Book Review on 'English for Business Communication'

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With globalization, the significant role of communication has increased, and language has gained an important role in society and the global dimension used by people from different backgrounds as a lingua franca for international communication. As a result, the global status of English has an essential role in increasing the use of English as the medium through which several business people get their work done. Furthermore, the rapid growth of digital tools and technology has resulted in various emerging communication platforms that have undoubtedly altered workplace communication culture. Under this framework, *"English for Business Communication"* constitutes a vital up-to-date contribution to the realities of communication in business today and related literature. This volume consists of eleven chapters along with an *Index* section at the end, and each chapter comprises reflection questions, post-reading activities, and references.

The first chapter, *'Written and spoken communication in the workplace'*, presents background information on the recent advancements in written and spoken communication in the workplace, and the author draws attention to the significance of oral communication skills compared to written communication skills and briefly puts forward several contexts and descriptive research into the language competency and needs of working professionals from different professions in various context. Lastly, an overview of the chapters is presented that the target readership of this comprehensive book is for researchers, professionals, and learners studying English for business or workplace communication.

Chapter 2, entitled *'Features of business communication'*, is devoted to the detailed explanations of features of business English, the improvement and the significant role of plain English. The chapter also purports the other features of the use of *active voice, avoiding nominalization, conciseness,* and *simplicity* which are all important features for effective communication, and mainly covers the fundamental features of workplace English and students learning workplace English with a suitable style for business communication. Furthermore, the author touches on the concept of communicative

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competence, including grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence (Hymes, 1996).

Chapter 3, '*Email and emerging social media for different purposes'*, starts with detailed information about the concept of *email*. In addition, the author briefly explains the most recent studies regarding the features and format of email messages and how to write efficient email messages. This chapter also touches on the common errors in email writing and gives some striking examples of the wrong use of lexical words commonly found in emails made by second language learners. At the end of the chapter, the author also highlights the emerging use of social media for different communicative purposes and represents research findings based on the perceptions of employers and employees towards the use of social media.

Chapter 4, *'Conveying negative and goodwill messages',* starts with a detailed explanation of a framework for analysing negative messages and two different approaches to conveying negative messages: *direct* and *indirect*. This chapter not only touches on detailed information regarding goodwill messages, including *thank you or appreciation messages; congratulations messages; and sympathy/condolence messages,* but also negative messages frequently used and challenging to deal with. Besides, the author introduces the occasions where negative and goodwill messages are required, and promotes information concerning what channels to use when conveying negative messages. At the end of the chapter, the readers are expected to establish efficient negative and goodwill messages.

The author emphasises different persuasive genres in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. Concentrating on the vital role of writing persuasively for professionals to communicate effectively in the workplace, Chapter 5, '*Persuasive messages: Sales correspondence and job application',* gives indisputable information regarding persuasive techniques and an overview of the key communication strategies to influence, engage and empower. The author also covers two different persuasive genres: *sales correspondence* and *job application*. Moreover, this chapter helps readers apply persuasive techniques in producing sales correspondence/job application letters and teaches them how to protect themselves from manipulation and use crucial tools to make their personal and professional lives easier. In Chapter 6, *'Persuasive messages: Enquiry and invitation messages',* provides detailed explanations of the concepts of *enquiry* and *invitation messages,* their essential roles, and in what way enquiry and invitation messages are effective.

Focusing on the growth in report writing due to "(1) business expansion – need for reports in large organisations; (2) globalisation of business – reports written in an increasingly international environment; (3) government requirements – to comply with the law and regulations" (Chan, 2020: 117), Chapter 7, *'Formal business reports/proposals',* introduces how to write a formal business report and the differences between a business report and a proposal. This chapter also aims to help readers apply the skills required in preparing business reports/proposals and other communicative activities in the workplace.

Chapter 8, *'Making oral presentations'*, concentrates on the importance of presentation skills and details of planning, organising and delivering a successful presentation. The author also promotes authentic examples and study findings based on how effective presentation skills are essential to business success. Furthermore, tips and suggestions are introduced to help readers give persuasive speeches and become charismatic speakers.

Indicating that business communication courses and textbooks rarely address informal English and English for socialisation, Chapter 9, *'Socialisation',* is devoted to the analyses of small talk based on Small Talk at Work sub-corpus (STW) and expressions. Besides, it provides some vital and effective ways for second-language learners of English for business communication to conduct small talk in the

workplace with colleagues informed by relevant research findings. Additionally, it allows readers to master the use of slang and informal expressions for conducting small talk in various contexts.

Business meetings and negotiations have been the subject of extensive research, yet they are not properly used to help inform teaching. In this respect, Chapter 10 mainly outlines the challenges and difficulties of having meetings and covers what is necessary to be an effective participant and leader/chair in a meeting using recent research findings. Moreover, suggestions are given to readers about how to be well-prepared as a participant and effectively negotiate in various situations.

Chapter 11, *'Employment and appraisal interviews'*, primarily focuses on the two basic interview formats: *employment interview and assessment interview*. In describing how to conduct successful employment and evaluation interviews, this chapter also represents a beneficial mix of theory and practice. Additionally, the author gives a detailed explanation of techniques required in interviews; hence, the skill acquired in this chapter may be used in different contexts where we, as interviewers, are to elicit the views and opinions of others.

This volume possesses different strengths in view of its content and organization. It provides valuable information about detailed business English, why communication in the workplace is vital in various contexts, and a wide scope of research in business communication and incorporates an international range of authentic texts. The authors also provide numerous studies based on up-to-date information regarding written and spoken communication in business and present to-the-point clues for readers. In addition, this book goes beyond the traditional coverage of business English to offer a broad and practical textbook for those studying English in a workplace setting.

Overall, this volume contributes a comprehensive and useful framework of key information on English for business communication with its rich and guiding coverage. This rich and up-to-date practice-oriented coverage and the reader-friendly language of the contributors surely make the volume a significant resource on 'ESP' in ELT. Regarding all these, it can be stated that this book is evaluated as a highly valuable resource for researchers and practitioners and thus should be added to the list of must-have books.

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