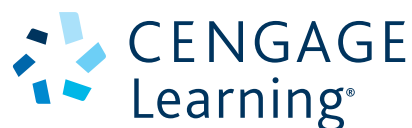


English at Work

An Analysis of Case Reports about English Language Training for the 21st-century Workforce

Anthony Fitzpatrick & Robert O'Dowd



TIRF – The International Research Foundation for English Language Education – promotes research and best practices in the teaching and learning of English. The Foundation supports research on high priority topics of current interest through doctoral scholarships and commissioned investigations.

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Foreword



A Japanese executive is sent with his family to live in Kuala Lumpur and manage his company's manufacturing center there.

Thai college graduates work as receptionists in the business center at a major hotel in Bangkok.

A Pakistani banker takes a job in Dubai.

Young men and women at call centers in the Philippines and in Guatemala field telephone inquiries regarding computer problems.

In Brazil, police and health service employees prepare for the influx of visitors for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics.

Russian- and Ukrainian-speaking nuclear and biological scientists take courses in California and attend non-proliferation conferences in Washington, DC.

In Australia, some Iraqi refugees in the food service industry work as servers, rather than as dishwashers.

The development of ecotourism provides employment opportunities for high school graduates in Kenya and Mongolia.

Armenian diplomats-in-training prepare for postings throughout Western Europe.

What do these people have in common?

It is very likely that all of them, along with countless other people around the world, will need English in their jobs. Whether they are communicating with employees, colleagues, clients, or visitors, most of them will use English as a *lingua franca*, or language of wider communication, in work contexts like the scenarios described above.

The current focus of the Board of Trustees of TIRF – The International Research Foundation for English Language Education – is on promoting research and best practices to improve the use of English in the emerging global knowledge economy of the 21st century.

This focus leads to important questions regarding English in business, industry, and the professions – questions about the skills needed by members of the 21st-century workforce and the kinds of programs that can help them develop those skills.

In this report, which is TIRF's second commissioned study, authors Anthony Fitzpatrick and Robert O'Dowd have investigated the issue of how language programs are preparing people to use English in these and other work-related contexts. They have provided a review of relevant literature and analyzed case reports submitted by twenty different language teaching organizations around the globe.

The twenty case reports summarized here do not represent a random sample of all the English language training programs for business, industry, and the professions. Nor does TIRF endorse these programs or make any claims about their reported success. However, we are excited to share the results of this study and we hope that it will be useful to practitioners, policy makers, and researchers alike. We anticipate that these findings will inform decision making and policy setting, which in turn will lay the groundwork for further investigations. We welcome questions or comments about the ideas presented herein and hope this study will encourage others to continue investigating these important issues.

Kathleen M. Bailey

Kathleen M. Bailey, PhD
President and Chair of the Board of Trustees,
The International Research Foundation
for English Language Education

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations



List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
ALTE	Association of Language Testers in Europe
BVI	Blind and vision impaired
BULATS	Business Language Testing Service
CAT	Computer adaptive test
CBI	Content-based instruction
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CLIL	Content and language integrated learning
CNS	Center for Nonproliferation Studies
DHI	Deaf and hearing impaired
DIALANG	Diagnostic Language Assessment System
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EU	European Union
HR	Human Resources
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (in Afghanistan)
LB	Language Biography
LP	Language Portfolio
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Association
NBC	Nuclear, biomedical, and chemical industries
OMLT	Operational mentor and liaison team
NEA	National Education Association
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages / Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TIRF	The International Research Foundation for English Language Education
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
VOLL	Vocationally Oriented Language Learning

Executive Summary

This study set out to identify the role that English plays in the 21st-century workplace and to explore how learners and workers around the world, both in English-speaking countries and in those where English is a foreign language, are being prepared to use English efficiently and effectively in their fields of work. For successful global cooperation, a common language is required, and there is no doubt that English has taken on this role in the 21st century. With this point in mind, The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) commissioned this study to explore how people around the world are being prepared to use English at work.

Approach Used in the Study

More than 100 recent books, articles, reports, and websites related to English language training for business, vocational, and professional purposes were reviewed. The findings of that literature review were related to twenty substantive case reports submitted to TIRF by English teaching professionals from various countries. The case report contributors represent English language training programs for business, vocational, and professional purposes. The information from the case reports was then discussed in terms of the English language needs of both immigrant workers in English-speaking countries and workers in a range of contexts where English serves as the means of communication among speakers of various languages.

Two main questions were addressed in this study. First, what English-related skills are needed for the 21st-century workforce? Second, how are members of the modern-day workforce being trained to develop English language skills throughout their professional careers? The first question was addressed through the literature review and the second by analyzing the themes that arose in the case reports. The answers to these questions indicate that there has been a substantial paradigm shift in course design and English language teaching methods. This development addresses the new aims and objectives defined as essential in the modern world, and also better meets the language needs of workforce learners and their organizations.

For successful global cooperation, a common language is required, and English has taken on this role in the 21st century.



The 21st-century Workforce

The paradigm shift referred to above is due, in part, to the fact that English is no longer seen as something to be taught separately from other subjects and skills. Rather, it is a tool to help people utilize a range of skills in their daily practice. Thus, English language training for current employees or for those preparing to join the workforce should reflect and be combined with the development of other skills needed in the 21st-century workplace. These 21st-century skills complement the specific job-related expertise that graduates and workers bring to the workforce in their own disciplines.

21st-century skills include those that enable workers to communicate and collaborate with others, organize and analyze information, make informed decisions, and then take decisive action. The skills required demand the deployment of the innovative abilities, technological knowledge, and career skills required in modern societies. The case reports which are presented in the study show how language training organizations are meeting these new challenges and how language teachers are designing curricula and training materials to satisfy the immediate and long-term needs of their learners.

Other key competences deemed necessary for active citizenship, social cohesion, and employability in a knowledge society include the ability to communicate in foreign languages, digital competence, and social and civic competences, as well as cultural awareness and expression. All of these competences are being implemented through the use of English in many of the working contexts examined in this study.

The analysis of the case reports revealed that English language teaching methods and course design for training the workforce currently emphasize interdisciplinarity between language and the combination of professional and cultural content. The teaching of subject matter through English has become a much more common practice than in the past. In addition, we have seen an increase in project-based approaches to classroom learning, which allow students to put into practice both the foreign language and the applied skills that they need for the workplace. These project-based approaches often involve the use of online tools

How are members of the modern-day workforce being trained to develop English language skills?

21st-century skills enable workers to communicate and collaborate with others, organize and analyze information, make informed decisions, and then take decisive action.

and resources. These developments have led to a change in the approach and work of language teachers, who are now expected to integrate all these elements into their teaching.

Communicative Needs of the 21st-century Workforce

What are the English language communicative needs of the 21st-century workforce? Those courses which have traditionally been called “business English” and “English for specific purposes” have mainly emphasized developing future workers’ skills in the classic business tasks of formal presentations, letter and email writing, formal negotiations, etc. However, recent studies highlight the importance of English for informal interaction and socializing in workforce contexts. English learners urgently need to be sensitized to communicative strategies for establishing relationships and maintaining rapport in the workplace (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Forey & Nunan, 2002). In meetings, the ability to take part in discussions is considered much more important than actually carrying out formal presentations. In addition, participation in teamwork is vital for job success. Furthermore, increased awareness of cultural differences that may arise in the workplace in both oral and written forms of communication is essential in the contemporary workplace, where personnel are of different ages and represent a range of linguistic, ethnic, and social backgrounds.

The case reports represent workforce training programs offered in a wide range of professional fields from an array of geographical backgrounds.

Case Reports and Principal Trends

The case reports summarized in this paper show a rich variety of courses offered in a wide range of professional fields (including dentistry, nursing, the military, diplomatic services, engineering, and finance and general business, among others). These courses are offered to learners from an array of geographical backgrounds, including Australia, Japan, Latin America, Europe, the Gulf region, China, Hong Kong, and the United States. The case reports offer practical portraits of how the principles, aims, and methods of the literature review are being put into practice around the world. Summaries of the case reports are provided to

help readers decide which of the reports might be of particular interest to them before they consult the corresponding full case report on the TIRF website (www.tirfonline.org).

The principal trends and developments identified in the case reports were

- a move towards specialization and personalization of English language training;
- the consolidation of online technologies as tools for learning and teaching;
- the increased recognition given to cultural aspects of language and communication;
- a rise in the use of project-based learning and authentic materials;
- the use of English to teach discipline- or career-specific content;
- the importance of autonomy and developing the skills of learner independence; and
- the vital importance of higher management support of English programs.

In contrast, two themes identified in the literature review received relatively little attention in the case reports: learner mobility within study programs and preparation for 21st-century literacies.

The paper suggests implications for companies and organizations that wish to improve workers' English language skills. Recommendations are also made for workforce training providers and for language learners themselves.

Based upon the findings of the study, a preliminary checklist for those wishing to set up or evaluate a language course for workers in a specific vocational or professional setting is provided at the end of this paper (see Appendix A).

The paper suggests implications for companies and organizations that wish to improve workers' English language skills.

English at Work



An Analysis of Case Reports about English Language Training for the 21st-century Workforce

1. Context of the Study

The dual phenomena of globalization and online communications technologies have brought about dramatic and ongoing changes in business, industry, and the professions in the first decade of the 21st century. In addition, related trends have accelerated the impact of these changes: the interdependency of economies around the world, the international outsourcing of manufacturing services, increased dependence on migrant workers, international multi-site collaboration in product development, and online collaboration and exchange. All these factors have become integral, intertwined elements of the modern-day workplace. As a result, for global cooperation to function effectively, a widely spoken common language is often required, and recent research (Graddol, 2006; GlobalEnglish, 2011) has clearly shown that English has taken on this role.

But how is the English language being used in the 21st-century workplace? And how can those employed in the workforce most effectively prepare for and develop their use of English language skills throughout their professional careers? This study sets out to explore what English-related skills are needed for the 21st-century workforce and how learners and workers around the world, both in English-speaking countries and in those where English is a foreign language, are being prepared to use English efficiently and effectively in their work.

The role of English as a global language has been examined elsewhere (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006), but it is still interesting to observe how the role of English in the workplace has been shaped dramatically by aspects of globalization. This trend can be seen in three interconnected yet separate developments.



The first of these developments is that the English language is often seen as the key to gaining access to global markets by non-English-speaking companies. Employers need their employees to be proficient in English, whether it is to do business in English-speaking countries or to operate in other markets where English can be used as the *lingua franca*. Despite the rise in importance of local languages in *glocalization*¹, English remains the language of international business. As a result, employees in multinational companies are increasingly expected to use English, not only with their international clients but also for internal communication with their own colleagues from other language backgrounds.

Various other studies have confirmed the importance of English in globalized markets. The recent CILT report (The National Centre for Languages in the UK, 2006), for example, investigated the effects on the European economy of foreign language skills shortages in enterprises. It found that English has a key role to play in European business as it is widely considered to be the *lingua franca* of European markets, particularly “for gaining access to export markets” (p. 6). Another recent study by the British Council showed that increasing the standards of English language proficiency among workers enables countries to participate successfully in the international business world and to attract more foreign investment (Pinon & Haydon, 2010). In addition, research by Grin showed that in Switzerland, proficient English speakers can earn between twelve and thirty percent more than their non-English proficient counterparts (Grin, 2010).

A second development related to globalization has been that companies operating in English-speaking countries are increasingly employing an immigrant workforce. Some of these immigrants may or may not be able to communicate efficiently in English. By way of example, one report from the United States suggests that more than five percent of working-age adults there do not speak English well or at all (Wrigley, Richer, Martinson, Kubo, & Strawn, 2003). With this point in mind, more and more companies are becoming aware of the

Employees in multinational companies must use English, not only with international clients but also with their own colleagues from other language backgrounds

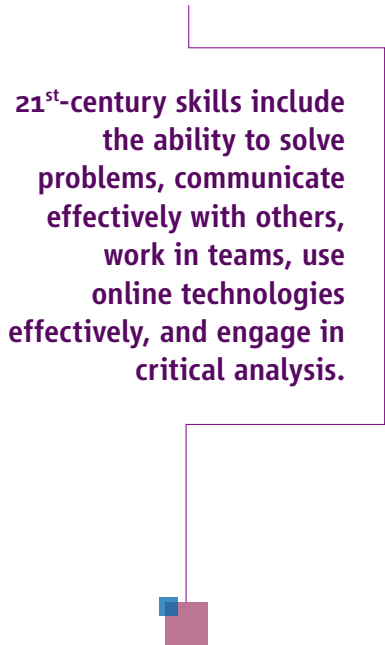


Companies need to provide in-house English language training for their immigrant workers to improve efficiency and avoid communication gaps among workers and employers.

¹ Glocalization is a term that was invented in order to emphasize that the globalization of a product is more likely to succeed when the product or service is adapted specifically to each locality or culture in which it is marketed.

need to provide in-house English language training for their immigrant workers in order to improve efficiency and to avoid communication gaps developing among workers and employers.

The third development is that the expanding area of information-based employment in the 21st century means that those entering the workforce need far more knowledge than simply to be informed about their area of expertise. The literature suggests that new graduates need to enter the workforce with a repertoire of what are described in the literature as applied skills, 21st-century skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009), and, in the context of international business and engineering, global competence (Lohmann, Rollins, & Hoey, 2006). These skills include the ability to solve problems, to communicate effectively with others (from the same culture and also from other cultures), to work in teams, to use online technologies effectively, and to engage in critical analysis. Thanks to the information and communication technologies at their disposal today, workers need to be less concerned about remembering facts and data about their area of expertise than was the case in the past. But they do need to be better at research, analysis, synthesis, and creativity. A recent report by the Partnership for 21st-Century Skills (2006) organization suggested that a combination of basic knowledge and applied skills is critical for new entrants' success in the 21st-century US workforce. Due to the role of English as a global language, graduates around the world are expected to be able to deploy these skills in both their first languages and in English.



21st-century skills include the ability to solve problems, communicate effectively with others, work in teams, use online technologies effectively, and engage in critical analysis.

These three trends highlight the importance of English and English language training for the 21st-century workforce and demonstrate how English is intertwined with aspects of globalization. However, while the importance of English is acknowledged around the world, this fact does not imply that graduates and workers are sufficiently prepared to use English in their work. For example, in 2006, the government of Malaysia stated that the main reason why 45,000 college graduates were unemployed in their country was their low level of English skills (Kassim & Ali, 2010). Likewise, Chew (2005), in her study of the English needs of Hong Kong bank employees, reported that Hong Kong employers were “dissatisfied with the English language standards of the university graduates that they employ” (p. 423).

2. Key Questions

With this background in mind, this report sets out to review what both researchers and practitioners can tell us about the following key questions:

- What are the English language needs of the 21st-century workforce? In what areas of English do workers need to be trained? In what ways has the globalized economy influenced the way people in the workforce use English?
- How are English language training programs designed to help prepare workers and future members of the workforce for their areas of employment?
- What teaching approaches are being used to prepare members of the workforce for the 21st-century workplace?
- What type of content is necessary for this sort of specialized English language training? What skill areas and genres are being emphasized?

The answers to these questions are of great importance to employers who wish to develop their employees' English language skills. In addition, this information is also relevant to educational institutions and Ministries of Education that are considering how to review and update their English language curricula. Furthermore, some of these questions are pertinent to workers or future workers who wish to learn more about the type of English language skills they may need in order to successfully participate in the 21st-century workforce. Before beginning to answer these questions, we will briefly describe how the study was conducted.

3. Methodology: How the Research was Conducted

Given its policy of promoting research and effective practices in English language education for the global knowledge economy in the 21st century, The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) issued a call for case reports about English language training programs in January, 2011. The Foundation subsequently commissioned us as authors to review current literature relevant to the issue of English language training for the workforce and to relate that literature to the case reports provided by respondents from throughout the world.

Case studies were submitted about programs in Abu Dhabi, Australia, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, and the USA.

To achieve these aims, we first reviewed the publications which had appeared over the past ten to fifteen years on the theme of English language training for business and professional purposes. We found a great number of research reports about the English language needs of immigrant workers in English-speaking countries such as the UK, the USA, and Australia. We also identified many insightful publications and studies related to how English is being taught to professionals and future workers in countries where English is a foreign language. Altogether, over 100 books, articles, reports and websites were considered for this study. The most relevant and useful of these publications and resources can be seen in the reference list at the end of this report and on TIRF's website.

While reviewing these publications, we identified several key trends related to the role of English in the workplace, and to how it is being taught. Examples and illustrative quotations were collected to exemplify these points as clearly as possible. These key findings are summarized in Section 4 of our report.

After reviewing the published research in this area, we analyzed the case reports submitted to TIRF by educators working in business English or vocational/professional English in varied educational contexts around the globe. Case studies were submitted by colleagues

working with programs in Abu Dhabi, Australia, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, and the USA. We decided to work with twenty of these case reports in an attempt to achieve a representative overview of different types of English language training being conducted around the world. We reviewed the texts submitted, identifying the key trends and developments that recurred in the various case reports. We then contrasted these findings with the main developments identified in the literature review.

The results of this process can be seen below in Section 5.1, where a general overview of the case reports is presented. It is followed by a discussion of the main findings, showing how they coincide with or differ from the research findings. Two lists were then drawn up. In the first, we identified areas where research and practice appeared to coincide. In the second list, we highlighted differences between the published literature and the case reports.

Finally, we have brought together the findings from the previous stages of our study in the form of a checklist of important questions for those wishing to contract, design, teach, or enroll in courses which accurately reflect the role of English in the 21st-century workplace. We hope that this checklist will be of use to those who are new to English language training for business, industry, and the professions, and also to those who have previous experience but may wish to update their approach to this area.

4. A Review of Current Literature

In this section, we will discuss some of the literature relevant to the topic at hand, beginning with the English-related skills needed by members of the 21st-century workforce. We will continue by considering the kinds of language teaching methods and workplace curriculum designs discussed in the literature, and then focus on the English communicative needs of the workforce.

4.1 English-related Skills Needed for the 21st-century Workforce

The literature reviewed for this study has come from many different areas of investigation. However, there seems to be a general consensus that the English language training for the workforce should reflect and be combined with the development of other applied skills needed in the 21st-century workplace. In other words, English is no longer seen as something to be taught separately from other subjects and skills, but rather as a tool to help people implement other skills in their daily practice.

English is no longer seen as something to be taught separately from other subjects and skills, but rather as a tool to help people implement other skills in their daily practice.

What, then, are these 21st-century skills? These are the skills that graduates and workers must bring to the workplace in addition to their own expertise in their specific vocational or professional area. In the 21st-century workplace, it is no longer sufficient for employees to be experts in their own fields of study or training. They must also master *transversal competencies*² which will enable them to communicate and collaborate with others, organize and analyze information, make informed decisions, and take decisive action. As a result of globalization and the role English has assumed as the lingua franca of business (see GlobalEnglish, 2011), these skills are increasingly being applied through English, even when members of the workforce and businesses are not in direct contact with native speakers of English. The link between these new skills and globalization is described by Trilling and Fadel (2009) as follows:

To be a fully productive contributor to society in our 21st century you need to be able to quickly learn the core content of a field of knowledge while also mastering a broad portfolio

² While in the educational field, transversal competencies are viewed as spanning various scientific disciplines or educational subjects (cross-curricular competencies), we refer here to competencies that span various sectors of human existence. Thus, key competencies are relevant for effective participation not only in school and the labor market, but also in the political process, social networks and interpersonal relations including family life, and most generally, for developing a sense of personal well-being (OECD, 2005).

of essential learning, innovation, technology, and career skills needed for work and life. And when you apply these skills to today's knowledge and innovation work, you are participating in a global network in which, for example, a product may be designed in California, manufactured in China, assembled in the Czech Republic, and sold in chain stores in cities around the world (p.16).

Within the context of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme, the European Commission has promoted projects designed to implement *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*. These projects set out to define and outline the 21st-century skills necessary for active citizenship, social cohesion, and employability in a knowledge society (European Union, 2007). Among the eight key competences identified is the ability to communicate in foreign languages. However, there are other abilities that are also clearly related to the use of English and other languages, such as digital competence and social and civic skills, as well as cultural awareness and expression – all of which will be implemented through the use of English in many working contexts. This model of key competences has been used as a framework document across Europe for developing school and university curricula.

In fact, it is becoming more and more common to find English as a foreign language (EFL) programs being refocused to enable learners not only to develop their English language proficiency, but also to learn how to master and integrate other competences, such as digital competence and cultural awareness, into their repertoire of skills. In Spain, for example, the new approach to university education based on the Bologna process (Council of Europe, 2009) has meant that English language syllabi must take into account the generic competences described in the European Framework.

Many other models have emerged which propose frameworks of generic skills for the modern workplace. For instance, in their model of 21st-century skills, Trilling and Fadel (2009) organize the skills into three main areas: (1) "learning and innovation skills" (e.g., creativity, innovation, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration); (2) "information, media and technology skills;" and (3) "life and career skills" (p. 48). Again, it is interesting to note that a large proportion of

Establishing relationships and working effectively with people of other cultures is a basic necessity for many professions which involve traveling abroad and collaborating with colleagues and clients.

Global competence entails attitudes of tolerance, flexibility, and openness to other cultural perspectives and knowledge of other cultures.

these skills are language-based and, therefore, likely to be implemented through English. This trend holds true not only for those working only in English-speaking countries, but also by those who use English during business trips, for online collaboration and exchange, and for various aspects of office work, such as research and publishing.

Apart from general skills such as communicating and collaborating, there are two specific skill areas which emerge repeatedly in the literature and which are arguably directly related to English language proficiency. These are intercultural communicative competence (or the similar concept of global competence) and the area of e-literacy or e-skills. These skills are worthy of particular attention here.

The important role of culture for foreign language learners has been highlighted regularly in foreign language circles for many years (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993), and in the area of international business (Hofstede, 1994; Bennett, 1993), but it was the advent of the new millennium which heralded the entry of intercultural communicative competence into state curricula and evaluation schemes. For example, tools for the evaluation of intercultural competence can be found in the *European Language Portfolio* (Council of Europe, 2000, 2007) and the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* (Council of Europe, 2008).

The ability to establish relationships and work effectively with people of other cultural backgrounds has become a basic necessity for many professions which involve traveling abroad and collaborating with colleagues and clients from other cultures. In the case of 21st-century engineering, it has been suggested that “the future belongs to those who learn to work or team together with other groups without regard to location, heritage, and national and cultural difference” (Grandin & Hedderich, 2009, p. 363). This point is undoubtedly also valid for graduates from various professional areas who will need to use English as a *lingua franca* to communicate and collaborate in their work.

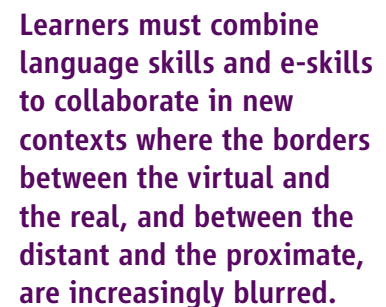
But what does intercultural competence or global competence involve? Most authors agree that global competence entails attitudes of tolerance, flexibility, and openness to other cultural perspectives and

knowledge of other cultures. It also involves the skills to collaborate and communicate with people from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds in a foreign language (Hunter, White, & Godbey, 2006; Grandin & Hedderich, 2009). A policy brief from the US-based National Education Association (2010) on this topic proposes that global competence also includes an awareness of world history, socioeconomic and political systems, and global events.

Yet another highly important recent development is the fact that foreign language proficiency and technological skills have merged inextricably as integral components of the new skills required in emerging labor markets. The growing importance of online technologies in global networks means that, instead of using technologies simply to learn foreign languages, learners in professional and vocational contexts need to combine both foreign language skills and e-skills to be able to work and collaborate in new contexts where the borders between the virtual and the real, and between the distant and the proximate, are increasingly blurred (Collier, 2007).

The basic e-skills that 21st-century workers need include being able to implement strategies for effective online research: the ability to evaluate websites and other online sources of information; the ability to create multimodal presentations in English using tools, such as PowerPoint™ or Web 2.0 applications (e.g., blogs and wikis); and proficiency to communicate clearly and effectively in English, both through asynchronous tools, such as email, and through synchronous tools such as online telephony (e.g., Skype) and video-conferencing (Shetzer & Warschauer, 2000; Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; US Department of Education, 2010a).

With the increasing complexity of communication outlined above, educators are being challenged to create learning approaches that integrate the tools and communicative practices that learners will later face in their working lives. In the United States, the US Department of Education's *National Education Technology Plan 2010* says the following about the integration of online technologies across curricula:



Learners must combine language skills and e-skills to collaborate in new contexts where the borders between the virtual and the real, and between the distant and the proximate, are increasingly blurred.

How we need to learn includes using the technology that professionals in various disciplines use. Professionals routinely use the web and tools such as wikis, blogs, and digital content for the research, collaboration, and communication demanded in their jobs. They gather data and analyze it using inquiry and visualization tools. They use graphical and 3D modeling tools for design. For students, using these real-world tools creates learning opportunities that allow them to grapple with real-world problems – opportunities that prepare them to be more productive members of a globally competitive workforce (2010b, p. vii).

The proportion of web pages in English and the number of English language speakers using the internet appear to have decreased in recent years relative to an increase of websites in other languages. (See Graddol, 2006, pp. 44-47, for a discussion of this trend.) However, it is fair to suggest that many workers, both in English-speaking countries and elsewhere, will need to put these e-skills to use in English. The European Commission's (2010) document *New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now* also calls for educators to develop new techniques which facilitate the integration of digital, linguistic, and intercultural skills and competences. This goal is best achieved by integrating “more cross-curricular and innovative approaches, such as learning-by-doing or project-based learning” (p. 26).

Educators' call for English language proficiency to be developed in combination with other applied skills is not limited to the case of employees in the business and enterprise sectors. This focus is also relevant, for example, in the case of training immigrant workers for the manufacturing and service sectors in English-speaking countries. In these cases, educators recommend that immigrant workers should receive ESL training which is related to training in particular occupations. This training should include elements such as general workplace communication skills, job-specific language, and the generic skills necessary to operate effectively in the new country's workplace culture (Wrigley, Richer, Martinson, Kubo, & Strawn, 2003; US Department of Education, 2006).

This combination of skills and language development holds clear benefits for both employers and employees. Some studies have shown

that improving their English language skills is a vital prerequisite for immigrants who wish to gain employment and avoid becoming trapped in low-wage areas of work. For example, Woock's (2008) research shows that those immigrant workers who report speaking the target language well usually earn between five and fifteen percent more than those who report speaking it badly. Furthermore, other studies have suggested that many immigrant workers may not be comfortable with classroom-based language training (Burt, 2004; Wrigley, Richter, Martinson, Kubo, & Strawn, 2003). Therefore, by offering English training in combination with skills related to their current area of work or to generic skills and job-finding skills, English can be presented in a very focused and contextualized way which will be clearly relevant and motivating for the workers.

For employers, immigrant workers who are both skilled in their jobs and competent in English can provide alternative viewpoints to the workplace and can ensure fluid communication between the different hierarchical layers of a company. A report by the US Department of Education (2006) explains that employers need immigrant workers who can “learn new skills or learn how to operate new machinery quickly” (p. 3). But they also need workers who can “communicate suggestions for product and process improvement to supervisors, and who can speak with co-workers of different nationalities” (p. 3). Investing in the development of workers' English language skills is obviously an important step on the way to promoting this type of workforce.

To conclude this section, we have seen that English language training for the new millennium should not take place in isolation but should rather be integrated with the new skills sets, which are considered vital for working and collaborating in the 21st-century workplace. These skills include transversal skills such as creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and collaboration. Furthermore, as workers will be increasingly putting their English language abilities to work in virtual and multicultural contexts, English should also be developed in combination with e-literacy skills and intercultural competence. In the following section, we move on to examine the most recent trends in vocationally and professionally oriented English language teaching approaches and course structuring.

Studies have shown that improving English language skills is a virtual prerequisite for immigrants who wish to gain employment and avoid becoming trapped in low-wage areas of work.

4.2 Language Teaching Methods and Course Design for the Workplace

Although it is difficult to generalize the types of English language courses and the methods being used to prepare a heterogeneous group such as the 21st-century workforce, some basic tendencies can indeed be identified from a review of the relevant literature. Foreign language education in general, and English language training for vocational and professional purposes in particular, have been characterized in the new millennium by various factors. These factors include, first, an emphasis on learner mobility and immersion in countries where the target language is spoken. Second, a greater interdisciplinarity between language and business and cultural content has emerged and, as a consequence, so has the teaching of subjects through EFL. This approach is similar to *content-based instruction* (CBI), in which students learn some content (e.g., business, nursing, ecology, etc.) through the target language at the same time they develop their language proficiency. In Europe, this approach is known as *content and language integrated learning* (CLIL)³. Finally, project-based approaches to classroom learning allow students to put into practice both the foreign language and the applied skills which they will later need for the workplace. These project-based approaches often involve the use of online tools and resources.

At the university level, there is a definite recognition of the importance of giving future workers the experience of living and working in other countries where the foreign language is spoken. One of the key findings of Grosse's (2008) study of the changes in business language education in the USA was the identification of a move away from the traditional business foreign language classroom and an increase in study abroad programs and internships in international business and foreign language programs. The main aim of such programs, she suggests, is to give learners an "authentic international experience" (p. 17).

Similarly, in their work on developing global competence in engineers, Lohmann, Rollins, and Hoey (2006) reported that there is

³ CLIL is used in European contexts, whereas the term *content-based instruction* (CBI) is used in the Americas.

general agreement among universities that to develop global competence, students need to have coursework in international studies, proficiency in foreign languages, and international experience. However, they also pointed out that “there is much less consensus about the kind of international coursework needed, the level of language proficiency desired, and the length and nature of the international experience” (p. 121). They went on to report that, in US universities, three main approaches are being used to develop global competence in engineers: (1) the offering of co-majors or dual majors in engineering and languages; (2) the opportunity to complete minor degrees such as an international minor in engineering; and (3) the provision of international work experience, allowing students to spend semesters working and studying overseas.

In Europe too, the future workforce is supported in developing its foreign language skills by taking part in mobility programs. For example, the Erasmus Student Mobility for Placements program enables students at higher education institutions to spend between three and twelve months gaining work experience in a business or organization in another European country. The aims of this program include helping students to adapt to the requirements of the EU-wide labor market and enabling them to develop their foreign language skills and to improve their understanding of the economic and social culture of the host country⁴ (European Commission, 2010). Currently, less than four percent of European university students undertake an Erasmus study or work placement during their academic career. However, this figure is expected to rise to six percent in 2012 (High Level Expert Forum on Mobility, 2008). The Bologna process (Council of Europe, 2009) has also enabled universities to establish joint or dual degrees between institutions in different countries. This process, in turn, facilitates greater mobility of students between these institutions as well as the development of a more internationalized curriculum for the masters or bachelors degree in question⁵.

Many universities are also beginning to offer courses in English in order to better prepare their own students to use it as a *lingua franca*

⁴ ERASMUS student mobility for placements:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm

⁵ For more information on dual and joint degrees in the European Union, visit

<http://www.ehea.info/article-details.aspx?ArticleId=112>

To develop global competence, students need to have coursework in international studies, proficiency in foreign languages, and international experience.



Rather than learning language for its own sake, people learn more effectively when they use language to accomplish tasks related to a specific content area and engage in genuine communication.

in their future careers, and also to make their courses more attractive and accessible for international students. At the beginning of the new millennium, Riemer (2002) reported that various universities around the world were already offering engineering courses in English, including the Technical University of Denmark, the Technical University of Łódź in Poland, the Technical University of Budapest in Hungary, several German universities, and other academic institutions in Asia and other regions. A more recent study by Continental AG (2006) on the same theme of global engineering excellence suggests that this trend has become more consolidated over the past decade. They note that in China, for example, many universities now encourage programs and courses taught in English and are increasing opportunities for international internships and summer schools for their students. Similarly, in Switzerland, a number of university courses are also taught in English, which, the report concludes, “greatly enhances Switzerland’s potential for transnational mobility among students” (p. 36). The report notes that, especially in the areas of science and engineering, English is increasingly seen as a basic part of the internationalization efforts in non-English-speaking universities.

This trend of universities offering courses through an international *lingua franca* such as English stems not only from economic considerations and from the need to attract students from other countries; it also reflects the growing belief in foreign language education circles that individuals learn more effectively and more naturally when they are using language to accomplish tasks related to a specific content area and are engaging in genuine communication, rather than learning a language for its own sake (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008). This approach, referred to as CLIL or CBI, as noted above, is being used increasingly to prepare future workers to use English in their places of work. A study of the implementation of CLIL across the European Union identified twelve countries where science and social science subjects were being taught in secondary education through a foreign language (Eurydice, 2006).

Outside Europe, this trend appears also to be gaining support among educators. Grosse (2008), in her study of business and foreign language learning in business programs in the USA, noted the increase in the number of interdisciplinary programs that brought together business, foreign language, and cultural learning (p. 18). Similarly, a recent report

by GlobalEnglish (2011) on how business English should be taught mirrors the principles of CLIL learning in Europe:

Workers are not developing English communication skills for their own sake, but as a way to communicate in the context of business. The opportunities to develop English skills should be relevant and contextual: Beyond providing exercises for core skill improvement they should focus on real-life business situations, reference common communication vehicles such as email, and include tools to support employees' ongoing communication needs during the work day (p. 5).

Thus, in previous training contexts, there has been an emphasis on learner mobility and immersion in the culture of the foreign language, and the tendency to combine English language with the content of the students' profession. This past decade has also seen a move away from grammar-based syllabi and functional syllabi (i.e., those organized around speech acts – utterances which function to do something, such as explaining, requesting, warning, apologizing, and so on). These approaches had become common in business English and English for specific purposes (ESP), but recently they have yielded, in many instances, to more project-based, experiential approaches to English language learning. Such approaches aim to give learners semi-authentic practice in the skills and tools of their profession in the 21st century. This trend was predicted by Warschauer (2000) at the beginning of new millennium:

Sophisticated skills of argumentation and persuasion may not readily emerge from the syntactic syllabi or basic functional syllabi evident in most English classes. Instead, new project-based approaches will have to be found that give students the opportunity to learn and practice the kinds of analytic problem-solving and argumentation that they will need in English if they are to compete for the better jobs in society (p. 516).

This approach is supported by many others in the field. For instance, Riemer (2002) argued that, instead of learning oral communication techniques from textbooks, global competence could best be developed through experiential methods such as role-play, carrying out

presentations, and intercultural sensitivity training. Similarly, Rogerson-Revell (1999) proposed that the most effective manner to raise students' awareness of conversation strategies and to develop their language skills is to use project-based approaches, in which learners do a series of tasks resulting in a product of some sort (Stoller, 1997). According to Rogerson-Revell (1999), project-based learning can include conducting case-studies and collecting samples of "real workplace interactions" (p. 56). The report on developing global competence in future engineers by Continental AG (2006) also proposed a project-based approach for developing work-related skills, since students "gain a deeper appreciation of theory when it is grounded in practice, and the practical environment gives rise to opportunities to improve professional skills. Thus, disciplinary skills and professional skills are gained concurrently" (p. 21).

The availability of online technologies in educational contexts is an important tool for facilitating project-based approaches to English language learning in professional contexts. By integrating online technologies, educators have greater opportunities to connect their classrooms with the real world of business and their students' future professions. The emergence of mobile learning (the use of mobile internet devices in education) has meant that educators and learners can use their phones, laptops, and tablets to access information and participate in online courses no matter where they may be working or studying⁶. Furthermore, the internet also allows learners to carry out projects which involve communicating and collaborating with fellow learners or with members of the learners' target profession who are located in other regions.

An example of how online technologies can support project-based learning and can enable connections between the classroom and the real world is the activity of foreign language telecollaboration or online intercultural exchange (O'Dowd, 2007; Guth & Helm, 2010). Here, learners use online communication tools to carry out collaborative project work with partner learners in distant geographical locations. By carrying out exchanges in their target language, learners can develop their foreign language skills and enhance their intercultural awareness.

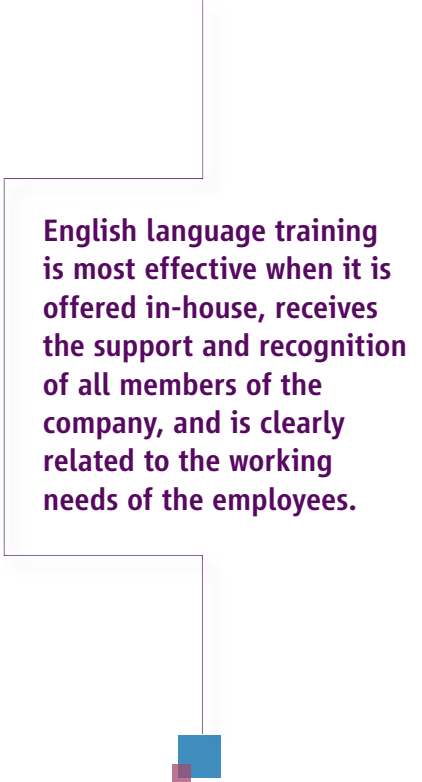
⁶ For more information on mobile learning, visit the website of The International Association for Mobile Learning: <http://www.iamlearn.org/>

One example of this type of activity in the world of professional or vocational English language learning is the report of the Soliya Project by Genet (2010), which describes how French engineering students took part in a synchronous video-conferencing exchange in English with partner students from various Arab countries. These online interactions were moderated by experienced western and Arab facilitators and were intended to improve students' communicative competence in English and develop their intercultural awareness.

Another example is found in a study by Vlachos, Netikšienė, and Concheiro (2011), which demonstrates how online exchanges can be used to develop the professional English skills of students in different disciplines. In this exchange, future language teachers from Greece drew up a proposal for an online language learning application, which they then forwarded to their partner class of engineers in Vilnius, Lithuania, who designed the application. This design was then forwarded to a group of marketing students in Reykjavik University, Iceland, where the class was required to draw up a marketing plan for the application. Throughout the exchange, the three groups were required to communicate together online in English in order to clarify doubts and reach agreement on the final product, thereby gaining an authentic experience of what working in the global society can involve.

The internet can, of course, be used not only to link learners with other groups of learners, but also with language instructors and platforms offering courses in professionally oriented English language training. Such courses are offered either completely online or in blended learning formats in conjunction with contact classes. Some oft-cited examples include Rosetta Stone, Digital Publishing, Speex, and GlobalEnglish.

Turning to the delivery of English training offered to immigrant workers in the workplace, various reports on this area (e.g., Burt, 2004; Woock, 2008) list a number of essentials for success. They concur that English language training is most effective when it is offered in-house, receives the support and recognition of all members of the company, and is clearly related to the working needs of the employees. In fact, a study published by the Manufacturing Institute and Center for Workforce Success (2006) asserted that “the delivery of ESL training in the workplace is only sustainable when the employer considers English Language



English language training is most effective when it is offered in-house, receives the support and recognition of all members of the company, and is clearly related to the working needs of the employees.

instruction essential to the firm's profitability" (p. 4). Furthermore, programs identified as exemplary in that study offered "ESL instruction on-site and on the clock tying ESL instructional content to work and skill development" (p. 5). An additional observation is that such training is most effective when it incorporates the cultural and linguistic background of the immigrant workers.

Based on her study of ESL programs in the US workplace, Burt (2004) recommends educating all members of a company about the process of learning a second language, and, when possible, using the immigrants' native languages in workplace instruction, particularly at worksites where much of the workforce speaks the same native language. She notes that this practice can help avoid miscommunication and can deepen learner comprehension of difficult concepts. She also advocates providing opportunities to use English on the job by promoting discussion among native and non-native English speakers through English language discussion tables at break and in mentoring or tutoring sessions. She warns that this tutoring should not be seen as a substitute for language instruction given by a trained instructor, but rather as supplementary support. However, she concludes by noting that multilingual and multicultural workers should be seen as an asset by their companies.

Multilingual and multicultural workers should be seen as an asset by their companies.

Woock's (2008) research also looks at in-company training of immigrant workers – this time by firms in the UK and the US. This study found that in the case of one company, effective English language training contributed considerably to reducing feelings of alienation between workers and management: "Language training was viewed as a way to increase acceptance and inclusion. Through improved relationships between employees and their managers, leaders of the company expected to increase employee retention and, through improved communication, increase efficiency and safety" (p. 5). Woock describes the company's training program, which included pairing a supervisor who spoke English and was learning Spanish with a Spanish-speaking worker who was learning English. These pairs spent five weeks working together, preparing for contact classes.

The US Department of Education's (2006) study of workplace ESL training also identified various factors that support exemplary workplace-

based ESL and many of the examples given echo those outlined above. The elements highlighted include making ESL instruction part of the firm's business model, delivering ESL instruction on-site and during working time, and tying ESL instructional content to work and skill development.

In summary, there is an important range of trends and approaches emerging in the area of English language training, both in contexts where English is a foreign language and in countries such as Canada and the UK, where English is the majority language. In the former context, trends include increasing participation in learner mobility as well as immersion programs with an emphasis on interdisciplinarity between language and course content. In addition, greater use is made of project-based approaches to classroom learning. In the context of immigrant workers in English-speaking countries, researchers argue for greater integration of English-language training in the workplace, greater recognition of the immigrant workers' mother tongue, and closer alignment of course content with workers' immediate work environment.

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4.3 The English Language Communicative Needs of the 21st-century Workforce

For the past two decades, a great deal of attention has been paid to the English language skills necessary for work and business. This focus has resulted in a large industry of courses and textbook materials for business English and ESP. However, the new millennium has seen some studies that suggest there may be a mismatch between the functional, work-specific language being taught in this area and the actual communicative needs of workers in the 21st-century workforce (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Roberts, 2010). We will conclude this review of the literature with some insights from research on the type of English most needed by workers in the new millennium and how these needs can be attended to in English language training.

The emphasis to date in business English and ESP has often focused on developing future workers' skills in the traditional business tasks of formal presentations, letter and email writing, formal negotiations, etc. However, many recent studies highlight the idea that the use of English for informal interaction and socializing is equally important, if not more important, for many workers.

In addition, some authors have argued that English learners urgently need to be sensitized to communicative strategies for establishing relationships and maintaining rapport in the workplace (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Forey & Nunan, 2002). Kassim and Ali (2010), for example, reported on a study which identified the oral communication skills needed by engineers in Malaysia and the communicative events where English was most necessary in the industry. They found that, apart from dealing in English with technical information, engineers in Malaysia also “need to have acceptable social and communication skills in order to excel in the workplace. Unfortunately, there is significant evidence that shows an inadequacy among graduating engineers to meet these requirements” (p. 171). These authors found that being able to participate in small talk was considered even more important for workers' promotion chances than being able to carry out daily tasks in English. It appears that it is through the use of small talk in English that workers can demonstrate to their superiors their ability to function effectively in English and, thereby, gain better possibilities of progressing in their engineering companies. Small talk in work environments was also found to be important in the case of Hong Kong accountants in a study by Forey and Nunan (2002).

Through the use of small talk in English, workers can demonstrate their ability to function effectively in English and increase their working prospects.

Crosling and Ward (2002) produced comparable findings, although they were studying the oral communication needs of business employees who had graduated from Monash University in Australia. They found that the most common forms of oral communication at the graduates' places of work were informal work-related discussions, casual conversation, and listening to and following instructions. They warn that while preparing students for formal oral presentations is important, it is insufficient for the workplace where “most oral communication follows the inductive model in the form of informal social and work-related communication, participation in discussion in meetings, and in team work” (p. 54). In meetings, the ability to take part in discussions

was considered much more common than actually carrying out formal presentations. These authors also found that participation in teamwork was seen as vital for job success and that the most frequently used forms of communication involved building relationships and taking part in informal conversations. Although not based specifically on the needs of non-native speakers, the findings in relation to oral activity in the workplace are nonetheless instructive for our purposes, since the authors state that “oral communication is essential for a successful professional career in Australia” (p. 53). They add that oral communication should be a priority in university business education courses.

More evidence for the need to refine informal communication strategies comes from Roberts (2010), who refers to several studies of office work and patient-care work. The research she reviews shows the gap between “the more formal and technically specific focus in the English language training program” (p. 215) and the needs of workers to be able to use pragmatic and social skills in English. Roberts gives examples of a Chinese female office worker who needed to change her indirect style of communicating to a more direct, assertive style, which was the norm in her US workplace. Roberts also refers to another example of migrant workers who were training to become resident care givers. In this case, she notes that “affective, personal and social modes of talk and bodily language were more important in the healthcare aide jobs than accurate English grammar or medical terms” (pp. 215-216).

What consequences do these research findings have for training? Researchers suggest there is a clear need to focus on developing learners’ strategies for informal discussion (Nickerson, 2005) and also to increase awareness of cultural differences in workplace communication. Crosling and Ward (2002), for example, argue that learners should appreciate the role of the background, experiences, and expectations of their workplace interlocutors. “This is especially relevant in the contemporary workplace, where personnel represent a range of national, ethnic, social, and age backgrounds” (p. 54). Roberts (2010) also points out that the type of personal presentation and intense face-to-face interaction which is often required in English-speaking workplaces “requires an assertive persona that is by no means a cultural universal” (p. 215). These authors argue that non-native speakers who are being prepared to work in English-speaking workplaces need to be prepared for these culturally-specific

aspects of English interaction norms. They may then choose to reject or accept such norms but, in any case, language learners do need to be aware of the existence of these norms and how they influence the development of interaction and relationships.

Of course, the influence of cultural norms and perspectives on work is not limited to face-to-face communication. Forey and Nunan (2002) conducted a large-scale investigation into writing practices and English communication needs and standards of accountants in Hong Kong. They argued that in order to help Hong Kong learners of English to develop effective English documents in their work, fundamental cultural differences between Southeast Asian and Western business communities needed to be taken into account. These differences included the high-context nature of Southeast Asian societies and the low-context approach of Western societies. Low-context cultures prefer explicit communication, whereas in high-context cultures, messages tend to be indirect and implied. There are also differences between Southeast Asian and Western discourse patterns. In Southeast Asian discourse, for example, the main point is usually expected to be found at the end of the text, while in Western cultures, the main point should appear in the topic sentence at the beginning of the text. These authors argue that making learners explicitly aware of these cultural differences should be a basic element of an ESP course or set of materials for English language training.

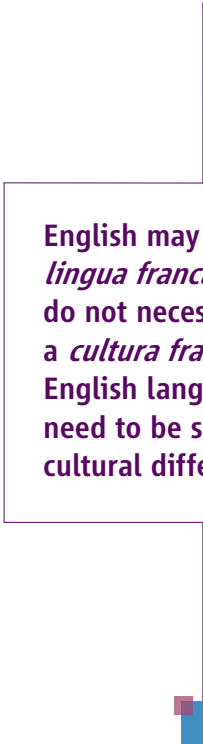
To summarize, there appears to be a growing awareness in the world of vocational and professional English education that it is no longer sufficient for workers to develop 'formal' English skills, such as the ability to make presentations or to write formal emails. Workers also must be able to use English effectively in informal situations in the workplace, for establishing relationships and maintaining rapport with their co-workers, superiors, and clients. They also need to be sensitized to cultural differences in workplace communication and in approaches to engaging in international business.

4.4 Summary of the Literature Review

This brief review of the literature on the English language needs of the 21st-century workforce has highlighted some important developments in how English language skills are currently perceived in the workplace. English has been seen to be much less an individual skill and more one which is intertwined with other 21st-century skills, such as the ability to collaborate, work in groups, solve problems, and communicate effectively with colleagues, superiors, and clients. The pervasiveness of globalization and online communicative technologies has also meant that using English involves being able to establish and maintain relationships with people from other cultural backgrounds who are living and working in contexts very different from one's own. The concepts of intercultural communicative competence and global competence, and the importance of understanding cultural differences in communicative situations are all signs that, although English may be a *lingua franca*, its users do not necessarily all share a *cultura franca*. Therefore, English language learners need to be sensitized to cultural differences in interaction norms, business discourse, etc.

The new millennium has also seen new developments in how English is being taught and tested. (See the checklist in Appendix A for a brief discussion and some examples of testing and evaluation procedures.) Learner mobility and immersion in the target language, content and language integrated approaches, and project work are some examples of the types of learning approaches that are supplementing, or at times overtaking, traditional textbook-based learning in the 21st century. In the manufacturing and service industries as well, new approaches that include English language development in company philosophy, create bilingual working teams, and exploit the potential of immigrants' native language and culture are also gaining in popularity.

In the following section, summaries of twenty case reports based on English language training for the 21st-century workforce will be presented. These reports offer practical portraits of how the aims and methods of this literature review are being put into practice around the world.



English may be a *lingua franca*, but its users do not necessarily all share a *cultura franca*. Therefore, English language learners need to be sensitized to cultural differences.

5. Case Reports of English Language Training for the 21st-century Workforce

In 2011, TIRF published a call on its website and in its monthly electronic newsletter for case reports of English language training programs in the workplace. In addition, along with the TIRF Board members, we contacted individuals whom we knew were teaching in workforce training projects. We asked those people to share the call widely with other professionals. This approach to data generation is called *convenience sampling* (Cohen & Manion, 1985): The researchers contact accessible individuals representing the target population and the process continues until sufficient data have been collected for the purpose of the investigation. There is also an element of *purposive sampling*, in which the survey respondents are selected by the researcher on the basis of their typicality (Cohen & Manion, 1985; Nunan & Bailey, 2009).

These case reports were based on a series of questions about the goals, objectives, and processes of the programs, as well as other facts related to the training programs. Contributors were asked to submit information on their target audience, the needs assessment procedures utilized to develop the program, the training program's overarching goals and specific objectives, the teaching methods and training procedures used, and the content of the English language training program. The cases we selected represent a range of businesses, industries, and professions, as well as rich geographic diversity.

Based on this announcement, English language professionals from around the world submitted case reports, which underwent a systematic evaluation process. Case reports were selected that were complete and well-written, and that represented a wide range of sectors and a broad geographic distribution. Twenty of these were chosen to provide a representative overview of how English language training programs are preparing learners to use English in the 21st-century workforce. We begin with a brief overview of the case reports presented in table format. Following that, the key trends and developments that were observed in the case reports are presented and discussed in relation to the findings of the relevant literature review.

Table 1 provides a thumbnail sketch of each case report, followed by summaries of the full case reports, using the numbering system shown in the table. Some readers may examine all twenty case summaries while others may select those most closely related to their own professional contexts. Some of the training programs discussed below are designed for employees whose language needs are determined by their working contexts, while others serve those preparing to enter the workforce.

5.1 Overview of Case Reports

Table 1 provides a concise overview of the diverse nature of the case reports accepted for inclusion in this paper. It is followed by a summary of each report. It is important to note that we have not been able to verify questions of content or any claims made by contributors regarding efficiency or success of the courses described. As a reminder, at the beginning of this paper, there is a list of abbreviations and acronyms used in this publication.

Table 1: Overview of workforce case reports

Title of Study Author(s) Organization of Author(s) Location of Training	Workplace Sector	Learners' Needs & Goals
1. Professional English course for nurses and healthcare professionals By Cuca Righini and Vinicius Nobre Associação Cultural Inglesa São Paulo, Brazil	Healthcare	Nurses and healthcare professionals who need to communicate in English on medical treatment and hospital care with foreign visitors/patients
2. English development program for teachers in Abu Dhabi By Alison Currie CfBT Education Trust & Abu Dhabi Education Council Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates	Education	Kindergarten through secondary school teachers in government schools needing skills in English to teach their subject matter
3. English for customs and excise By Claire Hart Language Consultant Bayreuth, Germany	Import/Export	Commercial employees working in the customs and excise department of a multinational tobacco company who require written and spoken skills for import/export contacts
4. Linguapeace Europe By Boian Savtchev and Jack Lonergan European Centre for Education and Training Sofia, Bulgaria	Military	Military and related peace-keeping personnel undergoing language training as part of their professional development for missions abroad
5. Language skills for Japanese executives By Anne Delaney Excelsior English San Diego, USA	Business	Male, senior Japanese executives in engineering, research and development, and sales requiring language skills to operate efficiently in the US branch of the Japanese home company
6. Teaching English to nursing and midwifery students in Switzerland By Cristina Vieira Oberholzer Flying Teachers Zürich, Switzerland	Healthcare	Young adults studying for a career in nursing and midwifery needing English for medical purposes
7. Military-specific terminology and use in time-sensitive radio communications By Roger Embree George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany	Military	NATO and Partnership for Peace military personnel who require specific English terminology and usage in time-sensitive radio communications
8. Intensive English program for students in Lebanon By Nahida Al Assi Farhat Hariri Canadian University Mechref, Lebanon	Administration, Engineering, Science, and Information Systems	Lebanese university students who require English to perform professional tasks and duties
9. English language and non-proliferation training program By Lisa Donohoe Luscombe James Martin Center for Non-proliferation Studies Monterey, USA	Nuclear Non-proliferation	Expert scientists in nuclear weaponry and dismantling weapons who require English skills to interact with others in their field

10. Nursing and medical technology By Najma Janjua Kagawa Prefectural University of Health Sciences Takamatsu, Japan	Healthcare	First-year Japanese students of nursing and medical technology in undergraduate programs
11. English for a Hispanic sales and marketing executive By Angela Edmonds Language Training Center, Inc. Indianapolis, USA	Business	A Hispanic sales and marketing executive who is representative of other professionals working in a wide range of industries and areas
12. The blind and visually impaired and the deaf and hearing impaired By Jack Lonergan LTL Training St. Albans, UK	Varied Sectors	Blind and visually impaired and deaf and hearing impaired individuals requiring language skills to obtain employment in business, hotel and catering, insurance, travel, and light industry
13. English for diplomats By Lawrence Lawson Custom Language Services Monterey, USA	Diplomatic Service	Individuals in diplomatic services who require English to perform professional, diplomatic services.
14. Japanese dentists improving their English By Courtney Pahl Monterey Institute of International Studies Monterey, USA	Dentistry	Japanese dentists who require English speaking skills for advanced dentistry specializations and conferences
15. Language coaching for professional, vocational, and academic needs By Susan K. Doll Oxford Intensive School of English, Boston Boston, USA	Varied Sectors	Individuals from around the world, requiring English language coaching in VOLL for their professional, vocational, and academic needs
16. Workplace training at a retirement facility By David Kertzner ProActive English Northern California, USA	Geriatric Care	Immigrants, mostly of Hispano-American background with low levels of ESL skills who work in geriatric care services in the US
17. Pathways to employment and training in Australia By Amanda McKay Technical and Further Education, South Australia Adelaide, Australia	Varied Sectors	A program for first-generation immigrants combining English language, workplace orientation, vocational training modules, and work experience placement for a wide range of occupations
18. English for the business and public administration sectors By Sky Lantz-Wagner Tongren University Guizhou, China	Business	Fourth-year Chinese university students who wish to specialize in business
19. Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Switzerland By Debra Ali-Lawson Bern University of Applied Sciences Bern, Switzerland	Business	Swiss lecturers and students on the international Master in Business Administration Program
20. Business communication in Hong Kong By Clarice S. C. Chan University of Hong Kong Hong Kong, China	Business	Chinese university students who seek to acquire practical knowledge of and skills in English for business and administration

5.2 Summaries of the Case Reports



Case Report 1

Professional English course for nurses and healthcare professionals

By Cuca Righini and Vinicius Nobre
Associação Cultura Inglesa
São Paulo, Brazil



This case study addresses the increasing need for nurses and healthcare staff in São Paulo to be able to communicate with English-speaking patients.

This case study addresses the increasing need for nurses and healthcare staff in São Paulo to be able to communicate with English-speaking patients. This sixty-hour course, which runs for sixteen weeks, is based upon a needs analysis established through an interview with the head nurse in charge of the training program. The

questionnaire used for this process is appended to the report.

The level of general language proficiency required by course participants to enter the program is defined as Level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which is provided in Appendix B. There is also an online written test as well as an oral test to ensure candidates have the necessary standard of language skills.

The general aim of the course is for participants to be able to interact effectively with a foreign patient in English

in order to obtain a precise diagnosis of his/her complaint. The teaching methods and training procedures are based upon twenty real-life cases of patient encounters, which are used as simulations during the course and in the final assessment.

A range of published materials is used with a core textbook, which is supported by video snippets from "ER," a medical drama on American television. A course designer collected and analyzed the everyday materials used by professional nurses and drew up a course program in consultation with the head nurse. In addition, various internet sources provide complementary, relevant, contemporary, subject-related materials.

The course provides forty-eight hours of face-to-face instruction in class with a teacher at the workplace and twelve hours of self-study online. It covers essential vocabulary to describe parts of the body, body functions, and body systems as well as the main ailments and diseases, the

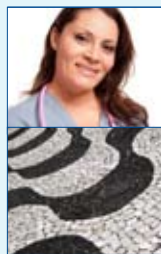
main symptoms of pain, and medical examination procedures. This approach is complemented by studying typical communicative interactions between patients and healthcare professionals.

After completing the course, learners should be able to refer to the human body and its systems, describe and ask about ailments and diseases and their symptoms, and describe and explain procedures for preparing for a medical examination as well as routines for the administration of medications. Above all, the course should enable the trainees to carry out their routine tasks and communicate with the patients in English confidently and effectively. The final assessment is based upon performance in simulated situations that replicate real-life encounters with English-speaking patients in the hospital environment.

A particular challenge for this short, intensive course is related to the departure from traditional teaching methods. Instead of concentrating on grammar patterns and vocabulary items, the teaching entails exposing students to authentic texts (both audio and written) in their field of expertise. This approach helps them to observe the main lexical phrases and patterns of interaction and subsequently offers opportunities for them to experiment with the new language in simulated situations in the classroom, supervised and aided by the teacher. This process has proved to be a challenge both to

the learners, who are not used to being independent risk takers, and to the teachers, who were daunted by the idea of teaching English through a subject they had not mastered. However, tapping into the nurses' professional knowledge and expertise and having the teacher as the language and communication expert and a facilitator of learning (rather than the provider of nursing-related information) has proved to be the most effective way of achieving the desired results in the given time frame. Initial skepticism gave way to conviction and enthusiasm, once the trainees had experienced this approach.

The success of the initial program can be measured by the fact that it has now been adopted as an integral part of in-house training in one of the branches at Cultura Inglesa, São Paulo, for a wider spectrum of healthcare professionals. In addition, the results of a satisfaction survey and the individual testimonials of course participants showed the enthusiasm with which the program was accepted.





Case Report 2

English development program for teachers in Abu Dhabi

By Alison Currie
CfBT Education Trust & Abu Dhabi Education Council
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



Increasingly, content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approaches to English as the language of instruction are being employed internationally but particularly in the Arab world. In vocational education in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, for example, expatriate experts of different nationalities and native languages often choose English as the medium of instruction for their subject specialty, whether it be dairy and food production, mechanical engineering, or informational technology sciences. For short-term input by specialists who are often filling a temporary gap in the educational/training system,

it is hardly practical or viable for the instructors to learn Arabic, or for Arabic-speaking learners to learn, for example, Dutch. Therefore, the teacher trainees discussed in this case report learn English both to understand such specialists and to teach in English subsequently.

This in-service training course is designed for subject area teachers of kindergarten through secondary public schools in Abu Dhabi. The focus is on helping teachers who are non-native speakers of English to develop the English language skills they need for instruction, classroom management, planning, and development. Training materials and objectives are guided by the curriculum, school calendar, and student needs. Each session is presented within the context of school and everyday language use, with grammar embedded within that context. Language that is essential for understanding and using the curriculum standards is an intrinsic part of the program. This case report explains how content may be analyzed in order for appropriate materials to be designed and produced for the communicative purposes that are dictated by the teaching and learning situation.

The course is offered as preparation for an IELTS⁷ qualification. It includes

⁷ The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is an English test administered worldwide. Over 1.4 million candidates take the test each year to gain a statement about their skills in English relevant to international education and employment.

This training program helps teachers who are non-native speakers of English to develop the skills they need for instruction, classroom management, planning, and development in English.

learner training strategies and study skills interwoven across the syllabus. The principal topics covered are the environment, industry, transport, media and communication, science and technology, education, society and social issues, culture and traditions,

the arts, medicine, and health. The syllabus for the preparatory IELTS training consists of listening, reading, and writing modules that are divided into task types and/or strategies for learning. They are directly related to a specific IELTS focus.



Case Report 3

English for customs and excise

By Claire Hart
Language Consultant
Bayreuth, Germany



This training program was designed for German employees working in the Customs and Excise Department of a multinational tobacco company in Bayreuth, Germany. Their jobs involve working with products that are delivered to and produced by their company for the purposes of customs and excise controlling and the controlling of tax stamps, tracking, and recording the movement of raw materials and finished products.

The course represents a specialization within the company, following a general language-teaching program offered to all employees. The trainees

for this program were assessed in one-to-one interviews where the assessor mapped the trainees' levels of spoken English against the scales of assessment defined in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR – see Appendix B). The interviews provided the basis for the analysis of learners' language needs and learning goals, i.e., what they would like to be able to do in English by the end of the course. In cooperation with the learners, the assessor compiled a list of "can-do" statements that reflected the trainees' goals. Additional

This training program was designed for German employees working in the Customs and Excise Department of a multinational tobacco company in Bayreuth, Germany.



needs analyses, complemented by an assessment of the learners' writing skills in English, were based on informal and on-going assessments of learners' output during participation in previous English courses.

Ongoing needs analyses documented learners' errors and identified areas where learners' skills required further improvement as they completed the assigned tasks. Tracking the trainees' uses of language revealed their needs as they arose, and these were then addressed by making adjustments to the program.

The overarching goal of the training program is to enable the participants to communicate verbally more effectively at work. More specific aims include (1) improving the trainees' repertoire of vocabulary relevant to the field of customs and excise, (2) increasing their confidence levels in communicating with native speakers in English, (3) enabling them to react more rapidly in situations where they need to communicate spontaneously in English, (4) increasing their grammatical accuracy, and (5) improving their presentation and telephone skills. The aims of the program reflect the teacher's belief – shared by the trainees – that conversational skills and informal communication in English play just as great a role, if not greater, in successful

international communication than do more formal skills, such as the ability to write reports in English. This view is reflected in course content.

Assessment is mainly conducted by the teacher mapping and evaluating progress made towards achieving the learning goals negotiated at the start of the course with weekly written feedback. It is complemented by oral feedback during the lessons. Assignments for work outside the classroom are also allotted, and they contribute to the trainees' overall learning.

Importantly, feedback on the course, which is forwarded to the trainees' head of department, demonstrates that the money invested in this training program is well spent. Evidence of the program's success is also determined by the improved quality of the presentations made by participants, increased ease of interaction, and time-saving in reading company documents.

The trainer reports that the greatest challenge to the success of the program is the scarcity of specific materials for English learners working in the field of customs and excise. Other specific challenges encountered relate to attendance at lessons and mixed language abilities within the group.

Evidence of the program's success is also determined by the improved quality of the presentations made by participants, increased ease of interaction, and time-saving in reading company documents.



Case Report 4

Linguapeace Europe

By Boian Savtchev and Jack Lonergan
European Centre for Education and Training
Sofia, Bulgaria



Linguapeace Europe was an EU-funded project that focused on the use of English by the military forces in the new Europe. As a particular example of ESP with certificated outcomes, it offers insights into the sociological and military developments of contemporary Europe and beyond, reflecting both the changing geopolitical and societal realities of Europe, and the changing role of military forces in the world. Led by Bulgaria, the project includes representatives from Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Spain. It has accreditation from the pan-European International Certificate Conference, with native speaking input from the UK.⁸

The project uses the medium of English as the international language of peacekeeping to promote new ways of appreciating and experiencing the military role. It approaches this task by including within the language-

training packages three elements: respect and empathy for the individual; personal development; and cross-cultural awareness. In terms of personal development, Linguapeace Europe offers a new possibility to many members of the armed forces, giving them the opportunity to gain a good language qualification and to take part in the new united Europe after demobilization.

Through the medium of the Linguapeace Europe course materials, members of the target group learn how to show empathy, how to address people and obtain information more gently, and in general how to establish rapport with the civilian population. In addition to being a desirable feature of communication in an enlarged EU, these skills are also necessary for international work, for example with refugees.

This case report offers insights into the sociological and military developments of contemporary Europe, reflecting the changing role of military forces in the world.

⁸ The website with full details can be found at:
http://www.linguapeace-europe.net/publications/TheLinguapeace-EuropeProject_Deco4.pdf

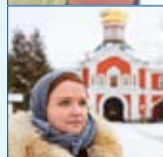
Cross-cultural awareness also plays an important role in the *Linguaepeace Europe* materials, which try to make the diversity of Europe's societies accessible to the military of other countries by promoting cross-cultural awareness and international understanding. The authors of the materials point out how important it is to change the mindset of military personnel, for whom the idea of merging into a new culture has traditionally been actively discouraged. In peacekeeping operations, their role is not offensive but is based instead on fostering international cooperation, even though this effort can be conducted in dangerous circumstances.

The materials for *English for peacekeeping* also examine the nature of the learners and the specific linguistic features of the language to be used. Areas of focus included (1) military training and needs analyses, (2) learners' needs and learner types, (3) discourse objectives and course design, (4) grammar as an enabling tool for communication, and (5) verbal courtesy.

A working taxonomy of activities for the *Linguaepeace Europe* project has been established to conform to expectations of military personnel, and all learning goals are presented in terms of operational applications in language that is recognizable by the learners. The result is a list of military tasks and activities rather than a list of structures, grammar points, or vocabulary items. The contents of the language-learning program are

described to the learners in terms of communicative activities that require task completion.

The project team has developed a version of the *European Learning Portfolio* specifically for military personnel. Learners use the portfolio to document and reflect on their own learning in this particular area of the English language.





Case Report 5

Language skills for Japanese executives

By Anne Delaney
Excelsior English
San Diego, USA



This case report describes work with a group of seven male Japanese senior executives who work for a corporation headquartered in Japan. The North American office of the company is staffed predominantly by English-speaking employees, but it is an objective of the mother company to foster a work environment that retains the corporate culture of its headquarters in Japan.

At the time the case report was submitted to TIRF, these clients had recently arrived in the US to work for three to five years for a wireless consumer product company in San Diego. They were working in engineering, research and development, management, and sales. In the Excelsior program, the trainers address the challenge of providing the Japanese executives with insights into American corporate culture and the necessary approach and communicative skills to deal competently and effectively with their American counterparts in business encounters.

Participants were divided into a beginning and an intermediate group, as determined by a grammar placement test and an oral proficiency interview. The needs of the executives were surveyed weekly and existing business English books and publications were examined with a view to supplementing the training program. However, the provider decided to create custom materials to fit the specific needs of the two groups.

The participants' own needs (including upcoming reports, presentations, emails, telephone interactions, announcements, and performance reviews) were addressed using a blend of authentic materials supplemented by brief refresher grammar lessons when necessary. Classroom activities included role playing expected work-related tasks, such as participating more assertively in conference calls; delivering clear, top-down status updates and talks rallying employees;

In the Excelsior program, the trainers provide Japanese executives with insights into American corporate culture.

describing past, present, and future goals and action items; and leading employee performance appraisal meetings. A wide range of delivery modes was employed, using most of the new media, including online exchanges.

Assessment procedures included pre- and post-program recorded interviews and writing assessments with weekly reviews and quizzes, as well as meetings with corporate training staff. There were also comprehensive interviews with various stakeholders.



Case Report 6

Teaching English to nursing and midwifery students in Switzerland

By Cristina Vieira Oberholzer
Flying Teachers
Zürich, Switzerland



This program provides pre-experience students of nursing and midwifery with communicative practice in English for real-life work situations, concentrating on key interpersonal skills for patient relations.

This sixty-hour training program provides pre-experience students of nursing and midwifery with communicative practice in English for real-life work situations, concentrating on key interpersonal skills for patient relations. It is a mandatory part of the professional training at the nursing colleges that employ Flying Teachers' instructors.

Two diagnostic tests are administered at the outset. First, there is an online placement test of grammatical accuracy and vocabulary range, identifying the

learners' general level of proficiency related to the scales of attainment of the CEFR (see Appendix B). Second, there is a test of communicative ability with speaking activities conducted in pairs or in groups, during which the teacher assesses the learners' speaking and listening skills. The latter test also prepares learners for the communicative approach adopted later in the course.

A needs analysis questionnaire is administered to identify learners' specific needs with regard to what they must know in order to perform their future jobs well. The questionnaire (which is also available in German for learners whose English is not at a level

to understand the questions) elicits information about the trainees' needs, motivation, and learning styles. The data are reviewed after each block of twenty lessons.

The core teaching material used in the course is provided by a standard textbook and supplemented by materials to create more communicative tasks. Additional readings involve authentic texts and articles from internet sources. Learners are always involved in the completion of learning tasks, followed by teacher's feedback.

Varied assessment procedures are employed throughout the courses to

evaluate learners' progress as well as the overall effectiveness of the course. With regard to language skills, the program includes both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation consists of individual feedback from the teacher and a learner portfolio maintained by each trainee. Summative evaluation is accomplished through regular progress checks using standardized achievement tests, as well as communicative tests of speaking and writing. Some challenges that arose included problems encountered in diagnostic testing, the identification of the learners' needs, learners' expectations in terms of methodology, and issues related to assessment.



Case Report 7

Military-specific terminology and use in time-sensitive radio communications

By Roger Embree
George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies
Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany



This training in military-specific terminology addresses English language deficiencies in the areas of time-sensitive radio communications of international military personnel deployed on missions in tactical military

environments where English is used in communications. The program is known as the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team-based Tactical Communications English Workshop. It consists of eight days of total training with an average

of six contact hours per day.

Once the training has been completed, the personnel deploy into a tactical military environment (possibly a hostile one) where English is needed for communication via the radio, and in face-to-face situations with their international counterparts, as well as with related junior and senior personnel. These situations may include informal settings, formal briefings, and life-or-death radio communication situations.

This training in military-specific terminology addresses English language deficiencies in the areas of time-sensitive radio communications of international military personnel.

The overarching goal of the program is to familiarize trainees with a particular component of military-related English for specific purposes (ESP). The specific objectives are the learning, activating, and utilization of specific terminology used in military radio communication skills and military planning format procedures, as well as face-to-face conversations and briefings with multinational commanders. The program also focuses on improving pronunciation to minimize any possible misunderstandings during face-to-face and non-face-to-face communications with native and non-native speakers.

Each topic begins with a general overview of the intended communication and familiarization with the necessary vocabulary, followed by any additional explanations needed to ensure complete comprehension. Trainees review and

practice standardized military radio format procedures and create scenarios for planning. Practical exercises in scenario creation are then used to activate topic-specific vocabulary in context. Participants then present the scenario they have created using the new vocabulary and formulate the appropriate radio call(s) needed during the envisaged scenario. All radio calls follow a strict formatting procedure clearly laid out in the technical manuals, so most participants are initially encouraged to write out the text of their radio call before transmitting it orally via a radio transceiver (also known as a walkie-talkie). Working in pairs or groups, they then transmit the appropriate radio call(s). Self-correction and peer-correction are encouraged during this phase, along with feedback from the instructors regarding comprehensibility of the message.

In addition, reading assignments are set as homework to provide further exposure to and consolidation of the language learned in class. The teaching materials come predominately from authentic materials found in US military training manuals. Press articles on military actions are studied, analyzed and discussed. Interactive multimedia activities with computers and audio/video sources support the in-class learning process.

The program provides specific training with several speech contexts. In non-face-to-face communication via

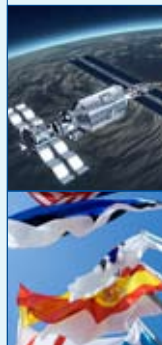
radio transceivers, as well as face-to-face briefings in related scenarios, participants need to perform the following communicative functions: acquiring and presenting information, seeking and providing clarifications, criticizing, giving oral instructions, assigning and delegating roles, and briefing an audience on a topic.

Training sessions usually start with plenary work to introduce a particular topic, followed by individual or pair-work, where relevant scenarios are developed. Participants then work in pairs or small groups, transmitting and receiving radio calls associated with the scenarios they created. The majority of the instructor-student interaction is face-to-face in the classroom, while there is a mix of face-to-face as well as non-face-to-face communication for the participants when using English during the workshop. Interactive multimedia activities allow for some guided self-study during class, and homework assignments are typically done individually as preparation for the following day's topic of discussion.

There is no formal assessment at the end of the training, but there are follow-up consultations with US and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) personnel to ensure that workshop participants who attend the workshop perform adequately. Participants' feedback is also solicited at the end of the workshop and after they have completed their deployment. Changes and improvements are then

made by taking this feedback into consideration.

Challenges related to implementing this workshop include informing the right personnel that the workshop exists, vetting and selecting the key personnel to participate, and ensuring trainees' minimum general proficiency in English. In addition, acquiring funding from sponsors is challenging.





Case Report 8

Intensive English program for students in Lebanon

By Nahida Al Assi Farhat
Hariri Canadian University
Mechref, Lebanon



This intensive English program helps university students in Lebanon who need English for their courses in business administration, engineering, and science and information systems.

This intensive English program is designed for university students whose English is considered insufficient for them to be able to benefit from the university's courses in business administration, engineering, and science and information systems, which are all delivered in English. Participation is obligatory for those whose TOEFL test scores on entry are below a predetermined level. If the students do not achieve a certain TOEFL score after completing the course, they have to leave the university.

The teaching material is basically a textbook series adopted for the English program, supplemented by a grammar textbook and vocabulary handouts. In addition, students are provided with a handout on the required TOEFL lessons. Written and spoken genres covered in the training program are emails, progress reports, and individual professional department presentations. Communicative functions dealt with concern primarily those required in the English

course (and later, probably, in other classes at the university): negotiating project assignments, clarifying processes in instruction and assignments, etc.

Similarly, the speech events covered are related directly to those needed in the university environment. These contexts include in-class discussions, presentations, teacher-student conferences, and conversations with employees on campus.

The varied content is delivered through scheduled classes and additional small-group discussions prior to project selection and presentation. There are also individual or small group tutorials with students to address weaknesses, as well as work in self-access centers for reinforcement exercises.

Assessment procedures include a diagnostic test at the beginning of the semester, four complete tests in the semester, and a final test on the material covered in the textbooks. There are also four quizzes on reading for understanding and four that focus on vocabulary, as well as a final TOEFL test.



Case Report 9

English language and non-proliferation training

By Lisa Donohoe Luscombe
James Martin Center for Non-proliferation Studies,
Monterey, USA



Individuals for this training program are professionals in nuclear, biomedical, and chemical industries, and government ministries and agencies that seek to control these industries as well as educational institutions that train future professionals. The sponsors' goals are twofold: (1) increased English language proficiency and (2) increased awareness of non-proliferation norms and conventions. Language proficiency serves the functional objectives of communicating with US and international partners in cooperative projects and meetings, speaking at international conferences on research projects, sharing information, and fostering transparency.

The standard, eight-week intensive immersion course takes place in Monterey in a face-to-face classroom setting in classes of approximately five to seven participants, with individual tutoring added as required. Participants may freely use the Center for Non-proliferation Studies (CNS) self-access materials and computers.

At the beginning of the program, participants take a program-designed diagnostic test of English language proficiency and knowledge related to course content. They also complete a needs assessment that informs a curriculum design tailored to each group and each individual in the group.

This program is typically an eight-week, 240-hour intensive, immersion English language program for content areas in non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, biological, and chemical). However, the program offers other delivery models in addition to the immersion option. The program is divided into three courses tailored to each professional target group: (1) English for non-proliferation content, (2) English for professional purposes, and (3) speaking, listening, and culture. An additional skills-based course is added when necessary for mixed proficiency levels or other special needs.

This training program is for people working in nuclear, biomedical, and chemical professions, and government ministries and agencies that seek to control these industries.

This training program has also developed and conducted a team-teacher training course in English for nuclear security for combined EFL and nuclear scientist teams from a Russian polytechnic university. This professional development course included the unique feature of cross-disciplinary pairings of CNS experts with the English language faculty in the development of model non-proliferation content lessons. The workshop also provided a training-the-trainers strategy for further content-based English language instruction initiatives at the university.

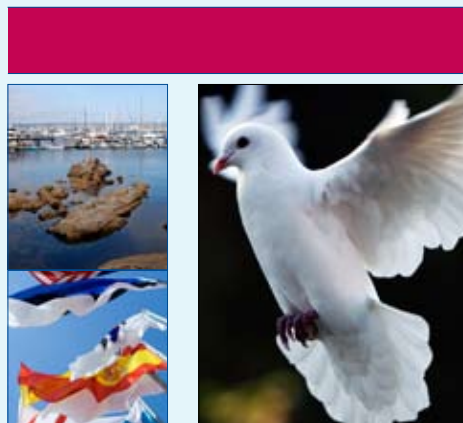
The overarching goals of increased English language proficiency and increased awareness of non-proliferation norms and conventions are exemplified with six major can-do statements. (For examples of such statements, see Appendix B.) Similarly, the specific objectives of developing English language proficiency are illustrated with reference to the required skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

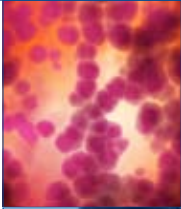
This program uses content-based instruction, contextualizing the learning process in real-world, social, political, and professional materials and activities. The teaching materials used in the program are drawn from authentic materials collected from the non-proliferation field in both printed and electronic form.

Trainers of this program also travel to sites for in-country, face-to-face training

courses, which vary in length and intensity. Online technologies include a course blog for multi-media materials collection and delivery and a Skype video connection. Technologies designed for discussion and for lecture delivery, such as Elluminate, are also available.

Proprietary pre- and post-course tests have been designed specifically for the program. Assessment includes results of these tests, as well as teacher observations, an oral proficiency exam, and performance in a final, mock conference presentation. Pre- and post-course assessments have shown consistent increases in language proficiency.





Case Report 10

Nursing and medical technology

By Najma Janjua
Kagawa Prefectural University of Health Sciences
Takamatsu, Japan



This program consists of a two-semester (thirty weeks, thirty hours) undergraduate curriculum in English for medical purposes for first-year Japanese nursing and medical technology majors. The courses are taught by a specialist in human genetics with extensive experience in teaching medical English. The overarching goal is to encourage Japanese academics to use English in their work and to master English for international exchanges.

The main course objectives include enabling the students to express themselves and communicate in English on a series of topics related to basic medicine and health care issues through the acquisition of new medical terminology and the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Participants also learn how to use English in a variety of real-life medical settings related to their future workplace.

A topic-based curriculum is used in the first semester, where students

are introduced to basic medical and healthcare terminology. In the second semester, students deal with a series of authentic, real-life case studies related to medical topics in written and audio form. These materials present the basis for the creation of different scenarios enacted by the learners in the form of role plays, and formal, face-to-face and online multimedia presentations. These activities use medical terminology from the students' major field in order to help them to develop effective communication skills for their future workplace settings.

Extensive use is made of material culled from websites on basic medicine and healthcare topics and from online resources for pronunciation practice. A case study series (Ankner, 2008) is employed in the second semester.

Written and spoken genres covered include diagrams and descriptions of

This training program teaches Japanese nursing and medical technology majors to use English in the workplace and for international exchanges.



human body systems, common medical conditions, medical tests, medical and surgical procedures, medical instruments, and medical specialties. Oral presentations are made on medical and healthcare topics. The case studies provide the basis for dialogues between healthcare professionals and patients or their families. These scenarios are written up and then enacted by the students.

Several communicative functions are covered in this curriculum. These include explaining medical conditions, tests, procedures and techniques; providing instructions; introducing; greeting; requesting; taking medical histories; making appointments; getting and giving information; explaining details; conveying test results; and giving advice.

The speech events focused upon are medical staff meetings, patient management sessions, and meetings with patients. The contexts include clinical laboratories, in-patient wards, out-patient clinics, emergency departments, medical emergency settings outside the hospital, in the ambulance, and interviews with patients, families, and friends.

Delivery mechanisms include classroom lectures, PowerPoint presentations, computer lab sessions, and handouts, as well as recorded lectures for student viewing via a university website. Assessment procedures comprise oral class tests, pronunciation tests, and grading of individual oral presentations and pair presentations of dialogues

based on case studies, concluding with end-of-term oral and written exams.

The challenges in delivering a program in this context lie in helping students adapt to a communicative approach in language learning and bringing them up to the requisite standard of English to be able to proceed to specialized language learning in their professional field of study. In Japan, English is mainly taught using the grammar-translation method and many Japanese high school students enter universities with minimal oral communicative competence in English. Some do not possess the minimum level of English proficiency to learn English for specific purposes or discipline-specific English. As a result, advanced ESP activities can be overwhelming and frustrating for them. Thus, one of the main tasks of the ESP teacher in this context is to motivate students, making them aware of the importance of studying the language of their future profession, making them active participants in the class, and providing them with the tools and the guidance to achieve their learning goals.





Case Report 11

English for a Hispanic sales and marketing executive

By Angela Edmonds
Language Training Center, Inc.
Indianapolis, USA



The workforce training program spotlighted in this case report is one example of the private language instruction offered by Language Training Center, Inc. The case reported is an individualized program of 106 contact hours supplemented by guided self-study and carried out over the course of two years. The trainee for this particular program was a sales and marketing representative from an American produce company managing all aspects of Hispanic sales and marketing, including interacting with vendors and suppliers and ensuring the right product is in the right place at the right time. The produce company supplies grocers and retailers with fruits and vegetables in over fourteen states.

The Language Training Center offers one-to-one classes to a worldwide clientele from multinational corporations, government agencies, sporting associations, and individuals from many different professional and vocational contexts. Each course is de-

signed to facilitate maximum progress toward the individual's unique goals. Instruction is provided by a team of professionals who, in addition to their qualifications as language teachers, often have subject-specific knowledge or qualifications. The training allows students to progress at their own pace and develop language specific to their distinct field, the company, their role in the company, and their communication needs within that role.

Each learner completes a needs analysis, which can be done online for convenience. The client also meets with a program representative for a complementary private consultation before starting classes. Information vital for course design is gathered, including student goals, prior language learning experience, workplace context, language needs, language learning styles and strategies, and schedule preferences. All potential stakeholders

This program was designed for an individual who is a sales and marketing representative from an American produce company managing all aspects of Hispanic sales and marketing.

are considered in the needs analysis process, and this information is used for curriculum development.

This specific learner's stated priorities were speaking, listening, and vocabulary development for business and daily communication. His specific workplace communication needs and problems (such as how to handle conflict resolution with a colleague or how to respond to a challenging email) were addressed in class as they emerged.

In the program, the clients' personal language coaches have the flexibility and capability to address workplace communication needs and problems as they arise, giving appropriate and immediate feedback and training to make changes in real time. Each class is planned to provide an appropriate challenge that is relevant to the learners' interests, needs, and contexts, engaging them in purposeful dialogue that is intentionally authentic and communicative.

The training draws on a wide range of authentic materials from all types of media, including video recordings of learners' presentations in its language training. However, all materials are viewed as resources for the course, not drivers of the course, and are adapted to best match learner goals and proficiency levels. In addition, an array of delivery mechanisms is offered, including alternatives when face-to-face sessions are not possible.

A challenge in this program is the danger of not addressing specific needs with tailor-made responses. The case report author points out that it is a false economy to opt for either fewer hours of instruction or off-the-shelf solutions: While they can be cheaper, these options may result in less overall return on investment than would tailored private instruction.





Case Report 12

The blind and visually impaired and the deaf and hearing impaired

By Jack Lonergan
LTL Training
St. Albans, UK



LTL Training applies innovative developments in English as a foreign language for people with a vision or hearing impairment of any severity. The program promotes the social inclusion of people who are blind and vision impaired (BVI) or deaf and hearing impaired (DHI) – in particular, to support their participation in the workplace.

The project addressed the difficulties BVI and DHI persons experience when seeking employment. The author of the case report points out that the abilities, expertise, and competence of BVI and DHI persons are often ignored, or are unknown to many people, including potential employers. Making employers aware of the English language competence of BVI and DHI individuals is an essential step towards promoting their employability. The project group set out to provide employers with materials that show how the abilities described in certificates for deaf or blind people are comparable to those attained by sighted or hearing people

applying for the same job.

The BVI and DHI materials consist of the Language Passport and Language Biography. The Language Passport is a small passport-like booklet containing a short summary of the holder's abilities in any foreign language. The summary is expressed by a range of can-do statements at six levels of ability, and covers the language skills of speaking, reading, writing, and listening, suitably adapted for BVI and DHI persons. The Language Passport is a user-friendly document, and its contents are decided by the holder and his or her competent mentor. It is designed to be accessible for the holder and for anyone who wants to look in it – for example, a person's potential employers.

Because the Language Passport is a summary document, it is underpinned by a far more detailed set of can-do statements in the Language Biography.

This English language training program promotes the social inclusion of people who are blind and vision impaired or deaf and hearing impaired, particularly to support their participation in the workplace.

Here the language skills are described in more detail, with numerous can-do statements in each skill at each of the six levels. The can-do statements describe capability, for example, *I can propose a wedding toast* or *I can follow the instructions in a maintenance manual*. Can-do statements can apply to any age group, any type of communication, and any language. For example, *I can describe my work to visitors* has the same communicative outcome in Bulgarian, Greek, English, or any language, even though the words, sounds or script, and grammar are different in each language.

Using the Language Passport and supporting documentation, which were developed through the Council of Europe⁹ as a template, staff members of this program endeavored to add, delete, or edit existing can-do statements to create a set that applies clearly and directly to BVI and DHI individuals. Thus, the Language Passports developed in this project have been modified to enable BVI and DHI persons to recognize their competences and make them known to others. By making explicit the skills and competences of BVI and DHI individuals in the can-do statements, the degree of disability in fulfilling the communicative task is reduced.

An essential feature of the Language Passport for BVI and DHI individuals is that those with impaired hearing or vision are considered as part of the whole language learning population in all respects – in terms of relevant learning

goals, preparedness for employment, and assessment of their competence. The program grants validity to the assessment of competence of BVI and DHI learners by mapping their abilities against the abilities of learners with no impairment.

The Employers' Guide, an integral part of the program materials, explains what the Language Passport is and how the version for BVI and DHI language learners differs from versions produced for those without impairments. It shows how the norms and standards in the Language Passports for BVI and DHI learners are aligned to the scale agreed upon by the Council of Europe.

A major challenge for the BVI and DHI Language Passport program was how to rethink radically the content and modes of presentation of the can-do statements. The project team undertook to change content without losing the norm calibration with the Council of Europe materials while taking into account the special issues associated with deaf and blind people learning English or other languages. They have made the contents transparent and accessible to learners and potential employers.

The BVI and DHI Language Passports allow an employer to see at a glance what an employee is able to do in any language. For example, a person may be able to read service manuals or import documentation from the internet in three languages, but may be good at

⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/portfolio/?l=e&m=/main_pages/portfolios.html

welcoming foreign guests in just one language. A switchboard operator may be able to deal with incoming calls in five languages but cannot write much in any of them. Thus, the Language Passport allows an employer to match a work task to a particular employee.

The independent evaluation by experts appointed by the European

Commission (required for all projects funded by the EU) assessed the BVI and the DHI project most positively. The DHI program, code named "Deaf Port," scored ten out of ten in three rating categories, and nine out of ten in four others, for an overall mark of 90%, a rating acknowledged as high under this system.



Case Report 13

English for diplomats

By Lawrence Lawson
Custom Language Services
Monterey, USA



The objective of this course is to provide a flexible and integrative curriculum for junior- and senior-level diplomats that incorporates a focus on language skills with exposure to career-related content and skills in both one-to-one and group environments. The English for Diplomats program is designed to help diplomats to develop and maintain a complex set of language skills relevant to diplomatic careers. These skills enable them to participate professionally, confidently, and successfully in diverse, simulated

diplomatic events. In addition, participants (further) develop comprehensive strategies that will promote autonomous language learning, skill building, and content analysis.

English for Diplomats is a flexible program that offers individualized language instruction focusing on client needs. It includes a platform for discussion and analysis of concepts, processes, and tasks

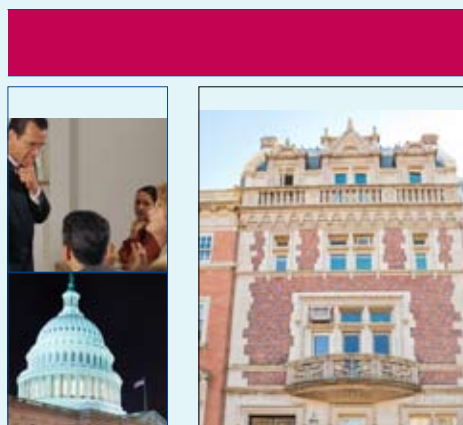
This course provides a flexible and integrative curriculum for diplomats that focuses on language skills and career-related content.

essential to a diplomatic career. It also provides a framework for the diplomatic profession, detailing and exploring specific skills needed for tasks and projects. Four options are offered ranging from personalized, one-to-one instruction to a "Module-Based Open Enrollment Program" with a minimum of ten participants. The expected entry level for the latter is advanced proficiency, as demonstrated by a score of 80-100 on the internet-based TOEFL (550-600 on the paper-based TOEFL)¹⁰ or the equivalent.

By way of a needs analysis, the provider surveyed former and prospective clients and former instructors to ascertain what the program should feature, having analyzed agreed-upon course content in previous offerings of the course. The result was a list of almost forty detailed can-do statements, which presents a comprehensive taxonomy of necessary skills, communication functions, and competencies to be mastered by the course participants.

The course objectives are clearly laid out for participants, as are the envisaged working modes, assignments, and projects. Computer-based tasks designed to improve a number of career related skills also form part of the out-of-class activities. A balance of face-to-face interaction and online sessions helps learners take advantage of blended learning modes.

Language logs and audio journals are used to help learners to keep a continuous account of their progress. An interesting additional feature of the course is the "Diplopedia", which is a searchable, online database with user-created information relevant to careers in diplomacy. This encyclopedia of information is produced as an on-going joint effort by course participants in conjunction with current and former teachers.



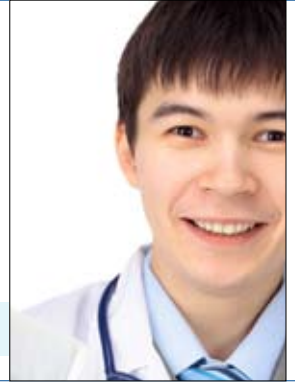
¹⁰ <http://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about/>



Case Report 14

Japanese dentists improving their English

By Courtney Pahl
Monterey Institute of International Studies
Monterey, USA



This five-week intensive program was organized in California for ten practicing dentists from Japan who were studying for advanced specializations (e.g., maxillofacial surgery, prosthodontics, periodontics, and pediatric dentistry) at the University of Osaka. In the second week, course participants traveled to San Francisco to participate in a statewide conference of the California Dental Association and to attend classes, workshops, presentations, and networking sessions with local dentists and graduate students of dentistry.

An important, integral part of the program was the field trips to various local dental offices, where course participants experienced dentistry in the US firsthand and interacted with dental professionals (dentists with various specialties, hygienists, dental technicians, etc.). In addition to the team of five teachers, the program staff included an activity guide, a post-graduate student of applied linguistics who had had teaching experience in

Japan. She accompanied course participants on all external visits.

The overall design of the program was content-based English for Dentistry, based upon the specific needs of the target group as elicited in pre-course questionnaires. Program participants were trained to attain a higher level of English language proficiency in all four skills in order to be able to participate efficiently and effectively in dentistry-related professional activities (e.g., conferences, tradeshow, etc.) on an international scale. The individual courses within the program covered pronunciation skills, discussion and presentation skills, reading and writing, and community language use.

Within the context of the courses, learners gave formal presentations on a dental topic of their choice. They kept journals and gave written and

Program participants were trained to engage efficiently and effectively in dentistry-related professional activities on an international scale.

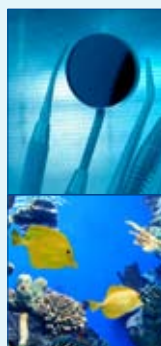
oral constructive feedback to their peers; wrote a number of reports in various styles, including narrative, informative, comparative, and persuasive; and prepared an academic abstract related to the research topic of their oral presentations. In the course on community language skills, the learners practiced personal introductions, asking questions, answering questions, interviewing, and being interviewed.

The program used mainly authentic materials from the field of dentistry. The reading and writing course used texts from newspapers, magazines, and academic journals from the dental field for reading materials. The participants wrote journal entries about their experiences visiting local dental professionals. They then practiced the peer review and revision process using these writing samples. The pronunciation course utilized English songs as class materials. The program also used websites, handouts, brochures, and other authentic materials collected from the individual dental offices as preparation for and reflection on the site visits.

Assessment consisted of an evaluation by all of the teachers. They wrote short reports describing the learners' progress, achievements, abilities, and attitudes in their classes. The grades and evaluations were based on the students' work in each class (e.g., final presentations, as well as written and oral feedback on writing samples) and their participation and

attitude during class time. The program itself was evaluated by the individual learners and by the sponsoring organization in Japan.

The challenges reported concern the different language levels among the ten learners, who had to be instructed as a single group. The participants also had very high expectations which necessitated careful coordination between the teaching team and those responsible for the field trip to San Francisco.





Case Report 15

Language coaching for professional, vocational, and academic needs

By Susan K. Doll
Oxford Intensive School of English, Boston
Boston, USA



The Oxford Intensive School of English, Boston caters for the heterogeneous needs of clients from varied professional, vocational, and academic backgrounds. It determines how to provide a range of learning scenarios to suit different clients' needs and preferences. Each day can be tailored to provide individualized programs for each client. Thus, there is no standard length for a course, nor is there a dictated structure. Each client determines individually what he or she wishes to do and for how long. The challenge for this company is to structure courses so that the interests of different individuals and groups can be dovetailed to take into consideration individual needs while also taking advantage of the learning potential to be gained by harnessing the skills and knowledge of disparate groups of learners.

Clients are usually professionals sent by their companies for training for periods of eight weeks or longer. They

come from a wide range of vocational and professional contexts, including the fields of mining and chemical manufacturing in Canada, and banking and finance in Latin America, as well as a wide assortment of other areas of activity in Europe.

Most of the business students take individual tutorials, and their specific needs assessment is conducted on the first day of class. The resulting information then forms the basis upon which faculty members and learners design a specific plan for each student. They generate a tutorial contract, which includes not only the skills to be improved, but the materials to be used to achieve goals, the assessment methods that the client and teacher consider appropriate, and the results of the assessment.

Clients can register for lessons up to six hours per day in a variety of configurations, mostly as private lessons or as "Quatorial" or group

Computer equipment and digital voice recorders are used for improving pronunciation and oral delivery in the classroom.

lessons. Private tutoring is recommended for clients wanting to work with very specialized business vocabulary (e.g., in banking and finance). However, the "Global Professional Quatorial Syllabus" brings together learners who wish to concentrate on learning English for the workforce with learners who have a more academic orientation. This syllabus ensures that all learners master the basics of the practical and necessary language

of meetings, commerce, and negotiation, as well as the wider variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures taught in academic preparation classes. Requiring the academically oriented clients to know how to participate in meetings, handle complaints, and negotiate terms greatly enriches their experience and skills in English. Requiring business-oriented learners to interact with a wider variety of topics also increases their ability to talk about the world around them in a more sophisticated way.

The school integrates a variety of audio-visual and electronic media. For instance, iPods and speakers are used for listening practice. A projector and digital (video) cameras also help learners to prepare, deliver, and subsequently critique their professional presentations. This process allows them to practice what they will do in meetings and at conferences. Computer equipment and digital voice recorders are used for

improving pronunciation and oral delivery in the classroom.

A special emphasis of this program is the preparation of trainees to continue their learning experiences after leaving the institutional context. To this end, a website has been created for departing students, which provides tips and links to encourage them to keep up the momentum of learning and research after their stay in Boston.

Assessment procedures used in the program include a placement test before arrival and progress tests at the end of the registration period. Weekly assessment forms for class performance (on which grades are given) constitute a regular part of the program. They are part of the tutorial contract which the learners enter into with the institution, and which guides their progress throughout their stay.

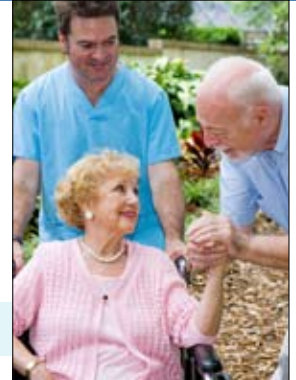




Case Report 16

Workplace training at a retirement facility

By David Kertzner
ProActive English
Northern California, USA



ProActive English provides an extensive on-site training course for non-native English-speaking employees at senior resident communities in northern California. An interesting feature of this course is that learners also meet outside class with residents of the retirement home (some of whom had been classroom teachers before retiring), who volunteered to give weekly tutoring sessions. The volunteers also attended some of the small group classes as aides. ProActive English offers support for the volunteers by offering workshops on teaching ESL and by providing materials for volunteers to use in tutoring sessions.

The learners, all immigrants, have typically been in the US for at least five years and most have had limited formal English as a second language training. Learners were from the Philippines, China, Korea, Eritrea, Vietnam, Burma, and several countries of the former Soviet Union. However, the largest contingent usually consists of Spanish-

speaking employees from Mexico and Guatemala.

The trainees work in food services (in the kitchen and the dining hall), in housekeeping, on the maintenance staff, and in nursing care. Most have had education through at least high school in their native countries and some have been trained as certified nursing assistants. Others received education in their native countries up to only the fourth grade and had never been in a formal English class until they enrolled in this program.

ProActive English was contacted by the corporate Human Resources (HR) office of the organization that runs the retirement communities. Needs assessment procedures included telephone interviews with on-site managers and HR staff to establish program priorities from management

ProActive English provides extensive on-site training for non-native English-speaking employees at senior resident communities in northern California.



and HR perspectives. Documents such as training manuals, safety guides, and lists of protocols were also considered in developing the course. In addition, ProActive English used its web-based technology to make audio recordings of managers and residents of the community speaking about “everyday activities” or making requests as they might to the trainees. Finally, on-site visits were conducted to complete the individual assessment process, and meetings were arranged with managers of trainees to ask follow-up questions about training priorities.

A learner-centered approach forms the basis of instruction.

A learner-centered approach forms the basis of instruction with a teaching method called Community Language Learning at the core. In this method, learners recount, while the trainer records their experiences at the retirement community. Close-to-life content from the workplace is collected in the form of recordings of managers and residents in the community speaking on a variety of everyday topics.

Understanding of cultural differences and the expectations of workplace behavior in American culture are emphasized, along with a focus on communication with senior citizens.

This recorded material forms the basis for the course, flanked by the use of a standard ESL textbook, providing those learners familiar with a traditional approach to language learning with the kind of systematic support with which they feel comfortable. The recordings are also made available to clients on the

ProActive English website for online access or in a CD-ROM format for self-study or use during tutoring sessions with the volunteer tutors. A distance learning class was also set up for more advanced learners who could access and use the web-based technology provided on the ProActive English site. The resident volunteers also participate in distance learning class activities, in pair work, and/or in whole group activities, which is especially useful when a model of communication that is related to a local community is needed.

In addition, authentic documentation is collected from site managers and modified for classroom use. Thus the language and communication skills addressed in the curriculum are directly relevant to the needs of the trainees. Understanding of cultural differences and the expectations of workplace behavior in American culture are emphasized, along with a focus on communication with senior citizens.

Assessment procedures include standardized recorded informational interviews with trainees, before and after training, and the application of the one-hour Basic English Skills Test, a combined standardized test of reading and writing skills using authentic situations as the basis for test questions²¹. Test results show consistent improvement in test scores of 10-30% among most program participants who attended class regularly.

²¹ <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/bestorders.html>



Case Report 17

Pathways to employment and training in Australia

By Amanda McKay
Technical and Further Education, South Australia
Adelaide, Australia



The English Language Services (ELS) Department of the Technical and Further Education, South Australia (TAFE SA) provides training for newly arrived immigrants to Australia who intend to join the workforce. The ten-week ELS Pathways program offers courses of 200 hours each, in English language, workplace orientation, vocational training modules, and work experience placement for a wide range of occupations.

The structure and curriculum of the ELS Pathways program represent a synthesis of the key features of best practices observed during a study tour of the USA, Canada, and the UK. The purpose of the tour was to research programs and services that were effective in assisting immigrants and refugees to move into sustainable employment.

A notable feature of the program is the integration of life skills, which are linked to the work experience

placements, into the English language curriculum. Classes are run to simulate a workplace and the teachers and trainers expect learners to behave as if at work with regard to their attendance, punctuality, teamwork, attitude, and presentation. Regular meetings between a case manager and individual learners help them overcome barriers to secure employment. Weekly meetings between teachers, case managers, and the program manager ensure consistency in dealing with the clients.

The overarching goal of the program is to prepare learners to successfully find and maintain employment. In order to ensure that learners can achieve this desired outcome, detailed lists of objectives for achieving this goal have been compiled. Program objectives are referred to regularly throughout the program. Provisions are also made to support participants

In this Australian program, life skills are integrated into the English language curriculum and linked to the workplace context.

after course completion, in order to assist them in searching for jobs. Many facets of computer-assisted learning are integral parts of the course content. Assessment procedures utilized include formal procedures related to national, standardized language and vocational tests as well as informal assessment techniques and procedures.

Interesting developments have occurred in employment patterns in the Australian hospitality industries. For example, it was observed that, after completing the training program, males were moving into traditionally female domain jobs, such as cleaning and housekeeping. Employers who provide

work experience for trainees have the opportunity to assess the suitability of the learner for potential employment.

According to the case report author, the impact on the lives of the immigrants and refugees of gaining jobs and participating in the workforce is the opportunity to improve their lives in Australia. For these individuals, this prospect means the beginning of participation in Australian society on an equal footing with other workers. The training gives them the opportunity to support their families in Australia and overseas, and the ability to begin to provide for family rather than receiving government handouts.



Case Report 18

English for the business and public administration sectors

By Sky Lantz-Wagner
Tongren University
Guizhou, China



The Tongren University Business English course is a one-semester, 36-hour course designed for fourth-year Chinese university students who are English majors. Instead of taking up teaching

jobs upon graduation, most of these students prefer to use their degree to pursue work in either the public sector or the private sector in administration or business contexts.

Based upon an ad hoc needs analysis of the perceived needs and wants of the students, a curriculum was developed, covering theoretical and practical business topics, including the global economy, corporations, business communication, and professional presentations. The overarching goal of the training program was to familiarize students with English as it is used in practical business contexts. The specific educational objectives were divided into four categories: cognitive, performance, affective, and meta-cognitive. The main meta-cognitive objective was to provide students with resources to become more autonomous learners upon completion of the course.

The teaching methods adopted in the course were varied. As the university-provided textbook for the course was dated and unsuited to the needs of the learners, the instructor mainly used internet resources to design lessons. The websites were chosen because of the variety of topics they offered related to business English, the ability to adapt lessons to diverse learners, and the communicative tasks they provided.

Two main assessment sessions were staged to measure learning during the program: a midterm exam consisting of multiple-choice and short-answer items, and a final assessment comprising a group project and presentation. The course itself was evaluated by university officers and teaching staff who attended formal class sessions and offered

critiques of content and procedures. In addition, the course was evaluated by the participating students, who gave feedback in the form of responses to a mid-term questionnaire and by completing a learning journal.

The major challenge of lack of resources was overcome by requesting materials from colleagues abroad and by utilizing the internet for ideas and lessons. A second challenge was trying to maximize participant interaction among learners who were not used to interacting with one another in a classroom setting. The instructor was able to address these challenges by introducing role play, pair work, and group work for most activities.

English is important not only for this cohort of students, but also as a valuable asset for college graduates looking for jobs in modern-day China, due to its widespread use, particularly in international business contexts. The participants in this course expressed the view that their knowledge and understanding of the global economy, especially the Chinese and American economies, had greatly increased as a result of participating in the course.

This university course in China covers theoretical and practical business topics, including the global economy, corporations, business communication, and professional presentations.

English is important not only for this cohort of students, but also as a valuable asset for college graduates looking for jobs in modern-day China.



Case Report 19

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Switzerland

By Debra Ali-Lawson
Bern University of Applied Sciences
Bern, Switzerland



In spring 2011, Bern University of Applied Sciences launched a special international program within the regular Bachelor of Business Administration degree. In the initial phase, all core modules of the second and third year of the three-year bachelor degree are being offered exclusively in English. In the second phase, the complete degree program is to be offered entirely in English. This course of studies specifically supports the acquisition of a working knowledge of English in business and administrative contexts. Emphasis is on the transmission of applied management knowledge and intercultural competencies.

This program provides practical, firsthand experience of intercultural communication by bringing together Swiss students with foreign students in multicultural teams.

The international program is based on the Bologna model and supports transparency and mobility among universities of applied sciences. For Swiss students, this program is aimed at candidates with a specialist or vocational qualification together with the Swiss Federal Vocational Baccalaureate or a higher secondary school-leaving

certificate. Candidates' educational backgrounds are complemented by one year of practical experience in a clerical or administrative position.

In order to join the international program, apart from these subject specific academic requirements, students must have English skills at level C1 of the CEFR (see Appendix B). Within the context of the international program, English language tuition and support are also provided for Swiss students. For foreign students, it is the responsibility of the home university which sponsors them to ensure that they possess suitable language abilities for them to be able to participate fruitfully in the course. (It is the home institution that accepts the credits awarded to the returning students who complete the program in Bern.)

The program forms part of the university's endeavors to cultivate international relations within the context of its international program, providing practical, firsthand experience of intercultural communication by bringing together Swiss students with foreign

students enrolled at the university. Group projects in multicultural teams are designed to boost international exchanges by ensuring that there is always a mix of participants. The international program also provides preparation for the exchange semester arranged for Swiss students at one of the many worldwide partner institutions.

One of the major challenges in introducing the program has been to equip staff members with the confidence, language competence, and skills to deliver their part of the program in English. An apparently simple approach to this “language problem” would have been to recruit experts who were native-speakers of English to teach the specialty subjects on the courses. However, it was felt that, if the organization was to become truly international, then all members of the faculty would need to develop an international mindset. Simply employing native speakers of English as new lecturers on the international program would be counter-productive to the policy of internationalizing the program. In addition, participation in the international program is also seen as an opportunity to equip the Swiss lecturers with the confidence to lecture in exchange programs with partner universities and to present papers at international conferences.

The Swiss lecturers are experts in their own specific academic domains, and many of them are multilingual in the official languages of Switzerland

(French, German, and Italian). Because of their academic background, most also have a good command of English; however, they may lack the confidence to deliver their own subject-specific content matter in lectures or discuss intricate content questions in English. Nevertheless, faculty members have come to see a growing need to provide lectures in English and have risen to the challenge. In order to help them achieve their personal goals in this area, members of the English language teaching staff have been allocated to provide individual support to those lecturers requesting it.





Case Report 20

Business communication in Hong Kong

By Clarice S. C. Chan
University of Hong Kong
Hong Kong, China



This Business Communication class is a core course for business majors at the University of Hong Kong. The clients are first-year students taking different programs for the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration; few have full-time work experience. They are largely local Hong Kong students, or else they are

Mainland Chinese students and international students from other countries. The course prepares students to communicate effectively, both at the university and in anticipation of work situations that entail the use of English. At the end of the course, students are expected to be able to

(1) investigate and report on real business activities; (2) demonstrate competence in oral presentation; (3) produce concise and accurate written reports in an appropriate format and style; (4) participate in business meetings and business-related discussions confidently; and (5) appreciate the role of idiomatic language in business communication.

The research conducted by the course coordinator prior to offering this course showed the importance of business meeting skills in the workplace. As a result, a new component on business meetings was fully integrated into the standard course. Project work with live, on-the-job interaction with informants in executive management positions provides the basis for true-to-life tasks related to interviewing, reporting, and presenting. Business meeting skills are practiced and acquired during the course in role plays and simulated business meetings. Particular emphasis is placed upon understanding idiomatic language, both in informal business situations and in more formal written and spoken genres.

The course places emphasis on experiential learning and reflection. It includes project work as well as task-based language learning, which involves the learners in "comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language [with] the intention

This Business Communication course prepares students to communicate effectively, both at the university and in anticipation of work situations that entail the use of English.

to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form” (Nunan, 2004, p. 4). Students are given role plays or real-world tasks (e.g., calling up a target company) to practice communicative functions in context.

The successes of the program can

be seen in the high scores for course effectiveness and teacher effectiveness, which have been significantly above the university average since the launch of the revised course. There has also been positive feedback from the School of Business.

6. Analysis of the Case Reports: Principal Trends and Developments

Table 1 above shows that the case reports represented a rich variety of courses offered in a wide range of professional fields (including dentistry, healthcare, the military, diplomatic services, engineering, finance, and general business, among others). These programs have been provided to learners from an array of geographical backgrounds, including Japan, Latin America, China, Australia, Europe, the Gulf region, the Near East, Hong Kong, and the USA. A review of the case reports provides a fascinating overview of the types of work being done in English language training for vocational and professional purposes.

The analysis of the case reports also confirms many of the trends outlined in the literature review, providing concrete examples of how these tendencies are being implemented in the day-to-day practice of English language training for the 21st-century workforce. However, the analysis also serves to occasionally highlight gaps between theory and research, on the one hand, and, the day-to-day efforts of workforce English trainers on the other.

The most striking trends in 21st-century English language training that were identified in the case study review include (1) the specialization and personalization of English language training; (2) the consolidation of online tools for learning and teaching; (3) cultural aspects of language and communication; (4) the use of project-based learning and authentic

The analysis highlights similarities and differences between theory and day-to-day practice.

materials; (5) recognition of the importance of learner autonomy; (6) interdisciplinarity and teaching qualifications; and (7) company support of English programs. Each of these themes will be discussed in turn.

6.1 Specialization and Personalization of English Language Training

In many of the case reports, it seems that educators are moving away from a one-size-fits-all model of business English or ESP courses and are striving to develop courses that clearly reflect the particular aims and needs of their clients. Some case report authors suggest that it is by personalizing materials and activities to reflect these specific needs that they can best prepare learners for using English in their workplaces. The implication here is that the different areas of professional and vocational English training are so diverse that effective courses need to be able to focus on the special needs of those working in particular fields. It seems that in some contexts general language textbooks and courses may not always be completely adequate or satisfactory in helping learners to achieve their aims.

Educators are moving away from a one-size-fits-all model of business English and/or ESP courses.

For example, the case report dealing with English language training for Japanese nursing and medical technology majors (Case Report 10), submitted by Janjua, discussed the challenges of motivating Japanese students for language learning and creating a sense of awareness of the role English would play in their future professional activities. In order to achieve this goal, the author describes the need for tailored teaching materials and methods that relate to the learners' backgrounds.

There is a need for tailored teaching materials and methods that relate to the learners' backgrounds.

Examples of personalization and language courses tailored to the specific professional needs of students can be found in a number of the case reports, including Edmonds' case study of "English for a Hispanic sales and marketing executive" (Case Report 11), where individualized courses allow learners to "develop language specific to their distinct field, company, role in the company, and communication needs within that role." Delaney, the author of the Excelsior case study of a training program for high-level Japanese executives (Case Report 5), also notes that, after reviewing various business English language textbooks,

she chose to create customized materials to reflect the specific needs of her clients. She developed authentic materials based on the course participants' own emails, reports, and presentation activities. Similarly, Hart, in her contribution on language training for people engaged in customs and excise activities (Case Report 3), shows how a specific course can emanate from general language teaching, based on original materials provided by learners.

6.2 Consolidation of Online Technologies as Tools for Learning and Teaching

The use of online technologies is mentioned in practically all the case reports submitted for this study. There is a remarkable variety of ways in which online tools and resources are employed in vocational and professional English language training. Online activities are no longer seen as add-on activities. Instead they play an integral part in English language workforce training. This trend is emerging partly because many clients of English language training providers use online technologies themselves on a daily basis for their work and need to learn how to use English in this context. It is also due to the huge amount of authentic materials that are now available online.

Donohoe Luscombe's report on "English language and non-proliferation training program" (Case Report 9) describes how her online courses use a blog for collecting online multimedia materials. She also uses Skype for establishing video links with learners. The use of Skype is also described in the case report on English for Diplomats (Case Report 13), but in that course, learners use this online telephony tool to carry out role-plays and thereby gain confidence in using the telephone in English.

Delaney's contribution (Case Report 5) describes how learners exchange emails with classmates in English, thereby putting their email communication skills into practice in a semi-authentic activity. The report by Kertzner about ESL training for geriatric care in the US (Case

Online activities are no longer seen as add-on activities. Instead rather they play an integral part in English language workforce training.

The internet is used to integrate up-to-date authentic materials and activities for classes.

Report 16) describes how busy employees were able to combine an online course with contact classes when their schedules allowed. The online facilities included an asynchronous application, which allowed learners to record themselves speaking and then to receive audio and text-based feedback from a trainer, who could use technological tools to provide the necessary feedback independent of time and place.

Several reports, including Lantz-Wagner's discussion of Tongren University's business English course (Case Report 18), as well as that of Edmonds about The Language Training Center (Case Report 11), describe how the internet is used to integrate up-to-date authentic materials and activities for their classes. The same is also true for the report on nurses and healthcare workers in Brazil (Case Report 1), where both excerpts from a popular television series and information on up-to-date medical applications are downloaded and used in class or for private study.

6.3 Cultural Aspects of Language and Communication

As was noted in the literature review, the development of intercultural communicative competence and global competence has become one of the key aims in the training of English language learners to operate in organizations characterized by international travel, immigration, and multicultural workforces. In the case reports, the importance of sensitizing learners to cultural differences and the role of culture in communication are undoubtedly present. It is also interesting to review briefly how this cultural element appears in the aims and objectives of the different courses discussed herein.

For example, many of the case reports highlight a growing awareness in learners of how culture influences communication. One of the objectives of the English for diplomats course (Case Report 13), for instance, is for participants to "exhibit understanding of pragmatic rules which govern discourse in American culture." Likewise, one of the main goals of the Excelsior English program (Case Report 5) is "assisting the participants in comprehending and communicating more confidently,

The development of intercultural communicative competence and global competence has become a key aim in the training of English language learners.

clearly, and appropriately in a technical North American environment.”

Course providers also try to draw learners’ attention to various countries’ different cultural norms regarding how business is conducted. Lantz-Wagner, the business English teacher at Tongren University (Case Report 18), talks about raising “understanding of cross-cultural differences in business, specifically between the US and China.” Likewise, Kertzner’s discussion (Case Report 16) of training workers for a retirement facility in the US emphasizes the importance of “understanding cultural differences and the expectations of workplace behavior in American culture, with an emphasis on communication with senior citizens.”

But how should these aims be achieved? For the most part, the case reports indicate that learners are often sensitized to cultural norms in English language communication by being encouraged to reflect on cultural aspects of their performance as those issues arise in role plays and in semi-authentic activities. For example, Edmonds (Case Report 11) talks of learners being engaged in “authentic and communicative” activities in class and then being led to focus on “socio-cultural issues affecting how messages will be best received, and strategic skills for managing interactions.” Similarly, the course of English for Diplomats (Case Report 13), deals with cultural issues such as appropriate tone in written correspondence and turn-taking strategies in telephone conversations. All of these issues are dealt with through role play and simulation activities. Very few of the other case studies state explicitly how cultural sensitivity and awareness are integrated into their course methodologies. A notable exception is Ali Lawson’s report on the international program of Bern University of Applied Sciences (Case Report 19). Here, students are confronted with intercultural experiences on a regular basis as they work together in international teams and are encouraged to reflect on how different members of the group react or interpret the tasks set in the program.

Perhaps it is understandable that a pervasive, complex theme such as culture is not outlined explicitly in the syllabi, but rather is dealt with as it arises in the projects and simulations that learners engage in during their courses. Unlike aspects of grammar and vocabulary, or factual information about businesses and countries, intercultural competence

is not something concrete that can be presented and learned, but rather it is something that is inherent in and intrinsic to all language communication skills and strategies. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that developing cultural awareness is explicitly cited in most of the case reports as an important aim of the courses described. This view contrasts quite strongly with similar courses offered in the past, where “culture” was often represented as a list of facts to be learned about corporate and political behavior in different countries. A sign of the growing importance of intercultural communication is to be seen in the Excelsior program (Case Report 5). The Excelsior team considers one of the main successes of their approach to be that learners generally develop a “deeper understanding of what a North American audience expects in terms of directness, delegation, teamwork, individual validation, and democratic decision making.”

6.4 The Use of Project-based Learning and Authentic Materials

Not all the case reports articulate the specific approaches used to develop intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence. However, it is quite apparent that the general classroom procedures adopted to prepare 21st-century workers for their English-language encounters involve the integration of project-based learning with role play and simulations that reflect the immediate and future needs of learners in their workplaces.

The integration of project-based learning with role play and simulations reflects the immediate and future needs of learners in their workplaces.

Two case reports specifically note a move away from previous methodological approaches. Chan, in her discussion of the business communication course at the University of Hong Kong (Case Report 20), explains that she avoided using the widespread functional approach to the teaching of business English through exposing learners to lists of communicative functions and their realizations because, in her view, “the lists do not sensitize students to the contextual factors which influence language choice.” Similarly, Janjua, in the report on English for Japanese nurses (Case Report 10), explains that high school English in Japan is usually taught through the grammar translation method, which students may find boring and demotivating.

Some educators report using simulations and role play tasks that are clearly relevant to the areas of work of their learners. For example, according to the report by Doll, the Oxford Intensive School of English in Boston (Case Report 15) engages groups of four learners each week in the preparation of a role play, which integrates the functional language that they have been studying. The report by Lantz-Wagner on Tongren University (Case Report 18) mentions various realistic tasks, including requiring groups of students to create an advertisement for a product of their choice, which they must then present to their classmates, explaining why their product is superior to that of their competitors. Lawson's paper (Case Report 13) discusses the development of learners' interaction skills by requiring them to take part in actual meetings or to carry out various tasks (such as clarifications and invitations) with another speaker over the telephone or using Skype technology. The case report on "English language and non-proliferation training program" (Case Report 9) also offers a wide range of semi-authentic communicative tasks which include requiring participants to present their own work and research to fellow students and staff in a simulation of an international conference. It is fair to speculate here that activities such as this one, which involves talking about one's own work experiences in English, are both enjoyable and relevant for learners. Further mentions of simulation and role play tasks can be found in the Linguaepeace Europe project (Case Report 4) and the "Military-specific terminology and use in time-sensitive radio communications" (Case Report 7), which presents narrowly focused, essential practice in communication that can, quite literally, save lives, if carried out correctly.

Going a step further than simulations and role plays, there are several examples found in the case reports of fully authentic or real-world projects or tasks being used in English language courses, which bring learners to use English with members of the world outside the course itself. For example, the course in business English at the University of Hong Kong, which was described by Chan (Case Report 20), requires each student to interview an English-speaking business executive and then to draw up a written report and make an oral presentation to classmates based on the interview. The in-house training course for English-learning employees at retirement facilities in northern California (Case Report 16) prepares class participants to carry out interviews and then sends them out into the retirement community to interview a resident in English. The

There are several examples in the case reports of fully authentic or real-world projects or tasks used in English language courses.

students then return to the class to report and reflect on their interview experience. Another close-to-life encounter with a specific professional field is described in Pahl's case report on the Japanese dentists (Case Report 14), who attended a dental conference during their stay in California. The international program at Bern University of Applied Sciences (Case Report 19) can almost be seen as "a play within a play." Students work on case studies related to the world of business and administration, using English in an international environment (i.e., the course itself), where they plan, discuss, negotiate outcomes, and present the findings of their research to their peers and the teaching staff.

6.5 The Importance of Autonomy and Developing Learner Independence

One of the striking differences between the review of the literature and the commentaries in the case reports is the different levels of attention paid to the development of language learning strategies. Considerable research was done in the area of learner independence in foreign language education in the 1980's and 1990's (see, e.g., Little, 1991; Nunan, 1988). This work culminated in the development of tools for developing learning strategies and learner independence, such as learner diaries and learner portfolios. It also led to the description of the students' abilities to learn as one of the key language learning skills in the Council of Europe's European Framework of Reference for Foreign Language Education (2001).

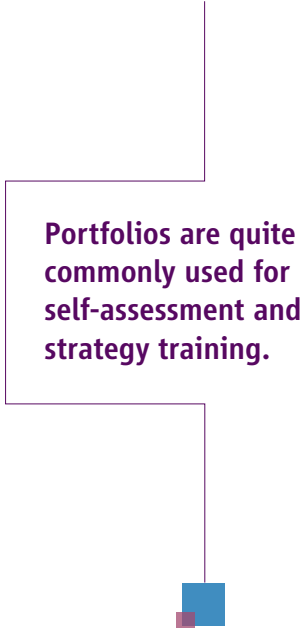
The concept that learners need to develop language learning skills and awareness, which they can apply to different learning contexts and situations outside of the classroom, has become so established in foreign language education at this stage that it has, perhaps, been taken for granted in the more recent literature reviewed here. It may be seen simply as a basic part of the language learner's repertoire of skills.

The concept of autonomy is referred to repeatedly in the aims of many of the case reports, highlighting the importance of learners' abilities

The case reports highlight the importance of learners' abilities to continue improving their English language proficiency beyond the duration of the course.

to continue improving their English language proficiency beyond the duration of their course. The ProActive English report about caregivers in retirement facilities (Case Report 16) refers to the importance of making learners more aware of their own responsibility for improving their English language skills. Similarly, Doll's account (Case Report 15) of language coaching for professional, vocational, and academic needs mentions that the program's teachers have recently placed a greater emphasis in their courses on preparing students to continue their learning after they leave the program. Indeed, they provide their students with various strategies and materials to support them in continuing to learn outside the classroom. Some reports mention particular strategies and techniques that they use to develop learner independence. Chan's description of the business English course at University of Hong Kong (Case Report 20) and Embree's contribution on the European Center for Security Studies (Case Report 7) both describe how they develop autonomy in their students through self-study and peer-teaching, which can involve, for example, students preparing vocabulary worksheets for their partners or giving feedback on their classmates' performance in English communicative tasks.

Portfolios are also quite commonly used for self-assessment and strategy training. Currie's report on the teacher training course in Abu Dhabi (Case Report 2) describes the creation of portfolios as being a key part of the course. In addition, the Linguaepeace Europe report (Case Report 4) describes a version of the European Learning Portfolio for military personnel, in which learners can document and reflect on their own learning in this particular area of the English language.



Portfolios are quite commonly used for self-assessment and strategy training.

6.6 Interdisciplinarity and Teaching Qualifications

One can see quite clearly a development towards teamwork between language specialists and subject specialists in some case reports. At the level of higher education, there is the example of Bern University of Applied Sciences (Case Report 19), where language teaching staff support subject specialists in a new venture to provide content delivery

in English. In vocational training, we see in McKay's example (Case Report 17) that language teaching is combined with practical input about life skills from vocational training experts. These skills are seen as essential to integration into the workforce and for society as a whole.

It is in this area of language education that one becomes particularly conscious of the need for lifelong learning. Language teachers in professional and vocational fields must be open to conducting research in any number of disciplines. Such research will enable them to provide learners with the language background information necessary to use English effectively in their particular field of work.

Language teachers in professional and vocational fields must be open to conducting research in any number of disciplines.

6.7 Organizational Support of English Programs

We saw in the literature review that in-company training is seen as most successful when it is integrated into the employing organization's basic philosophy and when it receives adequate support and recognition from management and other sectors of the company. This finding is clearly reflected in various case reports. For example, Currie's discussion of the language training program for practicing teachers in Abu Dhabi (Case Report 2) refers to the program's 2010 year-end review, which found that teachers are more willing to participate in language learning courses when school principals prioritize language learning as a key reform objective, where language classes are included as part of the school schedule, and when the principals themselves become involved in the English program.

In-company training is most successful when it is integrated into the organization's basic philosophy and receives adequate support and recognition from management.

The ProActive English program (Case Report 16) motivated and supported English learning staff members at the senior resident communities in northern California by inviting managers, human resources personnel, and tutors to share their comments about the English program with the learners. Case report author Kertzner explains the value of such an approach: "The positive message that trainees received was that this program matters, not just to 'you' but to the workplace community – and 'we' are seeing improvement." Another example comes from Edmonds' report on individual workplace language

programs (Case Report 11), which warns that it is vital for companies to look to the long-term benefits of English language training programs, and to be willing to make the necessary economic investment in the best possible courses for their employees.

Section 7. Themes Receiving Limited Attention in the Case Reports

A review of the case reports also reveals that there are two themes which received considerable attention in the literature review but which often appear to be overlooked or absent from the case reports analyzed for this study. It is interesting to look at these issues briefly and discuss the reasons for their absence.

7.1 Learner Mobility Within Study Programs

In Pahl's case report on English for Japanese Dentists from the Osaka University Graduate School of Dentistry (Case Report 14), students spent the second of the five-week study-abroad course in San Francisco, where they took part in classes and workshops, attended presentations, and were involved in networking sessions with local dentistry graduates. However, apart from this example, there is virtually no mention in the case reports of learner mobility or work experience programs being integrated into courses, except, of course, when training occurs on the job, as is the case of the retirement facility in northern California.


There may be various reasons for this absence of commentary about mobility as a concern in the reports. First, many workers have to travel to the target culture in the first place in order to take part in the courses offered and, second, most of the courses mentioned here are not long-term and, therefore, do not have sufficient time to include periods of mobility or work practice. Mobility appears to be most common in university-level education and long-term periods of vocational study

where language courses can be combined with stages of mobility over a three- or four-year study period, as is the case at Bern University of Applied Sciences. However, this situation does not reflect the type of programs described in the majority of these twenty case reports. That said, it is important to point out that virtual mobility, in the form of online contact and training between tutors and learners over a distance was discussed by Donohoe Luscombe (Case Report 9). This type of contact is undoubtedly an effective option for gaining access to expert tutors and native speakers when the learner is not able to travel physically due to professional or economic reasons.

7.2 Preparation for 21st-century Literacies

One of the principal findings of the literature review was the importance attributed to learners' capacity to apply the 21st-century skills of creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and e-literacies through English. Interestingly, there are very few references to 21st-century skills or transversal competences in the case reports. Furthermore, the syllabi would seem to suggest that the emphasis in business English courses remains very much on business-oriented or professional tasks and functions. Examples of these are making formal oral presentations, authoring written reports and business correspondence, participating in business meetings, etc.

The recent literature reported earlier highlighted the need for 21st-century workers to be able to conduct more effectively informal and affective forms of interaction in the workplace. While these skills were not described in all of the case reports summarized here, some case reports do touch on them briefly. The business communication course at University of Hong Kong, for example, emphasizes getting students to identify and understand idiomatic language in informal business situations. It is also important to point out that many of the 21st-century skills such as collaboration, problem solving, e-literacy, etc., are likely to be developed implicitly through the task- and project-based approaches that emerged as prevalent in many courses.



Many 21st-century skills are likely to be developed implicitly through task- and project-based approaches.

8. Conclusion

This study set out with the dual aims of examining, first, the role of English in the 21st-century workplace, and, second, how members of the modern-day workforce are being trained to develop English language skills throughout their professional careers. The combination of our literature review and the analysis of the case reports addresses these two issues.

This synthesis supports the idea that English plays an integral role in the globalized economy, not only in countries where English is the majority language but also where it is a foreign language used as a *lingua franca* by the local workforce. Workers around the world are increasingly required to be able to apply the 21st-century skills of collaboration, problem solving, e-literacy, etc., in English. They are being required to use this language to work and collaborate with clients, colleagues, and supervisors who may come from many different cultural backgrounds. This context suggests that English must be learned in combination with the skills of intercultural communication.

Our review of the literature outlined various important trends in how workers are being trained to use English in this new global playing field. These instructional trends included encouraging learners to develop their language skills through virtual and physical mobility programs, as well as integrating language and content in training programs. Other trends involved employing project work to make the language learning experience more authentic and more related to how English is being used in the workplace. It was also particularly noteworthy that many studies underscored the need for workers to be able to use English effectively in informal situations in the workplace, such as establishing relationships and maintaining rapport with their co-workers, superiors, and clients. In the context of immigrant workers in English-speaking countries, the literature also identified new approaches which include English language development in the organization's philosophy, creating bilingual working teams, and exploiting the potential of immigrants' native language and culture.



English plays an integral role in the globalized economy.

Workers must be able to use English effectively in informal situations in the workplace, such as establishing relationships and maintaining rapport with their co-workers, superiors, and clients.

The case reports analyzed in this study yielded various trends emerging from different professional training organizations and initiatives around the world. The most striking trends in 21st-century English language training which were identified in the analysis of the case reports included a move away from general business English approaches towards a greater specialization and personalization of English language training. Other important trends included a growing interest in raising student awareness of the role of culture in workplace communication as well as the need to develop learner independence. As had also been seen in the literature review, the content of many case reports reflected the importance of project-based approaches. The pervasive presence of online technologies was also documented, both for delivering English language training and for developing English proficiency through online interaction.

We believe that the findings of this study have various implications for different sectors of the English language training industry. We will close by discussing the implications for English language trainers, for companies and for other organizations, and for language learners.

The findings suggest that online technologies now play such an integral role in the international workplace that language trainers need to ensure that online activities and resources are fully integrated into language courses, rather than simply representing an occasional add-on activity. Workers are increasingly using English to communicate in online contexts (e.g., email communication, webcam-based conference meetings, etc.). With this point in mind, learners need to have regular opportunities to develop their language skills in these virtual contexts.

A further suggestion for training providers (and also for material developers) is to address the themes of intercultural communicative competence and cultural sensitivity in a concrete manner in courses and materials for professional English training. While many of the case report authors acknowledged the importance of communicating in intercultural contexts, there were not many specific examples of how this issue was being dealt with in course delivery.

We believe the present study also holds meaningful findings for companies and other organizations wishing to improve their workers' English language skills. First, we would suggest that employers try to take a long-term view when deciding whether or not to undertake the extra cost of personalized courses which are tailored to the specific English language needs of individuals or groups of workers. While this type of course may be more costly than a general off-the-shelf course in the short-term, the experiences described in the case reports would seem to suggest that personalized courses may be both more motivating and more useful and efficient for workers in the long run, compared to more general courses.

Next, we saw in the literature review and in the case reports that in-company training is most successful when it is integrated into the company's basic philosophy and when it receives adequate support and recognition from management and other sectors of the organization. Quite simply, management should remember that staff members need to feel that English language training is valued by their company and that their efforts to improve their language skills will be a great asset to their long-term careers in the organization.

Finally, we would like to address learners themselves. We would urge learners who need English language skills to refer to the checklist in Appendix A as this tool may help them to identify whether a certain English course deals with their own particular requirements. It is important that, when making contact with the person or organization offering a specific course, learners are able to articulate what their needs are and what they expect to find in their course. A general English course may often seem attractive because it is cheaper and more readily accessible, but learners should remember that an ESP course or even a tailor-made language course based on the demands of their own workplace may prove to be more effective and, in the long run, better value for money.

Staff members need to feel that their companies value their English training and that their efforts to improve their language skills will be a great asset to their long-term careers.

Appendices

Appendix A: A Checklist for Workplace Related Language Courses

The following checklist is presented as a list of relevant questions meant for several different reading audiences. First, we hope it will be helpful to newcomers to the field of ESP looking for guidance on how best to set up or evaluate a language course for learners who need English for specific vocational, professional, or academic purposes. It may also be of interest to employers looking for courses to develop their employees' English language skills. The checklist will also provide relevant information to educational institutions that are considering how to adopt, adapt, and/or integrate an ESP/VOLL approach into their English language courses. Finally, it should be beneficial to those who wish to find courses about the type of English language skills they need in order to be a successful part of the 21st-century workforce.

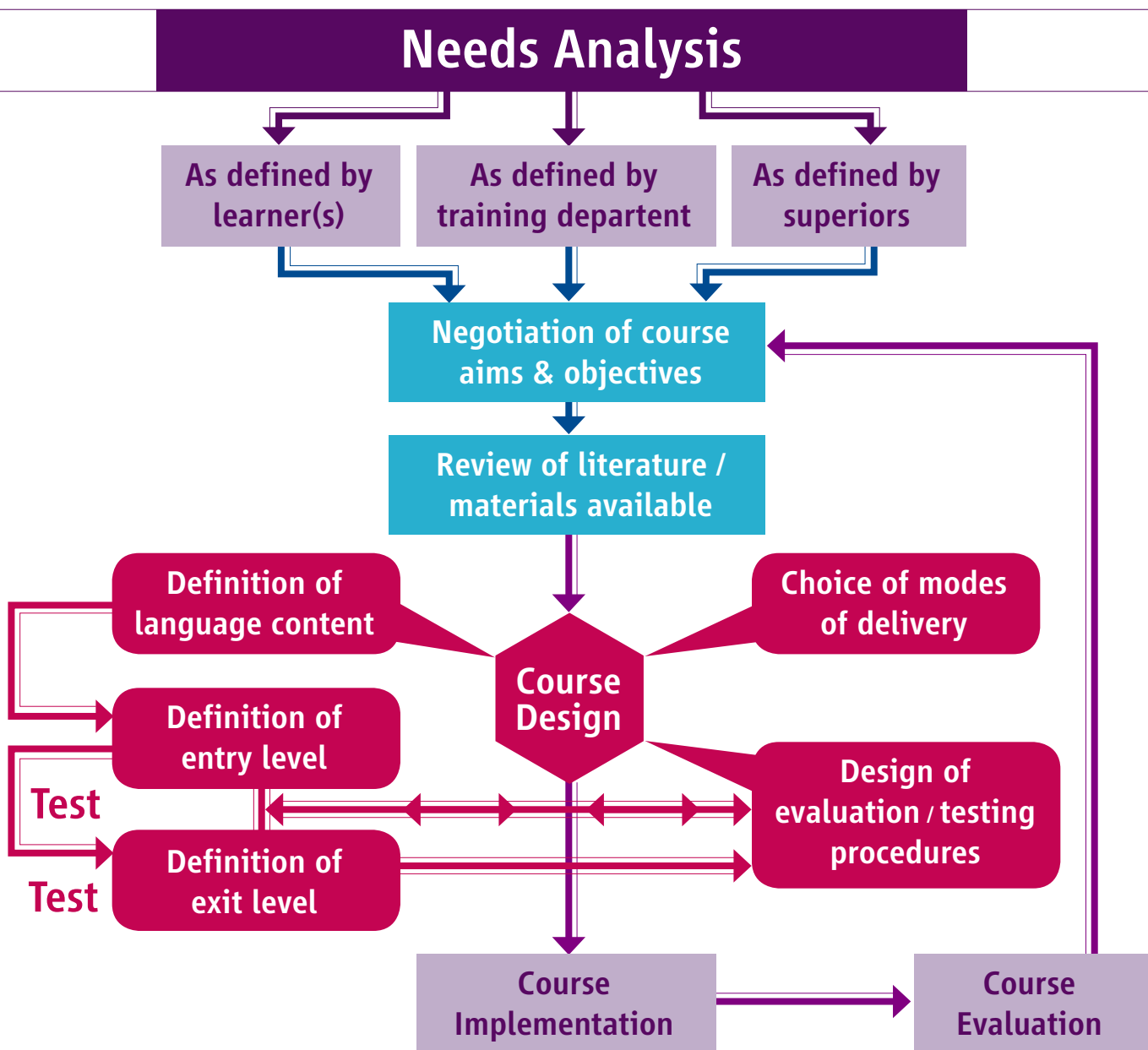
The checklist is not meant to be either detailed or exhaustive. Instead it should serve as a general guide regarding approaches that have proved fruitful in the past. The checklist is culled from our personal experiences, from the review of the literature collected for this study, and from the twenty case reports contributed to TIRF by practitioners in the field. It is presented in a loose chronological order in terms of the phases of course design, implementation, and evaluation.

Needs Analyses and the Language Audit Phase

Needs analyses consist of a series of procedures used to determine stakeholders' views of what language abilities course participants must develop. These procedures include interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, and observational data collection.

Figure 1 gives a general overview of the main steps to be taken in developing a specific purpose language course. Practical examples of how professionals in the field approach the different steps can be seen in the cases summarized above.

Figure 1: A model of needs analysis and course implementation



Language auditing, which is also known as “linguistic auditing” (Reeves & Wright, 1996), provides methods for the systematic analysis of the foreign language communication needs of organizations in the private sector or public sector. Such analysis can be carried out by managers, training officers, or language experts. This process enables organizations to identify strengths in the language abilities of current staff and any shortcomings in the organizations’ entire system for communicating with foreign markets. Further details about language audits can be found in a project called “Language Audits Tools for Europe.”¹² For a discussion of needs analysis conducted in planning a workplace language course for a Japanese company, see Cowling (2007).¹³

The following are key questions to be addressed regarding the needs analysis phase:

- Are the overall aims of the planned course clear and comprehensible to all?
- Has the available literature about linguistic audits been consulted?
- Will all the stakeholders involved be consulted: the (potential) learners, the training department of the organization involved, the superiors of the people in the learning group, and other people in the organization who are already carrying out the necessary functions in the target language?

It is not unusual for the groups listed above to have different views on the language needs of the potential learners. Nevertheless, for the success of a language course, it is essential that all stakeholders are consulted and advised on the contents of the course. Those contents should be based upon the language professional’s negotiation of course contents with the department responsible for training, using the data collected in this initial phase.

¹²<http://www.lilama.org/uploads/documents/LanguageAuditsToolsforEurope-Europe.pdf>

¹³<http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/yousif/CoursecontentforCI20584/NeedsAnalysis202007.pdf>

Establishing the Overall Language Goals

An important step in developing a specific purpose language course or contracting with a course provider is determining the goals of the course. As shown in Figure 1, conducting a needs analysis that involves input from key stakeholders is important in articulating the goals of the training. Once the general goals have been established, the following questions may be addressed:

- Do the language specifications defined reflect what the learners must be able to do in English to operate effectively in their work?
- Have existing can-do statements been consulted?

Those can-do statements published by the Council of Europe in the *Common European Framework of Reference* (see Appendix B) give general guidelines. There are also VOLL-adapted versions like *The EUROPEAN VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS*¹⁴ (*EVQs*), which provide specific guidance in terms of how to reformulate general can-do statements to match specific purposes.

Course Design Phase

A number of questions arise regarding the actual design of the course. These include issues of timing, intensity, delivery modes, and materials.

- How long will learners need in order to achieve the agreed-upon skill-levels and competencies?
- What is the optimal or most practical intensity of instruction?
- What delivery format will the course take? That is, will the course consist only of face-to-face sessions?
- Will online technologies be deployed to supplement face-

¹⁴<http://evolution.ecml.at/Home/BackgroundtotheEVOLUTIONProject/tabid/2544/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

to-face sessions?

- Will it be possible to offer a “blended learning” approach fully incorporating both face-to-face and online sessions?
- Is a mixture of different media, integrating internet research and online cooperation desirable?
- Will “WEB 2.0” resources and social media (e.g., blogs, wikis, etc.) be used to support out-of-class learning?

Beyond the language teaching focus of the training course, there is the issue of whether other 21st-century skills be addressed in the course.

- Will learners need specific training to develop additional skills?
- How will liaison with (potential) employers be effected to determine the skills required?
- How will training for these skills be integrated into the course?

Materials Research Phase

In designing a special purpose language course, once the language needs have been identified and the main course goals have been articulated, it is advisable to determine what teaching materials will be needed. Devoting time to this effort in a research phase can save time and money in the long run. The following questions inform the materials research phase:

- What teaching and learning materials will learners use?
- Are appropriate published textbooks already available on the market?
- Will authentic materials be culled from the workplace of the learners?
- Do specialist dictionaries or manuals already exist

for the specific professional or vocational area under consideration?

- Have other colleagues already designed teaching materials related to the professional or vocational area in question?
- Are these materials freely available or can they be purchased?
- Do all interested parties have access to the materials for the target group (i.e., materials in English used at the workplace)?

The Language Assessment Phase

It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss in detail many of the issues related to language testing and the professions. (See Douglas, 2002, for a thorough discussion of special purpose language assessment.) Here, we will simply introduce a number of key issues that merit consideration in course development.

For a special purpose language course to be successful, the point of entry must be clearly defined in terms of the candidates' initial required language proficiency. It is also helpful to identify the language elements and skills to be acquired to achieve the envisaged aims of the course from the outset. Tests administered at the beginning of a language program normally serve one of three purposes:

1. Admissions tests are very broad and typically assess candidates' overall proficiency to determine whether they are at the threshold level needed to undertake a course of study.
2. Placement tests determine which level(s) of a multi-level curriculum is/are most appropriate for the candidates.
3. Diagnostic tests are more specific. Their purpose is to determine the candidates' initial strengths and areas for improvement in the target language.

In an individual or tailor-made program, there may be no need for a placement test as long as the candidates' language proficiency is at a sufficient level to benefit from the course.

With regard to pre-course assessment, the following issues should be considered:

- What level of general language proficiency should the candidates possess to undertake the course of study?
- Which language skill(s) will be assessed – listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing?
- Which language components will be addressed – pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and/or interaction at the discourse level?

There are several widely used proprietary tests of language proficiency, which may be useful for some purposes in professional or vocational language training contexts. These include the following:

1. Basic English Skills Test Plus (BEST Plus)¹⁵
2. Business Language Testing Service (BULATS)¹⁶
3. Council of Europe E-VOLLution Project¹⁷
4. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS)¹⁸
5. Pearson Test of English¹⁹
6. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)²⁰
7. The Test of International English Communication (TOIEC)²¹

We are not recommending or endorsing any of these tests. Rather, we are simply providing this list to help readers locate assessment tools of possible interest.

¹⁵ <http://www.cal.org/aea/bestplus/index.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.bulats.org/>

¹⁷ http://archive.ecml.at/projects/voll/evolution/graz_2009/testing/index.htm

¹⁸ <http://www.ielts.org/default.aspx>

¹⁹ <http://www.pearsonpte.com/ptegeneral/Pages/home.aspx>

²⁰ <http://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about/>

²¹ <http://www.ets.org/toeic>

Apart from entry and exit testing, attention should be paid to formative evaluation, which provides developmental information during the course. Such ongoing assessment can take the form of progress tests or of learners' language portfolios, in which participants are encouraged to map their own progress. Portfolios are particularly useful in showing learners and teachers what progress has been made (formative evaluation) and can showcase examples of the learner's most successful work in the target language²².

A judicious choice of assessment instruments will contribute greatly to the overall success of the course. These instruments may be created specifically for the course or they may be chosen from among the many standardized and specialized forms of assessment available today. However, it is important to note that there is no "one-size-fits-all" test format for ESP/VOLL courses. This point is well illustrated in the different tests and assessment formats used by the professionals who submitted case reports for this study.

Bearing in mind the cautionary note above, there are also open source and proprietary computer adaptive tests²³ available, which can help to establish the general language abilities of potential course participants. An example of an open source computer adaptive test is DIALANG²⁴, which is offered by the University of Lancaster. An example of a proprietary computer adaptive test is Itembanker²⁵. This system provides computer-delivered tests of French, German, Spanish, and English. However, we believe that the results obtained from such tests should be corroborated by one-to-one interviews with a trained professional to ensure that the candidates have the necessary level of language knowledge and skills to embark on the training program.

²² A rationale for and example of a portfolio can be found at http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/introduction.html

²³ Computerized adaptive testing (CAT) is a computer-based test that utilizes the learners' response and adapts subsequent test items to the examinee's ability level.

²⁴ <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/researchenterprise/dialang/about>

²⁵ http://archive.ecml.at/projects/voll/evollution/graz_2009/testing/index_itembanker.htm

With regard to formative evaluation procedures used during the course, it is important to address these questions:

- What types of assessment will be incorporated in the course as it progresses?
- How often will such procedures be used?
- Will learners be encouraged to maintain a portfolio to record their achievements during the course?
- How will senior management be integrated into the ongoing flow of information about the progress and successes of the course?
- How will the concern, support, and interest of management and other employees be conveyed to the learners?

In terms of exit mechanisms, assessment procedures should be directly related to the course goals. The main issue is how to ascertain whether the participants have achieved the aims of the course. Other important questions include the following:

- If a standardized and/or computer adaptive test is used at the beginning of the course, will a comparable test be employed as the exit/achievement test?
- Will other formal testing devices be used, e.g., proprietary, commercially available tests?
- Will tailor-made tests or other forms of individual assessment be used to determine learners' achievement instead of or in addition to standardized tests?

The case study reported in the Council of Europe E-VOLLution project might provide useful insights for beginners on how to approach the question of testing and assessment in this area of language teaching on a step-by-step basis.

Related Activities

Another important issue has to do with language encounters that can be arranged outside the class meetings of the course itself. The following questions may guide discussion of such extracurricular activities:

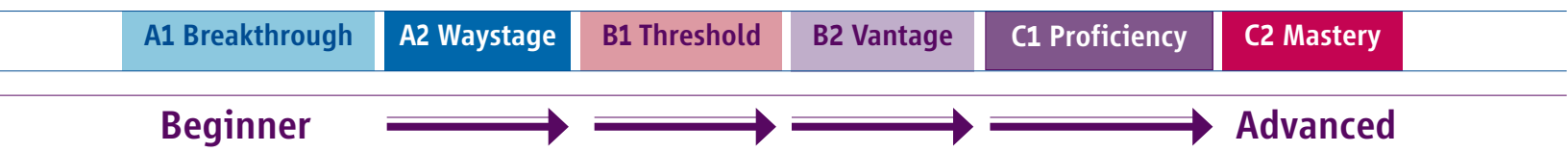
- Are internships or work placements in English-speaking environments available?
- Will participants be able to visit exhibitions, seminars, or conventions where English is used as the (chief) means of communication?
- Will participants have the opportunity to visit English-speaking working contexts that are directly related to their professional goals?
- Will the training include face-to-face or virtual talks in English by experts in fields related to the specific VOLL/ESP areas being dealt with in the training?
- Will there be virtual encounters with English-speaking colleagues working in the same or similar areas as part of the training?
- Do online platforms exist where learners can contact one another outside regular course sessions?

Arranging such out-of-class activities can greatly benefit adult learners. Providing opportunities for employees to use their developing language skills in genuine communicative contexts can stimulate their efforts and give them realistic information about their successes.

Appendix B: The Common European Framework of Reference

(Retrieved and adapted from <http://www.euregioenglish.be/levels.htm>)

This European standard for evaluating the different levels of language proficiency recognizes six different levels in the four skill areas: speaking, reading, writing and listening. They range from “A1” (the breakthrough stage) to “C2” (mastery), as learners progress from beginning to advanced levels of proficiency.



Below is a simplified overview illustrating how the levels relate to speaking skills.

Level	General Description of Skills
Breakthrough (Bre)	<p>Very basic concrete communication. Survival vocabulary & very limited knowledge of grammar.</p> <p>Capable of very short 1 or 2 word answers about personal & familiar topics.</p>
Waystage (A2)	<p>Simple & direct exchange of information possible about familiar & routine tasks.</p> <p>Can ask for & provide everyday goods & services.</p> <p>Can deal with simple transactions in shops, post offices & banks.</p>
Threshold (B1)	<p>Understands the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters.</p> <p>Can enter unprepared into conversation about familiar topics & connect ideas in a simple way.</p> <p>Can provide information, take messages, give simple instructions & deal with less routine problems, e.g., complaints.</p> <p>Can describe events, experiences, hopes & ambitions, give reasons, explanations of plans & opinions.</p>
Vantage (B2)	<p>Understands the main points of both concrete & abstract input.</p> <p>Can take active part in discussions on familiar topics, support ideas, discuss advantages & disadvantages, speculate about causes & hypothetical situations.</p> <p>Can interact spontaneously & fluently enough with a native speaker to avoid strain for either party.</p>
Proficiency (C1)	<p>Capable of fluent, spontaneous almost effortless communication.</p> <p>Can understand extended speech & present clear detailed descriptions of complex subjects.</p> <p>Can use the language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.</p>
Mastery (C2)	<p>Extensive knowledge of idioms and colloquial expressions;</p> <p>Able to use different degrees of formality and differentiate finer shades of meaning.</p>

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