

A TESOL Symposium

Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Meeting Our Learners' Needs

Universidad Argentina de la Empresa
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Thursday July 12, 2007

Featured Speakers

Donna Brinton
Almut Koester
Thomas Orr

The TESOL Symposium on Teaching English for Specific Purposes is sponsored by

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TESOL Symposium on Teaching English for Specific Purposes: Meeting Our Learners' Needs

Overview

On July 12, 2007, 131 participants from nine countries gathered at the Universidad Argentina de la Empresa, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, for the TESOL Symposium on Teaching English for Specific Purposes. The participants and speakers were from Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the United Kingdom, Japan, and the United States. The three featured speakers were Donna Brinton, Almut Koester, and Thomas Orr. TESOL Argentina, TESOL's affiliate, chose the theme of the symposium.

Sandy Briggs, President of TESOL, welcomed the participants and gave special thanks to the symposium sponsors: Heinle, a part of Cengage Learning, and ETS TOEFL. She also acknowledged and thanked Argentina TESOL and the Universidad Argentina de la Empresa. Patricia Orsi, President, Argentina TESOL, and Dr. Jorge del Águila, President, Universidad Argentina de la Empresa, also provided opening remarks.

In the morning session, Brinton, Koester, and Orr shared highlights of their work and research. In the afternoon, each of the speakers led an interactive breakout session. In the wrap-up session, Viviana Cortes summarized key insights from the symposium presentations and papers and facilitated a discussion involving the speakers and participants. Ana María Rocca, Immediate Past President, Argentina TESOL, provided closing remarks.

The three original papers and summary of the proceedings published here provide pertinent research and insights on the important topic of teaching English for specific purposes.

TESOL Symposium on Teaching English for Specific Purposes

Symposium Agenda

July 12, 2007

Universidad Argentina de la Empresa

Buenos Aires, Argentina

- 8:30 am—9:30 am Check in/Tea and Coffee
- 9:30 am—9:45 am **Welcome**
- **Sandy Briggs**, President, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
 - **Patricia Orsi**, President, Argentina TESOL
 - **Dr. Jorge del Águila**, President, Universidad Argentina de la Empresa
- 9:45 am—12:00 pm **Introductory Presentations**
- Two for One? Language-Enhanced Content Instruction in English for Academic Purposes
Donna Brinton
 - The Contribution of Research to Materials Development in ESP: The Case of Business English
Almut Koester
 - The Pursuit of Expertise
Thomas Orr
- 12:00 pm—1:30 pm Lunch (on your own)
- 1:30 pm—3:15 pm **Concurrent Discussions**
- Two for One? Language-Enhanced Content Instruction in English for Academic Purposes
Donna Brinton
 - The Contribution of Research to Materials Development in ESP: The Case of Business English
Almut Koester
 - The Pursuit of Expertise
Thomas Orr
- 3:30 pm—4:30 pm **Closing Session/Questions & Comments**
- Viviana Cortes**
- Closing Remarks**
- Ana María Rocca**, Immediate Past President, Argentina TESOL

TESOL Symposium on Teaching English for Specific Purposes

Speaker Bios and Overview of the Presentations

Two for One? Language-Enhanced Content Instruction in English for Academic Purposes

The literature on content-based language teaching (CBLT) often claims that students get two for one—both content knowledge and increased language proficiency. The literature also frequently discusses sheltering content, that is, using instructional means to make difficult content more accessible to English language learners (ELLs). However, the literature has less often discussed how content can be used in EAP courses to enhance ELLs' language skills. Donna Brinton discusses an alternate CBLT paradigm—language-enhanced content instruction. She will use an EAP instructional unit from American history (the Lewis and Clark expedition) to demonstrate how language and content goals can complement each other and how content instruction can be enhanced by an overt focus on language.

Donna M. Brinton is Professor of TESOL at Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo, California. For more than 25 years, she worked with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) as a lecturer and coordinator of UCLA's ESL courses for matriculated students and as associate director of UCLA's Center for World Languages. In addition to her work with UCLA, Ms. Brinton has worked for the U.S. Department of State and other private organizations and has conducted short-term teacher education programs in North America, Central and South America, Asia, Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East. She is the co-author and co-editor of several professional texts including *Teaching Pronunciation* (1996), *The Content-Based Classroom* (1997), *New Ways in Content-Based Instruction* (1997), *New Ways in ESP* (1998), *Content-Based Second Language Instruction* (2004), and *Heritage Language: A New Field Emerging* (in press). Ms. Brinton also served for twelve years as co-editor of *The CATESOL Journal*. Her areas of expertise include teacher education, second/foreign language methodology, and curriculum and materials design.

The Contribution of Research to Materials Development in ESP: The Case of Business English

Many teachers who enter the field of business English do not have a business background and rely on teaching materials to provide them with the relevant expertise in this area. However, most business English teaching materials are not based on research and may not always accurately reflect the language and content of actual business communication. Almut Koester discusses a number of findings from research into spoken business and workplace interactions, and proposes that such findings can help develop better and more realistic teaching materials in business English.

Almut Koester, Ph.D., is a lecturer in English language at the University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK, where she teaches discourse analysis, genre analysis and business English and directs courses in continuing professional development for nonnative-English-speaking university teachers. She conducts research on spoken workplace discourse and is interested in the applications of research to ESP teaching. She has published with Routledge, Palgrave, and TESOL, and in

international journals such as the *Journal of Pragmatics* and *System*. Her recent publications include *The Language of Work* (2004) and *Investigating Workplace Discourse* (2006).

Pursuing Expertise with Our Students in English for Specific Purposes

Expertise is a crucial concept in ESP, for it not only signposts the personal goal of professional self-development for ESP practitioners but also the goal of those who rely on ESP to develop proficiency in domains of particular English usage. Many ESP specialists, however, do not thoroughly understand the specifics of expertise and thus risk mediocrity in their careers as well as in their training results. Thomas Orr addresses this problem by examining expertise from scholarly viewpoints in multiple disciplines and then provides sound principles for study and practice that can deepen understanding and generate better results among ESP professionals.

Thomas Orr, Ph.D., is a professor at the University of Aizu, Fukushima, Japan, and director of the university's Center for Language Research, where he conducts research on professional communication in science and technology with the aim of developing effective educational programs and materials for nonnative English speakers. He has taught English for more than 20 years in the United States and Japan, and his research has been published by IEEE, Wiley-InterScience, Halldin, Rodopi, Blackwell, TESOL, JALT, JACET, and others. He has served as chair of the TESOL ESP Interest Session, editor for the ESP column in *TESOL Matters*, and editor of the TESOL book *English for Specific Purposes*.

Closing Session

Viviana Cortes has a Ph.D. in applied linguistics, from Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona, USA, an M.A. TESL, from California State University, Los Angeles, USA, and a B.A. in English and technical English teaching from the Universidad Tecnológica Nacional, Instituto Nacional Superior del Profesorado Técnico (INSPT), Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is currently assistant professor at Iowa State University, where she teaches English grammar, discourse analysis, and ESP classes in the TESL/Applied Linguistics program.

TWO FOR ONE? LANGUAGE-ENHANCED INSTRUCTION

Donna Brinton

Beverly Hills, California, United States

The appearance of content-based instruction (CBI) on the language teaching scene is often traced to Mohan's (1986) *Language and Content*. Mohan proposed the then quite revolutionary premise that language should not and could not be taught in isolation from content. He further argued that authentic content provided the richest and most natural context for language teaching to occur. Over the past three decades, this premise has come to be widely accepted and CBI has emerged as one of the primary approaches used in the teaching of English for academic purposes (EAP) (Stoller, 2004). Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of CBI is found in Wesche (1993):

Discipline-based language instruction, and the broader “content-based” approach to which it belongs, are part of a trend at all educational levels aiming at the development of use-oriented second and foreign language skills. Content-based language teaching is distinguished first of all by the concurrent learning of a specific content and related language use skills in a “content driven” curriculum, i.e., with the selection and sequence of language elements determined by the content . . . Essential to all content-based language teaching is a view of language acquisition which emphasizes the incidental internalization of new knowledge by the learner from rich target language data, while focusing on the meaning being communicated . . . In content-based language teaching, the claim in a sense is that students get “two for one”—both content knowledge and increased language proficiency. (pp. 57–58)

From Wesche's definition, we can derive the following premises of CBI:

1. The goal of CBI is to provide a meaningful context for language teaching to occur.
2. The organization of a CBI course centers on content.
3. Content drives the curriculum; that is, it is the starting point for decisions about what is taught.
4. Language and content are taught concurrently.
5. Comprehensible input, provided through the content materials, leads to language acquisition.

Though CBI here is clearly defined as an approach that integrates the teaching of language and content, the “two for one” claim is open to investigation, because Wesche does not stipulate the balance between these two, nor does she address how such a balance is to be achieved.

In fact, it is precisely this unclear balance between language and content that has led the pioneering critics of CBI to point out its potential shortcomings. One such pioneer is Eskey, who in his 1997 landmark article notes that communicative approaches in general, and CBI in particular, have difficulty achieving a balance between form, content, and function. In his view, issues of form receive short shrift in CBI courses, which “tend to come down hard on the side of fluency” (p. 139). In other words, the explication of content and issues of content comprehension take precedence over formal or overt instruction in language issues (e.g., vocabulary or grammar).

In a similar vein, Lyster (2007) points to the paradox that, in much of CBI, focus on language is often incidental—or worse yet, form and function are kept distinct. As a remedy to this, he

advocates a counterbalanced approach that “requires learners to vary their attentional focus between, on the one hand, the content to which they usually attend in classroom discourse and, on the other hand, target language features that are not otherwise attended to” (p. 4). In this manner CBI can support continued second language development.

To investigate the claim that CBI and grammar are not a natural fit, Brinton and Holten (2001) pose the question of whether the emperor has no clothes. In a small-scale study designed to look at how form is integrated into the CBI curriculum, they find some evidence that CBI instructors avoid teaching grammar.¹ They propose several possible causes of this: Instructors may either

1. avoid focusing on form because they lack the necessary knowledge base and skills for addressing form within a CBI paradigm or
2. experience curricular constraints due to a content overload in the curriculum and, as a result, spend time explaining content concepts that should have been dedicated to covering the grammar issues.

Brinton and Holten conclude that although “CBI is a highly effective method of delivering EAP instruction . . . CBI curricula need more systematic and principled attention to language instruction” (p. 251). In their words, the emperor does have clothes but needs “fashion consultation” (p. 251). They conclude by recommending that teacher education programs build training in CBI methodologies into their curricula.

Goldstein, Campbell, & Clark Cummings (1997) document the risk that in adjunct writing courses, the power relation between content and language instructors privileges content instructors, thus lending more legitimacy to content objectives. They term this relation the *flight attendant syndrome* and liken the relation between content and language instructor to that of the pilot and flight attendant, respectively. This power relation may result in a lack of communication between these two parties. Ultimately, it may impede the writing instructor’s ability to initiate students into the discourse community of the content area—that is, to truly integrate language and content.

THREE PROTOTYPE MODELS OF CBI

In noting the flexibility of CBI, Snow (1991) characterizes this approach to second language teaching as a “method with many faces” (p. 461). In this characterization, she is referring to the “prototype” models of CBI discussed by Brinton, Snow, & Wesche (2003), originally published in 1989. As illustrated in Figure 1, these models consist of the following three prototypes:²

¹ See also Brinton (2000) for novice teachers’ insights into the difficulty of addressing grammar issues in CBI.

² This paper does not aim to discuss in detail all possible variations of CBI because that information is readily available elsewhere. Interested readers are directed to Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (2003) for a more detailed discussion of the three prototype models of CBI. They may also wish to investigate recent hybrid models such as *simulated adjunct* (Brinton & Jensen, 2002), *sustained content* (Murphy & Stoller, 2001; Pally, 1997, 2000), *modified theme-based* (Stoller, 2002), and *bridge programs* (Iancu, 2002).

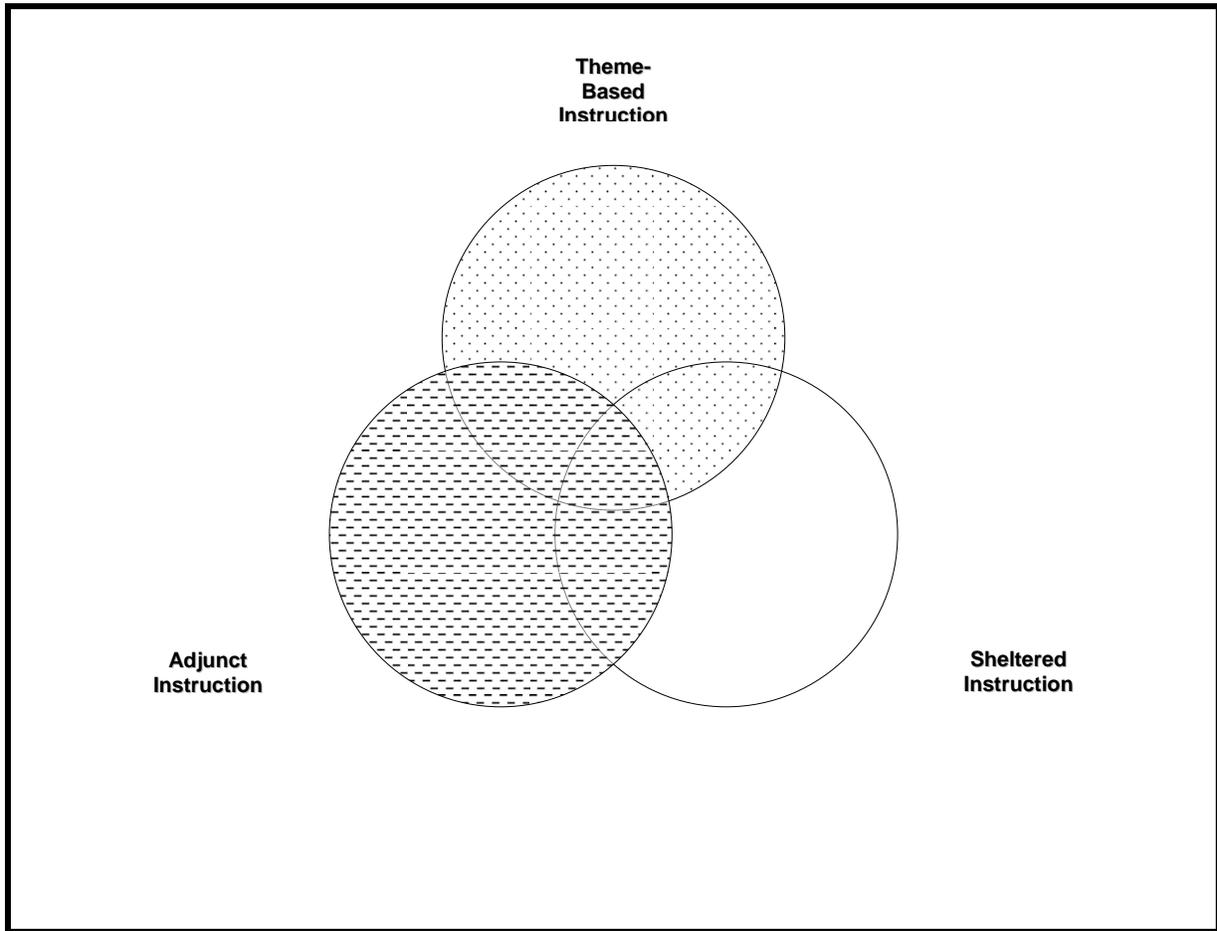


Figure 1. Three prototype models of CBI (cf. Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003)

1. *Theme-based instruction* refers to instructional models that focus on specific themes of interest and relevance to the learners. The themes provide the point of departure for skill- and language-based instruction and create the organizing principle for the course syllabus. Typically, each theme extends over several weeks and provides the rich input necessary for learners to acquire new language.
2. *Sheltered instruction* refers to instructional models in which students with gaps in their second language proficiency are separated from the mainstream content classes and instead placed in special sheltered content classes (e.g., a sheltered history or biology class). The medium of instruction is the students' second language, with all instruction occurring in that language. However, the sheltered content instructors receive specialized training in sheltering techniques and can use them to accommodate their instructional delivery (e.g., by modifying their speech rate and tone; relating new concepts to students' background knowledge; emphasizing context clues; making increased use of demonstrations, visuals, graphic organizers, or cooperative work). In this manner, they help students access the content material. The students' exposure to rich academic language and complex concepts provides the necessary conditions for second language acquisition to occur.

Adjunct instruction refers to instructional models in which a content course is paired with a language course and the respective instructors negotiate their syllabuses to dovetail their instructional objectives. The content course provides the point of departure, and language objectives are

identified with respect to students' linguistic needs in the content-area class. Second language acquisition occurs through exposure to meaningful content and high-level, challenging language in the content course along with the linguistic support and systematic academic language instruction provided in the language course.

According to Brinton, Snow, & Wesche (2003), these prototype models can be placed along a continuum depending on the necessary degree of content integration, task and materials authenticity, and learner accommodation. More important for the purpose of this discussion, these models differ in the weighting afforded to language versus content. In theme-based instruction, the content is incidental, serving primarily as a contextualizing device for the presentation of language items. Because the main focus of theme-based instruction is on language, students are not assessed on their knowledge of content. However, in sheltered and adjunct instruction, content plays a much more central role because in both of these models students are expected to use their linguistic means to access and master the content. Further, they are expected to demonstrate their comprehension and express their ideas about the content via the appropriate use of academic language. Thus in sheltered and adjunct instruction, language is in service to content. In sheltered courses, students may not be directly assessed on their language ability, though of course their ability to express their knowledge plays a critical role in their performance on assessment measures. And in adjunct instruction, students are assessed on both their knowledge of language and content in the language and content courses, respectively.

The model in Figure 2 (van Lier, 2005,) captures the flexibility of the various CBI models in emphasizing language, content, or both. According to van Lier, this model captures the amount of emphasis on language versus content present in any variant of CBI. It is a “reminder that CBI is a continuum, not an either-or choice” (p. 15). At the far left of the diagram are those models (e.g., theme-based) where language takes precedence over content, and at the far right are those where content takes precedence over language. Thus the vertical line A that dissects the horizontal axis would represent a course where language receives more emphasis than its counterpart course, as represented by the vertical line B. Van Lier cautions that the far ends of the continuum (i.e., language only or content only) are inconceivable because content and language do not exist apart from one another.³

The model shown in Figure 2 strongly echoes Davison and Williams's (2001) contention that integrating language and content should be viewed as a “cline ranging from ‘contextualised’ language teaching to ‘language conscious’ content teaching” (p. 60). The depth of a curriculum's treatment of language and content determines its focus, such that it is possible to envision an English as a second language (ESL) curriculum situated at either end of Davison and Williams's cline, for example, at one end an ESL course that simply uses content as a vehicle for language development and at the other end an ESL course that focuses on teaching the subject matter but embeds some language objectives into the syllabus in a “language sensitive” (p. 60) way.

³ For related discussions about the relative emphasis in CBI on language versus content, see Met (1998) and Wesche and Skehan (2002).

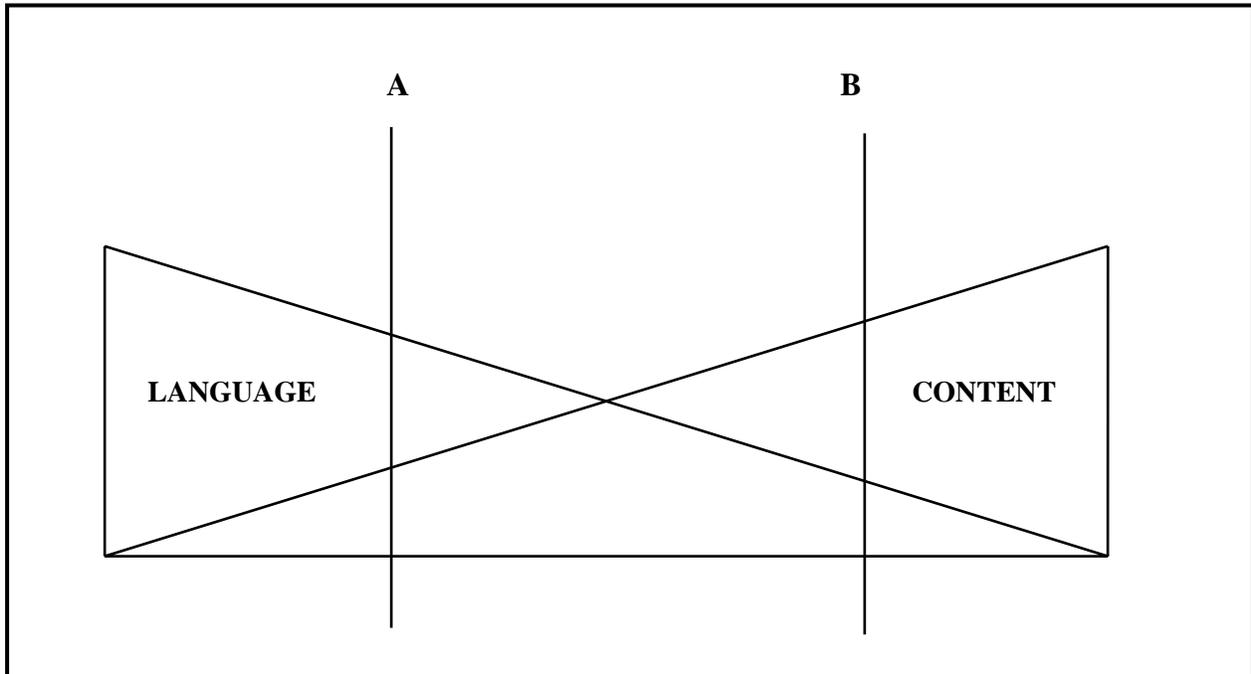


Figure 2. Language and Content⁴

A PROPOSED FOURTH PROTOTYPE: LANGUAGE-ENHANCED INSTRUCTION

The CBI literature frequently discusses sheltering content, that is, using instructional means to make difficult content more accessible to second language learners.⁵ Sheltered instruction predominates in settings with large populations of learners whose home language differs from that of the medium of instruction and where these learners are struggling to access the content because of their developing academic language proficiency. In North America and other parts of the English-speaking world or inner circle, we find this model widely employed in the delivery of content instruction. Its primary goal, as we have discussed, is access to content, not language development (which under ideal sheltered conditions theoretically occurs as an incidental outcome of sheltered instruction given the learners' access to the rich language input provided in the content course).

However, the literature has much less often discussed how content in content-area courses can be used as a point of departure to enhance language skills. This model is directly relevant to many expanding and outer circle contexts (McKay, 2002) where English is a lingua franca and may be used as the medium of instruction, especially in secondary or postsecondary content instruction. In such contexts, the development of higher-level academic language remains a concern—especially in English, given the global impact of the language and the need for lingua franca users of English to successfully navigate the arenas of academia and the professions using this language. To address this need, I am proposing a fourth prototype model, language-enhanced instruction (LEI), as illustrated in Figure 3.

⁴ From van Lier (2005), p. 14. Reproduced with permission.

⁵ Excellent sources on this topic are Echevarria and Graves (2003) and Reiss (2005).

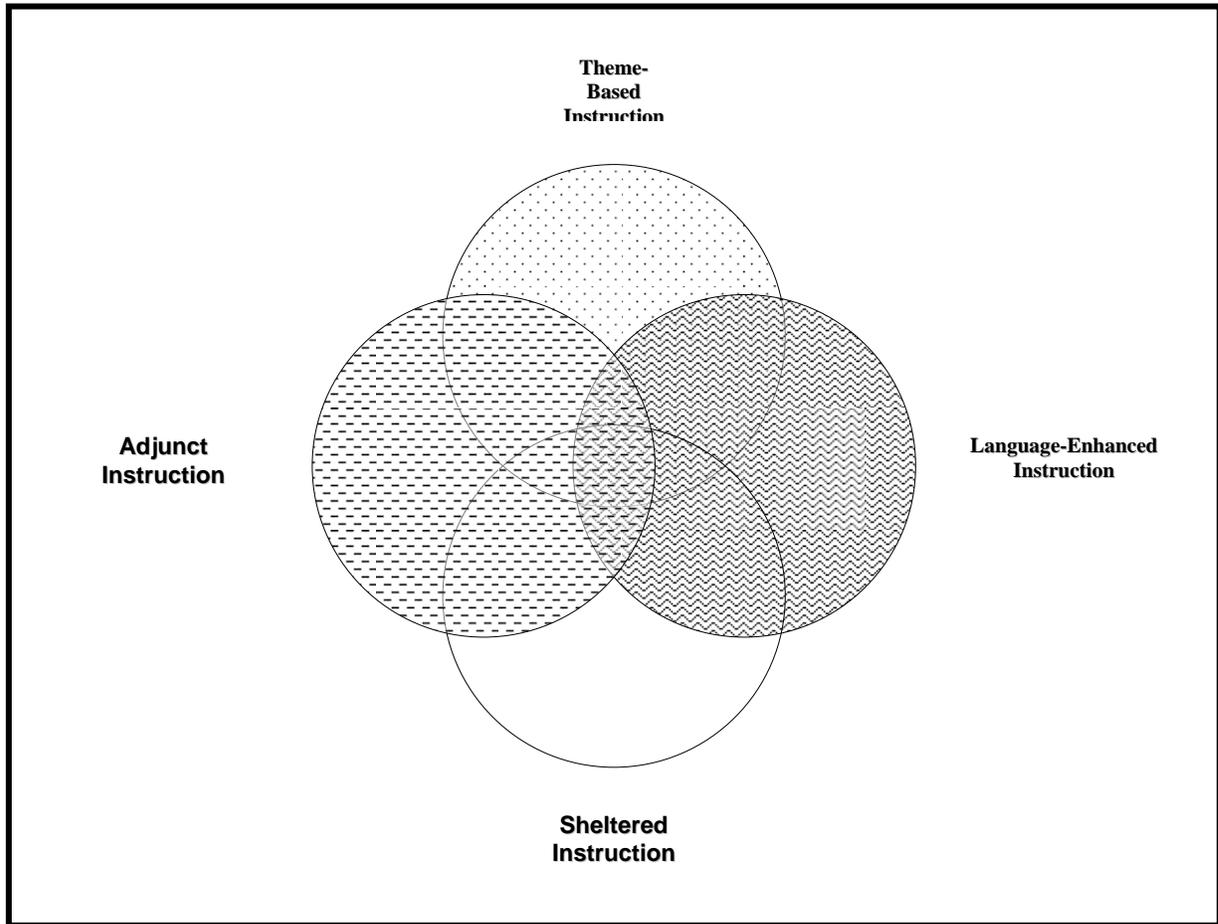


Figure 3. A fourth prototype model—Language-enhanced instruction

LEI refers to the application of CBI in contexts where content instruction occurs in the students’ second language—typically where English or another so-called world language functions as the lingua franca. Unlike its sheltered cousin (which falls on the right-hand side of van Lier’s sliding scale), LEI courses would fall closer to the center on the continuum given their emphasis on language development. In this approach, content and language goals are aligned, with all instructional activities aimed at developing learners’ language skills as well as increasing their content knowledge.

The LEI model would be most appropriate in contexts where students have at least a high-intermediate level of language proficiency, with gaps in their academic language proficiency. These learners would tend to be fluent but not accurate. Although comprehension of the content is less of an issue than in sheltered instruction, these learners would still have difficulty producing target-like output, especially when pushed to discuss or write about complex concepts from the content area. With respect to English, some possible settings where LEI would be appropriate include language teacher preparation programs in lingua franca contexts (i.e., where the learners are taking English

medium courses in methodology, phonetics, second language acquisition, etc.),⁶ British or American studies programs, and teacher preparation summer camps for nonnative-English-speaking teachers. Dueñas (2004) refers to such courses as second-language-medium (SLM) courses, citing the example of advanced-level literature or linguistics courses offered as part of English studies degrees at Spanish universities. She notes that in many cases, “language aims are not contemplated as part of the curricular formulations of the given courses; in fact classes of this kind normally proceed without specific instructional emphasis on language analysis and practice, and without making adjustments to adequate the discourse to the level of proficiency of the students. The context, however, provides valuable opportunities for language learning as it involves intensive exposure to highly contextualized language of particular relevance to the academic interest of students.” LEI as an emerging prototype model of CBI attempts to go beyond the “incidental” language learning that occurs through such exposure and make language learning goals explicit.

SAMPLE APPLICATION OF LEI—THE INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

The Uzbek State University of World Languages (USUWL) is a Russian-medium state university located in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Existing as a pilot program within this university, the Institute for English Language Teacher Education (IELTE) is an English-medium teacher preparation program which culminates in students receiving the equivalent of a bachelor of arts in TESOL.⁷ Within the 4-year curriculum, the first 2 years are generally devoted to intensive language study (e.g., speaking and listening, vocabulary, integrated skills), and the last 2 years are devoted to TESOL study (e.g., TESOL methods, second language acquisition, assessment, American history).

From October 2003 to May 2005, my colleague Barry Griner and I were privileged to work with the IELTE faculty as English Language Specialists (ELSpecs) under funding from the U.S. Department of State’s Office of English Language Programs. The main foci of our six site visits and the 2004 teacher training summer camp held at the University of California, Los Angeles, were program assessment, curriculum development, and teacher professional development. During the site visits, we devoted a large part of our time as ELSpecs to observing classes and providing teachers with direct feedback on their teaching, materials, and course syllabuses. On the global level, we helped the IELTE faculty revise the entire 4-year TESOL curriculum and gave them feedback on all relevant course documents because, at the time, the program was undergoing internal review by USUWL.

During the first two site visits, it became clear from our course observations and our examination of the existing IELTE curriculum documents that something was quite amiss in the program. Independently, my colleague and I arrived at the conclusion that the fault lay with the exclusive focus on language development during Years 1 and 2 and the exclusive focus on content mastery during Years 3 and 4. To us as outside observers, the first 2 years of study resembled pre-university intensive English language program (IEP) courses in the United States rather than TESOL preparatory courses—and in fact, in Years 1 and 2, the IELTE program was using many of the same textbooks that we knew to be used in U.S. IEPs. In reviewing Years 3 and 4, we were both struck by

⁶ See Snow, Kamhi-Stein, and Brinton (2006) for a discussion of teacher training issues with respect to lingua franca contexts.

⁷ The program, begun in 2000, is supported with help from the Regional English Language Office of the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent and has received outside sources of funding and assistance from other sources as well (e.g., the British Council, Soros Foundation).

the almost total lack of attention to language development and the absence of language feedback in the content courses—this despite our assessment that continued language feedback was definitely needed with these teacher candidates.

In our forms commenting on our class observations, we repeatedly noted on the lack of feedback on language accuracy in the language courses, as evidenced in the following verbatim comments:

- There was very little focus on students' language use. You occasionally “recast” what students said, giving them alternate ways to express things. But there were many more occasions where students had difficulty expressing their thoughts and could have used more assistance in formulating their thoughts in English.
- You did correct some student mispronunciations . . . But perhaps there could be more attention to student production.
- More systematic correction of student production is needed. There is very little correction of students' vocabulary use, their pronunciation, or their grammar. You need to decide which portions of your lesson are devoted to accuracy and which to fluency.

Similarly, we noted that the teacher-fronted lecture mode employed by all teachers in the content classes resulted in a lack of interactive activities that could foster linguistic development:

- The lesson was rather packed with information and topics. Was this because of the upcoming midterm exam and the need to cover information before the exam? We saw missed opportunities for doing interactive activities with the students that may be a result of time pressure and syllabus coverage.

In short, from our perspectives as CBI practitioners, the program was rife with missed opportunities—missed opportunities to integrate relevant content into the Year 1 and 2 courses and missed opportunities to integrate activities in the content courses in Years 3 and 4 that would provide interactive speaking opportunities, thus pushing students in their output and providing opportunities for continued English language development.

At the end of the third site visit, we voiced this concern to the IELTE faculty and expressed the hope that in their curriculum revision process they would consider a more language-enhanced approach to teaching content. Their response surprised us: The IELTE faculty said that they had recognized the problem but admitted to not knowing how to address it—particularly with respect to how, in the content courses, they might address language issues. They then requested that in the next site visit, we provide a demonstration unit that would illustrate the key principles of LEI.

The sample LEI unit in the Appendix was developed as a result of this request, and served during the fourth site visit as an interactive demonstration of LEI in action. The IELTE teachers had asked us directly to focus on American history because it was the most difficult course for them to teach and the least popular course with the IELTE students. In one of our observations of American history, we had observed a discussion of the Lewis and Clark Voyage of Discovery, so we decided to use it as the topic of our LEI demonstration. We also determined that in keeping with CBI principles, we should use authentic materials to enrich the unit and serve as the foundation of the

unit's activities.⁸ To underscore LEI's balanced focus on language development and content mastery, we stipulated both language and content goals for each activity. We also listed all skills practiced for each.

CBI OR ESP?

From a conceptual standpoint, language syllabuses fall into two broad categories (Nunan, 1999; Wilkins, 1976). The first category, into which the majority of so-called traditional language teaching methods (such as grammar translation) fall, is the *synthetic approach*. In such approaches, the language system is analyzed and broken down into learnable bits by the course developer. The teacher then presents these grammatical, lexical, phonological, and functional bits step by step (i.e., in a learnable sequence). Learners acquire knowledge of the system gradually, eventually building toward mastery of the entire language structure. Their main task is to put together or synthesize the discrete elements that make up the whole.

The second category, into which the currently favored communicative approaches (such as CBI) fall, is the *analytic approach*. In this type of approach, the language system (i.e., its grammar, lexicon, etc.) is not broken down into discrete bits. Instead, the course developer identifies and selects topics, texts, or tasks that are relevant to the needs and interests of the learner. The learner's task is to take the whole apart and analyze its constituent parts, in the process gaining mastery of the system.

An often-posed question in the field of EAP concerns the difference between CBI and English for specific purposes (ESP). Master (1997/98) and Master and Brinton (1998) answer this question as follows:

1. ESP is one of two main divisions of English language teaching (ELT), the other being English for general purposes (EGP).
2. CBI is a type of syllabus, like the grammatical, notional/functional, situational, rhetorical, and task-based syllabuses (cf. Eskey, 1997; Flowerdew & Peacock, 2000).
3. According to Wilkins' definition, CBI constitutes an analytic syllabus.
4. A CBI syllabus can be used in EGP or ESP courses.
5. Of the variants of CBI, theme-based courses alone fall into the EGP category. All other variants of CBI (including sheltered, adjunct, and LEI) are clearly ESP.
6. In sum, ESP is simply a domain of ELT that makes substantial use of the CBI syllabus.

CONCLUSION

CBI models continue to flex as new contexts emerge where CBI can be applied. When my co-authors and I originally wrote *Content-Based Second Language Instruction* (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003) almost two decades ago, we could not envision the scope of CBI's influence. The three original prototype models that we proposed were our attempt to capture the reality of what was happening on the CBI scene in the mid to late 1980s. We were careful, however, to stress that theme-based, sheltered, and adjunct instruction were only prototypes, and that a benefit of viewing them as such was that it would allow "consideration of other content-based variations which

⁸ Source materials for the Voyage of Discovery proved readily available on the Internet. Two particularly rich resources were the Web sites Chew (1995a, 1995b, 1996) and Public Broadcasting Service (2007).

combine features of the three prototype models” (p. 23). It remains to be seen whether LEI, as a proposed fourth CBI prototype, will stand the test of time as well as the original three prototypes. However, I believe that the lingua franca contexts I have described require CBI to flex yet again to meet the needs of advanced learners of English around the world who are receiving content instruction in their second language and who need high-level English language skills.

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APPENDIX

SAMPLE LEI UNIT: THE LEWIS AND CLARK VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY⁹

Activity 1. Recalling details of the expedition

- Content goal: Review the assigned reading, ascertain students' knowledge about the expedition
- Language goal: Provide lesson warmup, elicit known vocabulary
- Skills practiced: Speaking, vocabulary reinforcement/development
- Materials: Visual scattergram (on overhead or butcher paper); blackboard, textbook
- Source: Visual images of the Voyage of Discovery (from various Internet sources and from Ambrose, 2002)
- Procedure: Before class, the teacher posts the visual scattergram in clear sight at the front of the classroom. The scattergram serves as a visual prompt for the warmup activity, in which she asks students to recall information from the assigned reading. As students volunteer information, she either refers to the scattergram or writes additional information on the blackboard. She may also ask students to come forward and point out details on the scattergram.

Activity 2. Learning more about Lewis, Clark, and Jefferson

- Content goal: Provide details about the key players in the expedition
- Language goal: Develop students' ability to comprehend a reading passage, summarize it, and clearly communicate the information to others
- Skills practiced: Reading, vocabulary expansion, listening, speaking, critical thinking
- Materials: Jigsaw reading passages, expert group guide questions, collaborative comprehension grid
- Source: Brief biographies of Lewis, Clark, and Jefferson (from the Internet)
- Procedure: The teacher first explains the jigsaw task and then divides students into three "expert" groups. Each group receives one "piece" of the jigsaw, which they read silently and then discuss with reference to the guide questions. When all groups are finished, the teacher regroups students into new groups of three, with at least one "expert" from each previous group in each new group. Students share the information they learned with other members of their group and then complete the collaborative information grid. This is followed by a whole class activity in which students report their results and receive feedback.

Activity 3. Understanding the historical significance of the expedition

- Content goal: Expand students' knowledge about the overall role played by the expedition in U.S. history
- Language goal: Develop students' ability to comprehend academic lectures and discriminate between main points and supporting details
- Skills practiced: Listening, note taking, critical thinking

⁹ This unit was developed together with Barry D. Griner and is cited here with his permission.

- Materials: mini-lecture (teacher-delivered); notepaper, oral T/F quiz
- Source: Lecture adapted from various Internet sources
- Procedure: The teacher opens the activity by asking students to take out their notebooks and tells them to take careful notes during the lecture as it will be followed by an open note T/F quiz. She then delivers the lecture. Following the lecture, she asks students to take out another sheet of paper, write their name on it, and number it 1–10. She then reads the T/F items aloud and gives students adequate time to answer the questions. She asks students to exchange papers and goes over the correct answers. Students mark their peer's quiz and then hand it in to the teacher.

Activity 4. Using supplies and provisions to address unexpected situations that arise

- Content goal: Familiarize students with situations and hardships encountered during the expedition
- Language goal: Activate students' ability to identify the issues and brainstorm and negotiate possible solutions
- Skills practiced: Reading, problem solving, speaking, listening, vocabulary expansion
- Materials: Index cards describing issues encountered, supply and provision cards (posted around the room)
- Source: Situations described in the Lewis and Clark diaries kept during the Voyage of Discovery (Jones, 2002).
- Procedure: During the jigsaw reading (Activity 2), the teacher posts the supply and provision cards around the room. She opens this activity by explaining the task and dividing students into five groups. Each group receives an index card describing the problem and is told that, because of limited supplies, no more than four tools or provisions can be allocated to each group. The groups then brainstorm solutions to the problem, identify tools and materials needed to fix the problem, and "locate" the necessary items by collecting the necessary provision cards from around the classroom. Students should be encouraged to "barter" with other groups for items as necessary. Once all materials are collected, the group members describe the tools, explain how they are used to fix the problem, and choose a spokesperson. Spokespeople then relate their group's solution to the rest of the "expedition." The teacher, who has assumed the role of expedition leader, provides feedback on the quality of the group's solution.

Activity 5. Describing things seen on the expedition

- Content goal: Familiarize students with the knowledge gained during the expedition
- Language goal: Develop students' descriptive skills
- Skill(s): Reading, writing, grammatical consciousness raising, vocabulary expansion
- Materials: Student handout containing authentic journal entries describing things seen on the expedition, color photos of Indians, animals, and landscapes typical of those encountered on the expedition
- Source: Diary excerpts from Jones (2002); photos of the expedition from various Internet sources
- Procedure: The teacher begins by explaining the descriptive writing task and dividing students into three groups. She then distributes the packets (containing the relevant handout and two photos) to each group. Students first read the journal extract, then answer the

accompanying questions on the handout. Once finished, students in each group choose one of the two photos to work with, and brainstorm descriptive language for the photo. As homework, they are assigned to write a descriptive paragraph about one of the two photos using the language they have brainstormed.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH TO MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT IN ESP: THE CASE OF BUSINESS ENGLISH

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Teachers embarking on a career in Business English often do not have a business background and may therefore feel unsure about what it actually means to teach Business English. They rely on teaching materials to provide them with the information they need, such as what the main differences are between Business English and General English. In the last 20 years, applied linguistics research into Business English has provided much relevant information on the characteristics of business communication. However, a survey carried out by Nickerson (2005) on teaching materials for English for specific business purposes (ESBP) found that few of the books surveyed referred to research in the field. This paper therefore proposes to present some of the key findings from research and discuss how they might be applied to the development of materials for teaching Business English.

Perhaps the most obvious way to ensure that the material used in Business English classes reflects the world of real-life business is for teachers to use authentic materials, such as business letters and e-mails or business reports. In fact, the use of authentic materials has been advocated for some time now in teaching English for general as well as specific purposes. But although teachers may be able to get hold of authentic written materials from business publications, the Internet, or even from their students, it is much more difficult for them to get access to real spoken business interactions. For this reason, particular attention will be given in this paper to research into spoken business discourse and its possible applications. Such research has been carried out in two main areas: (1) the detailed analysis of individual interactions using a variety of qualitative¹ methods (discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and genre analysis), and (2) the analysis of computer-based corpora, or large collections of texts, using quantitative methods, such as calculating word frequency. I will present and discuss findings from both these areas of research.

HOW IS BUSINESS ENGLISH DIFFERENT FROM GENERAL ENGLISH?

Research that examines written and spoken business interactions, particularly corpus-based research, has enabled us to answer this question, at least to some extent. The good news for Business English teachers is that corpus-based research has shown that spoken business interactions have much in common with everyday conversation (McCarthy & Handford, 2004), so Business English is not entirely new. However, such research has also highlighted some key differences between the language used for business and language used for everyday

¹ A broad distinction is made between *quantitative research* which involves counting certain phenomena and using statistical measures, and *qualitative research*, which aims to interpret the data more holistically through a close examination of patterns and trends.

communication. One of the most important ways it is different is in its *goal orientation* (Drew & Heritage, 1992): People communicate in business, and other workplace contexts, for a particular reason—they are trying to get a job done. We can refer to such goals which focus on accomplishing a task as *transactional*. Language in nonworkplace contexts is not always transactional, for example, in casual conversation, where the speakers may not have a particular goal or outcome to the conversation in mind. The following two examples from real interactions illustrate this difference (see Appendix A for transcription conventions):

Example 1. Conversation Excerpt

(Talking about the running of the bulls in Pamplona):

1. *Gina* That's not your thing. No, seems it's kind of wild. Hehehe
2. *Kate* Hehehe
3. *Ann* Dangerous. Hehe
4. *Gina* Dangerous exactly. Hehehe
5. *Kate* [Well-
6. *Gina* I had a feeling-
7. *Kate* [Some of those guy get killed every year.

(© Cambridge University Press; used with permission)

Example 2. Meeting Excerpt

1. *Amy* So let's also schedule a meeting for that as well.
And we should do that this week.
2. *Chris* This week! Uh, Okay.
3. *Amy* Let's schedule the DP meeting right now.

The meetings excerpt in Example 2 is clearly focussed on a transactional goal (to arrange a meeting), whereas the conversation excerpt in Example 1 is not such focussed on a goal but rather the speakers' mutual interest in the topic, which is the driving force. A direct result of such a goal orientation is that people often start off business interactions by stating what it is they want to talk about (see Koester 2000), for example:

Example 3. Business Interaction Beginnings

- I have a quick question for you.
- Uh... just wanted to tell you about my... conversation with Tony.

They also often summarize what has been discussed or agreed at the end of the conversations, for example:

Example 4. Business Interaction Endings

Amy So those are my to do's for tomorrow, it'll be the left side, and . . .
miscellaneous credits.

[2]

Chris Works for me. ↓ Thanks.

In addition to differences in goal orientation, Examples 1 and 2 also illustrate other key differences between casual conversation and business or workplace talk: the fact that participants in workplace talk often have an asymmetrical status, with one speaker (here Amy) having more control, whereas participants in casual conversation tend to have a more or less equal status, with all speakers contributing freely. The meetings excerpt also has a more orderly structure, with one person speaking at a time, whereas the conversation excerpt seems messy with laughter, overlaps, and interruptions (shown by the symbol ⊥). The meetings excerpt also contains some words which have a high frequency in a business context (e.g. *meeting, schedule*).

BUSINESS VOCABULARY

Nelson (2000) compiled a one-million-word corpus of spoken and written business texts, the Business English Corpus (BEC), which he compared to the 100-million-word British National Corpus (BNC), a corpus of general English speech and writing. Not surprisingly, he found that business and finance vocabulary (words such as *company, market, product, sale*) were much more frequent in the business corpus than in the general corpus. More interesting, perhaps, he also found that the most frequent vocabulary emphasized action rather than emotion and concrete rather than abstract entities. Positive words (e.g. *new, best, successful*) were also much more frequent than negative words. Thus, we get a picture of an environment where people are getting things done rather than merely talking about things. These characteristics, of course, reflect the goal orientation of business and workplace discourse.

Another study compared a one-million-word corpus of spoken business interactions, the Cambridge and Nottingham Business English Corpus (CANBEC), with a subcorpus of informal social and family interactions from the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE), which comprises five million words of English conversation (Handford & McCarthy, 2004).² Both Nelson (2000) and Handford and McCarthy looked for key words in the business corpora, which are words occurring with above-average frequency in business compared to nonbusiness contexts.³ It is interesting that the top three keywords in CANBEC were not typical business words like *company* and *market*, but the items *okay, we, and need* (OK was also a keyword in Nelson's corpus). This

² CANBEC and CANCODE were developed at the University of Nottingham and funded by Cambridge University Press, with whom the sole copyright resides. They form part of the larger spoken and written Cambridge International Corpus.

³ Wordsmith Tools (Scott, 1999), a suite of programs for corpus-based text analysis, includes a key words tool that calculates key words in a text or corpus using a number of statistical measures.

finding reflects the fact that in spoken business interactions, the focus is not so much on talking about business but on collaboratively negotiating tasks—what the group (*we*) need to do—and agreeing on outcomes, as indicated by the marker *okay*. Even something as basic as the relative frequency of pronouns in the two corpora is revealing. Whereas *I* is by far the most frequently used pronoun in informal conversations, *we* is used more frequently than *I* in business conversations, reflecting the importance of a corporate identity and an emphasis on joint action.

BUSINESS DISCOURSE

Problem-Solving

Looking at key words and frequency reveals some of the key features of business discourse, but to have a full picture it is necessary to examine texts and interactions in detail. The word *problem*, which was also a key business word in CANBEC (and three times as frequent as in the general CANCODE), provides such a window.⁴ It reflects the fact that a great deal of spoken business communication involves problem-solving of some kind, as a number of studies have found (Boden, 1995; Willing, 1992). In a study of British and American office conversations, more than a quarter of all conversations involved decision-making aimed at solving a work-related issue; thus, the most frequently occurring genre or verbal activity was decision-making or problem-solving (Koester, 2006). Decision-making conversations are usually structured according to a problem–solution pattern (Hoey, 1983, 1994) which has three phases and is signaled through the use of key words (examples shown in italics):

1. Raising a problem: *problem, difficult*
2. Proposing a response or solution: *figure out, come up with*
3. Evaluating the solution: *good, works*

It is interesting that such “signals” of the different phases of problem-solving are often idiomatic and metaphorical expressions (Koester, 2006; McCarthy & Handford, 2004), such as *a pain, a headache* (for problems), *get it moving/sorted* (for solutions), *it never hurts, makes sense* (for evaluating), as Example 5 from the ABOT Corpus illustrates:

Example 5

1. *Beth* I'll update this. I don't need to keep this as it is now
2. *Carol* | You need to update this too.
3. *Beth* Right.
4. *Carol* However, . . . it's- it's complex.

⁴The high frequency of *problem* in CANBEC may seem to contradict Nelson's (2000) finding mentioned earlier that negative words did not occur frequently in his business corpus, but negative words appear less frequently in Nelson's corpus (BEC) probably because BEC also includes written business texts, which will often aim to convey a positive image of the business, whereas CANCODE only has spoken data, which is not usually for public consumption.

This exchange took place toward the end of a longer meeting during which Beth, Carol's assistant, had been briefing her about what had happened during her absence on a business trip. The underlined expressions all involve evaluative comment on the meeting, in particular positive evaluation of what has been accomplished. Again, a number of idiomatic expressions are used here (*clear the deck, hold down the fort*), which is often the case for such summaries. Linde (1991) also found that such idiomatic evaluative summaries were often used in workplace meetings for agenda management—to summarize one agenda item and move on to the next.

The purpose of the evaluative summaries in Example 6 is not only to provide a positive evaluation of the meeting itself, but also to reinforce a positive working relationship between the speakers: They help the speakers to end the meeting on a positive note. Idiomatic expressions, including proverbs and aphorisms, are so often used for evaluation because they are linked to cultural norms and values, and thus contribute to a sense of common identity and solidarity. This also makes them useful for negative evaluation, for example in talking about problems or being critical. By using clichés rather than original formulations, problems can be presented as common to everybody, rather than being an individual's fault. For example, when a sales representative in a British paper company told his manager about losing a large order to a competitor, the manager evaluated this negative outcome by using a number of proverbs such as *can't win 'em all* and *win some, you lose some* (see Koester, 2004, pp. 83–85).

Business Relationships

The foregoing discussion highlights another key aspect of spoken business interactions, which may again come as a surprise, namely, that people do not just focus on getting the job done, although this is clearly important, but also pay a great deal of attention to the relationship with their colleagues and business partners. Generally speaking, there are two ways such relational concerns are expressed through talk: on the one hand, people may make positive comments which seem to contribute to a sense of group identity and solidarity, as in Example 6. On the other hand, they may express themselves indirectly to avoid offending the other person or hurting their feelings in some way, as in the example mentioned above of the manager using proverbs in commenting on the lost order. We can refer to these two strategies as *solidarity* and *politeness* (see Koester, 2006, pp. 60–63).

Politeness and Indirectness

In discussing the goal orientation of workplace talk, I quoted some examples of speakers beginning a conversation by announcing what it is they want to talk about (Example 3). Let us look at these and some other examples of such announcements again:

Example 7

1. I have a quick question for you.
2. Uh . . . just wanted to tell you about my . . . conversation with Tony.
3. I've got a couple of queries actually, Mary, then I'll leave you to get on.

Notice that in all these examples, the speakers actually do more than simply state what they want. None of the underlined words (e.g. *just*, *quick*, *actually*) would have been necessary just to communicate the goal of the encounter, but they are important for the relationship between the speakers. All these little words or *hedges* have the function of showing the other person that the speaker does not want to impose too much on the addressee's time. For instance, in the final example, *a couple of queries* indicates that the speaker does not have many questions, *actually* softens the request, and finally *then I'll leave you to get on* shows that it won't take too long. By using these hedges speakers are showing what Brown and Levinson (1987) call *negative politeness*, which involves mitigating actions that limit the addressee's freedom of action.

The use of such hedges and other politeness strategies are pervasive in all kinds of spoken and written business communication and reflect the importance of relational concerns between colleagues and business partners. Politeness strategies become particularly important in situations where parties may disagree over a course of action, for example in negotiations. Research in conversation analysis (CA) has shown that disagreements consistently differ from agreements across a wide variety of situations. While agreements (or *preferred responses*) are usually short, direct, and simple, disagreements (or *dispreferred responses*) are longer and more complex and indirect—usually marked by hesitations, delays, and prefaces of various kinds (see Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987).⁵ Consider the following two examples showing co-workers discussing a task:

Example 8

Agreeing (preferred response):

Kate And then . . . I'll- I'll write a covering memo, which explains . . . why we're including that working, and . . . what our plans are

Jenny Uh-huh. Okay. Okay. Good.

Disagreeing (dispreferred response):

Don So I can do 'em . . . Let's say weekly, or something like that from here on out. I don't think it pays to do it any more often than that.

Andy Well weekly, I mean you have to do it . . . [1.5] ah . . . more often than that right now, for this week an' next week, 'cause we gotta- .hh . . . have 'em all entered into the system by a week on Friday.

Notice how Jenny's agreement, in the first excerpt, is very direct and short, consisting of only a few words; whereas Andy's disagreement, in the second excerpt, is much longer,

⁵ Note that conversation analysts do not discuss dispreferred responses as politeness strategies; they simply observe that preferred and dispreferred responses consistently exhibit certain structures and characteristics.

contains pauses and hesitations, has a hedged preface (*well weekly, I mean . . .*), and an account or explanation: *'cause we gotta- .hh . . . have 'em all entered into the system by a week on Friday.*

Research into meetings and negotiations has shown that being able to manage disagreement, including the appropriate use of dispreferred responses, may be particularly important in these kinds of interactions. Dow (1999), for example, compared simulated negotiations between business specialists and nonspecialists and found that the specialists “bent over backwards” (p. 92) to avoid disagreement and used many indirectness strategies when they did disagree. The nonspecialists, on the other hand, disagreed in a much more direct manner, which led to a serious breakdown in communication. Charles and Charles (1999) examined naturally-occurring sales negotiations and came to the conclusion that “bargaining is a far more subtle activity than the full blooded exchanges practised in many Business English courses” (pp. 71–72); that is, negotiators did not tend to engage in overt, aggressive disagreement, but sought to gain advantage in much more indirect ways.

Business Relationships—Summary

We can see, then, that being a proficient communicator in business and workplace situations involves much more than the ability to communicate information and intentions clearly. Attention to the relational and interpersonal dimension of interaction, which involves being able to employ politeness and solidarity strategies appropriately, particularly in managing disagreement, is a key skill that business communicators need.

FINDINGS

In this discussion, I have described and illustrated some of the key characteristic of business and workplace discourse (in particular, spoken discourse) which research into business discourse has revealed. I summarize these below:

- Business discourse is goal oriented, and this is reflected in a number of specific structural characteristics, such as initial and final topic summaries.
- There are important differences between business vocabulary and the vocabulary used in social or intimate situations, as demonstrated by the different relative frequencies of certain lexical items in business corpora compared to nonbusiness corpora.
- A large proportion of business and workplace discourse involves problem-solving, and many texts and conversations follow a problem–solution pattern.
- Evaluation is an important element of much business and workplace discourse.
- People working or doing business together pay attention to relational as well as transactional concerns, which results in the frequent use of solidarity or politeness strategies in workplace and business talk.
- The use of solidarity and politeness strategies affects the discourse in a number of ways, resulting for example in the use of idioms, hedges, and conversational routines, such as typical structures for dispreferred responses.

While some of these findings, such as the specificity of business vocabulary, may not come as a surprise, others, such as the importance of evaluation, may be more unexpected. The

most surprising finding is perhaps that in spite of the focus on transactional goals in business interactions, relational and interpersonal concerns play an important role and influence the discourse in a number of ways. In the conclusion to my book *Investigating Workplace Discourse* (Koester, 2006, p. 163), I suggest that there are three areas of interpersonal meaning (dealt with in the last three bullet points in the summary) which should be integrated into a syllabus of Business English, and I list some linguistic devices used for each area:

1. Expressing Stance or Evaluating
Linguistic devices: modals, conditionals, idioms, and evaluative adjectives, for example,
I think it looks better without, but I'd rather it was on.

2. Hedging and Politeness
Linguistic devices: modals, adverbs, vague language, and past tense, for example,
 Uh just wanted to come and chat to you a little bit about the company.

3. Showing Solidarity
Linguistic devices: evaluative adjectives and idioms, for example, You know what Debbie, that's a very good idea.

Identifying the key linguistic devices used in each of these three areas in this way is a first step to syllabus and materials design. In this paper, I consider not only interpersonal meaning and relational functions, but a wider range of characteristics of business and workplace discourse, which, I would argue, should all be dealt with in teaching materials for Business English. On the one hand, teaching something like politeness strategies may seem challenging, because these strategies involve indirect and subtle uses of language which could be complex for learners to master. On the other hand, many of these politeness strategies are conventionalized and expressed through fixed phrases, such as *I just wanted to*. Furthermore, as we have seen, business interactions frequently make use of particular conversational structures, such as initial and final summaries, problem-solution patterns, and preferred and dispreferred preference structures. Such structures can easily be taught because they involve clear patterns and often fixed phrases and expressions. In the final section, I make some concrete suggestions how the insights from research discussed in this paper could be used for materials development, and I include some illustrative sample material in the appendix.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND MATERIALS DEVELOPMENTS

To begin with, even something as basic as a list of frequent or key words in business is helpful for deciding what to include in a Business English syllabus and can be used to develop teaching materials. For example, learners could be given a list of words and asked to decide which ones they think are typical for business conversations and everyday conversations (see Appendix B, Activity 1). This activity could lead to a discussion of what the key differences are between business language and everyday language (e.g. formality, topic, etc.).

Although vocabulary exercises like this are useful, the greatest contribution research has to make to materials development is in discovering the discursive characteristics of business

and workplace language. Teaching materials may frequently focus too much on language at the lexical and grammatical level and not enough on *discourse*, that is, the structure and characteristics of longer texts and spoken exchanges. In a previous article (Koester, 2002), I argue for a discourse approach to teaching and suggest that naturally occurring conversations can be used to develop materials for teaching in two ways. On the one hand, recordings or transcripts of actual encounters can be used as part of the material, or alternatively, insights gained from the analysis of naturally occurring encounters can inform the development of pedagogical tasks.

Recordings or transcripts of actual business encounters can be used for activities aimed at raising learners' awareness of a variety of characteristics of business discourse, including goal orientation, the role of problem-solving and evaluation, and politeness and indirectness. For instance, the two excerpts shown in Examples 1 and 2 could be used to encourage learners to explore the differences between everyday conversation and business talk. The goal orientation of business talk could be further explored by showing learners some examples of advance topic summaries produced by speakers at the beginning of a business conversation and asking them to guess what the conversation will be about (see Appendix B, Activity 2). Depending on the learner's proficiency level, recordings or transcripts of naturally occurring conversation can pose quite a challenge, but as these examples show, the excerpts need not be very long, and they can be carefully selected for ease of comprehension.

Material which draws on research findings might involve creating simulated but realistic dialogues or exchanges (see Appendix B, Activity 3), or, alternatively, engaging learners in language production activities aimed at developing the language and skills of real business discourse. In Activity 3, learners insert missing words or expressions into a dialogue which follows a problem–solution pattern; thus they practice using typical signal words for problem–solution patterns, including some idiomatic expressions. Activity 4 in Appendix B guides learners in creating their own interactive task-orientated dialogue which exhibits a number of characteristics of business or workplace encounters: initial small talk, conversation-initial and final topic summaries, and positive evaluation. This activity aims to develop learners' ability not only to master the structural characteristics of business talk resulting from its goal orientation but also the relational dimension as reflected in the initial small talk and final positive evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper has been to show the contribution that research can make to the development of materials for ESP in general and Business English in particular. I have presented and described some of the main characteristics of English used in business interactions, particularly spoken ones, based on research into such interactions, and shown how insights from research can inform the development of teaching material. Although space permits me to show only a few concrete examples of pedagogic activities, I hope that these examples, and the rationale proposed for the development of teaching material, will provide inspiration for others who wish to develop materials based on realistic, research-informed models of business communication.

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APPENDIX A. TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

,	slightly rising in intonation at end of tone unit
?	high rising intonation at end of tone unit
.	falling intonation at end of tone unit
...	noticeable pause or break of less than 1 second within a turn
-	sound abruptly cut off, e.g. false start
<i>italics</i>	emphatic stress
↑	A step up in pitch
↓	A shift down in pitch
//	words between slashes show uncertain transcription
/?/	indicates inaudible utterances: one ? for each syllable
[overlapping or simultaneous speech
[]	words in these brackets indicate non-linguistic information, e.g. pauses of 1 second or longer (the number of seconds is indicated), speakers' gestures or actions
'Heheheh'	indicates laughter, for each syllable laughed a "heh" is transcribed
.hh	inhalation (intake of breath)

APPENDIX B. ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Frequent business words

Below are 20 words; ten are typical in business, and ten are unusual in business compared to everyday English. Which ones do you think are typical in business, and which ones are more usual in everyday English?

We, I, business, oh, problem, house, need, shit, issue, cool, if, terrible, customer, hate, sales, was, contract, lovely, hmm, no.

Activity 2: Introducing the topic

Here are some ways in which speakers in different work situations introduce the topic of the conversation. What do you think each conversation will be about? What kind of a conversation will it be: getting information, making a request, etc?

1. I've got a couple more queries actually, Mary, then I'll leave you to get on.
2. Shall we arrange a meeting with Jenny?
3. Uh, just wanted to tell you about my conversation with Tony.
4. Just wanted to come and chat to you a little about the company.
5. I don't know if you've heard, but if you haven't heard, it's confidential.
6. Something *very* important I need to tell you.

Activity 3: Problem solving

Complete the conversation below with appropriate words and expressions for talking about problems, suggesting solutions and evaluating solutions. Notice that the last two are idiomatic.

could

I'll

annoying

problem

good idea

mistake

get it straightened out

a real pain in the neck

A: What's the 1)_____ ?

B: I just made a huge 2)_____!

A: Why what happened?

B: I sent a customer the wrong order, and he called up and complained!

A: Well, that's 3)_____.

B: Yeah, it's 4)_____. I need to 5)_____.

A: Maybe you 6)_____ offer him a big discount with the next order.

B: Yeah, that's a 7)_____. I think 8)_____ do that.

Activity 4: Planning a conversation where you need to get something done:

Make an arrangement, Ask for information, Ask for a favour

Before you begin, plan your conversation:

1. Greet your partner and ask how they are

2. Tell your partner what you want to talk to them about.

You could begin with:

I just wanted to . . .

I'd like to . . .

3. Now ask your questions, make the arrangements, etc.

4. Now show your partner you have finished, for example you can say:

I think that's everything.

I think that's my last question.

I just wanted to check that.

5. End on a positive note, for example:

That's great!

Thanks for all your help.

That's very helpful.

I'm glad I asked you about that.

I'm glad we've sorted that out.

PURSUING EXPERTISE WITH OUR STUDENTS IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

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Two important words that frequently surface in the professional dialogue of language educators are *competence* and *proficiency*. In applied linguistics, *competence* is commonly used to mean one's knowledge of a language, and *proficiency* to mean one's skill in the use of a language (Richards, Platt, & Platt, 1992). In English for specific purposes,¹ an area of specialization within applied linguistics, these terms are often used to describe two central goals that ESP professionals typically set for their learners: (1) competence in the understanding of a particular domain of English and (2) proficiency in using it to carry out specified tasks and participate in specified discourse.

For short-term projects, such as campus orientation sessions to prepare new international students for studies at an English-medium university or business English seminars to prepare sales staff to deliver English presentations to international clients, the pursuit of attainable degrees of competence and proficiency within a specified timeframe is reasonable and common in ESP. However, when ESP specialists work with students in vocational schools or universities or with working professionals in companies or government organizations, to train them in the English that is needed for success in their careers, I believe that the broader pursuit of professional expertise is a more reasonable goal because it better integrates learning and experience and contributes more effectively to the larger goal of education, which is to prepare this planet's citizens for significant, positive contributions to society as well as to our environment.

UNDERSTANDING EXPERTISE

In everyday dialogue, *expertise* normally refers to a high degree of knowledge (competence) or skills (proficiency) in a particular field or domain that is able to generate impressive results. In athletics, expert runners run faster than ordinary runners. In investment banking, expert investors generate higher returns than average investors. And in education, expert teachers facilitate better learning than regular teachers. In everyday use, however, the standard for evaluation of expertise can be highly subjective and vague, frequently meaning simply that someone knows more or can do more than oneself.

Scholars who study *expertise* and *expert performance* use the term differently. For them, *expertise* refers to a superior level of knowledge as well as performance in a specific domain, which is impressive when judged by domain standards. In addition, the level of competence and proficiency must be reproducible (rather than accidental) in order to demonstrate that the level is truly characteristic of a

¹ Although definitions of *English for specific purposes* (ESP) continue to be refined in order to accurately describe this evolving field, for this paper I define ESP as follows: English for specific purposes is a branch of applied linguistics devoted to the research and teaching of English and related skills that are required for successful participation in specific academic and workplace activities.

person's normal abilities. Etymologically, the word *expertise* comes from the Latin *expertus* (past participle of *experiri*) meaning “to try” (Selinger & Crease, 2006), thus deeply rooted in the idea that superior knowledge and performance are attained primarily through personal experience rather than through textbooks and lectures which present the experiences and learning of others.

Researchers who study expertise and expert performance proceed on the premise that general principles can be discovered which can help others attain higher levels of expertise when the same principles are followed. Most studies of expertise are based on comparisons of experts to identify similarities, comparisons of experts and novices to identify significant differences, or case studies of individual experts to discover how they think and act in specific situations within and outside of their domains of expertise in comparison with people of average abilities. The natural attractiveness of expertise, as well as curiosity about how to obtain it, has spawned a plethora of theories and educational practices over the centuries, and yet most of what we currently know comes from systematic studies of expertise that began in the 19th century.

Research on expertise can be found in all disciplines, wherever researchers have studied superior human performance and attempted to identify its cause. In English language teaching, two fairly recent books that deal specifically with the topic are *Understanding expertise in teaching: Case studies of ESL teachers* (Tsui, 2003) and *Expertise in second language learning and teaching* (Johnson, 2005). Another book that presents a much wider overview of research on expertise across many fields is *The Cambridge handbook of expertise and expert performance* (Ericsson et al., 2006), which surveys well over 1,000 important books and research papers dealing with significant aspects of expertise. For those who are interested in familiarizing themselves with scholarly research on expertise, these three books are excellent starting places; however, deeper understanding of the topic will naturally require reading some of the cited works directly since much of what is presented in the overviews is superficial and incomplete.

For this paper, I briefly highlight a few of the foundational findings from these three books that are particularly relevant to ESP and then propose some educational guidelines and representative ESP activities, based on these findings, that have generated good results in my own pursuit of expertise as well as good results from my work with students and professors in science and engineering, and with professionals working in information technology (IT) and the manufacturing industry. As in the three overviews of expertise (Ericsson et al., 2006; Johnson, 2005; Tsui, 2003), the material I present merely provides another starting place for educators interested in knowing more about the topic of expertise and considering its potential application for more effective professional development for themselves as well as for their students.²

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Anyone who reads the three texts referenced earlier, as well as the central works they cite, will notice several findings from the research on expertise and expert behavior that continually resurface in the literature. To present these findings simply and briefly, under a clearer organizational scheme than those which normally appear in the research on expertise, I have chosen the following three

² For the sake of convenience, in this paper I use the word *student* to refer to all learners under the tutelage of a teacher, professor, or workplace trainer, regardless of age or social status.

categorizations: mental characteristics of expertise, performance characteristics of expertise, and development characteristics of expertise.

Mental Characteristics of Expertise

Much has been written in the research literature about what experts know, how they represent knowledge in their minds, and how they use that knowledge to generate behavior which surpasses that of novices and professionals of average ability. Two central findings that appear repeatedly are these:

1. Experts possess more usable knowledge than nonexperts.
2. Experts possess better organized knowledge than nonexperts.

Much of what is currently labeled as *education* (particularly in Asia, where I have been living for 20 years) remains stubbornly devoted to rote memorization of facts and formulas as well as the memorization and repeated practice (often measured by a stopwatch) of efficient methods for solving mathematical and other problems that regularly appear on course examinations, entrance examinations, job application examinations, and examinations for certificates and professional licensing. Current technology enables this information to be presented efficiently not only via paper and digital textbooks or exercise books but also via educational software packages and broadcasting services, which can be sent directly to a student's personal computer (PC) or cell phone. Those of average ability seem to be packing more and more information into their brains, but experts have repeatedly demonstrated to researchers that their brains contain larger percentages of information that is usable in real life contexts at superior levels of productivity. Researchers explain this phenomenon by claiming that knowledge in the mind of an expert is better organized.

The most significant way that knowledge differs in the minds of experts from that in the minds of nonexperts is that it is structured into meaningful chunks, templates, scenarios, and hierarchies that allow for more efficient storage, more rapid retrieval, and more impressive application. In the early stages of learning, most learners simply add one bit of information to another, without much linkage between the items. As knowledge expands and deepens, however, people begin to arrange their thoughts and experiences into groups and hierarchies. Differences in this mental patterning, researchers claim, are what eventually distinguish experts from novices in both their mental makeup as well as in their application of knowledge.

Chase and Simon (1973a, 1973b), in their research on differences in thinking and memory between chess players, observed that chess grand masters were able to recall nearly all of the positions of chess pieces on a chessboard (24–26 pieces) by simply recalling a small number of complex chunks, whereas novices were only able to remember the correct locations of about four chess pieces because each piece had been mentally encoded as an individual chunk. Chi et al. (1981; cited in Chi, 2006), in their studies of undergraduate and graduate students in physics, found that when presented with the same physics problems, undergraduates grouped them according to literal surface features, such as the presence of inclined planes or concepts such as friction, whereas graduate students sorted physics problems according to principles that were essential for the solution, such as Newton's Second Law or the laws of thermodynamics. In similar research, Weiser and Shertz (1983; also cited in Chi, 2006) found that expert programmers organize programming problems according to solution algorithms, while novice programmers sort them according to areas of application;

Shafto and Coley (2003) found that commercial fishermen sort marine creatures according to commercial, ecological, or behavioral factors, while novices sort marine creatures according to physical appearance; and Mayfield et al. (1999) found that professional counselors organize client statements according to superficial details, such as temporal order, while expert counselors structure client statements according to more abstract, therapeutically relevant hierarchies. Studies by Egan and Schartz (1979) of circuit technicians and Akin (1980) of architects have discovered similar complementary phenomena, all of which suggests that as expertise increases, experts reorganize their knowledge into meaningful chunks and patterns that reveal understanding and interconnectivity at significantly deeper levels of relevance, which have direct bearing on the actual use of that knowledge in superior, productive ways. Other studies of expertise (e.g., Alberdi et al., 2001) reveal that expert knowledge is not only well structured but that it is also complete in areas essential for peak performance and well integrated with the expert's life (i.e., one's worldview, personal philosophies, natural interests, and daily habits).

One additional (and rather comforting) finding of relevance to the mental characteristics of expertise is that experts do not seem to have different intellectual quotients (IQs) than persons of average ability. Jenson (1990; cited in Butterworth, 2006), studied a mathematical prodigy (listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for being able to multiply two 13-digit numbers in 28 seconds) and found that she was only able to score slightly above average on standard IQ tests and was even slower than normal on tests of mental speed. Shuter-Dyson (1982) discovered in his research that IQ scores do not correlate with expertise in music, and Doll et al. (1987) found that IQ does not correlate with expertise in chess. Before these studies, Taylor (1975) found that IQ is a poor predictor of career success in science and art. Although IQ scores may be able to predict learning speed or potential for the development of expertise (Ackerman, 1996; Fleishman, 1972; Horn & Masunaga, 2006; Cianciolo et al., 2006), most of the research on expertise that is related to IQ and similar measures of mental ability has only shown that professionals who excel beyond average levels of professional competence and proficiency possess IQs scores across a very wide range, clearly showing that other factors are far more important for the eventual achievement of expertise than IQ.

Performance Characteristics of Expertise

Although raw observation alone can tell us that experts behave differently than novices and other nonexperts, studies closely connected to research on the mental characteristics of expertise have also identified performance characteristics of expertise, which seem to be true across populations of experts rather than merely characteristic of individual experts alone. When compared with novices or professionals of average ability, experts appear to excel in the following areas, irrespective of discipline or domain, according to most of the studies cited in the three books under discussion.

- Experts perceive more, given the same quality and quantity of information.
- Experts identify needed information more quickly and can identify how to obtain it efficiently.
- Experts recall knowledge relevant to situations more quickly, with less cognitive effort.
- Experts envision, generate, and select better solutions to problems in their domain and yet behave predictably normal in other domains outside their area(s) of expertise.
- Experts reflect more productively on situations, wasting less time and energy on less important thoughts and emotions.
- Experts monitor and adjust their behavior more effectively.

- Experts learn more from their experiences, resulting in fewer repeated mistakes.

To offer an illustration of the kind of research that generated these findings, Lesgold et al. (1988), for example, compared the X-ray analyses of highly respected radiologists with those of average radiologists and discovered that the radiologists best known for their expertise were able to find quantitatively more information and qualitatively better information (e.g., information more relevant to a correct diagnosis) than average radiologists.

One thing that experts cannot always do, however, is explain why they can perform an activity so well or explain the process they employ to generate superior performance. Crandall et. al. (1992) explains this by claiming that expert knowledge is not only declarative (informational) but also tacit (operational), and most of this tacit knowledge is subconscious, automatic, and not verbally encoded. Researchers of expert thought and behavior have had to compensate for experts' frequent inability to explain their own superior performance with research methods that go beyond ordinary interviews and think-aloud protocols.

Development Characteristics of Expertise

How expertise develops is of especial interest to language specialists since findings from research in this area have the most potential for improving language teaching. According to the three books under discussion, experts develop differently from professionals of average ability because they tend to

- take better advantage of quality training / role modeling
- obtain needed encouragement from social support networks
- engage daily in deliberate, well-targeted practice or study
- manage their health (e.g., take recuperative naps after concentrated bursts of effort)
- use time and effort efficiently to pursue concrete goals
- learn from their mistakes as well as from the mistakes of others
- persist in spite of difficulties or hardships
- commit themselves to the pursuit of expertise

Studies of experts who started developing expertise early in life (e.g., Sosniak, 2003) show that many experts benefited from the support of committed parents as well as exceptionally good teachers who invested significant time and energy to provide opportunities to learn, authentic tasks for building authentic experiences, and exceptional social and emotional support. Other studies on the training of experts (e.g., Ericsson et al, 1993, in their study of pianists) reveal that experts (and their instructors) are much better at identifying weaknesses and planning productively targeted practice than novices who feel the need to practice but don't or who waste time practicing already perfected skills along with less perfected skills rather than prioritizing practice according to skills in greatest need of attention.

Expertise does not come quickly, however. According to Ericsson et al. (1993), top violinists have spent at least 10,000 hours of practice, by age 20, and on average, expertise in all fields requires at least 10 years of productive, daily engagement, averaging four to five hours a day, according to a long line of research from Bryan and Harter (1899) to Ericsson (2006). According to Goodyear

(1997), the two most important variables in predicting the eventual attainment of expertise in the field of professional psychology, for example, are motivation (via a high level of interest rather than pressure or obligation) and persistence (in deliberate engagement and well-targeted practice). This motivation (passion, drive, perhaps even mania) enables persistence, over long periods of time in spite of obstacles and inconveniences, to continually think about the domain, talk about the domain, study in the domain, and eventually work successfully in the domain at superior levels of accomplishment.

Several researchers have proposed models of professional development to illustrate the progression from nonexpert to expert. Two of these are listed below.

Hoffman Professional Development Scale

Naïve	has no knowledge of the domain.
Novice	has begun to have exposure to the domain.
Initiate	has begun introductory instruction in an official capacity, e.g., university studies.
Apprentice	has begun learning/performing beyond the introductory level with supervision.
Journeyman	has begun to work in the domain without supervision.
Expert	has achieved a high degree of knowledge/performance that is highly respected by peers.
Master	has reached a superior enough level to teach others and make policy decisions in the domain.

Note. Adapted from Hoffman (1998; cited in Chi, 2006).

Dreyfus Professional Development Scale

Novice	Actions are guided by rules, without relation to or understanding of context.
Advanced Beginners	Actions begin to be supported with personal experience.
Competent	Actions are goal directed and integrate more knowledge with experience.
Proficient	Actions become intuitive, with automatic support from knowledge and experience.
Expert	Actions are effortless and fluid in a subconscious unity of knowledge and experience.

Note. Adapted from Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986, cited in Tsui, 2003).

Hoffman's scale presents a model of transition from naïve to master that focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and the evolution from learner to teacher, and the model by Dreyfus and Dreyfus focuses on the transition from effortful action to effortless action as one's experience becomes increasingly internalized and integrated. The development of expertise in specific fields, however, will require different, more detailed models to make the process more transparent to students so that they can easily picture their professional goals and understand the processes they will need to go through to arrive at levels of genuinely professional expertise in their target domains.

EDUCATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PURSUIT OF EXPERTISE

As the research we have reviewed has shown, experts think, behave, and develop differently from persons of average professional ability. Now, I would like to recommend a few practical applications of these findings, beginning with some general guidelines for ESP practice that I have experimented with for several years now and obtained very satisfactory results. These guidelines, of course, do not

replace standard practices in ESP, such as needs assessment, but rather integrate with them to ensure greater effectiveness.

Guideline for Students

Students will make better progress in their ESP training if they do the following:

- understand the meaning of expertise and value its pursuit
- commit themselves to pursuing expertise
- make good use of the scholarly research on expertise that is published in their field and others
- work cooperatively with peers and mentors to develop expertise
- socialize within a supportive network of friends who are also committed to expertise
- actively seek out and imitate good role models who pursue expertise

Guideline for Instructors

ESP instructors will obtain better results from their ESP training if they do the following:

- help students to fully integrate their learning, experiences, goals, and philosophies into a more unified whole via well-designed activities that invoke productive thought and develop authentic experiences
- transform students into a mutually supportive community of learners who are committed to the joint pursuit of expertise
- join this community as an equal and pursue expertise with the same passion and persistence that is expected of everyone in the community

These guidelines provide a starting place for reflection and experimentation and should evolve according to need and understanding.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE PURSUIT OF EXPERTISE

Pursuing professional expertise requires mastery of knowledge and skills at a much broader and deeper level than normally gets identified in most ESP needs analyses, particularly because the needs analysis specifies only those goals that can be attained within the training time frame, not goals for a lifelong plan that accounts for transitions in learning contexts, such as the transition from learning in a university program to learning in the workplace. Based on learners' specific needs, potential areas for ESP training might include the some of the following, which represent targeted areas of training that can help move students rapidly and efficiently toward expertise in their chosen profession.

Treatment of Persistent Language Errors

All learners make mistakes as they attempt to learn and do new things. Prioritizing treatment of the most crucial language problems standing in the way of expert domain-specific performance and then delivering that treatment in a way that will build knowledge of essential vocabulary as well as knowledge in the target profession is clearly more efficient than focusing on language errors alone without a meaningful order of delivery and thoughtful integration with learners' subject matter

studies. Nonnative English speakers in the early phases of their professional studies might be given information something like the following, depending on their specific language needs and fields of study.

Example 1

INCORRECT: *Almost* U.S. architects are licensed by the NCARB.

CORRECT: Almost all U.S. architects are licensed by the NCARB.

CORRECT: Most U.S. architects are licensed by the NCARB.

NCARB = National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (www.ncarb.org).

Learning Activity: In your profession, what kinds of licensing are advantageous? What is the best way to obtain them? After you finish your research on this, organize your findings on one sheet of paper in a user-friendly way and then share the handout with your classmates.

Example 2

INCORRECT: The device *broke, but* was easy to repair.

CORRECT: The device broke but was easy to repair.

CORRECT: The device broke, but it was easy to repair.

Learning Activity: Rewrite the two correct sentences with as many words as you know in your field that can replace the words *device, broke,* and *repair* without creating odd collocations. Then work with classmates to expand each of your lists and correct any sentences that seem odd.

Learning Activity: What problems frequently surface in your area of specialization? At this stage in your professional development, how many of these problems are you able to solve successfully? What training do you still lack and what are your plans for taking care of these training needs? Will you simply trust your teachers/professors to provide you with all of the training you will need to solve these problems, or will you supplement your education with some self-development activities or your own? Explain your thoughts and plans to your classmates.

Example 3

INCORRECT: The numbers *are: 23, 12, 45, and 27.*

CORRECT: The numbers are 23, 12, 45, and 27.

CORRECT: Numbers: 23, 12, 45, 27.

Learning Activity: How are numbers typically used in your field of study? What kinds of information are numbers normally used to communicate? Gather some samples of numerical communication in your field and then be prepared to explain what distinguishes expert communication from average communication via numbers to the other members of your class.

Example 4

INCORRECT: The planets *circulate* the sun.

CORRECT: The planets circle the sun.

Learning Activity: List several things in your field that *circulate* and several things that *circle*. What words are easily confused by novices in your profession? Prepare a handout and distribute it to your classmates.

Expanding Essential Vocabulary

All students need to expand their vocabulary, but they should increase their vocabulary in the most essential areas in ways that can also facilitate better understanding of their discipline. One activity that can help is to ask students to select the single most important word in their field and then write as many collocations from field-specific discourse as they can think of using that word. Someone majoring in composition, for example, might create the following list:

Most Essential Word in the Field of Composition: *text*
gather text samples, study text, analyze text, evaluate text, write text, produce text, generate text, compose text, (in)effective text, (un)grammatical text, persuasive text, promotional text, rhetorical text, informational text, educational text, electronic text, digital text, hardcopy text, written text, spoken text, amateur text, professional text, textual cohesion, textual coherence, textual arrangement, textual density

This exercise not only allows students (and their instructors) to see what they know (and don't know), but it also provides a good opportunity for students to explain their field in terms of the word they selected. Use of a technical corpus and software to analyze it is not necessary but these can be used if desired. The aim, of course, is to help students develop a deeper understanding of their field while expanding their vocabulary in essential areas at the same time. Having students develop lists, like the one above, as they manually survey genres that are characteristic of their discipline, in my experience, yields better learning results in the long run than having them manipulate conveniently prepared text with sophisticated software tools. Technology should always be used (or avoided) with learning objectives clearly in mind.

Other Activities Beyond the Basics

Dealing with language errors and expanding vocabulary are two instructional goals that commonly appear in ESP training, along with many others that I will not list here. Tying this kind of training more tightly to the pursuit of professional expertise, however, transforms traditional single-aim activities into much more productive activities where learning in one dimension can be better integrated with learning in others for more productive use of time and more impressive results. Beyond the basics, activities such as those that follow have proved useful in my own ESP training.

Clarify Professional Development Targets

Teach students early in their studies (e.g., freshman year) the purpose, expected content, acceptable language, and common formatting conventions of résumés in their profession. Then have students make their own. Most students will quickly notice that they have very little to enter on their résumés because they have not yet done anything worth reporting nor are they currently engaged in any activities connected to their professional development that can be reported. After stimulating a little anxiety among students about their current state of affairs, have students collect samples of résumés in their field from the Internet (or wherever else they can be found) and analyze them to see what kinds of experiences experts seem to have, along with the English that the experts use to present them. Then have students make personal self-development plans with month-by-month goals so

that they can begin to fill their schedules with useful training and experiences that will not only look good on their résumés at graduation but also will equip them with the education necessary to become genuine experts. Mechanisms for later input on résumés after more experience has been logged can also be included in the project if this can be worked into the training program.

Build Professional Knowledge and Language Expertise

Identify useful knowledge targets for professional self-development together with students during class discussions and then collect the targeted knowledge through Internet searches, interviews, and other research activities. Have students archive the knowledge they obtain in well-organized computer files, notebooks, or professional resource Web sites. Then have students share their findings regularly with others in the learning community via self-generated handouts, PowerPoint presentations, oral reports, or other communicative means so that they can learn from each others' individual efforts. Depending on each student's career goal and language level, knowledge targets might include profiles of genres in a student's chosen profession along with representative samples, information about professional societies and events where experts meet, annotated bibliographies of essential reading material that is useful for becoming an expert, contact information on students or working professionals in other locales worth networking with, language samples of characteristic English in the field, and so on. Samples of written and spoken English that students might collect and study in the field of engineering, for example, might include the following:

Written English

- project proposals
- feasibility reports
- progress reports
- lab reports
- patent applications
- technical reports
- cover letters
- conference proposals
- presentation slides
- research articles
- tutorials

Spoken English

- self-introductions
- small talk
- discussion
- instruction / explanation
- persuasion / negotiation
- meeting discourse
- presentation discourse
- project discourse
- interviews
- telephone calls
- conference calls

Samples of rhetorical structures that might be common in a field, such as definitions, might look like this in a student's notebook.

Definition: *Term = Category + Details*

Biomaterials (term) is a specialization (category) within biomedical engineering that integrates engineering fundamentals in materials science with principles of cell biology, chemistry, and physiology to aid in the design and development of materials used in the production of medical devices (details).

Instruction on definitions can include analysis of lengthy noun phrases and their components to understand how these structures are typically used (and misused) in professional text.

Samples of technical language with information about how it can be correctly read might look like this in a student's professional development notebook:

$$a^3 + b^3 = (a + b)(a^2 - ab + b^2)$$

When Read: *a cubed plus b cubed equals a plus b times a squared minus ab plus b squared*

When Spoken for Transcription: *a superscript 3 plus sign b superscript 3 equals sign open brackets a plus sign b close brackets open brackets a superscript 2 minus sign ab plus sign b superscript 2 close brackets*

Build Professional Understanding of Expertise

Ask students to investigate the professional literature on expertise in their area of specialization and then write a one-page description or a one-page profile in table form, fully supported with proper references that are cited in the style preferred in their field. Then have students present their findings to each other to identify similarities and differences between areas of specialization as well as to alert students to gaps in their research.

These activities, of course, provide only a tiny glimpse of what is possible in ESP when students and instructors aim all of their learning efforts at the larger goal of attaining professional expertise rather than mastery of isolated bits of information and isolated tasks that are not well integrated with a student's life outside of his/her English training. All activities, however, should include ample devotion to reflective thought, creative problem-solving, and authentic communication so that learning can go sufficiently deep and understanding can be sufficiently chunked and categorized into meaningful patterns for efficient and productive use. Continually gathering useful knowledge, analyzing it, discussing it, and diagramming how it connects with other parts of their profession will help students think more deeply and productively about the material they gather so that expert performance will eventually become possible as they master essential content in their field along with the professional language needed to support it. As ESP instructors grow in their own expertise along with their students, better ideas that can generate better learning results will naturally surface.

CONCLUSION

This paper has had three goals. The first goal has been to begin acquainting ESP specialists and interested others with some of the basic research literature on expertise that might stimulate deeper thinking and further study of the topic. The second goal has been to present some simple guidelines to help ESP specialists begin to alter their current perspectives and pedagogical practices in order to generate better results. And the third goal has been to offer a few brief examples of potential ESP learning activities that can generate more lasting, integrated learning results within the time frame available for instruction. The material presented here is neither exhaustive nor thorough enough to produce expertise in ESP; however, if ESP practitioners pursue expertise more thoughtfully and passionately with their students in a mutually supportive community of committed learners, then down the road both they and their students may be able to offer this planet greater expertise in important areas. Life is short. Why waste learning efforts on educational activities that cannot richly benefit teachers and students alike in significant professional ways?

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CLOSING SESSION: CONVERGING PATHS IN ESP

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It was an honor to be invited by TESOL and Argentina TESOL to summarize the three main presentations for the closing session of the TESOL symposium on English for specific purposes (ESP) and provide insights on how the topics discussed relate to the Argentine and Southern Cone context.

MORNING SESSIONS

The morning session presentations were outstanding and provided different views on various aspects of the teaching and learning of ESP. The first paper, Donna Brinton's "Two for One," introduced the audience to the world of content-based instruction or CBI. In this approach, content and language use skills are learned together in a content-driven curriculum. Professor Brinton reviewed the most important CBI premises:

- Meaningful contexts for language learning are provided.
- Courses are organized around content, with content driving the curriculum.
- Language and content are taught concurrently.
- Content materials provide comprehensive input, which leads to language acquisition.

Professor Brinton explained that in spite of CBI's success through the years, it has been criticized because of the difficulties of balancing form, content, and function and because content instructors may have more power than language teachers and may prioritize content objectives over language learning. Professor Brinton took us back to the sources, recreating the three prototype models that have been the core of CBI during the last two decades:

1. *Theme-based instruction*, which focuses on themes that enable skill and language instruction and become the organizing principle of the course.
2. *Sheltered instruction*, in which sheltered content classes are taught to students who need to improve their second language proficiency.
3. *Adjunct instruction*, in which a content course is paired with a language course and the content and language instructors negotiate the syllabus to reconcile their course objectives.

These prototypes are placed along a continuum, depending on the focus they place on language or content. Two of these CBI prototypes have been widely adopted in different English as a foreign language (EFL) instructional scenarios in Argentina and South America, with the choice of prototype depending on the amount of English instruction time and the focus of the English curriculum. Theme-based instruction is often used in courses at all levels with fewer English instruction contact hours and Adjunct instruction is more often used in scenarios at institutions that offer more English instruction time. Sheltered

instruction, on the other hand, is often related to English as a second language (ESL) situations.

The application sample presented by Professor Brinton centered on the Uzbek State University of World Languages in Tashbek, Uzbekistan, focusing on the observations and evaluation that she and Barry Griner carried out in the university's teacher preparation. They discovered that the first two years of the program focused exclusively on language development, and the last two years concentrated exclusively on content. In these last two years, almost no attention was paid to language or language feedback. Brinton and Griner then proposed a *language enhanced approach* to teaching content, piloting the approach in a history class.

Professor Brinton finished her talk stressing the connection between CBI and ESP, concluding that ESP is a domain of English language teaching that often makes use of CBI.

The second presentation this morning stressed the importance of using ESP research findings when developing ESP materials. In "The Contribution of Research to Materials Development in ESP: The Case of Business English," Almut Koester maintained that instructors who teach ESP may not have a strong background in the specific field they are teaching, as in, for example, business English. Thus, they rely on teaching materials to bridge this gap, particularly to find out the differences between business English, for example, and general English. It is true, however, that few materials are based on research findings in the field. In consequence, many teachers use authentic materials such as business letters or reports, or some other samples of various business English registers (by *register*, I mean a situationally defined variety of English). Written materials are relatively easy to find on the Internet, for example, and in E-mails, company correspondence, and business publications. Spoken business English sources are much more difficult to access.

Professor Koester stressed that materials developers should review research studies that investigate ESP in a certain field and compare this specific register to general English. This kind of research has been conducted in two main areas: the analysis of individual interactions using qualitative research methods and the analysis of language corpora or large collections of texts using mainly quantitative methods.

Corpus-based research has provided empirical evidence to differentiate business English from general English. Some of these differences had been perceived by instructors and researchers in the field for a long time, and many features had been used intuitively in materials development, but evidence to support those perceptions was not available until computers enabled researchers to investigate large, machine-readable text collections. Corpus-based research findings show that although spoken business English shares many features with everyday conversational English, it also presents key differences. For example, business English is much more goal oriented. People who communicate in business environments have a very direct purpose: to have a job done. The analysis of business interactions in English also showed that there are strong power relations that result in different choices of formality and lexical features.

Corpus-based analyses also discovered specific vocabulary which is much more frequent in corpora of business English corpora such as the Cambridge and Nottingham Spoken

Business English Corpus than in general English corpora. Features such as action vocabulary and concrete entities were favored in business English as well as positive lexical items. Investigation of key words in business English corpora showed that spoken business English involves problem solving of some kind, such as raising a problem, proposing a solution, or evaluating a solution. This focus on problem solving is often reflected in this register's use of idiomatic or metaphorical signals, expressions that may surprise some business English teachers.

Evaluation of negotiations and outcomes is also a key activity in this type of communication, and business English has been found to reflect evaluation in its use of idiomatic expressions linked to the culture that help create a sense of shared identity and solidarity. Relationships among colleagues and business partners are clearly important in a business context. A closer look at business interactions has uncovered strategies of solidarity and politeness expressed by the frequent use of hedges showing that speakers are sensitive to imposing themselves on their addressees. These strategies were often employed to avoid disagreement.

Professor Koester finished her presentation with recommendations for business English language teachers that I would like to extend to all ESP teachers and materials developers. Informing our teaching materials with research-based findings can help teachers and students discover patterns of language use in specific registers.

The third and last section of the morning session was Thomas Orr's presentation, "Pursuing Expertise With Our Students in English for Specific Purposes." First, he described an ideal university ESP context. Although students in this context were presented with relevant content, better ESP practices, and high technology, these advantages did not improve their learning or its application. Students could acquire enough knowledge to perform an assignment, but their learning was far from authentic. Professor Orr then turned his interest to helping students to develop expertise because it seemed to be a better goal than having them master a specific task. To guide his own research, he decided to review related literature.

Professor Orr defined *expertise* in scholarly conversations as a superior reproducible level of knowledge in a specific field or domain, evaluated highly within that field. To understand expertise, Professor Orr carefully described three types of characteristics: mental, performance, and developmental.

- *Mental*: Experts seem to have different minds. They apply more usable and better organized knowledge and they are highly motivated by positive desires such as getting to know and understand their field better, performing better and being regarded as experts by other experts and themselves. Professor Orr noted, however, that experts do not have higher IQs than nonexperts and that in fact several research studies have discovered that expertise does not correlate with IQ.
- *Performance*: Experts also seem to behave differently, perceiving more, recalling relevant knowledge quickly or with little effort, producing better solutions, being more productive, learning from their experiences, and making fewer mistakes.

- *Developmental:* Experts seem to develop differently, taking advantage of quality training, being encouraged by social support networks, daily exercising their practice or study, efficiently managing their health and time, learning from their mistakes, working over difficulties, and committing themselves to the pursuit of expertise. Several studies support Professor Orr's claim that expertise takes time and that it requires motivation and persistence.

Professor Orr finished his presentation by recommending a series of guiding principles that can help students make better progress in ESP: valuing the importance of expertise, committing to the pursuit of expertise, investigating expertise, working cooperatively to develop expertise, and socializing with others who also pursue expertise. For this kind of work, students should engage in activities that integrate learning with qualities such as reflective and critical thinking, which are closely related to expertise, and use their existing knowledge, experience and personal philosophies, and they should set broader long range goals.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

I attended Professor Orr's afternoon workshop in which he suggested several activities for broadening domain knowledge such as identifying, collecting, storing, and sharing useful target knowledge for professional development and focusing on certain lexical items to help students learn domain language. Domain language can be easily identified by analyzing real spoken and written English texts. Text samples can provide exercises that help students improve grammatical, formatting, punctuation, reading, and pronunciation expertise as well their production of collocations and proficiency in word choice. The workshop provided practical insights into the theoretical side of pursuing expertise and allowed the audience to share their experiences and suggest possible ways to apply the model presented during the morning session to their own teaching situations.

SYNTHESIS

It was not difficult to find a strong link among these outstanding scholars' presentations and views on ESP. Professor Brinton focused on the importance of content in the teaching of English. I envision the new language-enhanced instruction prototype being used more and more in English for academic purposes classes and ESP courses in EFL environments, maybe still in search of that flexibility that Professor Brinton mentioned. I also foresee the coming of new hybrid courses that use elements of all or some of the CBI prototypes to satisfy varied ESP necessities.

Professor Koester's main message was the importance of research and text exploration for the teaching of ESP. Being a corpus-based researcher myself, I believe we will have to wait a while for more corpus-based ESP materials to be commercially available. Researching ESP, and in certain teaching scenarios, teaching our students how to analyze research findings, we can provide students with materials that mirror authentic language use and with skills that they can continue using after they leave the classroom. Research findings can help us get close to bridging the gap between specific language and general language, using examples of natural language use to raise our students' awareness of the differences between specific and general.

Professor Orr's introduction to the pursuit of expertise made us all reflect on the importance of guiding our students to become experts in their fields and in the language. I am sure the audience left the symposium with many novel ideas on the pursuit of expertise that they may put into practice following Professor Orr's theoretical framework.

It is up to the audience now to find ways to apply the knowledge from this TESOL symposium on ESP to their own teaching and research situations on the neverending road to better teaching and learning.

TESOL Symposium on Teaching ESP

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