learning process, e.g. audio, video and written material on business topics, reference material to be studied and learnt, such as notes on language forms and communication techniques and practice material to check on the assimilation of new language knowledge or communication skills. Most of these materials will be stored by the trainee/student and rarely if ever looked at, once the course finishes. It is only the accumulated knowledge and skills which is the true legacy of the course. These materials are only a means to extend knowledge and skills.

Equipment is the techniques by which they can be activated. Two types of materials can be used - raw materials or authentic, e.g. newspapers, reports and published materials, e.g. course-books.

However, no materials are ideally suited for a learner group, so the teacher has to customize and modify. When using published materials, if they are part of a unit, then activities can be created according to learners' needs. Raw materials are challenging, need effort to check suitability to be usable for the class. Adaptation and customization is needed. In designing tasks, especially for lower level students, attention to language level' is required so as not to 'turn off' the students. The teacher has to balance suitability of raw and published materials in terms of:

- Relevance to learners' objectives
- Quality of materials as learning tools
- The time needs for customization and adaptation
- Cost (customization versus purchase of published material)

Features of Materials - suitability remains criteria, other factors like features of materials play a role in teachers selection. As related to the Syllabus, e.g. in grammatical syllabus, its linguistic units and choose materials for it. Similarly a Business English syllabus can be based on:

- Identification of the elements that constitute the scope of Business English
- Selection of materials that fit the syllabus template

Another approach sees classroom activities as the basis of material selection. The Approach driven syllabus tries to base material selection according to the specific learning objectives of learners. The medium of materials could be: print materials - newspapers, reports, audio/video materials and multi medium materials.

Equipment: The medium of materials could be audio which satisfies the above criteria, offers a wide range of choice in Business English courses and is cheap. Videos are also catching up with audio in popularity as they combine sound and picture, however are considered expensive ELT materials. The personal computer has revolutionized the way work is done. The telephone line has traditionally been used for distance learning. Video conferencing, email for feedback, Internet offers unlimited sources of topical and authentic material.

The teacher has to balance suitability of these for particular learning aims. Materials are only a means to extend knowledge and skills, and equipment are the technical means by which training materials can be activated. So the teacher has to balance their use according to their relevance, the time available, learners' needs, the cost involved and the teaching purpose.

Topic- 056: Ready-made Materials

The most common ready-made material is course books, which are popular all over the world. Course books are textbooks, of which the teacher and the students have copies, which are to be followed systematically as the basis for course design. Advantages of using course books are that they save teacher's work, the teacher doesn't have to choose the lesson, and the activities, the lesson plan can be followed as given in the particular unit. Course books provide a solid framework, which is particularly useful for less experienced teachers and those who are under pressure of time. Pedagogical decisions, such as course content and methodology, have been made. They look professional, which is important for BE learners. Many course books include comprehensive teacher's guides and resources, supplementary materials for the students, self-study materials, audio and video resources. They provide a window to the business world, particularly those for pre-experienced groups.

Disadvantages are that course books can get outdated easily. The culturally content might be inappropriate in certain contexts. They might be based on different assumptions about language learning. It is worth thinking about the different perspectives of those connected with course books, material produced in-company or indeed any mass-produced material.

Important factors for learners could include learners' specific requirements: Clear layout and structure, relevance, regular progress checks, revision opportunities, entertainment, self-study sections, reference sections, up-to-date content, and authenticity. Price can also be a factor.

Teachers' priorities could be the amount of guidance provided in a particular book, the extra activities, flexibility and ease of use. Other factors in selection of the course book could be that the units and modules are according to time needed/ available and fits in with their own understanding of language learning, that it is not too technically demanding in terms of the business world and that it has a comprehensive glossary explaining the terminology.

Publishers' priorities are to satisfy teachers and students and catering for the needs of a wide clientele. Innovative teachers might feel using a course book is too conservative to go with new methodologies. Companies might not want too daring approaches and will prefer safe, traditional methods.

Topic- 057: Authenticity: Real World/Teaching Purpose

A key issue when considering the choice of course book (or indeed any materials) is authenticity. Does the language in the course book come from the real world, or has it been specially generated or adapted for language teaching purposes? Were the materials designed specifically for teaching purposes or do they serve the communicative purpose in real life?

There are many advantages of using authentic materials – it brings the real world into the class and provides motivation to learners by making the task realistic and useful for their future workplace. Authenticity could be of content and activities. However, there is some controversy regarding authenticity is that how much of it is related to the profession? How much to language?

Authenticity of activities is related to professional work. A newspaper reading activity can be seen as not authentic as students normally don't read the newspaper for Business Studies, nevertheless this does have value. Similarly an activity based on answering a letter can be different from a real life task. When writing an answering letter as an activity how would students write it? Would it be the same way as they would in real life? Teachers' reaction to authentic activities: would they apply the same criteria as for artificial task?

Presentation or negotiation is the main criterion for business success. This should be treated in the same way as when doing linguistic activities. Would they be evaluated according to the use of appropriate linguistic use or for effective business communication, achieving the linguistic goal or the business goal?

Topic- 058: Tailor-made Material – Generating/Adapting

Sometimes institutions and teachers find it important to produce tailor-made material, designed to supplement the course book or the regular course. This could be done by the training department or the individual teacher. Experienced teachers can have a huge amount of material which they can adapt to suit learning needs/contexts. Some of this adaptation can be merely cosmetic to make it look custom-made. At other times it could be using the same material in another context.

Material used for an in-company course for a group of engineers in a multinational electrical engineering company based in France, of the production department. A KD router (a piece of electrical equipment) is a best-selling product can be used a group of property consultants based in Rome. Vocabulary, dates and place names can be adapted for learners of two different contexts.

Generating Materials: Even if the teacher can get hold of genuine documents, the chances are they will need adapting, either because they may not be at an appropriate level, or they may only contain one or two 'usable' items, or because they are only relevant to a few people in the class. Ploughing through an irrelevant document can be extremely tedious, and may alienate learners. Even though authentic materials have distinct advantages, the aim is to teach people how to communicate in English, and that aim is paramount.

The advantage to teachers of making their own materials is that these can be much more specific. Disadvantages are that it could be very time-consuming to prepare and special skills and experience are needed in materials writing, word-processing, graphic design, and the like. Materials are sometimes are so context-specific that they cannot be reused.

Preparatory Stage: Material adaptation at this stage has to focus on:

- Assessment of the learners' needs
- Deciding on priorities
- Identifying and analyzing language items
- Working out pedagogical approaches
- Deciding what sorts of activities to use
- Making decisions about layout
- Evaluating or piloting early or draft versions

In practice, teachers do not create something completely new (there is no need to), but adapt ideas and resources to suit particular situations. Adaptation of existing materials takes advantage of work that someone has already done (including selection of general language items, writing base text, structuring and formatting a document, testing activities). Generating new material usually takes more time and effort, not only in designing but also because new components have to be collected and assembled. Fortunately, teachers/material developers have many resources available to them, including information and ideas on the Internet and Business media or in the public documents of companies, as well as what the learners themselves can bring to the class.

Topic- 059: Using Corpora

Corpora (collections of real language data) can be an important source of material. It is authentic, as it is drawn from real language in use. A concordance is a list of phrases, each showing the same word or language feature taken from a corpus, which allows users to focus on a particular lexical, grammatical, or discourse issue (concordances are generated electronically, so they may be accessed via the Internet). A typical concordance program can allow the user to isolate a particular language feature and analyze it in detail. Teachers may do this themselves, or may ask learners. Simply by typing a word, e.g. *market*, the learner can access its use as a noun, as an adjective or a verb.

Teachers can extract a few items and then use them in class for activities, how words are used, to create gap-fills for their colleagues, complete the sentences and write similar ones themselves. Open ended activities are helpful in allowing students to internalize language and professional content more than controlled exercises which focus on testing accuracy.

Using corpora has the advantage of making us aware of the real usefulness of teaching a certain language item. Corpus studies can give information on the most frequently used business terms - single words as well as multi-word items such as compounds, collocations, noun phrases, and acronyms. If these items are identified in corpus studies, included in a language course and treated as priority items, it can considerably speed up the teaching process and contribute to increased effectiveness of language courses.

The corpus evidence can serve as a powerful database that will make it possible to intensify the language acquisition process by focusing on the words and phrases that occur most frequently in professional business communication. Corpora allow us to move away from intuition to objectivity in our efforts to develop appropriate and useful materials.

Topic- 060: Learner as Resource

Sometimes teachers of Business English do not find prepackaged materials to suit a particular context. This is problematic as our credibility depends on how relevant we can make our lessons. The BE learners want to know where their studies are taking them, and why they are doing or what they are doing. That is why tailor-made materials are worth considering. A useful method is to involve learners. The learners know a lot about their business and jobs, as compared to the teacher, and have precise notions about what they need and want to learn.

The aim of using the learner themselves as a resource is to get content from the learner; the teacher remains the language expert. With a job-experienced learner this benefit is obvious – who knows more about the job and its requirements than the people who are doing it? One way of getting useful content is to chat to the learners which should be purposeful and focusing on particular utterances, to develop content and language.

Role-play can use real situations from learners' workplace, meetings, telephone calls, and the like. Basic procedure to follow is to discuss the background of the activity, followed by role plays where teachers and students take specific roles. These can be recorded and formulated until everyone is satisfied that the language being produced is appropriate. Learners note key language points which can then be used for future reference. Learners can bring materials, e.g. letters, emails, meeting points. Teachers and learners collaborate to generate language points. This is desirable as the learner has a stake in the lesson and is motivated by the fact.

Lesson 11

SELECTING AND DEVELOPING MATERIALS-II

Topic- 061: Framework Materials

Frameworks are explicitly structured contexts designed to help teachers and learners. They can be used to generate language and to focus on the language produced in the classroom. Frameworks create a situation where the learner is pushed towards using specific language in order to complete the task assigned. If the task is difficult for the learner, the teacher and other learners can be helped in various ways. The teacher or other learners can help by making suggestions reformulating what has been said or by making suggestions.

Activities can be given to practice a grammatical form, e.g. when negotiating activity, the framework entails using the conditional, when talking about your continuing habit you are forced to use “I am used to having tea at breakfast”, as contrasted to saying, “I used to go for a morning walk” a past activity which is no longer done.

A framework usually consists of a diagram or a simple outline, or a list of key words which can be used as a prompt. Some can be produced before the lesson and some in conjunction with learners. Several techniques can be used to elicit the desired response:

- Ask the learners to bring in their diary (or calendar) for next week, and take you through their plans.
- Ask learners to draw a time plan of a project they were involved with and talk about it.

Using frameworks in teaching Business English has several advantages. First of all they are easy to produce, they can generate relevant language, the learner can focus on meaning rather than form, and they can be used with all levels of learners. It is possible to run an entire course of Business English using just framework materials.

Topic- 062: Course Books

Course books are the major source of framework material which can be used extensively. The teachers use their own program but supplemented with other material. The advantages of frameworks are that they provide a sense of structure and progress to all involved. They also serve as a syllabus. Other benefits are:

- Ready-made texts and tasks: Available for appropriate level
- Economy: Cheapest material available
- Convenience: To use, easy to carry, pack, and stack.
- Guidance: For inexperienced teachers.
- Autonomy: Learners can learn, monitor, and review with autonomy.

Disadvantages are that they might be inadequate, i.e. cannot supply needs of diverse learners, topics might not interest everyone, and may inhibit teacher’s creativity. Some frameworks work in homogenous classes and cannot cater to diverse learning styles. They have their own rationale and approach. The using of too many framework materials results in making the teaching process overly easy for teachers whose role might be reduced as just mediators of content.

Topic- 063: Criteria for Course Books

The criterion for course book selection is generally applicable to all; however, for a certain course or learner population it can be specific. General requirements are that it has a clear layout and is reviewed periodically. A more specific selection for a certain course or learner population could have for example colorful and attractive illustrations for younger learners, and vocabulary and text relevant to topic for science and technology students. One of the most important points to note is that a course book has clear stated objectives. Other points are:

- Coverage: Systematic
- Authentic texts language
- Topics: relevant
- Focus on communication
- Specialist Vocabulary
- Needs: Relevant

Teaching philosophy spells out the:

- Cultural content.
- Can be used as a self-study material, reference book.
- Need of any special equipment.
- Provides guidance for exam preparation.

Course books can be evaluated by applying this criterion. However course books rarely cater for the needs of all learners. A certain degree of adaptation and tailoring is required as well as the use of supplementary materials. Another way is to involve learners in the selection of course book. This results in more commitment to make the course a success.

Topic- 064: Using a Course Book

Using a course book entails that the teacher knows the good and bad points about it, what a single unit or chapter covers in terms of coverage, texts, tasks and administration. Coverage can be seen as follows:

- Covers theoretical concepts
- Language forms
- Communication skills
- Professional content

Texts can be seen according to their:

- Difficulty level
- Genre
- Interesting/Boring

- Varied

Tasks: (Activities)

- Opportunities for using target language and communication?
- Relevant, useful
- Balance fluency and accuracy
- Heterogeneous
- Cover language items and skills

Administration:

- Specific components
- Administered effectively by teacher? Or learners to tackle individually?
- Provides guidance?
- Important: Activate learners for maximum benefit

Course book guidance:

- Activate learners
- Teacher-led questions? In pairs/groups, individually
- Work in pairs?
- Classroom interaction

Using a course book is the teacher's choice and learners' need. Teachers should select according to these criteria and keep in mind the need for supplementing.

Topic- 065: Supplementary Materials

Most teachers teaching course books need supplementary materials to some extent, even if they have to tailor them to the needs of a particular class /offer richer options. Besides course book, the teacher can use computers which have a huge potential in retrieving and storing information. Using computers is motivating and attractive for students, who, however, need to be computer literate. The Need of practice and availability remains a concern. As a teacher's resource in making materials, computers are invaluable, as research can be accessed.

Books are all-time materials which are user-friendly, light, and easy to store and pack. Having a collection of reference books, extra textbooks, teacher's handbooks and regular reading of professional journals can inject new ideas and update teachers on current thinking. Overhead projectors are useful for presenting visual/written materials for classes. They are invaluable in terms of presenting vivid and eye catching information. They save lesson time, but entail more work for the teacher. However, they are vulnerable to malfunction, breakdowns and electricity failures.

Audio equipment, for example, cassette recorders are relatively cheap, easy to use, the main source of spoken language texts in most classrooms, and however they lack visual content. Video equipment is an excellent source of authentic materials. It is attractive, motivating, and flexible – in terms of options to start, stop, run forward, back and pause. Programs are available in videos catering for different levels and areas of learners. The disadvantage is their lack of mobility and occasional breakdowns.

Posters, pictures and games can be home made. Use of glossy magazines is also useful. The Internet is an unlimited source of topical and authentic materials. Emails can be used for providing feedback, reviewing assignments, etc. The humble telephone remains an important resource for learning.

Topic- 066: Teacher-made Supplementary Materials

Traditional class teacher, armed with chalk and talk, was the sole imparted of wisdom. Now sources of knowledge have diversified and expanded in non-traditional ways, so the classroom has also become a place where multiple sources are used to bring the outside world into the class. The sophisticated BE learner expects to be given the latest trends, methodologies and equipment in classes. Even with an excellent course book and a wide variety of other materials, there comes a point when the teacher needs to make their own supplementary materials. This should be:

- Relevant
- Personalized
- Work sheets: Easy to make, MCQs, True/false tests, excellent for end of unit quizzes, easy to administer and check.
- Work cards:

The following guidelines can be used for preparing above:

Stage 1: Preparation of teacher made work sheets: Choosing language point or communication item, composing through word processor or by hand.

Stage 2: First Draft: Make a sample

Stage 3: Feedback: If working in a group, get feedback from others

Stage 4: Second Draft: Remake or make a new one according to ideas received from peers.

Getting students to read the latest researches of their relevant areas is a useful activity. For students of Economics, reading *The Economist*, where the content tends to work in consistent areas of language, so, after a while, students who practice reading this journal, will become experts in reading English language business publications, and get acquainted with the latest trends and happenings as well. Emails can be used for feedback and assignment checking. Supplementary materials should be based on learners' needs. Today's sophisticated learner is aware of, and needs the latest trends and equipment in teaching. Teachers of BE should draw on the wide range of materials offered by the ELT and the non ELT world to give their learners a varied experience, yet keeping in mind the suitability of materials in terms of learners' needs and aims of the learners.

Lesson 12

SELECTING AND DEVELOPING MATERIALS-III

Topic- 067: Authentic Materials: Definition and Use

Within the world of English teaching, authentic materials are texts which have not been produced specifically for classroom use. One of the key characteristics of ESP is that teachers and course developers value the use of authentic texts and tasks. The term 'authentic' denotes that the texts were written for purposes other than language teaching and learning. If we be developing a course for financial accountants, we would probably try to include real texts written by accountants and those in related financial sectors, such as, the financial section of a company annual report if they were written for the purposes of communicating financial or economic ideas and information. Texts written by journalists could possibly be used for class of journalists.

Authentic materials could be real commercial documents, newspaper articles, recordings of meetings and conversations used in the workplace, newspaper clippings, excerpts from case studies, reports. Using such materials is a fundamental part of teaching people who are working in companies, and even course books designed for pre-experienced people who often use authentic materials in their content for practice of reading, vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, etc.

Advantages are that they bring in real world (in terms of concepts, language, and practice). Learners can relate and understand the point of the training as it is relevant to their subject area, in terms of application of concepts and language items. Hence it leads to motivation /interest. It helps the teacher understand the needs of learners.

Some authentic texts are commercially or legally sensitive - we cannot talk about the working of a company by using its annual report, commercial products and practices cannot be named. Sometimes there is non-availability of materials on learners' part. We can arrive to teach a lesson expecting our learners to have brought materials in (as they promised in the last lesson) and then be disappointed when none are offered. Sometimes learners may lack the confidence to bring in their own work and show it to other learners. Confidentiality can be cited as a reason for failing to bring documents into class, although some companies are prepared to invest a significant degree of trust in their trainers and make them privy to sensitive information.

Sometimes there is the nonexistence of suitable materials. Perhaps the class is of MBA students who have not yet worked in an international company, or perhaps the in-house course is for a company that has only just moved into an international marketplace, and its employees have never had to do anything in English before.

Authentic texts play an important role in demonstrating 'real' language use. If we aim to demonstrate to our class of nursing students the forms and features of nursing care plans, we would generally wish to show the class samples of authentic care plans.

Following points can be noted while using authentic materials:

- Use contexts, texts and situations from the students' subject area. Whether they are real or simulated, they will naturally involve the language the students need.
- Exploit authentic materials that students use in their specialism or vocation – and don't be put off by the fact that it may not look like 'normal English'.
- Make the tasks authentic as well as the texts. Get the students to do things with the material that they actually need to do in their work.

<u>Topic- 068: Types and Sources</u>

Finding suitable authentic texts is not always easy. Audio materials, cassettes and tapes are relatively easy to get and are cheap. They provide a source of spoken language besides the teacher. Mobiles are easier to use, however, they lack visual content, but make a desired entry-point.

In discussing materials development in EAP, Swales (2009) describes a problem that can arise. Most EAP practitioners, when preparing materials for classes or workshops, can't find the perfect text for what they want to do in class. Textbooks, manuals, journal articles or websites have failed to produce a solution to the material writer's problem. The language exemplification requires editing. One text may have the looked-for rhetorical structure and linguistic exemplification, but the content is too obscure or unmanageable; another is attractive and has utilizable content, but the structure is wrong, or the treatment is too journalistic (Myers, 1990), and a third looks promising but it is too cluttered with intertextual links, asides and references to be useable 'as it is'. Authentic material can be accessed from the following:

- Minutes, Memos
- Emails, Contracts
- Reports, Company advertising brochures
- Presentations (PowerPoint™ slideshows, overhead acetates)
- Voicemail messages
- Audio and video recordings of real interactions, e.g. TV adverts
- Company sales videos, Internet and intranet websites

Today's sophisticated learner wants more teaching media to bring in more dynamic and authentic models of language, communication and content into the classroom. However the teacher needs to balance suitability of material as shown in the figure below. BE learners wanted to be given an exposure to all the latest materials and equipment. However, the teacher has to balance reliability, ease of use, accessibility, utility for selection and adaptation of authentic materials.

<u>Topic- 069: Selection and Adaptation of Authentic Materials</u>

The modern class has moved beyond" Chalk and Talk" style of the traditional class where the teacher imparted his/her unique knowledge to students. As the world has become more complex the sources of knowledge have diversified, no single teacher can be the font of all wisdom. However, we are not alone and have means to bring the outside world into the class. There is a wide range of materials and different media which can be exploited to turn the class into a varied teaching/learning environment. Teaching media allows dynamic and authentic models of language, content and communication. These include letters, minutes, memos, emails, contracts, reports of company for today's sophisticated learner and more relevant ones like company advertisements and brochures. Activities are based around giving presentations, voicemail messages, audio and video recordings of real interactions, TV adverts, company sales videos, Internet and intranet websites.

ELT and non-ELT world provides a wide range of audio and video content. The main aim is to impart knowledge and learning to the class, to bring the real life context in the class ensuring the suitability of materials. Suitability of authentic material is problematic. Availability of suitable materials poses problems as they are difficult to obtain in practice. Our credibility as teachers depends on providing relevant materials, as a high degree of relevance is expected.

Modification/customization is required with both published and authentic materials. Most EAP practitioners, when preparing materials for classes or workshops, face the familiar problem of not finding the perfect text they need in the class. Most textbooks, manuals, journal articles or websites have failed to produce a solution to the material writer's problem. One text may have the required rhetorical structure and linguistic exemplification, but the content is too obscure or unmanageable, another has attractive and utilizable content, but the structure is wrong, or the treatment is too journalistic, and a third looks promising but it is too cluttered with intertextual links, asides and references. The need for adaptation is always there. Editing is an option as is a certain amount of 'skeletonization', where ellipsis or some other 'placeholder' device is used to eliminate dense content chunks of language. The occasional use of 'instructor-written' materials is required sometimes.

Just as materials are the "software" of teaching, equipment can be called "hardware" of teaching. Equipment can be video and audio. Audiovisual materials are easily available and cheap and BE teaching material is available in them. It includes business news reports, company training or promotional videos can provide excellent opportunities to focus on the specific language used to discuss products. Video providing sound and picture both can provide excellent opportunities to focus on the specific language, used to discuss products, are useful for language teacher as well as learners.

Topic- 070: Using Authentic Materials for Developing Various Skills

The aim of using authenticity of texts and tasks is to bring the real world into the class. The task should mirror the real world task. The ideal activity is to interact with the authentic material in the same way that the learners might have to in real life. For example, with a letter, the teacher could play the part of a customer who has received it and has some questions to ask. With a presentation, the teacher (and other learners) could watch it and then role-play contributing questions from the audience. The authentic spoken material may also be very useful, although it can prove difficult to obtain in practice. Sometimes teachers are allowed to attend and record meetings and phone conversations. We can record colleagues carrying out role-plays of tasks similar to those faced by our learners, or we can make recordings of telephone calls we have with our learners. If we do have authentic spoken material, there are various ways to exploit it.

Audiovisual materials, can be used to develop various skills, such as business news reports or company promotional or training videos, can provide excellent opportunities to focus on the specific language used to discuss products (useful for the language teacher, as well as the learners). A typical activity would be to ask learners to watch three recent news reports, and then fill in a table responding to *Who*, *What*, and *Why* questions, as a basis for discussion.

It is convenient if authentic documents can be provided in electronic form; not only are poor quality photocopies frustrating, but more importantly, having materials in electronic form allows teachers to adapt and reproduce them more easily for classroom use, and to adapt them for other classes if this is appropriate and acceptable to the original producer of the document. Possible activities that can be done with authentic materials, either adapted or in their original form are:

- Reading (skim, scan, summarize, answer comprehension questions).
- Create gap-fill exercise (remove the words and replace with gaps).
- Ask students to predict content by just giving them section headings.
- Scramble the text and ask learners to rearrange it into the correct order.
- In the case of correspondence, ask learners to compose a reply.
- Get learners to select ten useful phrases or words from the document, and discuss their choice with other learners.
- Discuss possible improvements in the material.
- Use pictures and diagrams to prompt discussion.
- Ask learners to explain and clarify the issues in the document.
- If the authentic material includes notes or slides for a presentation, ask learners to deliver that presentation, or discuss content, or layout of slides.
- Select sections of a report for learners to read and present orally.
- Get learners to explain figures, calculations, graphs, tables, etc.
- Use customs or shipping documents to get learners to explain the process of moving goods from suppliers to customers.
- Redesign logos or letterheads, discussing the rationale behind the design.

One way might be to get our learners to focus on and notice particular aspects of the text, or particular communication issues. These might be vocabulary, useful phrases, grammatical points, or even non-verbal aspects of communication. We may ask the learners to transcribe what they hear, or compare their understanding to a transcription we have prepared earlier or listening to presentations and asking relevant questions after it. Authentic materials like newspapers can be used to develop letter writing and vocabulary, by picking up similar genre, legal, business, and medical words from the various news items e.g. business sections and using them in own writing.

Topic- 071: Using Role-Plays and Simulations

Role-plays are activities where the learners take on a role, they do not play themselves. Learner's behavior or opinions are limited to instructions card and the language used is pre-taught. Mostly the participants do not have all the relevant information. Role plays are good for pre-experienced learners, as most of the information is given to them. They may have no personal experience to use in the role they are playing. Role-plays are not practical if learners do not have enough time to memorize the information and have to look at their cards to remind themselves of what to say.

A simulation is quite different from a role-play. It refers to an activity where the learner is playing him or her, and (ideally) simulates what he or she might do in real life. The aim is to create a particular kind of situation in the safety of the classroom. He/she meets a similar situation in real life; he or she feels confident of doing it before. It gives a realistic reason for doing the activity in English. The aim is to create suspension of disbelief, so that the learners become fully involved in the activity, and are not distracted by the fact that it is taking place in a classroom. Indeed, one sign of a successful simulation is where the participants carry on discussing the issues outside the classroom.

Simulations are particularly useful for in-company groups where people have real jobs to focus on. As a simulated activity takes place in a safe environment, so there is no fear of making mistakes. To involve a good speaker of English, enormous benefit can be derived by communicating with a stranger who knows their subject but isn't the teacher. Sometimes a simulation would involve a learner simply discussing work-related issues with the teacher, in the same way that this might be done with a new boss, a customer, or a partner. The main point is that it stimulates the type of discourse the learner would have in real life.

Topic- 072: Using Case Studies

A case study is a description of a problem or decision faced by a company business. It describes a specific business problem and creates a jumping off point for analysis and discussion. It enables learners to look at a particular business problem from various perspectives. Using case studies is suitable for all types of business English learner (except low level of English language competence). For pre-experienced groups, some additional information might be needed. In an in-company training situation, case studies may mirror the real requirements of the job, can introduce interesting material not directly relevant and provides variety and useful language practice. Teachers can write their own case studies or can tailor situations to their learners' specific needs if do not wish to invest time and effort in preparation of each case.

Case studies require learners to use a variety of different skills in order to complete the tasks set. This may include writing, speaking, listening, researching and presenting their findings. A case study method teaches through focusing on relevant content rather than grammatical/lexical exercises. This content –material is business related. Authentic texts are used to analyze and solve particular issues, by using previous cases.

Lesson 13

TUTORING A COURSE-I

Topic- 073: Lesson Planning

A lesson is a type of social activity, which exists in every culture. It may vary in different aspects - the participants and teachers. However, it is always limited and pre-scheduled as regards time, place and membership. The transactional aspect of a lesson entails that it is a purposeful give and take. The interactional feature of a lesson is that it involves participants. It is goal oriented in that it has an objective. It is a satisfying experience if it provides motivation to learners and teachers.

A lesson would vary according to culture. In a role-based culture where roles are accepted, a lesson follows a conventional construct. It can be an event where events in the same way and sequence every time, or it could be a series of free choices: where learners can choose and decide. Lessons require preparation, which can range from weeks before it is to be delivered or a day or two before. For some teachers it could be writing a few brief notes, short headings and abbreviations, to look at occasionally. Such notes can be used later on or to reflect on.

There are varying components of a lesson. A 'packaging', or selection and organization of course contents can be done in various ways. A useful guideline could be to put the harder tasks first, or the quieter activities before lively ones as learners might get too stimulated to carry on the reflective ones. Teachers can think about transitions, how to go from one activity to the other smoothly, putting the class together at the beginning/end of an activity which involves group work, and ending on a positive note.

Practical lesson management involves preparing more than you need, and then seeing which part can be sacrificed, as well as time management, e.g. not distributing papers oneself, giving clear instructions for group work.

Topic- 074: Stages One

Lessons are there in every culture and have variety. There are many aspects of teaching. Here we will cover pedagogical on-course aspects of teaching. Teaching covers a wide range of disciplines, we will concentrate on the following as being of special interest to the BE teacher:

- Lesson Planning
- Learning styles and Training Styles
- Giving Feedback
- One-to-One Teaching or Group Teaching

The basic model of learning is: Practice – Feedback - Competence. In this basic model feedback is of central importance and with practice helps in developing competence. The practice and feedback model can be translated into a lesson plan. A lesson is a series of interrelated steps which aim to develop a certain aspect of language knowledge or communication skills according to the aim of the course. Each lesson should have its own unique aims, coherence and outputs. Business English teaching combines influences from other fields like management and communication, but we should not lose sight of the basic, essential model of learning which is warming-up, presenting, practicing, producing, evaluation, and feedback. Some consider reviewing the past lesson, or teachers own preparation for the lesson as a step.

The Business English lesson can be seen as having six flexible stages, focusing on the content, with the objectives of giving language as well as communication training, through tasks as well as texts. For example, in a lesson focusing on a presentation, the following six step model can be used:

1. Input: text and a task, information about a business or professional area.

2. Presentation: Language points: Related to the above, e.g. for presentations what should be appropriate linguistic item should be taught.

3. Practice: Practice of the above language form.

4. Communication points: Related to communication tasks, i.e. the presentation

5. Practice: Practice of the above.

6. Output Task: Production of the language and communication task.

Stage one gives the input text, focusing on the content. This stage provides informational content for a business or professional area. What we call presenting the objectives of the lesson, it is an introduction to build up learners' previous knowledge as well as warming them up. It gives a text, a task and a model. Information content can be taken from a listening or reading text taken for its informational content. It also provides a model for the output task. In order to provide a focus for the task (the reason for listening or speaking), the input text should be accompanied by an appropriate task. The input text used as a model, may be a listening or reading text. If the objective of the lesson is to develop communication skills then the input text should provide a model for the output task (Stage 6). In other words, a presentation provides a suitable input model for developing presentation skills and a meeting for developing meeting skills.

Topic- 075: Stage Two and Three

Stage Two: It focuses on language and presentation of language points, e.g. grammar, vocabulary, functions, pronunciation etc. Stage two focuses on language content. This may be grammatical area, a functional area, key vocabulary or pronunciation patterns. One text can lend itself to various language foci and the teacher needs to decide which focus best meets the students' needs. The trainers' role at this stage is to present, usually on the board the key features of the language forms.

Stage Three: This stage focuses on language practice. While stage two focused on presentation of language forms, at the third stage practice of these forms is carried out through controlled activities, e.g. Gap fill, sentence manipulation and practice on word families. At Stage 3 students get a chance to practice these forms and patterns through controlled exercises. The aim is to focus the trainee's attention on the forms and provide an exercise to check the ability to manipulate the forms correctly.

Topic- 076: Stage Four and Five

In Stage Four and Five the focus is on communication, e.g. presentation and delivery through controlled practice. Stage Four focuses on presentation of communication features like presentation structure, presentation delivery, controlling meetings and letter organization. While stages 2 and 3 focus on language forms presented in the input text, a parallel operation may be carried out for communication skills, e.g. presentations, meetings, interviewing, letter writing, report writing, etc. In this way the fourth stage would look at models for a particular mode of communication in order to raise awareness of:

- Procedures
- Behaviors
- Associated language

Stage Five carries out communication practice through tasks such as mini presentation, meeting excerpts, controlled letter writing. The models can be presented by the trainer himself or where impractical, videos can be shown. Just as Stage 2 and 3 focuses on the forms and functions of language, stage four analyses the techniques and strategies of communication as well as associated language. Examples are:

Presentations:

- Opening a presentation
- Linking ideas in presentations
- Summarizing and concluding a presentation
- Delivering effectively to an international audience, in terms of tempo, volume, visual aids, etc.

Meetings:

- Chairing a meeting
- Controlling a meeting
- Inviting contributions to a meeting

Topic- 077: Stage Six

Stage six provides opportunity for free practice for using forms and communication patterns presented and practiced in stages 2 -5. Building blocks of language and communication are practiced.

Where the focus is on language - grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and functions of language will be taught and practiced. Where focus is communication – structure of presentations and delivery, controlling meetings and letter organization may be taught. Context for communication - correspond to the model presented in stage one.

Stage six involves putting the various stages of the lesson together. A speaking or writing task based will be based around a communicative activity to develop fluency and a communicative activity to develop effectiveness. The context of each activity will be drawn from the materials/context and/or the trainees own or professional experience. Stage six presents a flexible lesson plan. It can be varied according to:

- Teachers' teaching style
- Learners' learning style
- Resources

Topic- 078: Lesson Evaluation

It is important for the teacher to reflect at the end of a lesson about whether the objectives were achieved or not. Was the lesson effective? What went wrong? Was it good? Certain criteria can be used for evaluating the lesson - Were your students active and attentive all the time to enjoy themselves? If they are enjoying the lesson they would be motivated, and hence they would learn better. However, in contrast, they could be activated but would be learning nothing.

Another point to ponder upon is whether the lesson went as planned –again it could be effective but the question remains whether it was a good plan. A reflective teacher is flexible, and would modify the plan during the class.

Another point for evaluating a Business Communication lesson would be to see whether the language was used communicatively throughout the lesson. To reinforce language use, other activities/tasks are also required. Sometimes the class seems to be learning the material well, but it is difficult for the teacher to judge whether learning is actually taking place. The criteria to evaluate a lesson will vary. Learning is the main aim and engaging with content shows whether the lesson plan was effective or not. Learners' attention, their enjoyment and motivation would ensure active learning. Teachers' job is to plan well, be flexible to change the original plan and have some contingency plan as well.

Lesson 14

TUTORING A COURSE-II

Topic- 079: Learning Styles

How can we apply the learning model suggested earlier? It has been observed that success in learning depends to a great extent on the learning style of learners. Each learner has a unique learning style and approaches a task according to this style. So given a task such as a presentation or learning twenty new words of the target language, each learner will bring his her own way of learning to achieve the task. Some learn by repeating after the teacher, others by writing down. Still others repeat the task and internalize it. As we know some learners will be more successful than others.

Oxford (2003) says: “The term learning style refers to the general approach preferred by the student when learning a subject, acquiring a language, or dealing with a difficult problem. Learning style is an overall pattern that provides broad direction to learning and makes the same instructional method beloved by some students and hated by others”.

Dunn and Dunn (1979) define learning styles as “A term that describes the variations among learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retain experience”

As business English teachers, we need to adapt our teaching style, we can go some way to help learners achieve their learning objectives more effectively. This approach involves:

- Identifying and being aware of our trainees’ learning styles
- Providing classroom tasks adapted to their styles

Topic- 080: Classification of Learning Styles

As educators we are familiar with categorization of learners according to the following categories of perceptual learners:

- Auditory Learners
- Visual Learners
- Tactile Learners
- Kinesthetic Learners

It is important to see them as connected as learners will have many different styles. Learning styles are also influenced by the culture of the learners. In Asian cultures, the teacher is seen as having the right answer, whereas in Western cultures the teacher is seen as a facilitator, which means learner have more autonomy. Styles are culturally motivated, can lead to conflict in L2 classes made up of students from different cultures. As the four learner types are spread evenly in population, so a business English class can be planned according to the stages defined in lesson planning. However, teachers have to adapt their lessons according to learning styles of learners.

Types of adaptation are:

Selecting lesson stages according to preferred learning styles
Modifying time allocated so that the less popular but important areas are covered.
Prioritizing and order lesson stages according to preferred learning styles.

Topic- 081: The Four Learning Styles

Honey and Mumford suggest four preferred learning styles that a learner brings to a task. Based on these learning styles we can classify learners into four types, and identify their learning characteristics: The Activist, the theorist, the Pragmatist, the Reflector.

The Activist: Learns by doing the task. In the language classroom, they are the ones who enjoy language tasks and communication practice, enjoy using and experimenting with the language.

The Theorist: Learns the language by understanding the underlying theory. These are the learners who want to know why a particular language form is more appropriate in a certain situation or why a particular communication technique is more appropriate in a given setting.

The Pragmatist: Learns by practicing in a controlled environment. They enjoy the security of closed environment and feel that this way gives them confidence to use the language forms in actual situations.

The Reflector: Learns by watching others do the task. They are likely to feel insecure about their own ability to perform in the language. However, in a secure environment they become willing to perform communicative tasks and participate in language activities.

Every language learner and language teacher has one or other learning style and preference of specific learning environment and methods and dislike others. Any of the learning styles is not opposites of the other at any stage as many of us think, but work as in a continuum. None of the learning styles have any better value over others, although some of the learning styles function well with some of the students than the others and vice versa. In order to get full advantage from any learning tasks and activities the students must think out of the box and stretch their language learning styles. Questionnaires can be used to identify learners' dominant learning style, and match the lesson stages with learner types:

Stage 1: Present the input text, the task and the model output (administer questionnaire).

Stages 2 & 4: The focus on language forms and communication patterns should appeal to the theorist who wants to fit the new knowledge into existing schema.

Stage 3 & 5: This controlled practice should appeal to the pragmatist who likes to test out the practical application of the forms and techniques presented.

Stage 6: This stage appeals to both activist and reflector who will benefit from and develop confidence from seeing the activist in action.

Perceptive teachers would identify the learning style of learners and would match it up with the lesson stages. Learning strategies are directly connected to the learning styles of the learners.

Topic- 082: Learning Strategies

Learning strategies and styles are linked to each other but are different. Strategies are "…characteristics we want to stimulate in students to enable them to become more proficient language learners" (Oxford, 1990). Style is natural, but strategies can be purposively taught, e.g. writing the main idea is a strategy which can be taught explicitly. It is a cognitive strategy known as summarizing. The following strategies are specific means which learners use to learn or improve learning:

Metacognitive Strategies:

- Planning: Previewing paying attention main ideas, seeking
- Monitoring: Self-checking one's comprehension
- Evaluating: Developing ability to evaluating own task

Cognitive Strategies:

- Summarizing: Main idea
- Induction: Figuring out rules samples
- Imagery: Visualize
- Auditory representation: Repeating words
- Making inferences: Guess meaning
- Using resources: Ability to use reference material
- Grouping: Classifying words, concepts
- Note-taking: Writing key words, concepts
- Elaborating prior knowledge: Relating

Social/Affective Strategies:

- Cooperating: Learning how to work with peers
- Clarifying: Asking questions
- Self-talk: Reducing anxiety by talking positively to oneself

The goal is to create a teaching environment that assists learners to learn efficiently and effectively. Learning strategies are useful in addressing the needs of diverse learners and preparing them for a better learning experience.

Topic- 083: Learning Styles and Strategies

Language learning style has a significant influence on second language learners hence on their achievements and progress in the learning. Many researchers have tried to prove the hypothesis that language learning styles force learners to use certain strategies more often than others. Ehramn and Oxford (1989) carried a research on the relationship between LLS and language learning styles shows the following: Extroverts use effective and social strategies more than introverts, while introvert use independent and self-management strategies more.

Sensing types use mnemonic devices and visualization strategies more and "intuitors search for and communicate meaning and use formal model more frequently" (Ehramn & Oxford, 1989

"Thinkers use a formal model building more frequently, while feelers employ authentic language use, searching for and communicating meaning, social strategies, and affective strategies" (Ehramn & Oxford, 1989, p. 259). "Judgers use general strategies, independent strategies, and self-management, while perceivers employ strategies concerned with searching for and communicating meaning" (Ehramn & Oxford, 1989, p. 259).

The style of the individual learner forces him/her to use certain strategies more frequently than others. Actually, their style helps them in learning language and this unconscious use of different strategies assists them in this process.

Topic- 084: Teaching of Strategies

Language learning strategies are directly connected to the learning styles of the learners. The learning model suggested above has to take into account the learning styles of the learners and adapt the teaching style accordingly. This approach involves identifying and being aware of our trainees' learning styles and needs. Classroom tasks can be adapted to their learners' styles, instead of trying to change their style. The Business English class is composed of four learner types. Lesson planning has to be according to the stages defined above and adapted according to learning styles of learners. The types of adaptations can include selecting lesson stages according to preferred learning style of class and modifying the time, so that the less popular styles but important areas are covered. The principles for teaching include varying activities and materials, making all learning styles value neutral, as well as continuously auditing our teaching. Learners should be encouraged to stretch their learning styles by linking learning styles/ strategies and varying techniques and tasks. Lesson organization should prioritize and order lesson stages according to preferred learning style of the class. Honey and Mumfield's (1992) questionnaire is useful to identify learners' dominant learning style. It gives the following stages of the process:

Stage 01: Identifying dominant style of learners

Stage 2 & 4: These stages focus on language forms and communication patterns which should appeal to the theorists who want to fit the new knowledge into existing schema.

Stage 3 & 5: This controlled practice should appeal to the pragmatists who like to test out the practical application of the forms and techniques presented.

Stage 6: Appeals to both activist and reflector who will benefit from and develop confidence from seeing the activist in action, Rossi-Le's study (1989) found a significant correlation between perceptual learning styles: visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic and strategy use for 7 out of 10 strategy categories. Auditory learners preferred memory strategies, cognitive strategies for authentic language use, and metacognitive strategies such as planning and evaluating their own learning. However, tactile learners revealed a strong preference for using strategies for communicating meaning and for self-management (Nian-nian, 2012).

Lesson 15

TUTORING A COURSE-III

Topic- 085: Giving Feedback

Feedback is information given to the learner about his/her performance with the objective of improving performance. It has two components - *Assessment,* in which you simply inform how well or bad the learner has performed, and gives a grade like 70% or a comment like "good", fair". In correction, more specific information on learner's performance is given through explanation, of provision of alternatives or eliciting from learners. It tells of what the learners did right and what was wrong. Different teaching methodologies e.g. audiolingualism, humanistic methodologies, and skills approach, etc. offer different approaches to assessment. Training can be seen as a close-looped system, consisting of the following stages:

1. Identifying needs
2. Designing training
3. Delivering training
4. Evaluating training

Stage 04 feeds back into stage 01 so that subsequent courses can be modified, and stage 04 also feeds back into the other stages so that the current course can be modified and learning can be maximized.

There are different types of evaluation:

- Trainer evaluation: in which the teacher decides how effective your training has been.
- Trainee evaluation: The trainees evaluate how effective the training has been.

Testing and feedback which is the process of determining to what extent the learning objectives have been achieved. In teaching a business English course, our aim is to evaluate: accuracy, fluency, and effectiveness through practice and feedback leading to developing competence. Feedback highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the course, of learning and teaching and provides a basis for remedial work.

Topic- 086: The Evaluators

The evaluators who decide how effective the training is are the trainer, the trainees, the participants and the audience. The targets for a BE course are to develop accuracy, fluency and effectiveness of communication around business related contexts, through the appropriate type of activity. For accuracy-based tasks the teacher with his/her superior knowledge of language forms is the evaluator.

Fluency has to do with the flow and effort of speaking. Flow can be observed, although not measured, and improvement can be seen in fluency in a foreign language user with practice over regular contact and use of the target language. Practice is the key to achieve fluency in intensive as well as extensive courses. Fluency improves confidence and hence competence. So it is important to give encouragement. All can give evaluation, as smooth flow is apparent to a teacher and co-trainees, although it will be subjective.

Effort of speaking is in the head of the speaker not with the listeners. Only the speaker knows the effort needed to speak, so it is only the trainee himself who can tell how much effort is needed. Therefore, the trainees themselves, the trainer and fellow trainees all have to evaluate.

Effectiveness in Business Communication depends on practice, but it should be focused around the building blocks of the communication. These building blocks are performance criteria and evaluation criteria. The most valid evaluation comes with the involvement of all participants -listeners, speakers, presenters, audience and participants who should provide feedback to evaluate the course. The trainer is in the best position to comment on language performance.

Topic- 087: Trainee Evaluation

There are three aspects to trainee evaluation - accuracy, fluency and effectiveness in communication. Practice and feedback are essential elements in developing communication competence. Traditional feedback methods have focused on the accuracy of language forms. However, professional business English training has grown to encompass other areas of communication - fluency of general communication and effectiveness of professional communication. Measuring accuracy is relatively easy, as the use of language forms are usually right or wrong. However, fluency presents problems and is more difficulty to evaluate, as depends on flow and effort of speaking. Flow is seen in terms of speed of speaking and entails that there are no hesitations and pauses. Effectiveness in communication has to be evaluated through the features of professional effectiveness, which include building blocks (procedural, linguistic, behavioral) for teaching professional communication, like presentations, etc.

If we view training as a closed loop system, then these building blocks are both the basis for course design as well as the basis for evaluation.

Topic- 088: Evaluating the Course

Testing learners' language skills is one of the main ways to find out how successful a course is and usually gives results which are qualitative, making the data easy to record, manipulate and compare. However, there are other ways as well. Checking learners' reaction is a standard form of evaluation of a course. Plenary discussions, involving the whole group where impartial members of the team sit together in circle and discuss the pros and cons of the course, can be conducted for evaluation. This sort of evaluations gives qualitative data. Quantitative data can be acquired through written feedback. Questionnaires can be used to get students' responses about various aspects of the course and the teacher. Variations on this could be to send this forms direct to learners from administration and for teacher to leave the class while learners are responding either on the white board or in writing. Such feedback can be used to evaluate teacher performance and base decisions for future hiring as well. More experienced peers are sometimes included in such appraisals of trainers.

Program evaluation is an ongoing process. It is an important source for improvement and monitoring the course. Trainer gets feedback from participants and integrates it back into other phases of the course, the materials and implementation.

Topic- 089: Guidelines for Giving Feedback

To be effective, feedback needs to be constructive, balanced, transparent and reasonable. A common sense approach can help satisfy these requirements. Practice is more important than feedback; more time should be devoted to practice than to feedback, whatever techniques are being used. All participants should participate in giving feedback. Team feedback is better than feedback provided by one person. Both negative and positive aspects of learners' performance should be reflected in feedback. It increases confidence if both strengths and weaknesses are highlighted.

Both oral/written feedbacks should be given according to appropriacy. Some learners have better memory of spoken word while others have more retention of the written word. Oral feedback on discussion of communication techniques is better, while written correction on the white board on language mistakes is more effective.

Immediate feedback is more effective than delayed feedback, giving it while the communication activity is still fresh in the learners' mind. Language feedback can be provided later for follow-up studies and language forms. Focus on feedback should be according to target or lesson objective, whether it was for effectiveness, accuracy or fluency. Feedback should only be as much as learners can assimilate. Better to give feedback of a few points which can be retained rather than too many points which they will forget.

Topic- 090: The Timing for Giving Feedback

The timings for giving feedback are of crucial importance. It can be given during or after an activity but depends on the type of activity and its objective of the activity. In accuracy based activities, some trainees demand instant feedback. However, this is not very effective. Ingrained errors are likely to be repeated again, and immediate attention to them is forgotten in the flow of communication. They have to be dealt with in the learners' basic language system and eliminated through controlled practice. On-the-spot correction may give learners a sense of learning, but actually more serious focus on mistakes after the activity is more effective. The feedback gets integrated into the learning process, becoming needs in the four-stage closed-loop learning system.

Giving feedback in accuracy is often impressionistic and subjective. However, the practice itself, the ability to participate in a fluency based activity is in itself a kind of feedback on trainee's ability to perform that task. Task fulfillment is an indication of ability. Feedback of fluency should be given after the task is over. Interruptions for correction will hinder flow of information and ideas and will curb confidence which is a must for fluency. Gentle correction is desirable when the student is floundering. The role of the trainer as orchestrator and the facilitator should not be underestimated.

For effectiveness through training, activities like presentations, negotiations, feedback can normally be given after the activity. Only if the learner transgresses the basic rules of communication and a breakdown in communication seems to happen, should the trainer intervene to remedy through feedback. After the activity, the notes taken down by participants can be used to generate discussion about its successes or failures.

Lesson 16

MANAGING ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM-I

Topic- 091: One to One or Group Training

One to One training/teaching is one of the unique characteristic of a Business English course. No other teaching situation offers program customization. Since the trainee is the sole focus of the trainer, everything in terms of objectives, program design, materials and methodology can be adapted for the learner's wish and need. The main difference in individual learner and group learners is the context itself. One to one is personalized and customized, while in group teaching learners share the trainer.

Individualized training is ideally suited to ESP as it offers program customization. The focus is a single learner with objectives, program design, materials, methodology suited to his needs. The basic difference is in the context. Groups and individuals both have high expectations for the course to deliver, however the difference is that:

- The individual learner expects personalized approach.
- Groups expect team work. If one learner in a group wants extra attention, the course atmosphere suffers.

As far as trainee involvement and contribution is concerned, it is easy to satisfy one person as he is involved in all stages of the course from design to delivery. The trainer can easily vary the design, tempo, focus, activity. With a group this is not possible, oral time e.g. has to be shared among the group. Individual differences need to be subordinated to the group's wishes.

The trainee's level needs consideration. In individual courses a certain level of competence which is required can be achieved. In group teaching learners, with lower levels of linguistic resources and less practice of operating in English will tire easily. Care should be given as experience might become a grueling survival test for them.

Trainee objectives are different in the two types of courses. Fluency and accuracy practice is limited in individual courses, are limited for learners who want to develop group interaction skills, there are limited chances of practice. Interaction can be simulated but limitations to what can credibly be done by two people to recreate a group meeting, negotiation skills, and meetings.

Trainer approaches need to be considered in the two types of courses. At the heart of contrast is the nature of relationship which leads to difference in training style. Both require an organization but in individualized courses, style depends on a trainer's sensitivity to shifts in a trainee's moods and responding to personal and professional needs. He/she has to be organized but sensitive to trainee's mood and attention. In group courses individuals change in mood and interest is not well received. The teacher can't throw out the planned lesson because of it.

Certain characteristics are needed for trainers undertaking individual courses. They require expertise as well as flexibility in course design, needs, materials and delivery of course content. The trainer has to spend a lot of time alone with trainee which is not suited to all situations. A house trainer who has a healthy curiosity of what makes people and companies tick, is likely to get satisfaction out of one-to-one courses. Pacing the lesson is important. At times, the learner is too keen. Learners immerse themselves too much one day and are exhausted the next day. If the trainer gets too enthusiastic, he/she might experience burn out.

Topic- 092: Dealing with Individuals

The concept of individualization is quite a common arrangement in business English teaching. It can involve preparing a learner for a specific project, coaching over a long period of time, helping with reports, presentations, etc. The concept of individualization is linked to the idea of provision of training like self-access centers, where learners can be entirely autonomous in their learning.

In individualized training there is more learner autonomy within the class. There is more learner autonomy to select materials, where teacher/learner can choose materials, and where a learner can choose to work alone or in groups. This is opposite to the lockstep arrangement, where everyone in the class, in principle has to do the same thing, at the same time, in the same way.

In individualized teaching the teacher focuses entirely on the learner's needs. The teacher's task is to reformulate learner's language, working towards an improved version, either orally or in written form, not merely focusing on grammatical or lexical errors. The case of the learner can be taken, who wants help in giving a presentation, and starts with the introduction, as an initial attempt. The teacher/learner can work to reformulate it, going over and improving it. It might mean correcting some mistakes but also to start from a scratch.

Within the class, individualization also means catering for the needs of learners and to provide for differing learners' needs within that context. This is not the case with self-instruction and self-access centers where learners work on their own. Effective procedures for individualization teaching include using readers for different levels of learners, varying responses to listening activities, using a variety of textbook exercises for homework, varied tasks for different levels of learners, using textbook questions of various difficulty levels in class.

Topic- 093: Teaching and Training

The terms *teaching* and *training* are used interchangeably. Teaching implies lessons and training implies professional development. The dictionary meaning of teaching is, as in school lessons, to impart knowledge or skills, to impart knowledge of a subject, to cause to learn by example or experience. Training implies professional training to coach in or accustom to a mode of behavior or to make proficient with specialized instruction and practice.

The scope of Business English is therefore both wide and narrow, so both terms can be used for it. It includes aspects of education in terms of language and specialist content knowledge and training in Business skills which includes negotiations, meetings etc.

Business English teaching is influenced by a wide range of disciplines, including ELT and management training. At the heart of Business English, is a needs driven approach, which requires trainers' responsiveness in terms of content and methodology. Therefore, it is not surprising that the BE teachers' repertoire of different training styles may draw on a range of different approaches from different areas. Teaching Business Englishis characterized by a diversity of content, therefore teaching it is complex. Teaching and training approaches focus on the following:

- Classroom as bridge
- Sharing control
- Training style

Topic- 094: The Classroom as a Bridge

In this approach, the classroom is seen as a kind of bridge, but there are different ways of perceiving and constructing this bridge. By its nature, the classroom is a very different place from the real world which most professionals inhabit. Trainers too because of their training/philosophy remain quite remote from the concerns of the real business community. Learners need to understand something of the business environment which they will encounter in real life through activities which prepare learners for the real world. How to integrate the real issues of business environment, communication skills, and management skills in the business English class? In order to achieve these objectives, the class should:

- Replicate the real world.
- Develop skills that can be transferred to the real world.
- Provide an environment from which these skills can grow naturally.
- The classroom should help students to acquire a good foundation of language which they can use in real life.

The real world approach tries to recreate the real world in the class. Activities like simulating real roles are effective. Learners will not only work on their communication skills, but the context in which they do this simulates the professional reality. This will facilitate the development of appropriate skills to be used outside the class.

For developing skill for later transfer, the use of case studies to practice around real cases, not the learners' own reality is effective. They allow the learner to look at the problem from various perspectives. Cases mirror the real job issues and requirements and require learners to use a variety of skills. Another approach sees the class as an environment where skills are acquired naturally in a stress- free environment which caters for certain learning styles. Beyond the world of the classroom is another world and the trainer's job is to train learners for this world without getting too close to it.

A final approach sees the class as separate and divorced from the professional world. Here the bridge is less obvious. The aim for the trainer is to give a secure base of language to learners. A good educational base and sound knowledge of the language will help them in their future professions. These viewpoints are not mutually exclusive. A lot depends on the learners, their objectives and their preferred learning style.

Topic- 095: Training Styles

As trainers/teachers, we have our own teaching styles just as learners have individual learning styles. The need is to modify our teaching style to suit the learning style of our learners. In our role as providers we may need to subordinate our preferred teaching styles to the needs of our learners and their learning styles. Four distinct teaching styles have been identified by Marshall and Wheeler:

The Listener

- Prefers trainee talks more than the trainer.
- Wants trainee to be self-directed and autonomous.
- Appears relaxed and unhurried.

The Director:

- Takes charge, gives directions, and appears self-confident.
- Is well organized, tells students what to do.
- Is final judge of everything

The Interpreter:

- Separates self from learners and observes.
- Uses theory as a foundation.
- Presents well-constructed interpretations.

The Coach:

- Allows learners to evaluate their own progress.
- Involves trainees in discussions.
- Draws on the strengths of the group.
- Uses trainees as a resource.

The Consultant:

- Is an expert.
- Is bought in to give advice, analyze, and carry out assessment of courses.
- See whether objectives are met are not.

Topic- 096: Sharing Control

The program of instruction can be divided into stages or units which are linked, like modules or lessons. Each larger unit can be divided into smaller moves, e.g. presentations and role-plays. Each unit is characterized by a lesson and an activity or task, which can be either trainer controlled or trainee controlled. The notion of control in the classroom is related to who controls the proceedings. Classroom control is seen as the exercise of directions over the proceedings. The trainer exercises control over the content and tempo of the lesson stages, seeing to it that there is no digression. As the program progresses towards a more central position the trainer allows more trainee involvement. The trainees exercise their control over the class proceeding initially with the trainer and later with a greater degree of independence. Control over classroom proceedings can be seen as two polarities. There are also possibilities of many intermediate teaching positions.

Classroom activities and lesson stages can also be adapted to different roles. Presentation stage of a lesson is best done through trainer-controlled mode. Later on, the transfer or practice stages are best done through trainee-controlled mode. Language controlled activities are conducted through trainer-control while communication activities through trainee-control. Communication activities in trainer-controlled mode can also be carried out but they cannot bring about the desired objectives of increased fluency and effectiveness.

The bridge to the real world is best build by creating a free classroom environment in which learners are allowed and encouraged to devise and use own techniques and strategies to achieve and bring out real world objectives.

Lesson 17

LANGUAGE FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION-II

Topic- 097: Clarity

The communication process involves the sending and receiving of messages between sender and receiver. Today's business is a communication based economy. Latest trends in technology, international competition and participatory management have increased the importance of sharing accurate, clear and ethical communication. The ultimate aim of good communication is clarity. If a piece of communication, a letter, email, text message are unclear, problems can occur, the costs of which can run into millions. To achieve clarity following guidelines are useful:

One way to achieve clarity is to provide specific, quantified information. Vague, abstract adjectives and adverbs should be avoided as readers will interpret them differently. "*Recently*" would be interpreted differently by people, unless the time is specified. Similarly the word, "*Some*" is abstract. If the term "*Annual Report*" is used, it remains unclear unless the time/year of the report is specified.

Passive constructions are often unclear, because there is no agency to the action. They can cause wordiness and lack of clarity. They require helping verbs and preposition (such as *has been*), so should be avoided. The second way to write clearly is by answering the reporter's questions. By anticipating and giving answers of the *Who*, *What*, *Where*, *When* and *How* related questions, clarity is added to the communication whether this communication is related to a presentation or a report.

Another key to clarity is to use easily understandable words. This can be achieved by avoiding obscure words. The purpose to write is to communicate, not to confuse; to express, not to impress. Abbreviations, acronyms, jargon: e.g. UNO, FBI, WAPDA, can create problems of understanding, so they should be defined, either in parenthesis or given in the glossary. Unclear technical communication can lead to missed deadlines, damaged equipment, inaccurate procedure, incorrectly filled forms and damage to an end user.

Topic- 098: Conciseness

Conciseness is a major goal of effective communication. There are three main benefits of conciseness in technical writing. Conciseness saves time. Business people spend 30% of their time in communicating whether written or oral. Conciseness saves them much time and effort.

Conciseness aids clarity. If you dump an enormous amount of words on your readers, they might not read what you wrote, or skip, skim to miss a key concept, or give it up. On the other hand, conciseness makes your writing appealing to the reader. If they can read it easily, they will read it with more interest and involvement. This will aid comprehension and readability.

Technology is impacting the way messages are written. Because the size of the screen is getting smaller and there are character limitations of Twitter and text messaging, so texts have to be concise. Communication must fix into a box, which forces one to use less words. Limiting word and sentence length adds to conciseness as does omitting shun words and redundancies. Paragraph length is also to be limited.

Topic- 099: Accuracy

Accuracy in technical communication refers to grammatical and contextual correctness. If your communication is clear and concise, but incorrect, it will mislead the audience and destroy your credibility. To be effective it must be accurate. If it contains errors, it will make the writer look incompetent. The most effective way to achieve accuracy is to proofread your writing. The following guidelines are useful:

- Get someone else to read the text
- Use gestation approach
- Read backwards
- Read one line at a time, or print it out
- Use dictionary Guidelines:
- Read long words syllable by syllable
- Use technology
- Check figures, scientific and technical abbreviations,
- Read aloud
- Try scattershot proofreading

If the writing not accurate, a negative impression is conveyed to the reader. Either the writer is thought of as unprofessional, or that he/she is lazy and casual. Either way the consequences are disastrous for company and individual.

Topic- 100: Ethics

Ethics are a final objective in technical writing. Ethical communication entails being honest about the product and services, in terms of considering the needs of the consumer and the business. You have an ethical responsibility to convey correct and true information. Your customers expect it and in the long run it is of benefit to the company. A sentence like, "*Our product has been tested for defects and safety by experts*", seems to be true, but is misleading. Readers assume that it has been thoroughly tested by technicians who are thoroughly trained. If this is not the case, it deceives the readers and becomes actionable by law.

When faced with a legal dilemma, like doing something which benefits the company but deceives the customer, who might happen to be your neighbor, it is best to trust your instincts and the law. Such dilemmas exist in the corporate world. One way to solve this dilemma is to check your actions against three concerns: legal, practical, ethical.

Being ethical in technical communication is practical. A very important goal of a business communicator is honesty. Withholding information is not practical as in the long run as it is not good business. The aim in business is not only to make a profit but to make it honestly and continuously. The importance of practicality can be seen in the example of resume writing. If you state something in your resume which is not true, you will ultimately lose the job, harm the company and the client. Following ethics in business communication is important for customer benefit and to avoid deceiving the end user. Defining ethics is as problematic as people have different perspectives and viewpoints. The "Code for Communicators" to achieve ethical standards given by the Society for Technical Communication states:

- Use language and visuals with precision
- Prefer simple, direct expression of ideas
- Satisfy the audience need for expression
- Strive to improve professionally
- Respect colleagues: Electronic communication, confidentiality, courtesy
- Respecting intellectual property.

Ethical principles for technical communicators include legality, honesty, confidentiality, quality, fairness and professionalism.

Topic- 101: Organization

Successful technical communication must be well organized. If the text rambles the reader will not be able to follow the meaning of the text. Organization can be done in various ways. Spatial organization is used to describe something as it appears. It helps the reader to visualize, envision a place or a piece of equipment. It might describe something from left to right, top to bottom, inside out or by giving directions (east, west, north, and south) to understand the physical qualities of the subject matter.

Chronological organization is used in the giving instructions, to document time, to tell about steps in a process analysis.

Text might be organized by placement of important information. The location of information is important. Important information will be missed if it is buried in a long text. It should be preferably in the first 1/3 of page, which is at eye level. The same holds for bullet points which are used to organize information. Only the first few would get the attention of the reader. Placing of important points first helps the reader to retrieve crucial information.

Proposals, sales letters are often problem/solution oriented. Writing can be organized around presenting an existing problem and offering a solution for that problem. The customer will only be convinced to purchase something if the existing alternative is a failure.

Organizing communication by comparing and contrasting different things provides options to clients. So similarities and differences can be compared and contrasted to help the reader arrive at a decision. The choice of how to organize communication will depend on a number of factors, including the channel, the medium of communication and the audience.

Topic- 102: Avoiding Biased Language

In the business world when you communicate, whether write or speak, you are always addressing some audience. Recognizing your audience is an important skill in business communication. Your audience could be high tech, low tech, laymen, multiple or multicultural. Audience recognition incudes knowing diversity which exists in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age as well as departmental diversity. Understanding the audience helps you to tailor your communication accordingly and use appropriate language.

Use of language which refers to age, physical limitations, and gender should be avoided. Every culture has own words which show derogation for old age. Ageist language using words like ‘Old people’ and ‘Old folks’ can be substituted by ‘retired’, ‘over seventy’. Language for disability or handicap, any euphemism referring to it can be offensive, and should be avoided.

Sexism in technical communication creates problems through omission, unequal treatment, stereotyping or the choice of words. Women are part of the modern workforce, so ignoring women in your texts amounts to treating them as secondary, and expressing sexist sentiments. If you imply that certain jobs are done by men and certain by women, e.g. management posts held by men or secretarial jobs held by women, you are indulging in sexist stereotyping. Gender tagged pronouns and nouns like, ‘his’, ‘him’, ‘mankind’, ‘manpower’, ‘chairman’ should be avoided.

Lesson 18

BUSINESS ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Topic- 103: Speaking Skills

Speaking is a productive skill which happens in real time. You cannot edit or revise as you can do with writing. Some people have a phobia of public speaking. What you say negatively or positively is affected by how you say it. The pace of speaking might be too fast or slow and the modulation of voice, pitch and tone all effect how your speech is perceived by the listener. While written communication is visual, permanent, and has delayed reception, speaking is auditory and temporary. In writing a lot depends on punctuation, delayed or no feedback; in speaking prosody and immediate feedback play an important role. Unlimited planning, editing and revision are possible in writing, in speaking, planning and editing is limited by the channel being used.

Oral communication is crucial to the success of any organization. Spoken skills are required for various business related functions, like video conferences, telephone, formal and informal presentations, voicemails and meetings. Verbal and non-verbal skills are as important as verbal skills, conscious or unconscious movement of any part of the body can communicate an emotional message. Cues to convey a message can be eye contact, facial expression, posture, proximity. In teaching speaking skills to business English learners, teachers should be aware of difference in the context of second language learning and foreign language learning as well as multicultural concerns.

Practice should be given to develop fluency and accuracy. Accuracy is seen in that speech matches what people say in a target language and fluency in using language confidently, and quickly. Teachers should avoid interrupting speaking skills practice and give feedback about errors after the activity. They should also limit teacher talk. Students should be given enough practice through pair and group work. Speaking tasks involving negotiation of meaning, trying to understand others and making oneself understood, involving clarifying, confirming, and checking information. Practice in transactional speaking in which using language for getting something done, a service, etc. In interactional speaking, language is used for social purposes.

Speaking is a productive oral skill as contrasted with writing. Speaking a foreign language is difficult. Using different levels of language sounds, words, syntax and discourse are part of Business English training.

Topic- 104: Listening Skills

Listening effectively is crucial to communication. No communication can take place if messages are not heard. Listening is a receptive skill which is as important as speaking. Listening is a conscious selective process, unlike hearing which is involuntary, depends on non-verbal signals. It is a taught behavior. Untrained people hear only 25% time. Listening effectively is crucial to communication. No communication can take place if messages are not heard. Collaboration demands that all voices be heard. There are various barriers to listening, which the Business English teacher should be aware of:

- Physical barriers

- Psychological barriers
- Language problems
- Non-verbal distractions
- Multitasking
- Focusing on your own response
- Preconceived notions
- Interrupting the speaker
- Noise
- Unfamiliar words

Keys to effective listening:

- Stop what you are doing.
- Do not talk
- Make eye contact
- Take notes
- Be objective
- Ask questions
- Control your reactions

Principles for teaching listening are as follows:

- Expose students to different ways of processing information
- “Bottom-up versus top-down”
- Expose students to different types of listening
- What they listen for
- Specific information
- Global of gist: main ideas
- Inference: implied meaning

Teach a variety of tasks:

- Tasks which can be done as they listen
- Task should not be too demanding
- Avoiding tasks which demand too much production

Topic- 105: Reading Skills

Reading is a process in which readers combine information from a text with their background knowledge to build meaning. Teaching objectives focus on strategic reading and fluent reading. Various principles of teaching reading skills can be used. Exploiting learners’ background knowledge includes all experiences learner brings to understand the text. These include life experiences, education, knowledge of how texts work, knowledge of first language and second language working and culture.

Building a strong vocabulary base is crucial in business communication. Basic vocabulary is taught explicitly while learners guess meaning of unfamiliar words used in the text through the context. It is easier for reader of academic texts to acquire specialist vocabulary as compared to general vocabulary. Teaching for comprehension is another principle of teaching reading, in which learners are tested and monitored. Students themselves can be trained to monitor their learning through metacognition. Asking questions in order to make sense of what is being said during reading to comprehend. What is the author trying to say? What is his/her message, does he/she convey it clearly?

Work on increasing reading rate is another goal for teachers. A fluent reader reads 200 words per-minute. The focus should be on fluent reader not speed reader, skills such as scanning, skimming, predicting, identifying main ideas. Analyzing and synthesizing the content of the reading and not focusing on one word at a time is required to increase comprehension.

Teaching reading strategies entails that learners not only know what strategy to use, but also know how to use and integrate a range of strategies. They can verbalize their thought process as they read, and be aware of other learners' strategies. Learners should be encouraged to transforming strategies and skills. Strategies are conscious actions that learners take. A skill is a strategy that becomes automatic through practice. The learner plays an active role – as they consciously learn to practice a strategy, the strategy moves from conscious to unconscious, becoming a skill from a strategy.

Assessment and evaluation should be built in teaching. Assessing growth and development in reading requires time and training. Both qualitative (reading comprehension tests, reading rate) and quantitative (journal responses, reading interest surveys and responses to reading strategy use) assessment should be built into the reading class.

<u>Topic- 106: Writing Skills</u>

Writing can be said to be a series of the following contrasts:

It is a physical as well as mental act - the physical act of committing words to some medium as well as a mental act of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs. Purpose to express and impress - In writing, we serve two masters, themselves and their own desire to express themselves and readers also called the audience.

Both a process and a product -The writer imagines, writes, rewrites, organizes, drafts and so on. The process of writing is cyclic. Ultimately, what the audience sees whether it is the teacher, the instructor or a wider audience is the product – a letter, a report, a dissertation.

Principles for teaching writing:

1. Understand your students' reasons for writing.
2. Provide opportunities for students to write.
3. Make feedback helpful and meaningful.
4. Clarify evaluation criteria.

Techniques for teaching writing skills are process writing, invention techniques, brainstorming, word mapping, and quick writing. Writing stages include drafting, feedback, and revising, proofreading and editing.

Topic- 107: Vocabulary

Vocabulary presents the main building block of functional meaning in language. There are over half a million English words, but the average native speaker is able to get by with around 5000 words. Words are bound together by grammar but without words normal communication fails. Business English has its own specialist vocabulary. How do we differentiate this vocabulary from that of General English? One way is to identify the types of, and contexts of communication. These can be summarized as:

Specialist---- Specialist

Specialist--- non-specialist

Non-specialist ---- Specialist

Generalist ---- Generalist

Specialist----Specialist: This presupposes a need for a range of vocabulary dealing with shared professional issues. The precise lexical items required will depend on the topic under consideration. However, it is possible to predict the range of vocabulary needed to treat topics within key management areas. This shared professional vocabulary depends on the topic under discussion.

Specialist----non-specialist/Non-specialist----Specialist: To be effective, today's multi-faceted manager needs to be able to operate in their own team and multi-disciplinary workgroups and contexts, so one needs business vocabulary of own area but of others as well.

Generalist----Generalist: It includes wider context in which professionals communicate outside the strict confines of corporate offices and board rooms. Successful business depends on successful relationship. So the social side of business communication must not be ignored – the ability to converse about economic, social, environment and personal issues. This requires its own set of vocabulary. So, besides context-driven and topic driven vocabulary, there is a need for general purpose vocabulary. Long lists might be daunting for the learner, so they should be served in reasonable chunks. Checklists exist in various areas and can be helpful for the Business English teacher and learner.

Topic- 108: Grammar

Grammar is the set of rules and conventions of language shared by a group of native speakers (whereby we decide whether a particular language form is right or wrong). It gives out the structure of the categories of language (whereby learners study the A – Z of grammatical structures). Grammatical accuracy is in most cases black and white, making it clear whether a sentence or an utterance is right or wrong. However, there are grey areas which are related to specific varieties of a language. The question to be asked is, is there a need for a separate grammar for business English? Actually, there is no need for any language category specific to business communication, all the forms which exist in general English - nouns, verbs, prepositions, adverbs can be utilized.

However, it does seem that some grammatical forms are more prevalent than others. Language is neutral. A genre analysis of a business text would reveal the types of communicative acts which are used for particular communicative purposes. In business communication, this could include activities such as presentations, briefings, memos, promotional letters all recognized and classified according to communicative purpose. However, as a wide ranging area it encompasses all communication activities and has no limits as far as grammar is concerned..

Principles for teaching grammar to business English learners should integrate inductive and deductive methods. In deductive teaching of grammar, rules of grammar are presented, followed by exercises to clarify grammatical point. In inductive grammar teaching, language samples are presented and learners are guided to let them discover the rule. Both methods can be used by looking at learning styles of the class. Inductive method, however, demand more mental effort and results in more effective learning, retaining more language in the long term, although takes more time for learner to understand the grammatical point in question.

Tasks related to target grammatical form and communicative function can be given for practice, to teach why a certain grammatical form is being used. Most grammar – based courses are relatively ineffective because they teach grammar in an abstract way, present grammar as isolated sentences, and fail to give a context. Typically for teaching passive voice, a list of sentences is given in passive voice, “The boy hit the window, the dog bit the man’, and then a structure of how to change it into the passive voice, ‘The window was broken’. There is no insight into the communicative contexts. Grammar should be presented in a context that makes clear the grammatical form and the communication function.

Focus on development of communicative ability of learners. Often declarative knowledge, i.e. knowing language rules is emphasized in language classes, to the neglect of procedural knowledge which is being able to use knowledge for communication. We know that learners can give a standard textbook explanation of a grammatical rule, but violate the rule when using language communicatively. Students will tell you that you have to put‘s’ after the verb in making a 3rd person declarative statement. However, they will often ignore this rule, showing that they have declarative knowledge but not procedural knowledge. By using target language items in communicative contexts, business English learners can develop their communicative competence.

Lesson 19

TEACHING BUSINESS SPEAKING SKILLS-I

Topic- 109: Socializing

Socializing skills are important for the BE learner - how to meet and greet people in various contexts before and in between meetings, at the airports, in the car parks or just passing each other in the corridor.

Business English learners often need to have certain skills in order to do their job properly, no matter what language is being used. Socializing is one such skill, and is relevant because such a lot of business-related interaction is done in places like restaurants, airports, before and after meetings, or standing chatting at trade fair stands. Most experienced business people would agree that first impressions are important when meeting someone, and this often happens in a social environment. Socializing may be vital in establishing rapport with a business partner, and good rapport is often considered essential to good business.

So, what language might be taught here? Meeting and greeting people is certainly part of this skill, and business English learners need to be taught the necessary language and social conventions. Similarly, many business people need to know the language of dining out, or what to say when visiting people's homes. Another part of socializing involves being able to keep a conversation going, and to encourage other participants in a conversation to speak. Our learners use social interactions for business, as well as pleasure, and it may be important to find out as much as possible about their conversation partners. The skill is to do this unobtrusively, so that fellow conversationalists are happy to pass on information. Related to this is storytelling, or at least the ability to tell a good anecdote. As always, the language must fit the context. Excellent use of language will be insufficient unless accompanied by an awareness of cultural factors. The businesswoman who misjudges when and where it is acceptable to make a joke, and the businessman who does not understand that alcohol plays a very different part in business socializing in Saudi Arabia, France, and Japan, will not get very far.

Simple participative activities, like role-plays and simulations, can easily be designed which enable learners to practice skills used for socializing in a safe environment. For example, at a lower level of language competence, using real restaurant menus will allow learners to practice useful lexical items, and also to role-play typical conversations about food and drink. At higher levels, learners will need to know what phrases are useful when they want to tell a story and recount a particular experience. They also need to be given the opportunity to discuss what can and cannot be said in social situations, and to develop techniques for managing conversations. In what context is it considered acceptable to talk about how much one earns, for example? When is it safe to discuss politics? What point can an overtly social conversation move on to discussing a business contract? How does the learner get out of answering difficult questions? Many of these questions have no firm right or wrong answers, but classroom discussion, the teacher's and learner's experience, and some careful research, often help.

Instructions for activities will have to be adjusted to suit the group. For example, if the group consists of pre-experienced learners, they will need to be given information about their supposed job and company, and their reasons for being in the country. If the group consists of a group of learners from the same company, the teacher can give everyone roles, including names and company details. If the group consists of learners who come from different companies, the setting might be changed, so that they are in the country they are currently in. Each person then plays themselves and their own companies. The teacher's role in such activities is to circulate and make notes of weak language, with suggestions for possible improvements. Good examples should also be recorded and referred to in the follow-up discussion.

Topic- 110: Story Telling/Meet the Guest

Story telling is an engaging or amusing way which is often a key part of effective socializing. Story telling can be practiced by encouraging learners to tell anecdotes about their own personal experiences, or by using pictures, or prompts to guide them through a story. Perhaps one of the most useful resources in the classroom is the teacher. The teacher can tell a personal anecdote, record it, and for the learners then to listen again, focusing on useful language. Here are some possible approaches to using the text:

- Learners listen to the original recording and then repeat the story.
- Learners read the text and then repeat the story.
- The teacher turns the text into a gap-fill exercise by removing some words.

The teacher divides the story up into three or four parts, and asks learners to put the parts in the right order (a scrambled text task). Learners identify phrases or expressions in the text which they might find useful when they tell the story themselves. Learners mark places in the text where they think pauses should be, and underline the words which they feel need to be emphasized. They then read the story aloud to the class.

Topic- 111: Small Talk, in Pairs, Small Groups

When people are engaged in a business situation, they are not talking business all the time. There are times when they have to talk about normal, everyday matters, like discussing the weather, exchanging pleasantries, asking after each other's health, etc. Such talk is called '*small talk'* and is part of normal human interaction. Business English learners will have to carry out small talk in-between meetings, at airports, in the corridors and car parks, over food, and other contexts of socializing. Practice should therefore be part of their Business Communication training.

Small talk requires learners to engage in polite discussion on, often banal subjects, using appropriate language.

Topic- 112: Telephoning: Standard Lexical Phrases, Survival Strategies

Answering the telephone strikes terror in the heart of any language learner. As it happens in real time, so choosing the right response and having a number of standard phrases to use is important. Usually a telephone call catches you when you are in the middle of something else. Then there is no body language to help the learner understand what the caller is trying to say. However, it is a skill that can be learnt.

A lot of business is done over the phone, so communication skills to use the phone are an important part of BE learners' training. In a telephone call both interlocutors contribute in the conversation and since the aim is to achieve success as far as the business objective is concerned, it should not fail just because one person does not have effective telephone skills. Some telephone calls are quite easy to manage. For example a call made by the secretary to put the call through or the call to say that someone is going to be late for the meeting. Phrases for both kinds of calls are easy to learn and use.

Telephone training falls into two main parts. First, there are standard lexical phrases which are learned, and which are useful in many contexts, e.g. "*I'm calling about …",* or "*I'll put you through*". The second type is survival strategies, which allow the learner to control the conversation and deal with the situation ("*I didn't quite catch it"*, "*Could you spell that?"*, "*Could you confirm that in writing*?". The teacher can teach by using typical functions like getting through, taking and leaving messages, clarifying information or can use a task based approach, using role plays to find learners weaknesses in which learners learn through performing.

An effective way is to use learners' mother tongue to discuss telephone skills as it is difficult to separate language from communication skills. The choice depends on a teacher's style, learners' needs and the context.

Topic- 113: Structure of the Telephone Conversation

The structure of the telephone call can be seen as two parallel building blocks, i.e. the caller and the called, which follow a pattern. These building blocks provide a framework in which the various steps or routines fit. Giving feedback to our learners is also important, so evaluation which should be based on Preparation, Structure, Manner, and Language, which are important skills for an effective phone call.

Preparation for a telephone call refers to be mentally prepared for it, in terms of giving, confirming and requesting information, making arrangements, persuading the called party, negotiating and complaining to the called party. Evaluation should be whether the learner has made necessary preparation for the phone call? Is learner prepared for the foreseeable range of scenarios? Structure refers to the stages of the call. Is the caller aware of the steps to be taken to manage the call effectively, according to his/her purpose? Does the caller have appropriate linguistic and organizational skills to advance the call according to its purpose, through the call stages?

Manner refers to the techniques used for effective calls. It relies on voice, as there is no eye contact between the parties. Care should be taken to speak in a clear and comprehensible voice, give regular and appropriate feedback: e.g. *I see, I understand*, maintain an appropriate vocal tone which is polite, helpful, and persuasive. Acting appropriately during the call is important - not leaving caller/called hanging for more than 10 seconds and ending with offer of appropriate follow up action where necessary. Language refers to linguistic resources like correct use grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation. The key to improved performance is to agree on the elements of effective phone calls, carry out practice phone calls to integrate elements and share feedback on strengths and weaknesses.

Topic- 114: Speaking on the Phone

Various activities can be used for practicing speaking on the phone. Practicing phone calls require both a bank of short phone exercises to be used for developing techniques and language, and longer activities requiring more detailed interaction between the parties. Long activities involve detailed interaction. Published materials provide activities for practicing both. Where learners share same professional background, it requires little effort to draw up a list of typical calls they need to make and receive. The teacher can set up contexts of communication through practice calls drawn from published materials or the learners' own needs and experience.

The advantage of using role play activities at lower level is that key lexis is repeated and allows learners to concentrate on the caller's concerns when they need to use the phone in a real situation using cards and tape recorder. Similarly, leaving a message using cards is useful. Each learner is given five minutes to record their message, the class listens to recorded messages and finally the original message is displayed for learners to check. Practice of simple conversations can be done in which learners read numbered cards and clarify words and carry out role-play pairing with someone with same number card. Learners pair with other learners and repeat the conversation. Using an authentic document like a contract can be used. Each learner gets a card of the contract copy. Once familiar with the material, learner A calls learner B. The teacher records a conversation and gives feedback.

Guidelines for improved performance: The teacher should ensure that there is no eye contact when role-playing telephone calls. The teacher can ring up learners at their workplace and record conversation and give practice of listening to speech without visual cues. With learners of the same professional BG (business group), it is easy to draw up typical calls to make and receive. At higher level of training, complex role plays can be created, taking into account intercultural elements.

Lesson 20

TEACHING BUSINESS SPEAKING SKILLS-II

Topic- 115: Presentations

Presentations are communication situations in business where one person is speaking, while others listen. In this sense, nearly every time a person speaks, he or she could be said to be giving a presentation. But, even if we exclude this most general sense of the word, there is still a huge range of situations in which presentations are given. A small, informal meeting over a cup of coffee can include small, informal presentations (one person standing at the flipchart, speaking, while the others listen). Giving a talk to an audience of 300 is also a presentation. On occasion, verbal skills might be essential, but in some presentations the focus is almost completely on the visual aids being used (technical presentations are typical of this), rather than on the language spoken. The presenter's role here is different, because most of the content may actually be in the visual information, not in what the presenter has to say.

Presentation skills are particularly interesting to teach because once again the line between language and other skills is blurred. Most business English teachers have listened to learners giving perfect presentations (from a linguistic point of view), but who were so monotonous and boring that they would have lost the audience immediately. Likewise, good speakers with the right personal style, who can entertain and inform their audience, can get away with a lot in terms of linguistic (in) competence. The aim of a presentation is to get through to the audience - anything else is secondary. Of course, in many situations the audience is primarily interested in the content (rather than the presenter), which is good news for many of our learners. The audience may be willing to forgive language problems, if the message or the content, is clear or valuable. If the presenter is good, it is so much the better. Teachers who concentrate on language alone are doing their learners a disservice if they are not pointing out other aspects. These may include delivery, content, use of visual aids, and even body language.

Topic- 116: Structure – Opening

When we talk about the organization of the presentation, we mean looking at the component /parts it is made up of, and how they relate to each other. Most audiences, particularly non-native speakers, appreciate a structure which is easy to follow. Many successful presentations consist simply of three parts: an introduction (opening), a middle section (which usually contains the main substance), and a conclusion. A sales presentation, for example, might be divided into the following stages:

1. Arousal of interest.
2. A description of the problem that needs solving.
3. A solution.
4. Advantages.

As ever, the first thing we need to do is to make sure we understand the context in which our learners have to give presentations. Here is a checklist of possible questions to ask:

- Who is the audience? What might be their expectations?

- What experience does the learner have?
- What is the theme of the presentation?
- What does the presenter want the audience to get from the presentation?
- What facilities are available?
- What aids is the presenter planning to use?

In the introduction you welcome your audience, tell your aim and provide a road map, capture their attention/interest, address them politely, and set the table. Tell your name and your companions' names, welcome them and thank them for inviting you. Next tell them the road map or the thesis statement. Word picture or a variety of openings can be used to capture their attention and interest, telling anecdote, giving names, dates, times, places, etc. Asking questions is a useful technique to involve the audience. Most presenters would agree that the opening part of a presentation is particularly important because it sets the tone for what is to come. The importance of a clear opening cannot be overstated. The audience will not understand stilted jargon and complex construction, so communication that is easy to understand should be used, assuming that your audience is laymen.

Topic- 117: Structure – The Main Body and Conclusion

After having aroused audience interest and stated your goals, you have to prove your assertions. The body provides an opportunity to prove your thesis statement. Various organization techniques can be used for the information you are giving:

Comparison/Contrast: Compare different employees, office equipment, site for new office.

Problem/Solution: A problem-to-solution analysis while explaining why your department needs downsizing.

Argument/Persuasion: All presentations have an element of persuasion in them, like all good common writing. You will be persuading your audience regarding some information; you have shared with them in your presentation.

Importance: Prioritizing your information from most important to least important or vice versa will help your audience to understand your reasoning more easily. Chronology: A chronological presentation can outline for your audience the plan of action they have to follow.

Maintaining Coherence: To maintain coherence guide your listeners through your speech by using signposting and reference to previous knowledge. It is hard to get far in business without having to give some kind of presentation, so part of the business English teacher's task is to help learners prepare their presentations.

Topic- 118: Language for Presentations

Using the voice, intonation, chunking correctly is an important skill in presenting. There is certain language, often called signposting, which is used in each of the sections of a structure, to help guide a listener through the presentation. Typical signposts are: *So, Right then, let's start, to conclude, I'd just like to go back to* One way to focus on such items is to get learners to listen to professional presenters, and to listen out for how these signposts are used to manage the presentation. Teachers should note that many commercial materials available on the market also include recordings which allow the practice of such language. At higher levels, it is often possible to teach rhetorical language, such as tripling (Our computers are fast, reliable, and inexpensive), emphasizing (e.g. use of lexis like really, absolutely, extremely), rhetorical questions (What does this mean? Let me tell you ...), and so on. Metaphors and anecdotes may help to make a presentation easier to understand or a particular point more memorable. It is always useful to practice language and techniques for dealing with questions.

The key to any presentation is not the vocabulary, or the structure, or the wonderful slides. The key is the voice. It's not what the presenters say; it is how they say it, which often determines the success of a presentation. So, many teachers spend a significant amount of time working on delivery techniques such as intonation, stress, and chunking.

Intonation is about how the voice rises and falls in pitch during speech. It is related to culture, so that a German speaker, say, might sound monotonous to an English listener, but quite lively to Japanese. One way to explore this aspect is to ask learners to read short texts in strange ways - too fast, too slow, and too loud. They should be encouraged to experiment. The idea is to make them more aware of their own voices. You will not be able to highlight important points. So your body language, pitch, gestures, and enunciation will highlight what you want to emphasize. The stress has to do with where speakers put the emphasis on particular words, or on specific syllables within the words. Learners need to understand how altering the stress patterns change the meaning of the sentences.

Chunking is how words are characteristically grouped together in spoken utterances (see page 9). Training in this involves teaching learners how to identify such 'chunks' and insert pauses at the appropriate places. An excellent way to bring this message across is to get learners to listen to a well-known politician or business leader giving a speech (if the teacher can provide a transcript, so it's much better). Learners could be asked to predict where the pauses (and stress, and rises and falls in intonation) will be, and then to compare their predictions to the real conversation. Pausing at appropriate points is also important.

Topic- 119: Preparing for Presentations

Preparing for presentations involves using/thinking about the wide range of technology available ranging from the PowerPoint, the OHP (Overhead Projector) to the use of audio and video equipment as well as preparing learners for it. Training should include body language, using prompt cards, referring to vocal techniques and printed notes to be used to help recall. There are enormous benefits of the PowerPoint. It offers a perfect hybrid, fusing the benefits of oral with written communication. Use of PPTs has become the standard in oral presentation. You have the power of oral communication enhanced by the power of written communication.

Most professional presenters rehearse their presentations as a matter of course, although rehearsals are not always relevant to business context, which might demand an impromptu performance. Using a video camera to record learners' performance is invaluable, although the teacher or a co-learner should be adept at using it. Another technique is to use other learners to use a checklist which includes the following points:

- Aids

- Rapport
- Delivery
- Language

As business English learners expect a lot of professionalism from their teachers, a valuable strategy for teachers is to give some formal presentations themselves to enhance this key business skill. A teacher could try to practice presentation skills by giving a presentation to peers at a conference. This would turn out to be quite a different experience than teaching a class. The teacher should try to include using the technology and resources which that particular teacher's learners are expected to use. For example, if the learners use PowerPoint™, the teacher should become familiar with what it can do. Such a strategy will probably result in teachers learning more about giving presentations than any book will teach them, and they can use this experience and transfer it to students who are preparing for presentations of their own.

Topic- 120: Practice of Presentations

The classroom is seen as the arena practicing and getting feedback about their performance. Practice of presentations should be based on the course objectives and building blocks of the presentation. The four areas to focus on for practice and evaluation are: Content, Structure, Delivery, and Language.

Practice Stage 1: Each participant gives two minutes presentation in which he/she greets the audience, gives an introduction of him/her and the talk, and gives an outline of the presentation. This is followed by a roundtable feedback, both negative and positive, regarding content, structure, delivery, language. A participant may be asked to repeat his activity.

Practice Stage 2: At this stage each participant gives ten-minute presentation of the main part. Each practice is followed by a feedback discussion: Content, delivery, language, and structure. This part is videoed so that participants can see their performance. Good or bad visual aids are discussed as well as overhead transparencies.

Practice Stage 3: Each participant presents a transparency, for 2 to 3 minutes, practicing appropriate language and appropriate techniques, followed by discussion on delivery and techniques. Discussion is on the importance of strong and memorable ending.

Practice Stage 4: Each participant summarizes and concludes the presentation. Discussion is as before.

Practice Stage 5: Each participant gives a complete presentation. Feedback is as before. Discussion is on question handling both easy and difficult questions.

Practice Stage 6: Each participant gives part of their prepared talk, while the audience interrupts with questions. Feedback is given as before.

Practice Stage 7: If time permits, further practice of prepared presentations is done and feedback is given as before.

Training and practice can help learners improve their presentation skills. Practice improves communication skills and confidence. Constructive feedback combined with practice in class is invaluable for improving presentation skills.

Lesson 21

TEACHING BUSINESS SPEAKING SKILLS-III

Topic- 121: Business Meetings

In business, people have meetings all the time. There are many types of meetings - large formal meetings, with a chairperson, and someone responsible for taking the minutes, and there are informal meetings over a cup of tea. Meetings with customers will not be the same as meetings with partners, which will in turn not be the same as internal departmental meetings.

The very notion of a meeting can mean something different in different cultures. In some countries, a meeting is used to lay down the basis for consultation and discussion. In others, meetings are used primarily to present the boss's opinion or transmit corporate directives. In some cultures, meetings will follow a carefully organized plan, while in others the way they develop will depend on the issues raised or the people involved. Sometimes people will focus entirely on the business of the meeting, whereas at other times the meeting may be one of several things happening at that time (e.g. phone calls, private conversations, interruptions).

Meetings are a normal part of business routine. There are briefing meetings with the aim to inform participants, brainstorming meetings, decision-making and problem-solving meetings, committee meetings. Usually there are two or more interested groups, a chair is elected, and decisions are reached. Companies have different types of meetings. The AGM is a requirement for all companies, with fixed procedures, including reports, the company's accounts and resolutions.

Constituents of effective meetings are:

- People: Refers to people involved and their being aware of their role in it.
- Procedure: Steps and stages and their management.
- Results: Outcome of meetings. Meetings fail because the participants don't know the purpose of the meeting.

Meeting success depends on:

- Communicating the purpose effectively
- Satisfying expectations
- Clarifying the outcomes in terms of action recommended

Objectives for Business English Learners:

- To develop meeting skills in terms of procedures
- To improve techniques for improving, controlling and participating in meetings
- To practice presenting information in meetings
- To learn appropriate expressions to do above
- To practice meeting and get feedback from on strengths and weaknesses

So the main concerns of business English learners are:

- The procedural elements
- The linguistic elements
- Practice
- Feedback

Procedures for the chairperson (opening, welcoming, apologizing, stating objectives, closing, summarizing, setting next meeting), the participants (giving oral presentations, giving an opinion, agreeing, disagreeing, advising, suggesting, asking for information, asking for clarification), for the secretary, (to record names of participants, absentees, the points discussed, details of discussion, argument, decisions taken, voting details, actions taken, next meeting). Effective management of meetings means that first the trainees are made aware of the process of meetings and then given the tools to carry them out. The tools which are needed to carry out the procedures are linguistic, oral and written skills. There are lists of phrases which can be shared with learners.

Topic- 122: Language in Meetings

Meetings are communication situations in which the main part is played by language, including traditional grammatical forms like vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Procedures for the chairperson, participants and secretaries are accompanied by appropriate and usual linguistic forms. In order to utilize classroom time, activities should focus on practice and feedback, through a series of mini practices in an observable way in which feedback is given in one or more of these areas. Some linguistic elements are mechanical, e.g. greeting, but others like summarizing require higher skills and need practice to achieve.

Language of meetings requires both link and control phrases. Beyond the control language is the content of the meeting, the agenda points for discussion. With students of same professional background this is easy but with students of disparate professional backgrounds, it poses a problem and is more challenging. Universal topics involving social and ethical issues, which can be shared by all, can be drawn up by the teacher to involve active participation of all. The language of meetings can be equally varied. In formal meetings, there are certain lexical items which are quite common, such as *"Has everyone got a copy of the minutes?"* Or *"Moving on to item, three on the agenda…."*

Unfortunately, many business English course books have presented language that can seem stilted or unnatural. A course book of language for interrupting may include rather labored phrases. It is probably not worth spending too much time on convoluted phrases which might appear, and far more useful to practice the language and skills that actually occur in meetings. Normally people in meetings are doing things like passing on information, persuading, justifying, defending their position, or arguing. So the language teacher's focus should reflect this. Other common functions include clarifying and summarizing.

Role-plays and simulations which come close to what the learners do in real life will obviously be the most useful, so one of the first things to do is decide how to approach the topic in the classroom, and which type of meeting to focus on. For example, with a large group of pre-experience learners it might be worth spending some time exploring role-play scenarios set by the teacher.

Meeting role-play - the teacher gives each learner a copy of an agenda and some background information, together with a role-card which gives specific information which the learner will need during the meeting, including opinions about the issues being discussed. This information is not available to other learners in the group, which makes the whole role-play more realistic.

Meeting simulation - another option is to present the learners with background information, and then allow them to play themselves, thus creating a simulation rather than a role-play. For example, they could be asked to organize a conference in a hotel, and then be given access to the hotel websites in order to gather relevant information before coming together to find the best solution.

With a small group of experienced managers, on the other hand, it might make more sense to design the meeting simulations around the types of meetings the managers actually participate in (in an ideal situation the teacher might get permission to observe such events). Points to consider when designing meeting simulations include:

- Who is to chair the meeting, if it is to be chaired at all?
- What is the chair's role?
- What contributions are to be made by participants in the meeting?
- What is the function of the meeting (e.g. to discuss issues, brainstorm, find solutions to problems, give out tasks, make decisions, pass on information, and so on)?
- How formal will it be (e.g. strict rules of procedure)?
- Will there be a tight structure (e.g. agenda, timings)?
- Will minutes be produced? If so, who is responsible?

In large formal meetings, with a chairperson, and someone responsible for taking the minutes, and there are informal meetings over a cup of tea.

Topic- 123: Activities: Role-play, Simulations

Role-plays and simulations which come close to what the learners do in real life will obviously be the most useful, so one of the first things to do is decide how to approach the topic in the classroom, and which type of meeting to focus on. For example, with a large group of pre-experience learners it might be worth spending some time explaining different types of meeting before going on to form small groups who role-play scenarios set by the teacher. There are several activities which are available in course books, supplementary material provided by the publisher and on the Internet to set up such exercises on role-plays and simulations.

Topic- 124: Teaching Negotiations

A negotiation is a special meeting in which parties need each other's agreement in order to achieve an effective result. In business, we have to bargain to get something we want. This might be regarding delivery dates, costs or price. In daily life we negotiate all the time and have to compromise, and give in to mutual interest. Various types of negotiation outcomes/objectives are seen in business:

- Distributive.
- Competitive
- Win-lose

- Directly opposite goals
- Conflict: Price, resources
- Long-term relationship, A's gain would be B's lose

In integrative and win-win situations, the goals are not mutually exclusive, so the focus is to achieve consensus on common goals, solutions, concentrate on needs and interests, not positions, and generally seeking outcomes for both sides to gain. Integrative negotiators explore mutual needs and interests, find a way forward. Negotiators are neither wholly distributive nor integrative, and have the ability to move from win-lose position to win-win.

Constituents of an effective negotiation are:

- People: refers to everyone involved in the negotiation and their roles.
- Planning/procedures: Steps and stages of the meeting in which they meet face-to-face.
- The results: outcome of the negotiation is important. All parties are committed to the agreement reached, terms of agreement clear, and are capable of being implemented.
- Language: refers to traditional categories of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation (Key to improving performance is to agree what constitutes an effective negotiation).

Learning objectives for developing negotiating skills involve teaching business techniques and tactics, presenting information using appropriate expressions. In short, we can say that there are procedural and tactical elements, linguistic elements, and feedback which should be elements of the course design. The problem for Business English teachers is that the tactical aspects and procedural aspects are largely related to management training and learners might have gone through them in various approaches. To avoid clash, it is better to focus on the traditional areas of language teaching.

The teacher's job is to provide a framework for practicing procedures of negotiation and leaving learners to use their own tactical repertoire and tools. These tools would be linguistic tools and checklists of language item to improve performance.

Topic- 125: Stages in Negotiation

Following are the stages in a business negotiation:

1. Preparation includes the following points:

- Assessing power
- Establishing specific needs/objectives
- Sorting out options
- Defining issues
- Setting positions
- Finding out the bottom-line need of the other party

2. Relationship building: Getting to know the other party, looking at the similarities and differences, achieving a mutually beneficial set of outcomes

3. Information gathering: Learning about the issue, the other party and their needs, about the feasibility of possible settlements and the outcome in case of failure to reach agreement with the other side

Each of these stages can be seen as a communicative situation, requiring its own set of linguistic items. Understanding these stages is useful in trying to work out potentially useful language.

Topic- 126: Language and other Negotiating Skills

Identifying the key language for use in negotiations can be quite difficult. Classroom activities to focus on negotiation practice, feedback, to derive greatest benefit from short classes. Course books usually emphasis on functional areas:

- Summarizing
- Clarifying
- Asking questions
- Proposing/agreeing/disagreeing

However, the real pressures on learners have nothing to do with language – a boss-wants results, a promotion depends on your negotiation. An added problem is that no negotiator ever knows the real motivations/desires of the other side. Negotiators are people who can be influenced by people and personalities. Perhaps the best way is to adopt a task based approach, i.e. to do role-plays and simulations in class, provide opportunities for non-linguistic negotiating skills and practice relevant language. Using a camera and observers to watch and give feedback to learners about their performance is useful.

Ideally a role-play activity should give background information; learners understand the situation and their roles and are given enough preparation time. Students would be motivated if the scenario is from the area business situation. Reverse role simulations enable learners and teachers to maximally contribute their knowledge and expertise to the task. After elements of effective negotiations are agreed, a series of mini practice sessions with the aim to improve learners' performance in an observable way.

Context for negotiation can be generated by students or teacher according to professional background. With students of diverse backgrounds, it can be based around a problem – easily understood and quickly prepared. Contexts for negotiation could be as the following:

- Buyer-seller: price, discount
- Employer-employee: salary, leaves
- Budget allocation: Allocation of funds for company/department, for marketing, research, administration.

As with all communication skills, the key is to give practice on relevant scenarios from learners' work place, constant feedback for improvement according to trainee's needs.

Lesson 22

TEACHING BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS-I

Topic- 127: Business Writing: The Process

Business writing is a key part of the day-to-day activities of most businesses and like speaking, is used in a vast range of different situations. It allows communication across time and space, and provides an invaluable medium for storing records and other information. Written communication offers different challenges from spoken interaction. In one way, writing is easier than speaking, in that it is not usually spontaneous and near-instantaneous. There is time to think about what the sender has sent and what the reply should contain, so it is more contrived. On the other hand, speaking is more natural, and is a skill that needs to be learned. Writing requires planning and organizational skills, as well as skills in linking paragraphs and sentences together, skills in spelling, punctuation, word order, word choice, and overall evaluation of the end result.

The approaches to teaching writing are the process approach which is based on the three steps of: prewriting, writing and rewriting.

The genre approach is an alternative approach to the teaching of writing. The underlying theory here is that texts of a certain type, e.g. letters have the same kind of purpose as each other and show similar language and features. Letters are different, in these terms, from reports, which in turn are different from agendas. A genre like letters can be divided into sub-genres like letters of persuasion, letters of enquiry, letters of confirmation, and so on. Some teachers argue against a genre approach, saying that the notion of genre is too vague to be of practical use to the student. After all, every letter is unique and has its own specific characteristics. Others argue that the theory of genre is useful for teachers and learners alike because it gives learners something concrete to aim for. In a genre approach, learners are given the chance to study model texts and to base their own writing on what they have noticed in the texts.

The goals in writing are accuracy, conciseness, effectiveness, organization and ethics.

Topic- 128: Prewriting

Most good writers use a process to write. Prewriting is the first step in the process approach to teach writing. It is like plotting a route before a trip. Prewriting involves planning your communication and the objectives are to:

- Examining the purpose
- Determining goals
- Considering audience: Internal, external
- Deciding what action you want from your audience
- Generating information/collecting data
- Choosing channel, according to audience, purpose

Examining your Purpose: First thing is to determine one's goals - Why are you writing? The writer has to decide whether he/she is writing to persuade the reader to accept their point of view. Is instruction the purpose of writing - to direct action, to follow procedures? Is it to inform co-workers, staff about change, plan or procedure? Or whether is it to build trust, rapport, and positivity within the organization or with external readers? This will help in determining your motivation, whether it is extrinsic or intrinsic.

Considering Audience: What you say and how you say it depends on who are your audience are. They might be seniors or subordinates. They may be high, low or lay audience as far as the concerned area of communication is concerned, so the writer has to select appropriate content and language. Multicultural audience is normal in today's business as well as ethnic and gender diversity. Considering the audience helps to decide how many details, definition, examples, you have to give.

Gathering Data: What the writer says in the body of the text has to be based on valid facts and figures. This information can be gathered by a number of quantitative and qualitative methods and primary and secondary sources. This might be related to personnel, dates, actions, procedures, locations, resources, costs, etc. Ways to gather data are:

- Answering reporters' questions
- Mind mapping
- Brain storming
- Story boarding
- Outlining
- Creating organizational charts
- Researching

Determining the communication channel is also an important feature of writing. The choice can be a letter, memo, blog entry, text massage, email proposal. Also, whether the letter is meant for single sourcing or designed to be recombined, reused for future projects.

Principles of writing effectively are:

- Accuracy: Refers to the correct use of language forms: grammar vocabulary spelling).
- Fluency: Fluency refers to the mechanics required speed of writing, effort, flow of writing).
- Effectiveness: Refers to the impact it has on the reader in terms of layout, conciseness, coherence, cohesion, appropriacy of style, use of a variety of features, tables, highlighting etc.
- Conciseness
- Ethics

Objectives in teaching writing:

- To improve writing skills for reports and correspondence (This will vary according to the needs of the particular group e.g. for secretaries, managers).
- To develop appropriate style.
- To improve knowledge of standard structures and phrases used for reports, documents.
- To practice writing, get feedback on strengths/weaknesses, especially with a view to check accuracy and effectiveness.

Topic- 129: Writing

After prewriting the next stage is writing, in which you package your ideas which are gathered in the pre-writing stage, draft document, organize the content, add the visual aids and format the body of the document. Organization of text can be:

- Spatial
- Chronological
- Importance
- Comparison/ contrast
- Problem /Solution

Teaching the elements of structure - how paragraphs and sentences work together. Two principle ways to ensure this:

Coherence: It involves creating a logical argument or a sequence which makes sense to the reader. Activities can include jumbled up paragraphs and sentences

Cohesion: It is about how sentences connect with each other to form a sense of unity. Various grammatical devices, such as conjunctions, pronouns, lexical items work for cohesion.

Formatting allows the reader ease of access to the text - how it looks on the screen. Various techniques can be used to make the text reader friendly. Highlighting the key points catch the reader's attention. Breaking paragraphs into manageable chunks is another technique to make a long text less formidable. Teaching writing can use an eclectic approach, focusing on the structure, and on teaching cohesion/coherence. Activities should be based on models of good writing.

Topic- 130: Rewriting

The final step in the writing process is rewriting. To perfect your writing, the text has to be revised for:

- Retrievab ility
- Readability
- Accuracy
- Usability Rewriting for perfecting
- Test for usability

At the rewriting stage, the documents are revised for:

- Adding details
- Deleting wordiness
- Simplifying words
- Enhancing tone
- Reformatting
- Proofreading correcting errors

Usability means that the audience can understand the text. Various revision techniques can be used to achieve usability in a text. Rewriting is the most important stage in writing. It helps the writer to understand what should be kept in the draft and what should be discarded. It looks at what would confuse the readers. If the reader cannot understand the text it destroys the credibility of the writer.

Process Approach to writing is a dynamic process. The three parts can occur simultaneously. They give a generic approach which gives a methodology which can help Business Communication learners to write effective written communication in every situation.

Topic- 131: The Context of Writing

Writing happens in a context. It has to relate to the setting. This means that a BE writer has to take into account/consider the audience, the purpose of the document and the expected response. This also explains why BE teachers integrate writing with other skills activities such as role-plays and simulations.

It is important to recognize your audience /readers. Your choice of vocabulary ,style and tone will depend on who is going to read the report. Is it for in-company or outside the organization, is it for an international audience? Is it a favorite client or new one? The audience can be high-tech, i.e. experts, or low-tech, i.e. those who have some knowledge, or lay, i.e. those who don't know anything, necessitating keeping it simple as proficiency might not be like yours. They may be customers, students, and a diverse audience. They could be multicultural, and have different ways of understanding. What works in one culture may not work in another.

The practical intent of the writing is of key interest. Grammatical niceties rarely matter in the business world. What matters is whether the document can be used. Business people would not notice writing errors of an email, but say, "*great, we got the contract*"! Rather than saying. "*This email is full of mistakes, it is unacceptable".* This might be anathema for English teachers, but the fact is that some companies have policy for internal emails: speed and efficiency rather than correctness. In teaching too much red-inking in practice letter will undermine confidence of a learner. The purpose is to achieve accuracy, in contracts and minutes, as they are referred to again and again. Vagueness in amounts, dates and costs has to be avoided. While responding to letter various things have to be considered:

- If the writer is angry, it might not be appropriate to respond at instantaneously in the same vein.
- What is the relationship between me and my reader, or between the companies we work for? Is it long term, short term, customer, partnership?
- What are the main issues at stake? - Loss of business, profits, details on a project, loss of trust, etc.
- Is there enough information? Will my reader know what I need or want them to do.

Topic- 132: Activities for Practice

Practical models of business language should be used as teaching examples for learners to familiarize them with style, layout and organization of letters to develop competence. These are best taught through controlled activities. Free activities aim to integrate into relevant documents.

A Paired Crossword Approach combines the different threads of the course design – the lexical, functional, situational and structural thread. In activities too we can combine one or two, e.g. the same text can be used for punctuation and for focusing on lexis. There can be a combination of lexis and grammar in the same text. Information is divided in the two participants and given in the form of cards. Neither knows what the other has on his/her card. Other activities are:

- Gap Fill
- Mixed Jumbled texts/phrases
- Dividing sentences into two halves and learners to find the matching sentence halves.
- Change style from formal to informal.

Examining models of good writing can become a good starting point. The idea is not for learners to replicate them but to examine their layout and style, in order to develop their own style. Activities and practice of writing through controlled activities aim to develop competence in techniques, formats and language forms. Free activities are undertaken to allow learners to integrate them into documents relevant to their workplace and adapt them to their own style. The published material is available to provide for the former, whereas learners can provide materials from their workplace for free activities.