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English as a Lingua Franca in Teaching Business English:
A Course Book Evaluation from an ELF Perspective

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To my late father

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It has not always been an easy undertaking to pursue studies at an age when most of the fellow-students are around 30 years younger. But I had set myself a goal and I wanted to achieve that goal. At the beginning of my studies I sometimes had the feeling that I had to justify my presence in crowded lecture halls. It was only in the second part, in the last 3 semesters, that I have experienced the undertaking as a truly joyful and enlightening experience. I have gained many insights, had many blissful encounters and motivating discussions and finally I have almost attained my goal.

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Abstract

This study is concerned with a business English course book evaluation from an ELF perspective. First, the concepts of English as a lingua franca (ELF) and Business English as a lingua franca (BELF) will be clarified and the issue of the competence of the non-native speaker will be raised. The field of teaching business English and the nature of business English course books will be discussed and a short introduction to pedagogical approaches will be given which the paper will refer to in the evaluation section.

In this thesis, by drawing on several empirical studies, I will describe the competent BELF user: he or she has cross-cultural awareness, knows how to build rapport and to negotiate meaning. The good BELF user achieves communicative goals by the skilful use of pragmatic strategies such as accommodation.

The core of this diploma thesis will be an analysis and evaluation of five selected business English course books. As a first step, for taking stock, a published framework for textbook analysis will be used. As a second step, the evaluation procedure will be based on a checklist containing specific criteria and foci developed for this study. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the course books from an ELF perspective, which means to find out if the course books contain features which help the learner to become *a good BELF user*. The findings will be discussed in detail and pedagogical implications for BELF-oriented teaching will be discussed.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BELF	Business English as a lingua franca
CLIL	Content integrated learning
CLT	Communicative language teaching
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ELFA	English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings
ELT	English language teaching
ENL	English as a native language
EFL	English as a foreign language
COFP	Community of practice
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EOP	English for Occupational Purposes
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
GPE	General Purpose English
L1	First language
L2	Second language
NS(s)	Native speaker(s)
NNS(s)	Non-native speaker(s)
VOICE	Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is undisputed that in the 21st century English is the most widely used lingua franca around the world. Technological progress, modernization and especially globalization have created a need for a lingua franca which can be used internationally and worldwide. The purpose of English as a lingua franca (ELF) is an instrumental one and it is the field of international business communication where this function becomes most obvious. Especially in the last decade, an increasing body of research has focused on the use of ELF for business. This is why the term Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) was coined. It is the domain of BELF which has been chosen for this thesis.

This thesis consists of ten chapters. Following this introduction, chapter 2 clarifies the concept of ELF, research on ELF is briefly described, different attitudes towards ELF are discussed and the impact of different cultural backgrounds is mentioned. Then, the issue of the competence of non-native speakers is raised and the question discussed whether ELF represents a threat to native speakers of English.

Chapter 3 provides a definition of the notion of BELF and a description of research activities in the field. Chapters 4 and 5 prepare the ground for the core part of this thesis. Chapter 4 is dedicated to teaching business English. First, I compare English for General Purposes (EGP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Then, I elaborate on the nature of business English materials and on the role of the business English teacher, who has to teach a variety of skills in order to equip his/her learners for the requirements of the business world. Finally, chapter 5 provides an introduction of the most common pedagogical approaches which prepare the ground for the course book evaluation.

Chapter 6 depicts the evaluation procedure of five course books. The course books are evaluated by means of a two-part checklist developed for this study. The purpose of this thesis is to find out whether current business English course

books reflect and consider the importance of BELF for doing business via English in today's globalized world. Thus, the focus of the course book evaluation is guided by an ELF perspective and one of the evaluation criteria is if the course books present English as a global and international language or rather as a certain variety of native speaker English.

Chapter 7 contains the evaluation of the course books and Chapter 8 provides a detailed discussion and comparison of the findings. Chapter 9 draws conclusions and implications for a BELF-oriented teaching approach are discussed. In the last chapter the thesis is rounded off by a conclusion that summarizes the most important findings.

2. PREPARING THE GROUND

2.1. Defining ELF

It is necessary to clarify the concept of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in general before discussing Business English as a lingua franca (BELF). ELF could be described as a common language that is used among people with different mother tongues to enable communication. In the past, some researchers restricted ELF to non-native communication, thus excluding native speakers. House (1999: 74) presents such a definition when she describes ELF interactions as “interactions between members of two or more different lingua-cultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue”.

In more recent years, however, the term ELF has been defined in a wider sense. Seidlhofer (2004: 211) comments:

While these definitions [excluding native speakers] could be said to capture ELF in its purest form, it has to be remembered that ELF interactions often also include interlocutors from the Inner and Outer Circles, and can indeed take place in these contexts, such as at academic conferences in Madras or meetings of the United Nations in New York.

Smit (2010: 49) also includes the native speaker when she points out that

actual ELF talk necessitates another kind of variation to be factored in: international settings can and often do include (monolingual) L1 speakers of English.

But Seidlhofer (2011a: 7) emphasizes that in ELF interactions non-native speakers of English generally are in a majority and currently she defines ELF as

any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option.

It is obvious that there are more non-native speakers (NNSs) of English than native speakers (NSs) but it is difficult to provide reliable figures, one reason being that the ratio of native to non-native is permanently changing. Crystal (2011 in an interview to the *Spotlight Magazine*, estimates that of the 2 billion

people in the world who speak English only about 400 million are native speakers. In the face of the unprecedented ubiquity of English as a lingua franca it is important to be aware of the fact that ELF is clearly different from English as a native language (ENL). As Seidlhofer (2011a: 8) argues

ELF has taken on a life of its own, in principle independent to a considerable degree of the norms established by its native users, and that is what needs to be recognized.

Thus, ELF is not an impoverished copy of native speaker English but it is used by speakers who have the prime goal to achieve successful communication. This is why ELF speakers should not be regarded as learners because their goal is not to achieve native-like competence but they want to be effective communicators. This issue will be discussed in more detail in sub-section 3.2. of this thesis. Jenkins (2009: 145) points out that

[p]ragmatically, it involves the use of certain communication strategies, particularly accommodation and code-switching. This is because ELF forms depend crucially on the specific communication context rather than being an 'all-purpose' English.

By accommodation Jenkins refers to the ability to adapt to the linguistic behaviour of interlocutors and thereby to avoid misunderstandings. I will return to this point when I look at accommodation later in this thesis (cf. sub-section 4.5.2.1.).

2.2. Researching ELF

In the last years, a growing body of research on ELF has developed and authentic ELF data has become accessible. I would like to mention three corpora here which have been compiled and which have offered new research possibilities. In 2005, Seidlhofer initiated a research project at the English Department of the University of Vienna called VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English). VOICE is a "structured collection of language data, the first computer-readable corpus capturing spoken ELF interactions of this kind" (VOICE 2005). The corpus, which is freely accessible online for

research purposes, offers a variety of recordings of naturally occurring ELF interactions with speakers who have approximately 50 different first languages. The interactions take place in a variety of different domains such as casual talk or business meetings. Based on the corpus VOICE, in the last years, an ever increasing number of PhD and MA theses have focused their research activities on interesting aspects such as specific lexico-grammatical features and pragmatic strategies.

Another ELF corpus (though not freely accessible online) has also been compiled by Mauranen et al (Mauranen, Hyninen & Ranta 2010) at the University of Helsinki. The acronym ELFA stands for English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings and the corpus focuses on spoken academic ELF (see ELFA 2012). The Asian counterpart of VOICE is being compiled. It is now called ACE (previously ELFIA, see ELFIA (2010)); the new acronym stands for Asian Corpus of English (see ACE 2012).

Corpus-based and empirical studies dealing with ELF have already revealed many interesting findings and it is to be hoped that those findings will also lead to an increasing awareness of ELF on the part of the stakeholders of English language teaching and hence that implications for teaching will be considered (cf. Seidlhofer 2011a). In the next chapter a description of the situation will be provided which has caused the need for a lingua franca.

2.3. Globalization as cause and promoting factor of ELF

In my view, the following definition of Held et al (1999: 2):

Globalization may be thought of initially as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life.

covers well what the concept globalization means. It implies that today people all over the world are much more connected with each other than ever before. The same goods are available in many countries worldwide and companies

merge with other companies and set up subsidiaries in many parts of the world. As Dewey describes, modern technology for communication has led to a situation which is “blurring the boundaries between what is local and global” (2007: 337). This situation has also had far-reaching implications for the use of languages.

As described by House (1999: 73), at the end of the 20th century it became evident that the global language was English and that since then, most international communications, negotiations and information exchanges have been conducted in English. House describes that English is used as a lingua franca in international politics, on congresses, in academic discourse and scientific settings. To use Held et al’s definition of globalization “the speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness” has increased tremendously and more than ten years after House’s statement it seems that the modern world has got used to the present *zeitgeist*. Dewey (2007: 334) argues that the present role of English as a lingua franca differs from former lingua francas in many ways. As differences he depicts the many different cultural backgrounds of the users of the language and the many different domains in which the language is used.

The above mentioned state of interconnectedness is especially evident for people who work in large international companies and who communicate with their colleagues and business partners on a daily basis on a global scale. ELF is the dominant language for global business, not only for cross-cultural communication but also as a company language. On a similar note, Kaur (2009: 5) points out that

[t]he global village in which we live today necessitates the use of a lingua franca to facilitate communication between people of diverse first languages and cultures and English has provided the world with the means to do so.

Kaur mentions one additional aspect here, namely that ELF not only enables communication between people of different mother tongues but also of different

cultural backgrounds. The impact of culture will be discussed in the next sub-section.

2.4. The impact of different cultural backgrounds

According to the findings of the linguistic anthropologists Sapir (1985) and his student Whorf, language and culture are inseparably linked. The researchers based their assumptions on a study carried out on the languages of Native Americans, such as the Hopi. They found out that the use of a different language makes the speaker to perceive the world differently and it is the language which causes them to do so (Yule 2006: 218). This perspective became known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Hall (2012: 19) argues that this view is also held by Hymes (1964: 110) who claims that language use is always based on sociocultural knowledge. Hall (2012: 23-24) describes that

like Whorf, Hymes sees language and culture as inextricably linked. However, by giving primacy to language use and function rather than linguistic code and form, Hymes transforms Whorf's notion of linguistic relativity in a subtle but significant way. More to the point, in asserting the primacy of language as human action, the source of relativity becomes located in language *use*, not language *structure*.

The above described emphasis on language *use* instead of *structure* can be regarded as the basis and starting point for the development of Hymes' concept of *communicative competence* which will be discussed further in sub-section 5.1. of this thesis. Considering the findings of the above mentioned researchers one might assume that the different cultural backgrounds of interlocutors who use ELF for communication have a large impact and are a source of frequent misunderstandings. The literature on misunderstanding caused by cultural differences in ELF communication is controversial. Kaur (2009: 7) points out that

communication in ELF is [...] perceived as being particularly problematic, given the varied cultures that come into contact. Misunderstanding and communication breakdown are considered all the more likely as

participants rely on the norms of their mother tongue and native culture to interpret meaning.

House, (1999: 85) has a different attitude when she argues that usually the reason for misunderstandings in ELF conversations are not the different cultural backgrounds of the interactants but a deficient knowledge of the language and the appropriate discourse rules. She argues that “instead of cultural knowledge, it is *linguistic* knowledge which is of prime importance in ELF interactions” (House 1999: 84f.) House (ibid.) describes further that ELF speakers act mainly as individuals and not as members of their L1 group. Thus, together with the other interlocutors they seem to form a new “discourse community” (ibid.) or as it would be expressed with a more current term, they form a new Community of Practice (CofP) (cf. p. 16 of this thesis) and seem to adapt to the prevailing circumstances. House (1999: 84) describes this phenomenon as follows:

This non-influence of ELF speakers’ native linguaculture, coupled with the non-availability of ELF as a means of identification, I boldly call the ‘culture irrelevance hypothesis’ in ELF talk.

House who carried out an empirical study where she collected data from an international students’ meeting in the Netherlands summarized her findings and reports that misunderstandings between ELF speakers

do not stem from deep cultural differences between interactants’ native culture-conditioned norms and values, but can be traced, more mundanely, to interactants’ lack of pragmatic fluency (House 1999: 85).

By pragmatic fluency House alludes to discourse strategies such as turn-taking and repair. A similar study was conducted by Meierkord who set up a corpus of spoken English as a lingua franca which is based on tape-recorded dinner-table conversations in a British students’ residence for international students. She recorded 13.5 hours of conversations of 48 students coming from different cultural backgrounds and having also different competence levels of English as a lingua franca. She found out that

[i]n lingua franca communication, both the communicative goal as well as the speakers' competence in the language they use for interaction influence performance just as much as cultural background does (Meierkord 2002: 129).

The important message here is that there are always several factors that lead to either successful communication or misunderstanding. Cultural differences are never the only reason for success or failure of a conversation and if we bear in mind, what has been mentioned earlier, that ELF speakers form new CofPs when they communicate, then it would be more sensible to look at the "cultural hybridity" (Ehrenreich 2009: 141), which develops within CofPs, instead of looking at cultural differences. Archibald, Cogo & Jenkins (2011: 2) describe that recent empirical studies have shown that ELF communication leads to much less misunderstandings than expected because usually interactants cooperate and use strategies such as accommodation in order to ensure successful communication.

2.5. ELF – a matter of attitude and identity

Even if it is without doubt that English has its firm position as the global lingua franca, when it comes to the description of ELF there are still many controversial views. Some regard ELF as a deficient and simplified form of English and as a threat to native English, others increasingly discover its usefulness and effectiveness for international communication. The relationship between individual identity and language use must not be underestimated. Hall argues that "[i]n our use of language we represent a particular identity at the same time that we construct it" (2012: 34). From this perspective it is not supportive that ELF is not acknowledged as a fully developed and highly functional form of English. The main problem arises from the fact that the competence of non-native speakers is always compared to that of native-speakers. Kaur refers to Pavelenko when she argues that

applying Chomsky's conceptualization of competence to the context of 'the multilingual reality of the contemporary world' in which individuals are increasingly becoming 'users of multiple linguistic resources and [as] members of multiple communities of practice' (Pavlenko 2002: 295) quite naturally proves to be problematic (Kaur 2009: 15).

Kaur emphasizes further that poststructuralist approaches regard competence "as resulting from actual use of the language rather than the contrary" (2009: 16). Cook, who argues that competence is "whatever it is at the particular moment that is being studied" (Cook 2002: 8) suggests that the competence of the L2 user should "be judged as an L2 system in its own right, not against that of the native speaker". Cook's suggestion touches upon the crucial point. If the dichotomy native speaker / non-native speaker is not the right one here and ELF is regarded as a language in its own right, then ELF is not measured in terms of competence it is measured according to other parameters, which are much more important, such as if speakers manage to achieve their communicative goals. The discussion about what competence actually is and how it is to be measured confirms Widdowson's view that competence in itself is "a fuzzy concept" (1989: 134). This is why when describing ELF, the distinction between native and non-native speakers of English is called into question by several scholars. Jenkins (2009: 87) argues that

while the native speaker/non-native speaker distinction holds good for English as a *foreign* language [...] it does not hold good for ELF, which is used mainly among L2 speakers of English, often with no L1 English speaker present at all.

Seidlhofer (2011a: 17f) shares a similar view when she claims that a distinction has to be made between settings where English is obviously perceived or learned as a foreign language, with the emphasis being on a certain English speaking culture, and English as a lingua franca used for intercultural communication. Thus, the orientation towards native speaker norms is not a negative endeavour as such, it is just not appropriate for ELF because the use of ELF is guided by other objectives. As Seidlhofer (2011a: 18) describes, in

ELF interactions participants are typically focused on co-constructing a viable *modus operandi* to achieve a communicative goal, whether that is negotiating a business contract, hammering out a political compromise, arguing about scientific experiments, or having a good time with a group of tourists in a seaside tavern.

As Seidlhofer points out here, ELF interactions are guided by the common goal to achieve effective communication. Thus, communicative effectiveness is one of the prime goals for ELF interactions. This is even more obvious when ELF is used for business purposes. Handford (2010: 145) argues that

the most important issue in business is not language ability, but the experience and ability to dynamically manoeuvre within the communities of practice which business people inhabit.

We learn here that successful business communication requires much more than native-like language skills. I will discuss later that a competent BELF user also requires interpersonal and intercultural skills. Handford (2010: 247) reports that he observes within the UK a growing interest that English NS business people, who work in international companies, are trained in communication skills.

2.6. Correctness and appropriateness

In the preceding sub-section it has become obvious that the competence of ELF users should not be judged towards that of the NS of English and that the purpose of ELF is successful communication on a global scale. But despite the seemingly clear purpose of ELF there still appears to be confusion about the notions of correctness and appropriateness. Most scholars agree that while it is important to communicate appropriately, the correctness of a linguistic form depends on its context. Hülmbauer, who did an interesting study on the “relationship of lexicogrammatical correctness and communicative effectiveness” (2010: 3), quotes Quirk who states the following:

A correct form is one that is felt to be acceptable at the relevant period, in the relevant place, and on the relevant occasion. This means that there cannot be a single standard by which an expression must be correct in

all places, on all occasions, and at all periods of history (Quirk 1995: 14, quoted in Hülmbauer 2010: 21).

Quirk's statement which refers to NS-norms is just as true for ELF, where it is even more important to bear in mind that appropriateness and correctness are context dependent. This is also highlighted by Pölzl and Seidlhofer in their study of four ELF speakers with Arabic as their L1 while being in their own 'habitat'. Seidlhofer and Pölzl observe that what is appropriate "in one ELF context might prove inappropriate in another" (2006: 163). I have discussed earlier that recent studies (cf. Archibald, Cogo & Jenkins 2011) show that interactions in ELF settings lead to much less misunderstandings than expected because the good ELF user is willing to cooperate and to accommodate. The willingness to cooperate and to use pragmatic strategies such as accommodation seem one of the most important pillars of successful ELF communication. Thus, successful language seems a more useful notion than accurate and correct language. I will discuss later in this thesis that this becomes even more evident in BELF.

In the next sub-section, I will describe that the ubiquitous presence of English as a lingua franca also poses problems to native speakers of English.

2.7. ELF – a threat to native speakers?

With ELF interactions, in the last decades, non-native speakers of English have outnumbered native speakers. Crystal (2003: 69) states that

[t]here is evidently a major shift taking place in the centre of gravity of the language. From a time (in the 1960's) when the majority of speakers were thought to be first-language speakers, we now have a situation where there are more people speaking it as a second language, and many more speaking it as a foreign language. If we combine those two latter groups, the ratio of native to non-native is around 1:3.

Almost 10 years after Crystal's statement the share of NNSs of English has steadily increased and in spite of these figures it is not surprising that this

situation sometimes even represents a threat to native speakers. In 2006, the British newspaper 'The Guardian' featured the following headline "Global spread of English a threat to UK". A British journalist reported that

the global dominance of English, which has brought economic and cultural benefit to Britain for the past 100 years, now poses a major threat to the UK's international standing (Taylor 2006).

He referred to a then published research study commissioned by the British Council, which said that the former advantage for British people had turned into a disadvantage because millions of people in other countries speak today English and, at least, one other language whereas in the UK not many people speak a foreign language at a sufficient level.

But it is not only native speakers who feel threatened by the predominance of English as a lingua franca. The Scandinavian journalist Fouché (2008) describes in an article in the English newspaper *The Guardian Weekly* that Scandinavians fear that their mother tongues will become less important than English in their own countries. Fouché (ibid.) points out that "English has become so predominant that the government says it is threatening the existence of Norwegian". The journalist quotes the culture minister of Norway Trond Giske, who says that "languages around the world are simply vanishing and are not being used anymore". Fouché (ibid.) describes that the two areas where English is more used than Norwegian are business and academia and he adds that not only Norway is concerned but shares anxiety with Sweden and Denmark. He continues to describe that in both countries government bills have been handed in to protect the countries' main languages. Thus, it seems that the initial advantage the Scandinavians gained by always promoting the use of English as a lingua franca especially for business and academia also has its drawbacks. This may be true of other regions in the world as well.

3. ELF IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

As mentioned earlier, globalisation has created many large international companies which have subsidiaries all over the world. Globalisation has, of course, also an impact on the language used at the workplace. Meanwhile there are many international companies which use English as their corporate language. As Vollstedt (2002: 87f.) already reported 10 years ago, we can recognize a language shift in many companies. Especially in the last 15 years English has gained great importance and is used as a lingua franca for business communication. She explains that there are several reasons for this language shift.

One reason is the increasing importance of English in other fields such as science and technology. According to Vollstedt (2002: 91), other reasons are

the change of company organisation, innovations in communication and information technologies, the influence of corporate culture, power structures and legislative regulations.

Vollstedt (2002: 93) reports that the introduction of computers in companies played a major role in the increased demand for English at the workplace. She emphasizes that since that time there has been a permanent increase in the need for employees to know English and to use it as a lingua franca in the world of work. This has led to changes for people working in the business industry. Vollstedt (ibid.) explains that sixty years ago, only top managers needed to know English and that today also employees at lower levels are required to have at least a basic working knowledge of English.

3.1. Business English as a lingua franca (BELF)

Gerritsen and Nickerson (2009: 181) describe that “the role of English as an international business lingua franca is now beyond dispute”. Because of the growing importance of ELF used in business communication the concept of

BELF (Business English as a Lingua Franca) has been created by Louhiala-Salminen et al who define the notion of BELF as follows:

BELF refers to English used as a 'neutral' and shared communication code. BELF is neutral in the sense that none of the speakers can claim it as her/his mother tongue; it is shared in the sense that it is used for conducting business within the global business discourse community, whose members are BELF users and communicators in their own right – not 'non-native speakers' or 'learners' (2005: 403-4).

If we compare the above definition with the provided definitions of ELF in chapter 2 of this thesis there is one conspicuous and contrasting feature. Louhiala-Salminen et al exclude the native speaker of English here. According to them, BELF-communication only takes place between speakers of first languages other than English. Louhiala-Salminen et al bring up another issue which has already been discussed earlier. It is the question of competence of the BELF speaker. The scholars emphasize here that BELF is 'a shared communication code' which serves the sole purpose to do business in the 'global business community'. They also clarify that in a context where English has a neutral function because none of the interlocutors can claim it as their mother tongue the definition *learner* is not the right one here. As it has already been claimed earlier that ELF users should not be regarded as learners (cf. Cook 2002; Jenkins 2009; Seidlhofer 2011a) Louhiala-Salminen et al demand that BELF users should be considered language *users* who use a common lingua franca in order to do their job.

Business English as a lingua franca is a very dynamic field of research at the moment and the above mentioned researchers seem to be the pioneers of BELF research. Wolfartsberger (personal communication) reported that at the workshop *Teaching (B)ELF and/or Intercultural Communication* (2012) the above mentioned researchers discussed that the meaning of the acronym BELF should be changed from Business English as a Lingua Franca to English as a Business Lingua Franca.

Kankaanranta (2009) argues that we have to distinguish between 'Business English' and BELF. She explains that business English can be defined as a sub-category of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and that

in the late 1980's 'Business English' was still mainly used with native English speakers in foreign trade transactions (2009: 2).

She argues that the main difference to BELF is that 'Business English' is taught for using it in business related fields and usually oriented towards a native-speaker model and that BELF is used in the "global business community" (ibid. 2) to do business. Kankaanranta puts the emphasis on the word *use* and goes a step further when she argues that BELF "is created in actual use because of its sensitivity to contextual constraints" (ibid. 2). She describes BELF here as a flexible and fluid language which adapts as soon as the context or the community of practice (CofP) dictates different requirements. Since the term CofP seems to me particularly important in business contexts and since the term will also be used repeatedly in this thesis an explanation of the concept will be provided here.

The concept of CofP has superseded the concept of 'speech community' for ELF contexts because, as Seidlhofer (2007: 310) describes, not all concepts which have been used traditionally for describing sociolinguistic realities are still sufficient to describe the changed conditions of ELF communication. The concept which goes back to Eckert & McConnell Ginet (1992) was further developed by Wenger (1998) as part of a social theory of learning. Ehrenreich, in referring to Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (1992: 464), provides the following definition:

A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour. As a social construct, a community of practice is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages (Ehrenreich: 2009: 130).

The above definition makes clear that a CofP is not a fixed and predestined construct but that it is flexible and shaped during the process while communicators gather for engaging in a common endeavour. Seidlhofer (2006) adds an additional aspect when she points out that

what may well characterise communities of practice on a global scale is that they do not have the same native language.

To summarise, I have discussed the concept of CofP in more detail because whether most BELF users achieve their communicative business goals often depends on their skill and willingness to engage in diverse mutual endeavours, to be flexible and to negotiate meaning (cf. Wenger 1998).

After this excursus on the concept of Communities of Practice I will now return to the discussion of BELF. Kankaanranta (2009: 3) emphasizes that the perception of BELF as a “neutral professional language” can in some aspects be problematic. She argues that some users will always be better performers than others, for reasons of a higher proficiency in English or because they are simply the better communicators. Concerning BELF and culture Kankaanranta has an interesting point of view when she points out that

BELF carries culture on two levels: BELF users share the international business culture but are separated by their personal, specific cultural background (2009: 3).

Thus, instead of regarding culture as a separating issue it might be more useful to put more emphasis on the elements that people share when they use English as a common code for being able to communicate. Ehrenreich (2009: 141) uses the notion “cultural hybridity” to describe the phenomena that develop within CofPs. The link between using English as a lingua franca and culture will also be discussed in sub-section 4.5.2.2. of this study when intercultural skills of business people will be discussed.

In the last years, several empirical research projects on the use of English as a lingua franca in business contexts have been carried out and have shed light on

interesting aspects. Kankaanranta & Planken (2010) conducted two research projects which describe the use of language in large multinational companies and used the findings for adapting the courses for International Business Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics in order to prepare students for the current requirements of the business world. They did a quantitative study focusing on language and culture in multinational corporations. The researchers wanted to find out how internationally operating business people perceive BELF communication. The research activity was based on selected data from an online survey combined with in-depth interviews. They found out that BELF “can be characterized as a simplified, hybridized, and highly dynamic communication code” (Kankaanranta & Planken 2010: 380). Their findings show that for BELF users native speaker norms and fluency is not important but their prime interest is “to use the language strategically [...] and to convey business content unambiguously” (ibid. p. 404).

They report (ibid.) that other important aspects for the managers are accommodating to the interlocutors level and communicating on a relational level. The importance of accommodation will be discussed in more detail in subsection 4.5.2.1.

Ehrenreich (2009) applies the community of practice (CofP) approach and describes how German managers, who work in a multinational company, use BELF. She reports that during her research activities in a large multinational corporation she learnt about

the skilful and creative ways in which the managers utilize ELF as part of their communicative repertoires in order to get their work done efficiently (Ehrenreich 2009: 147).

Ehrenreich claims that in order “to make valid generalisations about ELF speakers and their uses of ELF” (2009: 148) more research is necessary in different communities of practice.

Pitzl's (2010) study analyzes the use of ELF in two international business meetings. Pitzl describes in her book how ELF speakers deal with the topic of 'miscommunication' and which solutions they find if there is a threat of communication breakdown. Her analysis is based on an interactional approach and in the theoretical part Pitzl describes "different linguistic approaches to 'miscommunication'" (Pitzl 2010). The focus of the study is on the qualitative analysis of different kinds of 'miscommunication' based on the data of business meetings among ELF speakers. Pitzl describes how BELF users skilfully resolve miscommunication and how they manage to explore common ground.

Wolfartsberger (2009) carried out a research project where she audio recorded a business meeting in Vienna by focusing on pragmatic strategies which the interlocutors used in order to achieve mutual understanding. In her findings she reported that the participants of the meeting demonstrated support and collaborative behaviour on the language level but "precise negotiation of meaning on the content level" (Wolfartsberger 2009: 213). She found out that conspicuous pragmatic strategies were, for example, code-switching of interlocutors into their first languages when they needed certain words. Wolfartsberger added that precisely such an interruption by code-switching, which was regarded as supportive in the context of the meeting, could be regarded differently (i.e. negatively) in a different context.

Code-switching as a pragmatic strategy in BELF communication is also described by Cogo (2009: 254) when she suggests that

ELF speakers may strategically use repetition and code-switching in terms of signalling affiliation to their community, and these may be two of the possible accommodation strategies that identify them as members of one of the multilingual ELF communities.

For Cogo accommodation has a key role when interlocutors use a common language in order to communicate. She argues that the ability to accommodate does not only ensure intelligibility but also signals solidarity (2009: 255). The linguistic strategy accommodation will be discussed in more detail in sub-section 4.5.2.1. of this study. Since the focus of this thesis is on an evaluation of

business English course books from an ‘ELF-perspective’ in the next section, a closer look will be taken at the topic of teaching business English.

4. TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH

Before elaborating on different aspects of teaching business English in more detail I would like to argue here that the pedagogical implications for teaching business English in an ELF-oriented way are much more obvious than for general English and it is also easier to adapt teaching procedures to the current situation. This because of two main reasons.

Firstly, in teaching business English, which mostly takes place in adult education, there are no fixed curricula or syllabi which have to undergo lengthy procedures if changes are to be made. Thus, teachers or trainers who teach business English are more flexible and are able to react faster to current situations and also to individual needs.

Secondly, as Frendo (2008: 7) describes, the learner of business English does not only need to learn the language but he/she also needs the skills “in order to do their job” (ibid. 7). I fully agree with Frendo when he states that “the English used in international business is not necessarily the same English that native speakers use. It is a lingua franca” (ibid. 7). When people use the acquired language in a way as to do their job in the best possible way, they are ‘languaging’ as described by Seidlhofer (2011: 202). Thus, many business English learners have for a long time, when English was needed at their workplace, used English in a way which could be described by “whatever works” (Seidlhofer 2011b). This situation demonstrates that the need for English as a lingua franca in international business communication has been obvious for a long time and that many business people have used BELF quite intuitively without needing a label for their language behaviour.

4.1. The difference between EGP and ESP

Since Business English can be regarded as a sub-category of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for a better understanding of the term Business English, in this chapter, a brief description of ESP will be provided. As Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 1f.) describe, ESP has always been regarded as a separate field within English Language Teaching (ELT) and ESP has always received attention from applied linguists. By preparing learners for being able to communicate successfully in their respective domains, ESP has been focused on practical results. Dudley-Evans & St Johns (1998: 2) describe that originally ESP focused more on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) played a minor role. They report that it has only been in the last decades that due to our increasingly globalized world EOP has developed into a large field with the focus being on English for Business Purposes (EBP). Dudley-Evans' & St Johns' definition of ESP is based on the following 3 absolute and on 4 variable characteristics:

1. Absolute characteristics:

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
- ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

2. Variable characteristics:

- ESP may be related or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (Dudley-Evans & St Johns 1998: 4-5).

The before-mentioned characteristics imply that ESP is very learner-centred and oriented towards the specific requirements of the learner. Thus, ESP courses are always goal-directed courses. Dudley-Evans & St Johns (1998: 57f.) emphasize that for a business English course a needs analysis is of great importance because the needs can be very specific and varied. This is also echoed by Donna when she points out that

the aims of a course may be quite radically different from those of a General English course. Aims – whether broad or narrow for a particular course – will always relate to students' work (Donna 2000: 2).

When Widdowson defines ESP in contrast to EGP he does not compare aims and needs, as is done by Dudley-Evans & Johns and Donna, but he looks at the definition of their purposes. He argues that

GPE (General Purpose English) is no less specific and purposeful than ESP. What distinguishes them is the way in which purpose is defined, and the manner of its implementation. (1983a: 5).

He further explains that in ESP it is much easier to define the purpose because after a needs-analysis a course can be designed which tries to meet the specific requirements. Thus, Widdowson sees ESP as a “training operation” (1983a: 6) which aims at providing the learners with the specific competence they need to fulfil their pre-defined requirements. By contrast, Widdowson sees EGP as an “educational operation” enabling learners “to cope with undefined eventualities in the future” (ibid.) He emphasizes that it is essential in EGP to define clear objectives because they will lead to aims while in ESP the objectives of a course are equivalent to its aims. By aims Widdowson means “the purposes to which learning will be put *after* the end of the course” (1983a: 7).

4.2. Defining the term Business English

Section 3.1. has provided Kankaanranta's (2009) distinction between Business English and BELF. In this chapter the term Business English will be discussed in its traditional meaning.

Dudley-Evans & St Johns (1998: 54) argue that it is not easy to define the term Business English. This view is also shared by Ellis & Johnson (1994: 10) when they emphasize that

Business English is not a neatly-defined category of special English. The term is used to cover a variety of Englishes, some of which are very specific, and some very general.

The above statement shows that even within its traditional meaning the term Business English is hard to define, let alone agree upon. I fully agree with Ellis & Johnson that the concept of Business English comprises a wide range of Englishes always depending on the specific CofP where it is used.

4.3. On the nature of business English teaching materials

As Frendo (2005: 43 f.) describes, especially for the un-experienced teacher a good course book “provides a solid framework to work with” (ibid.). I agree here with Frendo but would like to add that an experienced teacher will also use different approaches. He/she will first analyse the needs and specific requirements of the learners and then decide which materials will be used in class. Especially for business English the requirements can vary to a large degree and can be very specific. An experienced teacher will have collected a large collection of teaching materials in the course of teaching different classes.

As Harwood (2010: 376) explains

in order for the language teacher to equip the students with the necessary skills for successful encounters, s/he would need to know in which CofP the student will need / desire to participate as well as the repertoire.

This can certainly be found out by a needs-analysis at the beginning of a course but the problem in practice is that usually a business English teacher or trainer is confronted with more than one student which means that the students will be involved in different CofPs.

My own experience is that adapting existing course book materials to the needs of learners and combining it with authentic materials such as newspaper or magazine articles and tailor-made materials works best. Another aspect which has to be borne in mind is that the field of business communication is a very vibrant field and that innovative and state-of-the-art course book materials might become outdated within a few years.

Handford (2010: 245) argues that while in the course of the last 20 years corpus-based studies have brought valuable findings for a number of fields of applied linguistics, findings from corpus studies are seldom used for the development of teaching materials. Koester (2010: 149f.) proposes that the findings of research into business discourse should be applied for the development of teaching materials. She suggests (ibid.) that the most important areas to be researched are the discursive differences between everyday and business communication, high-frequency vocabulary, the nature of workplace genres, problem-solving and relational language. In the next sub-section one important aspect of teaching materials for business English will be reflected.

4.4. The question of authenticity

Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson & Planken (2007) refer to an interesting PhD corpus-based study of business English and business English teaching materials which was carried out by Nelson (2000) and which will be described in the following. Nelson provided a description of his study also in an article of the *Guardian Weekly* (Nelson 2003). Reference will be made to that article.

How much of the language we teach in business English classes – based on the course books and materials we use – is the kind of language that is actually used in business? (Nelson 2003).

This was the question which was asked by Nelson when he carried out a corpus-based research project over two years where he compared a corpus consisting of 33 computer-stored business English course materials and a second corpus consisting of “real business English” (ibid.).

However, Widdowson (2003b) warns that expressions like *real English* and *authentic language* should be used with caution. He explains that the language used in textbooks and 'real' language cannot correspond to each other in all respects because language as it is used in the 'real world' carries a "complexity of sociocultural knowledge" (Widdowson 2003b: 98). Thus, he argues that

[w]e need to take pedagogic decisions as to what kind of language data will be most conducive to the activation of learning, and at what stage, and in what manner, 'real' texts (and what kind of 'real' texts) can be most effectively introduced (Widdowson 2003b: 99).

In my view Widdowson's statement is very persuasive and Nelson's study would have been even more interesting if he would have added the question what the best investment for the learner is.

Anyhow, Nelson's analysis resulted in the findings that the real life business language was

surprisingly positive, with very few negative words featuring at all. It was also found to be dynamic and action-oriented and non-emotive (Nelson 2003).

The language used in the course book materials seemed similar but used less variety of business terms and was more polite than real life language. Nelson (ibid.) reports in the *Guardian Weekly* that one of the major differences was that the course book materials showed speech events that were very linear and direct, whereas real-life communication contained also vague language. One interesting aspect was that the real-life language contained many verbs while the other materials concentrated on nouns. Thus, Nelson came to the conclusion that teaching materials should instead of "talking about business" rather use an approach where

the language and vocabulary used in materials should aim at reflecting those used in real life. The materials writers' job, then, would simply be to lead the students through this real world, rather than make up the world as they go along. Next time someone tries to sell you a BE book, you are entitled to ask them, "How do you know it is business English?" (Nelson, 2003).

Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson & Planken (2007: 93) argue that the texts used in the above described study were all texts produced by either British or American native speakers, whereas, and this especially in the business domain, English is more used as a lingua franca by non-native speakers for many different interactions and purposes. The scholars (2007: 94) mention that in the last years there has been a lot of research towards a description of English as a lingua franca in general aiming at producing adequate teaching materials. I absolutely agree with Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson & Planken) when they claim that it would be very useful to do “a large scale corpus-based investigation of the language used in BELF (Business English as a Lingua Franca)” (2007: 95).

As the researchers (2007: 95) point out, in general it is useful and effective to use insights gained by a corpus-based research approach for resulting implications for teaching and to apply the gained knowledge for developing course books and materials for teaching. But this should be adapted to current needs and it is a fact that English in the business world is mostly used as a lingua franca. In the next sub-section the role of the business English teacher will be discussed.

4.5. The role of the Business English teacher

4.5.1. General

According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 59) “[p]ersonality, knowledge and experience are important to a Business English teacher”. I agree with Dudley-Evans & St John and I would like to add that most business English teachers coming from an English teaching background often face it as a challenge to cope with the needs of learners if the teachers themselves have no immediate working experience in a business-related context.

As Frenco (2008: 14) describes, teaching business English comprises much more than only teaching the language because other factors such as

communication skills play an important role and “business English learners need to develop linguistic, discourse, and intercultural competences.” (Frendo 2008: 14). Business English teachers are often called trainers and according to Frendo (2008: 5) there is a fundamental difference between a teacher and a trainer. Frendo argues that

whereas a language teacher is helping a student to learn a language for a variety of (unspecified) purposes, a trainer is training them to behave – both linguistically and pragmatically – in a certain way (Frendo 2008: 5).

The individual requirements business English learners have can be very different and also very specific. Frendo (2008: 1-2) sub-divides business English learners into three categories. First, there are “pre-experienced learners” (ibid.) who having little experience of business life as such but who want to learn business English because it is an additional qualification and their goal is a business career. Such learners might, for example, be university students. In teaching such learners, the business English trainer also is expected to give them an insight into the business world. The second category comprises of “job-experienced learners” (ibid.) who have a large professional knowledge and also experience. Such learners usually have very precise expectations what they need to learn or improve. The third category is termed by Frendo “general business-experienced” (ibid.) This last group consists of learners who are already job-experienced but need to learn English for a new job or because of a changed company situation as today often occurs after mergers or take-overs. Ehrenreich mentions a very interesting point when she states that

[a]nother challenge for trainers lies in the fact that what is “appropriate” with regard to the use of English in one business CofP may be different in another (Ehrenreich 2009).

The concept of CofP has been explained earlier in this thesis. Ehrenreich suggests that business English trainers, in order to offer effective training, first need to “learn from their learners” (Ehrenreich 2009: 147). I can only agree

here that the needs of learners differ to a large extent and always depend on the specific CofPs at their workplace.

But the business English trainer does not only have to equip the learner with language skills which help him/her to survive linguistically in the respective business CofP but there are other skills which have to be trained and those are irrespective of the CofP. There are pragmatic strategies which are equally important such as accommodation strategies, intercultural skills and rapport building which will be discussed in more detail in the following sub-sections.

4.5.2. Additional skills to be taught

4.5.2.1. Accommodation skills

The BELF user will have to interact with speakers who have different L1s and also different cultural backgrounds. Such interactions are less problematic if speakers are willing to employ certain pragmatic strategies. Business English trainers have to make learners aware of the fact that such strategies are a vital element in enabling successful communication. An important pragmatic strategy in order to facilitate communication is accommodation which is defined by Cogo (2009: 254) as follows:

Adapting one's speech or altering it for certain communicative purposes [...] i.e. the process by which speakers adjust their communicative behaviour to that of their interlocutors in order to facilitate communication.

Many scholars emphasize that accommodation is a key element for successful ELF communication. Jenkins argues that

speakers need to develop the ability to adjust their pronunciation according to the communicative situation in which they find themselves (2000: 166).

Jenkins describes that willingness to adapt to certain prevailing local features instead of concentrating on patterns of correctness contributes to intelligibility and is a sign of solidarity (ibid.).

In addition to the area of phonology/pronunciation, Cogo (2009: 259) mentions repetition and code-switching as examples of important accommodation strategies. Cogo sees the use of accommodation strategies by ELF speakers as

testimony to the creativity of ELF speakers, who use language skilfully, drawing on their multilingual and multicultural repertoire, not only to make ELF communication successful, but to enrich it with their own flavour, to make it their own (2009: 270).

I would like to argue here that the above described communicative strategies used by ELF speakers are another proof that ELF is not, as often claimed, an impoverished form of native speaker English but, on the contrary, an enriched form of English and “a use of English in its own right” (Seidlhofer 2011a: 24). This is an aspect which should be emphasized much more by English teachers when they discuss the notion of ELF with their learners.

Seidlhofer (2011a: 206) referring to a personal communication with Hollett, who is a Business English course book writer (one of her course books will be analysed in the practical part of this thesis) and being a NS of English, reports that Hollett emphasizes that “accommodation skills are among the most valuable aspects for her students” (ibid.). Another skill which should be fostered by business English teachers will be discussed in the next sub-section.

4.5.2.2. Intercultural communication skills

According to Frendo (2005: 112) teaching intercultural communication skills plays an integral part in teaching business English and he argues that business English trainers should discuss the notion of their own culture with their learners and question how they perceive it and what culture means to them. He claims that awareness should be created that there are different ways how people do

things and that the way how people behave and approach different matters is often influenced and coined by their cultural origins. Frendo emphasizes that

the aim is to provide learners with strategies that they can use to cope with diversity, and ultimately to create value out of that diversity (2005: 112-113).

By strategies Frendo refers here to pragmatic strategies such as turn-taking, repetition, pauses or repair. As discussed earlier in this study, House, for example, basing her findings on empirical studies, states that it is not the different cultural background of interlocutors that leads to miscommunication but often it is “a lack of pragmatic fluency” (House 1999: 85). Thus, the prime aim of the business English teacher is to make learners aware of that.

Handford brings up an interesting point when he mentions that unfortunately course books often approach the topic of cross-cultural communication by presenting popular stereotypes. By referring to Blum-Kulka (1997: 57) he explains that course materials which deal with the issue of intercultural communication in such a way

risk causing ‘pragmatic failure’ on the part of learners, which ‘carries the risk of being attributed to flaws of personality or ethnocultural origins and may carry grave social implications’ (Handford 2010: 249).

Thus, presenting stereotypes is not enough but, as discussed earlier, the learner has to be equipped with strategies that help to cope with diversity. We learn here that teaching intercultural skills is a very sensitive matter and in the practical part of this thesis examples of course books will be presented where the course book writers have managed to present situations, dilemmas or simply contexts in order to initiate discussions among the learners which will help them to gain an understanding of differences in culture, whereas the presentation of stereotypes would rather engrave prejudices.

4.5.2.3. Rapport building

Another skill which should be taught in business English courses is rapport building. Strengthening interpersonal relationship or negotiating common ground is a key skill in business communication. Frenco (2005: 61) describes that

[s]ocializing may be vital in establishing rapport with a business partner, and good rapport is often considered essential to good business.

The importance of small talk and socializing in business communication must not be underestimated and Poncini (2004: 296) states that learners of business English should

be made aware of the importance of opportunities to socialize as a way to build common ground, which in turn facilitates communication and paves the way towards achieving common goal.

This is also echoed by Hollett (2010) when she says that people like to do business with people they like. Most current course books consider the importance of small talk and socializing which are a vital skill in order to strengthen interpersonal relationships between business partners. Good course books offer a large variety of role plays and prompts to offer the learner ample opportunity to practise such situations in a safe learning environment.

In the next chapter a description of the most important pedagogical approaches will be provided which will also prepare the ground for the course book evaluation.

5. PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

This chapter will provide a theoretical reflection on the pedagogical approaches which will be used for the course book evaluation in this study. The course books will be, on the one hand, evaluated according to a general checklist and, on the other hand, according to a checklist which will evaluate the ‘ELF-factor’ of the course books.

In this chapter I will first provide a description of the established methodological approaches *Communicative Language Teaching* and *The Lexical Approach*. Then I will briefly explain the notions *Functional Language* and *Presentation-Practice-Production* because I will use the terms in the course book evaluation. Since the teaching of grammar and vocabulary happens in all approaches, I will also dedicate sub-sections to a discussion of those teaching practices.

5.1. Communicative Language Teaching

This topic will be dealt with in more detail since this methodological concept is one of my main pillars of the ‘ELF-criteria’ which will be considered when the evaluation of the selected course books for this study will be carried out. It is also the methodological concept which will be used most often in this study when referring to the teaching materials for business English. I argue here that communicative language teaching (CLT) should always be part of a successful teaching methodology which considers the current importance of ELF. The term CLT dates back to the 1960’s when this approach, which became relevant for second language teaching, was developed. Widdowson, who played a pioneering role in the development of communicative language teaching argued that

the teaching of language as communication calls for an approach which brings linguistic skills and communicative abilities into close association with each other (Widdowson 1978: 144).

I strongly agree here with Widdowson that communicative competence has to be taught along with linguistic competence and not in isolation. As Widdowson already argued more than thirty years ago the final aim in learning a foreign

language is always “to acquire communicative competence” (Widdowson 1978: 67). He further describes that traditionally the emphasis has always been more on linguistic forms and that the belief has been shared once a learner has learnt these sufficiently, communicative competence will happen naturally. He argues that this is not the case and that there is evidence that

an overemphasis on drills and exercises for the production and reception of sentences tends to inhibit the development of communicative abilities (Widdowson 1978: 67).

From my own teaching experience I can only confirm that putting too much focus on, for example, certain grammar structures can result in barriers in the communicative abilities of the learners. Thus, EFL teachers have to be aware of the importance that linguistic forms have to be taught in context and as a part of communicative competence. In the course book analysis in this thesis it will be demonstrated that not all course book writers consider this fact.

Thompson (1996: 9) argues that “communicative language teaching (CLT) is well established as the dominant theoretical model in ELT”. CLT is similarly described by Hedge (2000: 44 f.) when she argues that “the ability to communicate effectively in English is now a well-established goal in ELT”. She describes that communicative language teaching does not only involve *speaking* but that it covers all four skills, namely speaking, writing, reading and listening. She mentions further that characteristics of CLT also include that practising a foreign language should “resemble real life” and that teachers should encourage learners to express their “needs, ideas and opinions” (ibid.). In order to increase the student’s capability to use a foreign language they should be given opportunities to “develop and apply” (ibid.) the language.

The communicative movement is based on Hymes’ concept of *communicative competence* (Hymes, 1972). Hymes emphasizes that speakers require social and cultural knowledge in order to use linguistic forms appropriately. Canale

and Swain (1980) have adapted Hymes' model as a basic guideline for communicative competence and they suggest the following:

Our own tentative theoretical framework for communicative competence includes three main competencies: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain 1980: 28)

In recent years, sub-forms of CLT have been developed such as Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Language and Content Integrated Learning (CLIL).

In the next sub-section a teaching approach will be discussed which is in some aspects related to CLT but as Richards & Rodgers explain "lexis still refers to only one component of communicative competence" (2001: 138).

5.2. The Lexical Approach

The term Lexical Approach was coined by Lewis (1993). According to the linguist the Lexical Approach "develops many of the fundamental principles advanced by proponents of Communicative Approaches" (Lewis 1993: pref.). Key principles of the Lexical Approach include that "[l]anguage consists of grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar" (ibid.), collocation is used as an organizing principle and "task and process, rather than exercise and product, are emphasised" (ibid.).

Lewis argues that teachers should put the focus on teaching their students how to "chunk language successfully" (ibid.) Thus, the lexical approach in language teaching refers to the ability of learners to learn new vocabulary not only as isolated words but being able to combine words and to find out with which words they collocate. Lexical units or chunks of language play an important role in learning a foreign language. In Business English there are many specific collocations and it is very useful for the learner to become familiar with them but in my view the Lexical Approach should always be combined with CLT.

The next sub-section provides a description of *functional language* which is closely related to the Lexical Approach. I decided to dedicate a brief sub-section to this concept because *functional language* is a crucial term in one of the evaluated course books.

5.3. The teaching of functional language

According to Lewis “a function is the social purpose of an utterance” and “they are, in the technical sense, pragmatic in character “(1993: 3). There is a wide range of functions such as making a request, offering to help, declining an invitation, apologizing, persuading or giving instructions. Lewis (1993: 4) argues that one advantage of teaching functions is that they are fairly easy to understand, very useful for communicative tasks and it is possible to teach them also at lower levels without analysis.

Also the next teaching method is used by one of the course book writers. Thus, a short explanation is provided.

5.4. Presentation, Practice and Production

The three stage procedure is often used by course book writers and refers to an approach to integrate input of new forms, practice activities and self-guided production of language (Hedge, 2000: 61). In the **presentation** stage the teacher presents a new language item in a certain context. The **practice** stage involves guided exercises where the new item has to be used by the learner. The aim of the **production** stage is that the learner produces language in uncontrolled exercises resembling real life (Harmer 2001: 80).

As explained in the introduction of this chapter, since the teaching of grammar and vocabulary occurs in all approaches, a discussion of those teaching practices will be provided in the next sub-section.

5.5. The teaching of grammar

Hedge (2000: 143 ff.) describes that for many teachers in foreign language teaching the teaching of grammar has always been of special importance. She states that in the 1980's an anti-grammar movement could be observed which was based on Krashen's idea

that grammar can be acquired naturally from meaningful input and opportunities to interact in the classroom: in other words, that grammatical competence can develop in a fluency-oriented environment without conscious focus on language forms (Hedge: 2000: 144-45).

In the last years a renewed interest in the teaching of grammar can be noted. Hedge underlines that one of the main questions when teaching grammar is "how to integrate grammar teaching into a communicative methodology which pays attention to all aspects of communicative competence" (Hedge: 2000: 145).

The integrated approach mentioned by Hedge was postulated by Widdowson (1978: 144-145) when he claimed that linguistic skills and communicative skills should never be taught separately but should always be linked. This point has been discussed earlier. Later in this thesis it will be demonstrated how some course book writers successfully manage to apply this approach in their course books. Hedge (2000: 146 f.) explains that acquisition of grammar consists of four main processes, namely

- noticing
- reasoning and hypothesizing
- structuring and restructuring and
- automatizing

5.6. Teaching vocabulary

According to Hedge (2000: 117) there are different strategies to learn vocabulary. Some of these strategies can be defined as cognitive strategies

where learners try to understand new words by making, for example, associations or lexical interferencing where similarities in the learner's first language are regarded as helpful with the objective to grasp the meaning. Hedge (2000: 118) describes that there are many different factors which affect vocabulary acquisition. An important factor is input and the way how vocabulary is presented to the learner. She states that

[o]ther factors are to do with storing, organizing, and building vocabulary in the mental lexicon and being able to retrieve or recall it when it is needed (Hedge: 2000: 118).

Another important factor is frequency of words and Hedge (2000: 119) describes that the lexical syllabus of some textbooks is based on frequency analyses which are done by means of corpora. Many learners manage to extend their range of vocabulary when repetitions of words regularly occur in texts.

6. EVALUATION OF COURSE BOOKS

6.1. A systematic approach to materials evaluation

As McGrath describes

[t]he decision to use one textbook rather than another cannot be taken lightly. Since the textbook tends to be the main teaching-learning aid, in school systems at least, it influences what teachers teach and what and to some extent how learners learn (2002: 12).

A similar view is shared by Hedge (2000: 37) when she points out that any course book suggests specific approaches to learning and that the design of tasks and the sequence of activities attribute certain roles to teachers and learners alike. According to Frendo (2005: 43)

a course book provides a solid framework to work with, which is particularly useful for the less experienced teacher or one who is under time pressure. Many of the pedagogic decisions such as course content and methodology, are already made.

I agree with Frendo that a good course book is particularly important for an un-experienced teacher because the basic guidelines are provided. The more experienced a teacher is the more critical he/she will become towards ready-made teaching materials. Dudley-Evans & St John (1998: 170-171) see the purpose of a course book in the following four issues:

1. as a source of language
2. as a learning support
3. for motivation and stimulation
4. for reference

Of the above mentioned purposes I regard the issues *support* and *reference* as the most important but I would like to underline that a course book should not be the only tool that a good teacher has at her/his disposal.

6.2. From textbook analysis to textbook evaluation

McGrath (2002: 22) claims that a prerequisite for the process of evaluation is textbook analysis. He describes that

analysis is a process which leads to an objective, verifiable *description*. Evaluation, as the word suggests, involves the making of *judgements*. When we compare a description of a textbook with a description of a context in order to establish a preliminary way whether that course book might be suitable for that context we are evaluating.

Littlejohn (1998: 195 f.) states that analysis aims to find what is there, while evaluation tries to find specific things and then to evaluate them. Thus, in the case of my study, the course book analysis serves as a stocktaking procedure and the evaluation procedure serves the purpose to find pre-defined ELF-criteria in the course books and to discuss their relevance and usefulness in light of the current importance of ELF.

McGrath explains that the aim of a course book analysis is a descriptive one but that it can be carried out “at different levels of sophistication” (2002: 22). He states that

[b]eyond the most basic level, the concern is to understand what assumptions and beliefs lie beneath the surface and what effects can be anticipated; analysis involves interference and deduction. (McGrath, 2002: 22-23).

Based on the insights gained and described above this study will apply Littlejohn’s three level analysis as a basis for the evaluation procedure.

6.3. Course book analysis as a first step

The following textbook analysis proposed by Littlejohn (1998: 195-202) will be used as a first step for taking stock what is there and also as a basis for the evaluation procedure which will be done by a checklist.

<i>Level</i>	<i>Focus of analysis</i>	<i>Examples of features to be considered</i>
1	'what is there'	Publication date; intended classroom time required; intended context of use; physical aspects, such as durability, components, use of colour; the way the material is divided up across components; how the student's book is organised, and how learners and teachers are helped to find their way around
2	'what is required of users'	Tasks: what the learner has to do; whether their focus will be on form, meaning or both; what cognitive operations will be required; what form of classroom organisation will be involved (e.g. individual work, whole class); what medium will be involved; who will be the source of language or information
3	'what is implied'	Selection and sequencing of content (syllabus) and tasks; distribution of information across teacher and student components; reconsideration of information collected at levels 1 and 2

6.4. Course book evaluation

Mc Grath (2002: 40) describes that the evaluator of a course book has three "basic options" which can also be combined.

- The evaluator can "borrow and adapt" which means to check all the available checklists
- To "originate" which means to develop own ideas for a checklist
- To "research" and investigate what teachers and learners need

The above mentioned options should only be regarded as a means to support the evaluator by constructing the actual procedure but the most important step for the evaluator is to determine the specific criteria which should be evaluated.

In this study I would like to use a combination of checklists which are available and complete them with own ideas. Since the evaluation approach described in

this thesis will above all put emphasis on questions which have an 'ELF-factor', the used checklist will try to provide answers to questions how much room course books give to cross-cultural communication, how they deal with linguistic features which are typical of native speaker English such as metaphors and idioms, if the teaching approaches are guided by CLT and if listening exercises include more native speakers or non-native speakers of English. By shedding light on such aspects I would like to find out if recent course books take the present importance of English as an international language into consideration.

Thus, the approach used in this study is to develop specific criteria and foci and to divide the checklist into two categories. The first category will consist of general course book evaluation criteria and the second part of the checklist will be called 'specific ELF-criteria'. I argue here that the EFL-criteria serve as a means to find out if the course book writers have the intention to demonstrate to the course book users that English is not only the native language of certain countries but also serves as an international language and as a lingua franca for diverse purposes. In the following I will present the questions of my checklist. The first part serves the purpose to get a general impression of the course books. For the second part I will explain in more detail why I developed those questions.

Checklist first part: general criteria

- ✓ Is there a balance of modes of language use, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing?
- ✓ Presentation of grammar
- ✓ Presentation of vocabulary
- ✓ How does the book relate to the needs of learners? Is the content interesting and challenging to the learners?

Checklist second part: ELF-criteria

✓Does the first language have a role in the materials?

The purpose of this question is to find out if the course book is supposed for an international target group or if it is produced for a specific group of learners.

✓Is the focus on linguistic forms or on communicative tasks?

As I have discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis the purpose of ELF is not to achieve native-like competence but to enable effective communication. That purpose is even more obvious with BELF which is used by business people, who do not share the same L1, in order to do their job efficiently. Thus, it is evident that effectiveness in communication is more important than lexicogrammatical correctness (cf. Hülmbauer 2006, 2009, 2010). The purpose of this question is to find out if the course books offer enough opportunity for longer speaking tasks which support the learner in order to improve fluency.

✓Does the course book consider and discuss the importance of communicative strategies such as turn-taking, hedging, repeating, pausing etc.?

In the theoretical part of this thesis I have also reported on empirical research activities of several scholars (e.g. House 1999; Meierkord 2002; Ehrenreich 2009; Kankaanranta & Planken 2010; Archibald, Cogo & Jenkins 2011) who have highlighted in their findings that the skilful use of pragmatic strategies such as accommodation and code-switching lead to successful communication. Thus, an ELF-friendly course book should not only teach linguistic forms but the focus should rather be directed towards teaching linguistic strategies and pragmatic functions. Moreover, the teaching material should contain a variety of guidelines and prompts for communicative tasks which give the learner ample opportunity to practice certain linguistic strategies and to achieve 'pragmatic fluency' (cf. House 2002).

✓ **How much space is dedicated to cross-cultural communication?**

As discussed in sub-section 2.4. of this study language and culture are inextricably linked. In ELF settings speakers come from different cultural backgrounds and this is why I want to find out how course book writers present cross-cultural communication. The purpose of this question is to find out if the topic is only touched on the surface by presenting popular stereotypes or if the authors try to create serious awareness of different cultures and different ways of doing things.

✓ **How does the course book deal with idioms and metaphors?**

As described earlier, the majority of ELF interactions takes place between NNSs of English. This is why an ELF oriented teaching approach does not consider it important to teach elaborate expressions such as idioms or metaphorical language. The use of such forms is not only not helpful but can even lead to miscommunication. Seidlhofer (2004: 220) termed this linguistic phenomenon “unilateral idiomaticity” and she argues that

particularly idiomatic speech by one participant can be problematic when the expressions used are not known to the interlocutor(s). Characteristics of such unilateral idiomaticity are, for example, metaphorical language use, idioms, phrasal verbs, and fixed ENL expressions.

According to Seidlhofer (2011: 135) the term ‘unilateral idiomaticity’ also implies that an interlocutor is lacking awareness in accommodation skills which are an essential feature of ELF talk. Idiomaticity in ELF has also been discussed by other scholars. Prodromou (2007; 2008) drawing on a corpus-based analysis of L2 conversations describes why idiomatic language is a challenge for ELF users. Pitzl (2009) discusses in her study that ELF speakers develop their own approaches when it comes to idiomaticity.

✓ **Do listening exercises include more NS or NNS production?**

The choice of speakers for listening exercises for a course book provides a hint if the aim of the author(s) is to present English as a native language or English

as an international language or lingua franca. Hence, I have included this question in my checklist.

✓ **Is there an orientation on one specific variety of English?**

This question is closely linked to the question above because it is mostly the listening exercises which disclose the author's preference for a certain variety of English.

✓ **Do the course book writers try to create an awareness of English as an international language or do they rather propagate native-speaker language?**

This question has the purpose of rounding off the second part of the checklist and to lead to a conclusion on the ELF criteria of the course books.

7. THE COURSE BOOKS

7.1. *English for Business Communication*

7.1.1. General information

Title	<i>English for Business Communication</i>
Author	Simon Sweeney
Publisher	Cambridge University Press
Date of publication	First edition 1997 / second edition 2003
Stated level	Intermediate level

7.1.2. Course book analysis

'What is there'

English for Business Communication is a course book set consisting of a Student's Book with audio CDs and a Teacher's Book. The physical aspects of the second edition of the book provide a colourful and appealing image and give a compact and professional impression. At the end of each unit there is a monolingual language and skills checklist and a so-called *Quick Communication Check* which also provides an answer key which enables the student to check if the most important things have been understood and it is supposed to be used for self-study. At the end of the course book several file cards are provided which can be used for role plays. The contents of the Student's Book are clearly organized and the book consists of five modules which are sub-divided into units. The organisation of the book supports learners to find their way through the course. And so does the Teacher's Book which starts with a briefing for the teacher at the beginning of every module.

According to the Teacher's Book the intention of the course is

an opportunity for intermediate-level students to develop confidence and fluency in five key communication contexts: socialising, telephoning, presenting information, participating in meetings and handling negotiations (Sweeney 2003b iv).

The course book will cover at least two semesters (1.5 lessons a week) of a business English course offered in an adult education institution.

'What is required of users'

The course book includes a variety of tasks such as listening exercises, matching exercises, reading tasks, making dialogues, leading discussions, doing role plays and writing e-mails. There are tasks for individuals, but most activities can be done in pairs or groups. Most of the exercises can be described as communicative activities. The *Quick Communication Check* at the end of every unit can be done individually and is supposed for self-study use. Each unit includes several listening tasks. The source of language and information are the language and skills checklists at the end of every unit, the listening activities and of course the teacher.

'What is implied'

According to Sweeney (2003b: iv) the five modules can be studied consecutively or individually. But there is a certain logic in the order how they are introduced in the Student's Book. The first module, *Socialising*, is presented as a starting point and the approach used throughout the book is introduced and established. The next module, *Telephoning*, "treats a fairly restrictive amount of language as is typical in telephoning" (ibid.). The third module *Presentations* is the longest module consisting of four units and the skills introduced here can also be used for meetings and negotiations. The fourth module *Meetings* is an interactive module containing many role plays and is the basis for the last module *Negotiations* "which is the most challenging in terms of language" (ibid.).

As key aims of the course book Sweeney mentions not only "improving communication technique and developing and consolidating the target language" but also "the development of effective learning strategies for both language and communication skills" (ibid.). The sequencing of the book seems a good means to achieve the above mentioned aims. As regards the distribution

of information across teacher and student, students have access to most of the information except for the guidance material in the Teacher's Book which is only directed to the teacher.

7.1.3. Course book evaluation

First part of checklist - general criteria

The course book will be evaluated drawing on the information provided in the analysis in the preceding chapter. The evaluation will be carried out by means of the previously developed checklist.

✓Is there a balance of modes of language use, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

Sweeney describes in the Teacher's Book that the course focuses on "improving speaking and listening skills". He explains that one of the main purposes of the book is to develop fluency and to make students more confident when they talk. Thus, it is the task of the teacher to offer as many activities as possible which lead to discussions and to encourage the students to talk. The file cards at the end of the book provide many prompts for role plays, meetings and negotiations where the students are given opportunities to communicate and interact actively.

The course book contains more than 80 listening exercises. The listening exercises in the first units are easier to understand than the ones in the last units. The tasks going with the exercises vary from listening for gist to listening for specific details. The listening exercises can also be used to make students aware of stress, intonation and other features of phonology of the target language.

Each module contains reading texts which are all taken from authentic materials such as management books or newspaper articles. The language level of the

reading texts is higher than the language level of the rest of the book. But the aim is that reading techniques should be taught and students should be guided that reading for details is not always necessary but that the aim is rather to understand the main ideas. The skill which is least promoted in the book is writing. There are only some completion and gap filling exercises.

✓ **Does the first language have a role in the materials?**

The materials only use the target language English. It seems that the course book is written for an international market. There is no indication of the level according to the Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR). I would classify the course book between level B1 and B2.

✓ **Presentation of grammar**

English for Business Communication is based on CLT and by offering many useful phrases in the *Language Checklists* it also contains some elements of the lexical approach. Throughout the book there is no explicit reference to grammatical terms which might present problems for a less experienced teacher. A more experienced teacher will use additional material if the learners need assistance for certain grammar structures. I argue here that at language level B1- B2 the learner should be familiar with basic grammar. The course book writer seems to rely on the one hand on previously acquired knowledge of grammatical structures and on the other hand on “implicit grammatical knowledge” (Hedge: 2000: 150) which develops in a natural way when the learner is repeatedly exposed to the same structures. Most learners have the capability to remember chunks of language and to use them when they are producing the language themselves. But as Hedge (2000: 151) explains many researchers claim that the learning of grammar rules can be very beneficial for the learning process.

Instead of explicit grammar exercises the course book writers offer phrases which support discourse strategies. In Unit 8 which is part of the module *Presentations* the Language Checklist covers linking and listing techniques and

sequencing language. As Widdowson describes, in order to use a language we need

to go beyond the sentence and to look at larger stretches of language. Normal linguistic behaviour does not consist in the production of separate sentences but in the use of sentences for the creation of discourse (Widdowson 1978: 22).

This is another proof that the prime aim of the course book writer is that the learner improves his/her fluency and is able to communicate effectively.

✓ **Presentation of vocabulary**

The course book does not contain any vocabulary lists or glossaries. The *Language Checklists* at the end of every unit provide phrases and chunks of language where the focus is on specific situations such as *stating opinion and asking for opinion in a meeting*. So does the *Skills Checklist* but there the vocabulary especially for the last two modules *Presentations* and *Negotiations* is partly quite demanding and sophisticated. Here additional explanations of words or synonyms would be helpful. All in all, a language glossary of the most important words or a word list at the end of the book would increase the value of the book. Since the reading texts are all authentic texts, the level of language is sometimes very demanding and would sometimes need additional explanations even if the course book writer Sweeney claims that it is not necessary to understand every single word and that the emphasis is on understanding the gist of the texts and the meaning. A good point is that there is a lot of repetition of the most frequent and useful words and phrases. At the end of the units the most frequent phrases are listed in the *Language Checklist* and this list can be used as a reference tool for preparing the role plays.

✓ **How does the book relate to the needs of learners? Is the content interesting and challenging to the learners?**

The author of *English for Business Communication* states that the target group of that course book are managers who want to improve their communicative skills when they socialise, talk on the telephone, when they hold presentations

and take part in meetings and in negotiations. The content of the book is definitely interesting for this target group and especially the reading exercises and some of the listening activities are very challenging. The large amount of opportunities to practise in the form of dialogues, role plays and prompts for meetings and negotiations makes the content even more interesting. The book, however, relates only to the need of learners if the level of the learners is high enough. As mentioned in the course book description at the beginning of this chapter the level of the learners should be between B1 and B2.

7.1.4. Second part of checklist: ELF-criteria

✓ Does the first language have a role in the materials?

Since the course book is written for an international market only the target language English is used.

✓ Is the focus on linguistic forms or on communicative tasks?

As mentioned above the course book contains a large variety of practice activities which enable the learner to interact with other students and to use the language and the strategies which are acquired in every unit. Reading texts and listening exercises serve to present new language to the students which can be used in extensive speaking tasks. There is ample opportunity for language production and practice and the focus of the course book is definitely on communicative tasks.

✓ Does the course book consider and discuss the importance of communicative strategies such as turn-taking, hedging, repeating, pausing etc.?

In Unit 5, which covers the topic cross-cultural communication on the telephone, Sweeney explains that people from different countries have different ways of

dealing with gaps and silences in conversations. He describes that in some countries conversation is “an endless flow of talk” (Sweeney 2003a: 45) whereas in other countries listening is more appreciated. He also points out that interlocutors who use English as a foreign language might need time to search for words and that this should be considered in conversations. In the same module, the *Language Checklists* for telephoning contain phrases for comprehension, confirmation and clarification requests.

In Unit 11 advice is given how to handle interruptions in meetings and useful phrases are provided. By equipping the learner with phrases for comprehension checks, clarification and confirmation checks the course book writer considers the importance of communicative strategies.

✓ **How much space is dedicated to cross-cultural communication?**

The shortest module of the course book, consisting of two units, is dedicated to *Cultural diversity and socialising*. The focus of the module is on cross-cultural understanding and on socialising with people who have a different cultural background. The impact of culture on business is explained in a very descriptive and sensitive manner. In one of the reading texts (Sweeney 2003a: 14) the notion of *human-resource management* is analysed and it is explained that the concept comes from an Anglo-Saxon background and that it implies that people can be regarded as ‘resources’ and that they have many capacities for development. The author of the article (Trompenaar 1994) claims that “in countries without these beliefs, this concept is hard to grasp and unpopular once it is understood” and he adds

that we use the same words to describe them tends to make us unaware that our cultural biases and our accustomed conduct may not be appropriate, or shared (Trompenaar 1994 in Sweeney 2003a: 14).

The choice of the reading texts and the prominence which is given to the topic of cross-cultural communication transfers a belief that English has an important

status as an international language and thus also as a language which is used between speakers of different first languages. Instead of presenting popular stereotypes Sweeney chooses issues such as the example mentioned above and approaches cultural differences in a very sensitive way in order to create awareness among students that according to a different cultural background people perceive and do things differently.

Also in the module *telephoning* one unit is dedicated to cross-cultural communication. More of this unit will be described in the next sub-chapter.

✓ **How does the course book deal with idioms and metaphors?**

The course book writer does not use many idioms and metaphors. There is only one conspicuous instance in the unit *Cross-cultural communication on the telephone*. A listening exercise presents a telephone call between a native speaker and a non-native speaker where the English native speaker uses the idiom *to bark up the wrong tree*. The usage of this idiom causes misunderstanding and communication breakdown. Such a situation is an example of how destructive native speaker language can be if the speaker is not aware of the fact that talking to NNSs requires the skill to accommodate i.e. to adapt to the linguistic situation. As mentioned earlier in this thesis Seidlhofer termed this linguistic phenomenon “unilateral idiomaticity” (cf. Seidlhofer 2004).

In a reading text of the same unit the author explains that “different cultures have different ways of using language” (Sweeney 2003a: 35). He explains that some speak in a more direct and others in a more subtle way. The course book writer tries to create awareness of other cultures and also warns of using metaphors and idioms. The message between the lines is that communicative effectiveness is the most important goal. In the Teacher’s Book the course book writer claims that metaphors should not be used because most non-native speakers have problems to understand them and he points out that international English tries to avoid such language features. We see here that the course book writer, being a native-speaker of English himself, seems to have an

awareness of English as a lingua franca. Investigations on the author show that Simon Sweeney is a lecturer in International Business with a research interest in the impact of globalisation and that he has a strong interest in English as an international language (www.simonsweeney.net). It is obvious here that the research interest of the course book writer has an impact on his writing.

✓ **Do the listening exercises include more native speaker or non-native speaker production?**

As stated in the introduction of the Teacher's Book, the focus of the course is to improve the speaking and listening skills of the students. The five modules contain approximately 80 listening exercises. Sweeney emphasizes that when students listen to a recording for the first time, they should only concentrate on meaning and not on language. The goal is to identify "key information". Only as a second step the students should be directed to focus their attention to the target language. Sweeney recommends that these two activities should always be kept separate and that the teacher should also make this clear to the students.

A closer investigation of the 80 recordings shows that there is a variety of interactions with interlocutors who have different first languages and cultural backgrounds. There are interactions between native speakers of English with different varieties, e.g. an Australian business person talking to a British person. There are many interactions where a native speaker of English talks to a non-native speaker of English and there are also recordings where two non-native speakers of English communicate, such as a Swedish business person talking to a German visitor to the company in Stockholm which demonstrates a situation where English is used as a lingua franca. The non-native speakers of English on the recordings have different levels of English, but most of them have a rather good level of English and are competent and fluent speakers. Communication breakdown only occurs twice. In the first situation a caller is confronted with a situation where the person answering the phone has not even a basic knowledge of English and the second situation occurs when the native

speaker of English uses a complex metaphor. That situation has been described earlier in this study.

✓ **Is there an orientation on one specific variety of English?**

Presumably because the course book writer is English, the basic orientation is on British English but especially in the language checklists attention is drawn to vocabulary where words differ from American English and both versions are listed. The reading texts which are all authentic are taken from British and American sources. The recordings show a variety of different 'Englishes' such as Australian English or Indian English.

✓ **Do the course book writers try to create an awareness of English as an international language or do they rather propagate native-speaker language?**

The contexts in which Sweeney presents the role plays and communicative activities and the carefully chosen reading and listening texts make it clear to the learner that business life takes place on a global scale. By presenting an example where misunderstanding occurs caused by 'unilateral idiomaticity' and by critically reflecting on notions such as *human resources* Sweeney makes the learner aware of the fact that business English is mostly used as an international language and that orienting towards native speaker models can sometimes even be problematic.

7.1.5. Findings and conclusion

English for Business Communication is a course book which focuses on the skills speaking and listening. The book uses a communicative approach and since the course seems to be written for an international market, only the target language English is used. There are references made to different varieties of English and there are also implicit references to English as an international language. One of the foci is on cross-cultural communication and here Sweeney does not approach the topic by illustrating unquestioned stereotypes, as some

course book writers do, but he critically explores areas and concepts. As discussed earlier, in Unit 2, which is titled *Culture and Entertainment*, he uses a reading text which is an extract from Trompenaar's book *From Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business* as a starting point for a communicative task. Critically exploring long-established notions such as the concept of *Human Resources* is one way to illustrate that terms which belong to the business jargon might have a different meaning when used in another cultural context.

The native-speaker norm is not idealized, on the contrary, by presenting an example of "unilateral idiomaticity" (cf. Seidlhofer 2004, 2011) he demonstrates how the lack of accommodation skills on part of the native speaker can cause communication breakdown. The course book tries to create awareness on part of the learner that in business life English is mainly used as an international language. Sweeney provides the learner not only with useful language but also with communicative strategies. The structure and organization of the book could not be better. Teacher and students alike are easily guided through the course. In a nutshell, *English for Business Communication* seems a good and useful course book for an international target-group and also if the before mentioned ELF criteria are applied I can say that *English for Business Communication* is an ELF friendly course book.

There is only one suggestion for improvement. A language glossary or a wordlist with monolingual explanations or synonyms of the more difficult words at the end of the book would even increase the value of the course book.

7.2. Short Course Series

7.2.1. General information

Title *Short Course Series*

Authors	different
Publisher	Cornelsen
Date of publication	First edition 2006
Stated level	CEFR B1- B2

7.2.2. Course book analysis

‘What is there’

The *Short Course Series* offer short courses which can be used to supplement a regular course book, on its own as an intensive specialist course or for self-study. The complete series covers the following topics:

- English for Accounting
- English for the Automobile Industry
- English for Cabin Crew
- English for Customer Care
- English for Emails
- English for Energy Industry
- English for Human Resources
- English for IT Professionals
- English for Legal Professionals
- English for Logistics
- English for Marketing and Advertising
- English for Meetings
- English for Pharmaceutical Industry
- English for Presentations
- English for Real Estate
- English for Socializing and Small Talk
- English for Telecommunications Industry

Since the books are all developed according to the same system, for this analysis a closer look will only be taken to the two course books *English for Meetings* and *English for Telephoning*. The intended context is adult education and as described above the book can be used as a supplement or as an intensive course on its own. The components of the course are the course book and one audio CD. The physical appearance of the book conveys a professional image. There are images and pictures and the layout is well-structured. The contents page of the book is rather simple and it is sub-divided into 6 units. There is one column where the topic is briefly presented and one column with useful language and skills which will be presented. The appendix of the book contains one short language test, where a cross-word puzzle has to be completed, a variety of partner files which can be used as prompts for role plays, an answer key for all the exercises in the units, audio transcripts, an English-German word list and a list with useful phrases and vocabulary. Since the book can be also used for self-study there are no guidelines for the teacher.

‘What is required of users’

There are many different exercises such as matching, gap-filling, completion, true or false, translating. There are individual tasks and there is also pair-work. The source of language or information is provided in the listening exercises and in the book. Every unit contains a sub-chapter which is called *Useful Phrases*. At the end of the book there is an alphabetical English-German word-list and a summary of the already mentioned *Useful Phrases* for each key area.

‘What is implied’

The author of *English for Meetings* states in the preface of the course book that the purpose of the book is to offer vocabulary and phrases which can be learnt easily and applied immediately. The book obviously uses the three stage procedure *presentation, practice and production*. First, new items of language are presented, followed by a long sequence of practice activities and a rather short production part at the end of the unit.

7.2.3. Course book evaluation

First part of checklist: general criteria

✓ **Is there a balance of modes of language use, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing?**

There is no focus on one or two specific skills like in *English for Business Communication*. There is a balance on the four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing.

✓ **Presentation of grammar**

The Short Course Series are based on the lexical approach and the prime aim of the courses is to offer useful phrases. There is not much space dedicated to grammar exercises. In *English for Meetings* there are two instances where grammar points are mentioned. In Unit 3 the difference when to use *simple past* and when to use *present perfect* is briefly explained and in Unit 5 *Conditional 1* and *Conditional 2* are explained.

In *English for Telephoning* in Unit 2 it is described that language is less direct and more polite if the *past tense* is used instead of the *present tense*. In the same sub-section the use of the modals *could* and *would* is recommended in order to make questions or statements less direct. In Unit 3 *Reported Speech* is mentioned and it is demonstrated how *reporting verbs* are used. In Unit 4 it is briefly mentioned that the *present continuous* can be used as a form to indicate the future. The selected grammar exercises are presented in a contextualised way and the choice of the grammar structures seems to be guided by its usefulness for communication.

In contrary to the course book *English for Business Communication* the authors of the *Short Course Series* offer some explicit knowledge of grammar. The

presentation of the selected grammar structures is well chosen and the grammar forms are also embedded in exercises following the descriptions.

✓ **Presentation of vocabulary**

The course books of the *Short Course Series* contain an alphabetical bilingual word list at the end of the book and a monolingual comprehensive list of useful phrases and vocabulary for specific situations such as *opening a call* or *arranging a meeting*. There is an additional list of useful verbs in context with a German translation and a short list with words which take a different form in British and American English. The lists at the end of the course book are completed by a list of *numbers, dates, times* and *symbols*. Throughout the book there are green frames called *Vocabulary Assistant* which has already been described in the sub-section above concerning use of the first language.

✓ **How does the book relate to the needs of learners? Is the content interesting and challenging to the learners?**

The Short Course Series offer very specific topics for learners and therefore they relate to their needs. The content is interesting but could sometimes be more challenging regarding the target group of learners stated as CEFR levels B1 and B2.

7.2.4. Second part of checklist: ELF-criteria

✓ **Does the first language have a role in the materials?**

The book seems to be solely written for German speaking target groups. The introduction of the course book is only in German, there are many translation exercises and in the units there is a so-called *Vocabulary Assistant* which gives translations of words in German. By using the German language throughout the course book the authors restrict the target group of the course. As the other course books demonstrate there is actually no need to employ the first

language of the learners. At that level there should be no need to provide translations of words such as *silence* or *to talk nonsense*.

✓Is the focus on linguistic forms or on communicative tasks?

The *Short Course Series* obviously use a lexical approach. Throughout the book and also in the appendix the focus is on phrases and on contextualised vocabulary. The authors also emphasize in the introduction of the course books that the focus is on offering and presenting useful phrases and vocabulary which can be learned quickly and applied immediately. The authors describe that one of the purposes of the lists of useful phrases at the end of the book is also to offer a tool which can be used at the workplace before a meeting or a phone call.

The focus is more on accuracy and in my opinion fluency activities are neglected. In the many exercises in the practice sections throughout the book the focus is on linguistic forms whereas only the discussion points at the end of every unit and the file cards for role plays in the appendix of the course books provide opportunity to practise fluency. The lack of enough longer speaking tasks is one of the weaknesses of the *Short Course Series*.

✓Does the course book consider and discuss the importance of communicative strategies such as turn-taking, hedging, repeating, pausing etc.?

In *English for Telephoning* in Unit 2 advice is given how to be less direct and strategies are provided how to be more polite and how to listen actively. The course book writer mentions expressions for confirmation checks, for repetition and for clarification checks. One reading text in the same unit is dedicated to active listening. In Unit 6 the function of hedges is explained, which is useful for the learner for developing strategic capability, but by explaining that hedges are often used by NSs of British English, the course book writer seems to introduce hedging only for that purpose. The same unit, however, contains a useful

section on turn-taking. Also *English for Meetings* provides useful information on interrupting politely (Unit 3) and clarification requests. Unit 4 discusses diplomatic language to express criticism. The authors of the *Short Course Series* seem to be aware of the importance of communicative strategies and offer useful phrases for that purpose.

✓ **How much space is dedicated to cross-cultural communication?**

In *English for Telephoning* the issue of cross-cultural communication is not addressed at all. In *English for Meetings* there is one reading text with the headline *Building intercultural bridges for reaching business agreements*. The text describes that there are often communication breakdowns between people who work for companies which have different cultural backgrounds because of a missing cultural understanding. The text says that

[c]ompanies from different countries can usually deal with language differences by learning foreign languages. But they also need to be able to deal with cultural differences. That's where intercultural training comes in (p. 47).

I do not agree with the author of the article here when he reduces the reasons for communication breakdowns only to cross-cultural or intercultural differences. I argue that this is the wrong approach. This assumption has also been refuted by several scholars who did empirical studies on language and culture in contexts where English was used as a lingua franca (cf. House 1999; Pitzl 2010). Instead, the authors of the *Shortcourse Series* should try to create an awareness of other cultures by informing the students that people from other cultures do things differently but that if English is used as a common language in order to communicate a willingness to explore common ground can help to overcome differences. The impact of different cultural backgrounds on language behaviour has been discussed earlier and in more detail in the theoretical part of this thesis.

✓ **How does the course book deal with idioms and metaphors?**

The authors do not mention idiomatic language or metaphorical language and the reading and listening texts do not contain any idioms or metaphors.

✓ **Do listening exercises include more native speakers or ELF speakers?**

The speakers of the listening exercises of both books are mainly native speakers of the variety of British English. There are a few non-native speakers and those mainly from Germany. Interactions occur mainly between native-speakers of English and interlocutors who are non-native speakers always interact with native-speakers. The listening exercises do not show an awareness of English used as a lingua franca.

✓ **Is there an orientation on one specific variety of English?**

The main focus is on the variety of British English but throughout the books there are a few small boxes where words or phrases are compared in British and American English. And also in the appendix of the books there is a small section comparing a few words and phrases in British and American English.

✓ **Do the course book writers try to create an awareness of English as an international language or do they rather propagate native-speaker language?**

It is obvious that the course book writers orient towards British native speaker norms. When new language or strategies are introduced the authors repeatedly inform the learner that it is very useful to learn such phrases because they are very common with native speakers. Throughout the book the learner gets the impression that he/she learns English to use it for communication with British speakers and no awareness is created that English can be very useful when communicating in an international and global context.

7.2.5. Findings and conclusion

The course books of the *Short Course Series* offer a variety of very specific topics and can be used as a supplement for a regular course for business people or prospective business people who need to communicate in English.

The book uses the Lexical Approach and the emphasis is on phrases for specific situations. Considering that the target group are learners with a CEFR level B1 and B2 the books do not use enough target language. At that level so many translations into German are not necessary. Since the book contains bilingual vocabulary lists in the appendix, there would be not need to use German throughout the book. There are explicit references to grammar structures but since the topics seem to be carefully chosen this is beneficial for the course book. Considering the suggested CEFR level the books could present the individual topics in a slightly more challenging way and more fluency activities would also increase the value of the course books. A very positive aspect of the two analysed course books is that they provide many useful phrases for communicative strategies and that the learner's awareness is raised that the skilful way of handling interruptions, pauses, repetitions, comprehension and clarification checks is a vital element of successful conversation.

The biggest weakness of the books, however, is that no awareness is created of English as an international language or lingua franca. The native-speaker norm is idealized and the book frequently emphasizes that certain phrases are often used by native-speakers. It is not indicated that features of native-speaker language can create problems when talking to other non-native speakers and when communicating in cross-cultural contexts.

In conclusion, the books have good features such as the contextualised vocabulary and phrases for communication strategies but also weaknesses and the books can only be used as supplement or for seminar teaching for one specific topic.

In the face of recent developments or as Kankaanranta and Planken describe that

it is now beyond dispute that business English as a lingua franca (or BELF; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, & Kankaanranta, 2005) has come to dominate as the language of international business over the past few decades (2010: 381)

it is hard to understand that teaching materials for business English are produced without any awareness of recent trends and insights gained. Kankaanranta (2009) describes that the phenomenon of English as a lingua franca has also been discussed in the popular press when she refers to an article in the *Financial Times* of 11 Sept. 2007 where it has been mentioned that 80% of all interactions in English take place between non-native speakers.

The importance of English as a global lingua franca is highlighted by many other scholars. Already more than ten years ago House (1999: 73) pointed out that at the end of the 20th century it became obvious that the global language was English. Gerritsen & Nickerson emphasize that “the role of English as an international business lingua franca is now beyond dispute” (2009: 181). Koester (2010) emphasizes that it is obvious that English is mainly used as an international language or lingua franca for doing business on a global scale. The prominence of BELF has been discussed in more detail in chapter 3 of this thesis.

Hence, the course book writers of the *Short Course Series*, when providing only examples of interactions where the interlocutors are either all NSs of English or interactions where NSs interact with NNSs fail to provide an authentic picture of the real business world.

7.3. English for Business Life

7.3.1. General information

Title	<i>English for Business Life</i>
Authors	Ian Badger & Pete Menzies
Publisher	Marshall Cavendish Education
Date of publication	2006
Stated level	Intermediate (B2-C1)

7.3.2. Course book analysis

‘What is there’

English for Business Life is a four-level course designed for people who need English for their everyday work” (Badger & Menzies 2006: 10). This study will be based on the intermediate level. The set consists of a Course Book, an Audio CD, a Self-Study Guide (with Audio CD), a Trainer’s Manual and a Business Grammar Guide including answer keys. The intended classroom time required for the course book is approximately 60 hours which is the equivalent of two semesters (2 hours a week) of a business English course offered for example in an adult education institution. The physical aspects of the course book provide an appealing image and a professional impression. The Student’s Book consists of thirty relatively short units which are concluded by a section which is called *Language Reference* and which is subdivided into two parts called *Language Notes* and *Useful Phrases*. That part of the book summarizes all the grammar issues and relevant language covered in the unit and students are also asked to refer to those sections while doing the units.

At the end of the book there is a range of additional material. Firstly, there are so-called *Support materials* for some units, such as a form to fill in for Unit 4 which covers the issue *Introducing your company* or additional role plays and

dialogues which always refer to a certain unit. Secondly, there are audio-scripts for the listening exercises for every unit. Thirdly, there is a *Grammar/language index* and finally there is a *Glossary of business-related terms*. The contents page of the course book is well organized and helps the students to find their way through the book. Each unit is subdivided into the following three sections: *Expressions, Language Focus and Practice*.

‘What is required of users’

There are a variety of tasks such as listening exercises, dialogues, interviews, discussions, gap-filling exercises, practising phone conversations, matching exercises, writing tasks, reading tasks and role plays. There are guided and free exercises and there are tasks which can be done individually, in pairs or groups.

The authors state that the course

follows a progressive and comprehensive grammar syllabus, with the stress on the effective use of grammar for clear communication (Badger & Menzies 2006: 10).

Thus, the cognitive operations which are required by the students are to repeat and remind useful grammar patterns and to use them in communicative tasks. This point will be covered in more detail when the presentation of grammar in the course book will be discussed.

The source of language or information are the *Language Reference* pages at the end of every unit, the listening activities with the audio-scripts, where students have the possibility to check language if it was not understood and finally the *Glossary of business-related terms* at the end of the book.

‘What is implied’

The course book follows a grammar- based syllabus but also puts emphasis on communicative elements. In doing this, they follow the same approach as Vicki Hollett (2010) when she argues that a grammar-based syllabus has several advantages because you can use grammar knowledge as a basis and build on what has been learned earlier. Hollett (2010) also underlines that such a

syllabus “provides the student with a sense of progression”. Considering the sequence of the content in *English for Business Life* there is a certain logic in the order how grammar patterns and also the common business issues are introduced. As regards grammar, the book starts with easier forms such as *much and many* and *prepositions* and moves on to more demanding patterns such as *Passive tense and Verb + infinitive or –ing form*. As regards the business issues, the topics which are presented in the first units are topics like *Developing contacts* or *Introducing your company*, whereas in the last units more challenging topics such as *Company finances* or *Delivering a presentation* are covered.

As concerns the distribution of information across teacher and student, students have access to a wide range of information since the course consists of various components. There are not only a *Course Book*, audio CDs and a *Self- study guide* but also a *Business grammar guide* and answer keys. Thus, the materials also support autonomous studying.

7.3.3. Course book evaluation

First part of checklist: general criteria

✓Is there a balance of modes of language use, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

Badger & Menzies argue that

[t]he materials cover everyday business speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, through a range of guided and free exercises (2006: 11).

A closer inspection of the course book shows that all four skills are covered. There is, however, slightly more emphasis on speaking and listening. Each of the thirty units of the course book contains at least two listening exercises. The authors argue that the first listening exercise in every unit offers something like an overview to the learners because it “encapsulates the target language of the unit” (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11). The listening exercises present many

different speakers coming from diverse cultural backgrounds. This issue will be further discussed in the second part of the checklist.

Most units contain reading texts and some of them are taken from authentic materials such as management books or newspaper and journal articles. Other reading texts are adapted for learning purposes. With some of the reading texts the use of a dictionary is recommended. With others, links to websites are provided which lead the learner, for example, to international websites of companies. Some of the reading texts are linked with writing exercises, such as providing answers to an email or letter or writing the own job history while referring to models and language presented in the unit.

Each unit of *English for Business Life* contains so-called *language focus* sections which cover grammar patterns or vocabulary. Badger & Menzies argue that the purpose of those sections is mainly to support the learner “to use the language accurately for effective and clear communication” (2006: 11). Thus, we learn that the prime aim behind many different activities and exercises is to improve speaking skills. But there are also many overt speaking exercises such as discussions following a reading exercise or dialogues and role plays. Especially the last units of the course book offer many speaking exercises and provide many prompts for discussions. The last three units of the book are dedicated to the topic *Delivering a presentation* which offers many opportunities to the learners to practise their speaking skills.

✓ Does the first language have a role in the materials?

The materials only use the target language English. In pointing out that

English for Business Life presents the language that is essential for doing business in English; it has strong global relevance (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11)

the authors want to tell the user of the book that the course is created for an international market.

✓Presentation of grammar

By following a progressive grammar syllabus the authors pursue a methodological approach where you can build on what has been learnt before. This is a good and useful approach per se but only if the grammar input is linked to communicative tasks. This necessity is also pointed out by Widdowson when he claims that “linguistic skills and communicative skills should never be taught separately but should always be linked” (1978: 144-145). Unfortunately this is not the case with Badger & Menzies’ course book. On the so-called *Language Reference* pages new grammar structures are presented to the learner and it is recommended to go to the *Business Grammar Guide* at the end of the course book for further reference but no further practice or production exercises are offered. By using such an approach the *Language Reference* sections are perceived as a part that is almost detached from the rest of the unit and not linked or embedded as such input is supposed to be. This is definitely one weakness of the course book.

✓Presentation of vocabulary

The course book offers several ways to learn vocabulary. Learners are exposed to vocabulary through reading and listening exercises. As Hedge describes, it is very important that new “vocabulary is well-contextualised” (2000: 134). For several reading texts there are recommendations to use a dictionary where necessary. When the students are faced with such a recommendation for the first time, the teacher or trainer should take this as an opportunity to teach the effective use of dictionaries.

Each unit contains one listening exercise which, as the authors explain, “encapsulates the target language of the unit” (Badger & Menzies). By *target language* the authors refer here not only to vocabulary but also to grammar structures and fixed phrases. In the *Language focus* sections different study points are incorporated, not only for vocabulary but also for grammar.

At the end of the book there is a glossary of business-related language. At the beginning of the course book the authors (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11) present several study tips for learning vocabulary. They state, for example, that the students should put emphasis on vocabulary which is most important for their own professional needs and they recommend to the students the following:

If there are terms you need which are not included in the material, consult your trainer, English-speaking colleagues and friends, and make thorough notes (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11).

Apart from that they also recommend to the students to use dictionaries and online sources. Thus, the course book writers encourage the learners to become pro-active and to use their own strategies for vocabulary learning.

✓ How does the book relate to the needs of learners? Is the content interesting and challenging to the learners?

The authors of *English for Business Life* state that the target group of the course are people who need to improve their English in order to “use English in a wide range of business and business-related social situations” (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11). They also recommend the course to people who already have a high level of general English, but need more terminology and skills for business communication. In general, the content is definitely interesting to the mentioned target-group but when it comes to recommending the book to people who already have a high level of General English, I would argue that for that group the book contains too many exercises where grammar and accuracy are trained instead of putting the emphasis on specific terminology, functional language and fluency exercises for business related situations. I argue that this group of learners needs more prompts for dialogues and role plays instead of repeating grammar structures from a very basic level. Since the stated CEFR level of the book is B2-C1 there should not be the need to repeat basic features such as *articles* and *some/any*.

7.3.4. Second part of checklist: ELF criteria

✓ Does the first language have a role in the materials?

The materials only use English. The course book is written for an international market and the authors emphasize that *English for Business Life* “has strong global relevance” (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11).

✓ Is the focus on linguistic forms or on communicative tasks?

As discussed earlier (see Presentation of Grammar) the course book follows a grammar syllabus. Such a syllabus design has of course advantages and as Hollett (2010) points out one major advantage is that students are provided with a sound basis where they can build on and such a syllabus also makes the learning process more feasible to the student and transmits them with a sense of progression. But Hollett (2010) also emphasises that speaking should be the most important skill. And in this respect I would like to argue that the *Language focus* sections in the course book take up too much space and in some parts the course book seems almost overloaded with exercises where the focus is on linguistic forms. I would rather argue for more and longer explicit speaking exercises to give the learner the chance to improve fluency. One way would be, for example, to leave out the *Language focus* sections in the last units of the book and to add more prompts for role plays and other speaking tasks instead. In considering the learning objectives of students of a business English course the question is here if a learner whose first priority is to improve his/her English skills for business communication really wants to practise *Reported Speech* and *Passive Forms* towards the end of a course. It would probably be more motivating for the students to give them ample opportunities to show via role plays and dialogues how their communicative skills have improved?

✓ Does the course book consider and discuss the importance of communicative strategies such as turn-taking, hedging, repeating, pausing etc.?

The course book writers do not direct much attention to communicative strategies. Unit 20 provides phrases for expressing agreement and disagreement in meetings and Unit 30 lists some phrases for clarification requests during presentations. Taken into consideration that the course book contains 30 so-called *Language Reference* pages (1 per unit) which, according to the authors, have the purpose to help the learner “to use the language accurately for effective and clear communication” (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11) I have the impression that the focus is much more on accuracy and grammatical correctness than on communicative effectiveness.

✓ **How much space is dedicated to cross-cultural communication?**

The course book writers describe the course as

a course written by authors with a wide experience of teaching English for business in a range of international contexts, countries and cultures (Badger & Menzies 2006: 10).

The authors also emphasize that *English for Business Life* has “strong global relevance” (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11). Throughout the course book, in the described business interactions people from different cultures participate and practical issues such as different time zones and different seasons are being described. Under the sub-section *Cultural sensitivities* of Unit 16 the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ for doing business with Japanese business partners are listed (p.75).

In Unit 2 a reading text from the *Daily Telegraph* deals with problems multinational teams have to face in companies. The key message of the article is that “[c]ultural differences present much greater problems than language” when international companies work in multinational teams. I would like to refer here to my discussion in chapter 2 of this thesis where I have described that several researchers argue and also base their findings on empirical studies (cf. House 1999; Pitzl 2010) that reasons for misunderstandings do not come from the different cultural backgrounds but can be found in the lacking knowledge of appropriate discourse rules such as turn-taking and repair.

✓ **How does the course book deal with idioms and metaphors?**

The book does not mention idioms or metaphorical language. Ian Badger, one of the course book writers, argued in his conference speech at *IATEFL 2012* (Badger 2012) that one way to help the listener is "to avoid unnecessary idioms and complex grammatical structure". He points out that today's learners of English have to communicate with international speakers and that many of them are not native speakers of English. Badger also draws attention to the fact that NSs of English, when communicating internationally, are not always well understood and should moderate their accent and pronunciation to help the listener. By these statements Badger's stance is made clear and he is aware of the fact that communicative effectiveness is more important than elaborate language use.

✓Do listening exercises include more NS speaker or NNS production?

There are many listening exercises with NSs of English speaking different varieties of English but there are also NNSs of English who communicate with other NNSs or with NSs.

✓Is there an orientation on one specific variety of English?

Probably because both of the course book writers are British the focus is entirely on British English but as described above the listening exercises present speakers with many different accents.

✓Do the course book writers try to create an awareness of English as an international language or do they rather propagate native- speaker language?

According to the course book writers one of their aims is to

develop sensitivity to different types of English, in line with the fact that English is very often used as an international language of communication between speakers of many nationalities (Badger & Menzies 2006: 11).

This intention can also be felt when flipping through the course book. Even if there is a clear orientation on one specific variety of English, awareness is created that English is used internationally and on a global scale. There are many aspects of the course book, such as the illustrations throughout the book, the listening exercises and the described locations where the business interactions take place, which create awareness that in business life English is predominantly used as an international language and also between NNSs of English.

7.3.5. Findings and conclusion

English for Business Life is a course book which equally covers the skills business speaking, listening, reading and writing by using a variety of guided and free exercises. It is a very detailed and dense course book packed with a variety of language, a lot of useful information for diverse business encounters and useful phrases for business communication. It is a good course book offering many useful prompts and guidelines for the teacher.

The course book follows a grammar based syllabus and is written for an international market and thus only the target language English is used.

But if the before mentioned 'ELF-criteria', which this study has developed by means of a checklist, are applied I would like to argue that the focus is too much on linguistic forms and that there are not enough longer speaking exercises. The course is too much form-centred and there is the danger that the learner might assume that all the structures and grammar patterns have to be accurate in order to communicate fluently in the world of business. I fully agree with Seidlhofer when she argues that

it is commonly assumed that language use and learning are two different processes, and that the first is dependent on the second. You first learn a language and then use it, and if you do not learn it properly, you cannot use it effectively. I would argue, on the contrary, that learning and using are *not consecutive but simultaneous processes* (2011: 189).

When flipping through the book the reader gets the impression that the course book writers share the above alluded common assumption that foreign language learners have to be familiar with every linguistic detail and form before they are able to become fluent users. Such an approach ignores the fact that, as Seidlhofer (2011: 189) argues, language learners also learn a foreign language by using it. I have met students in my own classrooms who, when advised to use every opportunity outside the classroom to practise their acquired knowledge of English, reply that first they want to learn all the grammar and the necessary structures before they feel safe enough to use the acquired skills outside the classroom. Such an attitude definitely hinders learners from making ever real communicative use of the language. I rather agree with Phipps when she recommends “having a go, trying to make sense and getting somewhere against all the odds” (2007: 1).

7.4. Lifestyle

7.4.1. General information

Title	<i>Lifestyle</i> <i>English for work, socializing & travel</i>
Author	Vicki Hollett & Norman Whitby
Publisher	Pearson Longman
Date of publication	2010
Stated level	Pre-intermediate level / A2-B1

According to the title *Lifestyle* is an English course book *for work, socializing & travel*. The book has been chosen for this study because of two reasons. Firstly, because one of the authors of the book, Vicki Hollett, is “a recognized authority (as a teacher and course book writer) in the areas of business, technical and professional English” (Seidlhofer 2011: 206) and she is also actively involved in the current discussions about the position and importance of ELF and BELF.

Secondly, it is a rather recent course book which can be used in courses for business people.

7.4.2. Course book analysis

‘What is there’

The *Lifestyle* package includes a Student’s Book, a Teacher’s Book, a Workbook with further practice of key vocabulary and useful phrases and a CD-ROM, which is designed for self-study on a computer. The CD contains additional activities for each of the units and the second part contains all the audio recordings of the course. The physical aspects of the book give a compact and professional impression. The course book consists of 16 units and the contents page is divided into the following four sections: *Grammar*, *Word focus*, *Communication strategies* and *Interaction*. After every four units there is a *Review* section with additional exercises, where the students can check if they have understood the grammar and the new vocabulary and phrases which were covered in the unit. At the end of the course book there are additional *Information files* for dialogues and role plays referring to the units. Then, there is a complete list of the *Audio scripts* used in the units followed by eight pages of detailed *Grammar reference*. There is no word list and no glossary but there is a recommendation to use a dictionary of the same publisher. The intended context of use is adult education and *Lifestyle* is designed “to meet the everyday language requirements of people who need English for work, socializing and travel” (Hollett & Whitby 2010).

‘What is required of users’

The course book offers a variety of exercises where the skills speaking, listening, reading and writing are practised. There are common exercise techniques such as gap-filling, true/false, matching exercises, completion exercises, paraphrasing, finding synonyms, writing e-mails and a variety of dialogues, discussions, games and role plays. There are tasks for individual work but most exercises can be done in pairs or groups. The focus of the tasks

is slightly more on communicative functions than on linguistic forms. The source of language or information are the reading and listening exercises, the *Information files* and the *Grammar reference* part at the end of the course book.

‘What is implied’

Pearson Longman put a video on UTube where Hollett presents the advantages of using the course book *Lifestyle*. In the following sections reference will be made to that video (Hollett 2010). Hollett emphasizes that the grammar which is used in the course book “is always related to getting things done” (Hollett 2010). She explains one example where the correct use of the *present perfect* is presented by means of a reading text and a listening exercise. The purpose of the two exercises is twofold, first, to present the correct grammar and second, to provide the student with topics. Hollett explains that every section of a unit finishes with a longer speaking task and that speaking is always “the top priority skill” (ibid.). Every unit of the course book contains the two sub-sections *Communication strategies* and *Interaction*. The section *Communication strategies* covers, for example, phrases and exercises for *Requests, Thanking, Persuasion, Sharing ideas* and *Turn taking*. Under the heading *Interaction* there are topics such as *Networking, Deciding on priorities, Persuading an audience, Roleplay a marketing campaign meeting, Job interviews* and *Sharing anecdotes*. Hollett calls such skills “relationship language” (ibid) and she emphasizes that functional language is very important when people do business.

As regards grammar and vocabulary, the sequencing of the content is progressive. As far as the distribution of information across teacher and student is concerned, students have access to most of the information of the course package except for the *Teacher’s book* with the *Test Master CD-ROM*.

7.4.3. Course book evaluation

First part of checklist: general criteria

✓Is there a balance of modes of language use, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

Lifestyle offers exercises for all four skills but it is obvious that the focus is on speaking. The goal of the reading and listening texts is guiding students towards a speaking task. Hollett (2010) argues that the listening exercises are not only used to equip the student with a range of topics and ideas which can be later used for the speaking tasks but that they are also used to present correct grammar patterns and structures. The speakers of the listening tasks are NSs and NNSs of English.

The reading texts are mostly rather short and cover diverse areas from everyday topics to more specialized topics such as *What makes a successful entrepreneur* or *Multitasking* or *The psychology of selling*. The reading tasks mainly serve the purpose of presenting correct grammar structures and to provide the students with topics and ideas which can be further used in the speaking tasks. The skill which is least promoted in the course book is writing. There are many completion exercises and a few e-mails to write.

As mentioned before, the most promoted skill is speaking and according to the authors (Hollett 2010) the prime aim of all reading and listening tasks is that the presented language is used in the speaking tasks. As Hollett explains (ibid) that usually it is easier to make students talk when you give them the chance to draw on their own experiences and I absolutely agree with her here. And this is exactly what is done in *Lifestyle* by offering talking points which give students the opportunity to draw on their own life experience.

✓Presentation of grammar

One of the course book writers states that the course uses a traditional grammar based syllabus which has many advantages because it “provides the student with a sense of progression” and “students can build on what has been

learnt before” (Hollett 2010). But the difference to some of the other course books which use a grammar based syllabus is that Hollett & Whitby relate the teaching of grammar always to communicative tasks. When they present the present perfect, for example, by means of a reading and a listening text, the goal of the two exercises is to perform a concluding speaking task and to use the introduced form. With *Lifestyle* the presentation of grammar always takes place in a contextualised form and this makes grammar teaching and learning much more feasible. The *grammar reference* pages at the end of the book are very compact and contain useful information for further reference for the learner.

✓Presentation of vocabulary

The course book does not contain any vocabulary lists or glossaries. Every unit contains so-called *Word focus* sections, where vocabulary is always presented in a contextualised form to the learner. There are exercises with verb-noun collocations, finding synonyms or paraphrasing. There is, for example, the image of an email and a web-site address where the different parts have to be labelled by choosing words from a box. For more difficult words there are also descriptions in English. One of the main purposes of the course is to teach how to use functional language and how to use it successfully. This is why the authors never introduce new vocabulary in an isolated way but always in context. One of the striking features of this course book is that when new phrases are introduced they are mostly introduced as adjacency pairs. In this way not only utterances are taught but also responses such as the examples provided in Unit 13 *Thanks for the great meal. Glad you enjoyed it / Thank you for coming. Thanks for having us (Lifestyle 112-113)*. By teaching adjacency pairs the authors promote the skill of conversational turn-taking which is an important pragmatic function. Thus, one purpose is to feed in vocabulary and phrases to the students which they are going to need for their speaking tasks. The learners are also encouraged to use a dictionary and if the teacher explains the correct use of dictionaries in one of the first lessons, I would argue that such

an approach justifies that the course book does not contain any word-lists or glossaries.

✓How does the course book relate to the needs of learners? Is the content interesting and challenging to the learners?

The authors describe that

Lifestyle is designed to meet the everyday language requirements of people who need English for work, socializing and travel (Hollett & Whitby 2010).

The above mentioned contexts describe 'classical' ELF settings. For learners who will use English mainly in ELF contexts, where the most important goal is to achieve successful communication, the content of the book is definitely interesting. Above all the variety of speaking tasks in the form of dialogues, discussions, games, telephone calls, describing own experiences or projects at work, prompts for developing conversations and holding presentations offers many opportunities to the learner to improve fluency. As mentioned in the introduction of the course book *Lifestyle* covers not only business topics such as *telephoning, presenting, and negotiating* but it

also helps learners interact effectively outside of the work environment, enabling them to 'get things done' in a variety of situations (Hollett & Whitby 2010).

7.4.4. Second part of checklist: ELF criteria

✓Does the first language have a role in the materials?

Since the course book is written for an international market only the target language English is used.

✓Is the focus on linguistic forms or on communicative tasks?

With *Lifestyle* the course book writers combine a traditional grammar based syllabus with communicative language teaching (CLT). Hollett & Whitby provide

the learner with grammar structures and essential phrases but the goal is always that students use that input for their speaking tasks. Speaking is always the key priority and the rationale of the course is how to use functional language and how to use it in a way to achieve communicative goals more easily. Hollett (2010) argues that it does not help the learner if you provide him/her with a lot of phrases and vocabulary but if they cannot use it successfully. Teaching adjacency pairs and contextualised phrases is one way to help the student to use functional language in a way that it helps to achieve their communicative goals. In conclusion, I would say that the focus is also on linguistic forms but that the main emphasis is on communicative tasks.

✓Does the course book consider and discuss the importance of communicative strategies such as turn-taking, hedging, repeating, pausing etc.?

Learners do not only need topics and ideas but also strategies to facilitate communication. By teaching adjacency pairs the authors also promote the skill of conversational turn-taking which is an important pragmatic function. Especially the two sections *Communication strategies* and *Interaction* contain many useful exercises and phrases for improving fluency in English. In my opinion, those two sections are the main strengths of the course. I share Bohrn's opinion when she argues in her thesis that "it is important to raise the learner's awareness for the subtleties of language use" (Bohrn 2006). Referring to Poncini she further points out that

it is important that speakers of Business English are able to use particular discourse strategies to show politeness, negotiate common ground and strengthen the sense of 'groupness' (Poncini 2004) within the interactions (Bohrn 2006: 125).

By offering language and exercises for topics such as *persuasion, instructions, agreeing, disagreeing* and *turn taking* Hollett & Whitby promote the above mentioned linguistic strategies. The course book contains a large variety of recommendations how to converse successfully. In Unit 12, for example, the authors discuss different conversation styles and how to develop successful

conversations. Unit 3 discusses active listening and phrases for comprehension and confirmation checks are provided.

✓ **How much space is dedicated to cross-cultural communication?**

One feature of the course description by the authors is the following:

Functional language is presented in a cross-cultural context helping learners to build successful business and social relationships and avoid communication breakdown (Hollett & Whitby 2010).

In around 80 audio files mostly conversations are presented where a NS interacts with a NNS. The illustrations throughout the course book show pictures of people belonging to different cultural backgrounds. Some of the reading texts describe stereotypes and characteristics of different cultures. And there are many instances throughout the book where the course book writers try to create awareness for cross-cultural differences. Examples for such instances are in Unit 2 a reading text with the title *Sorry, I'm English* which describes a study done by the anthropologist Kate Fox (2005), who found out that English people apologize much more than in other countries. In Unit 7 there are instructions how to eat with chopsticks or another example can be found in Unit 9, where a reading text with the title *What do you mean by 'late'* describes different attitudes in different cultures about being punctual. There is another reading text in Unit 9 which describes the life of a key account manager from Los Angeles who has a personal assistant who lives 140, 000 kilometres away in Mumbai and who organizes his life. In the same unit six examples of international misunderstandings are presented and discussed.

There are many more descriptions of situations where in a subtle way an awareness of cross-cultural differences is created and I argue here that the way in which the authors of *Lifestyle* arrange these instances and the mentioned locations and backgrounds where the described business interactions take place, transmits an impression to the learner that English is mainly used in a global context and by people who do not share the same culture.

✓How does the course book deal with forms such as idioms and metaphors?

The authors do not dedicate much space to idioms and metaphors and seem to be aware of the fact that idiomatic and metaphorical language can cause communication problems for the learner and misunderstandings in interactions.

Their approach is to use 'lean language' and Hollett argues that

[f]or the many English learners who won't be needing English to communicate with native speakers (NSs), why faff around with frilly stuff that will have little value when we can go 'lean' (<http://www.vickihollett.com/?p=3031>, 19 December 2010).

By 'going lean' Hollett alludes to the issue which has been discussed earlier in this chapter. Teaching English to learners who will use English mainly in order to communicate in ELF settings does not have to cover metaphorical language and idioms because using them in a 'unilateral' way can cause communication breakdown.

✓Do listening exercises include more native speaker or non-native speaker production?

The audio files contain a variety of different 'Englishes' such as American English, Australian English, Indian English, South African English and also a variety of non-native speaker production. The recordings contain interactions where a native speaker talks to a non-native speaker of English and there are also recordings where two non-native speakers communicate. The main purpose of the audio files is to provide the listener with phrases, grammar structures and ideas and topics for speaking tasks.

✓Is there an orientation on one specific variety of English?

Presumably because the course book writers are British, the basic orientation is on British English.

✓ **Do the course book writers try to create an awareness of English as an international language or do they rather propagate native-speaker language?**

By presenting functional language in different cross-cultural contexts through carefully chosen reading texts and various listening exercises, instead of permanently reminding the learner that the only goal is to approach native speaker norms by exclusively referring to native speaker standards, the rationale of the course becomes obvious. The aim of *Lifestyle* is to teach how to communicate effectively in business and social contexts and this on a global and international level.

7.4.5. Findings and conclusion

Lifestyle is a course book which uses a traditional grammar based syllabus but the presentation of grammar is always related to a final speaking task where the learner has the opportunity to employ the acquired forms. The course combines a grammar based syllabus with a communicative approach. The main focus of the course book is on teaching functional language. The idea of teaching functions dates back to the 1960's when CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) was developed by Widdowson (1978) and other scholars. Hollett (2010) argues that "people like to do business with people they like" and this is why one of the main aims of the course is that the learner of business English should be able to use "relationship language" (ibid.) By 'relationship language' Hollett means *functional language* which is described in chapter 5.

For Hollett & Whitby the priorities in teaching business English are not that the learner should be able to use very elaborate linguistic forms of native-speaker language but that he/she should be able to communicate successfully and effectively at work and when socializing with people who have different first languages and to avoid communication breakdown. The language and the topics are presented in a cross-cultural and international context and this is

done in a very sensitive and subtle manner. This is definitely one approach to create awareness of the existence of English as a lingua franca.

7.5. *In company*

7.5.1. General information

Title	<i>In company</i>
Author	Mark Powell
Publisher	Macmillan
Date of publication	Second edition 2009 (First published 2002)
Stated level	Intermediate (CEF Level B1-B2)

7.5.2. Course book analysis

‘What is there’

The author describes the course as “a fast-paced, four-level Business English course for professional adults who need to communicate in everyday business situations” (Powell 2009). For this study the intermediate level Student’s Book will be analysed. The complete course book set consists of a Student’s Book, Class Audio CD’s, a Teacher’s Book with photocopiable resources, Case Studies and a website with supplementary classroom material (www.businessenglishonline.net). The course book covers 40–50 hours of teaching, which is the equivalent of two semesters (1.5 lessons a week) of a business English course offered in an adult education institution. The book can also be used by teachers who are going into companies to teach there. The physical aspects of the book provide a professional image as do most business English course books.

The contents page is clearly organized and consists of 20 units which are subdivided into the three sections *Communication skills*, *Reading and listening texts* and *Language links*. 15 of the 20 units are called *Skills units* “focusing on everyday, functional business English language” (Powell 2009: 2). Five of the units are called *Topic debates units* “focusing on topical business issues” (Powell 2009: 2). 15 of the 20 units contain *Language links* for “consolidating grammar and extending vocabulary from the Skills units” (Powell 2009: 3). There are also five *Case studies* “reflecting real-life business scenarios” (Powell 2009: 3). At the end of the course book there is, on the one hand, additional material for almost every unit such as quiz answers, additional role plays or additional case studies. Most of the material can be used for communicative activities. On the other hand, there are listening scripts for the 100 listening exercises. The detailed map of the book helps learners and teachers to find their way around.

‘What is required of users’

The course book offers a variety of exercises for all four skills and there are tasks such as doing discussions, expressing attitudes, doing quizzes, completion and gap-filling exercises, listening exercises, reading tasks, making dialogues, doing role-plays and writing e-mails. There are many exercises for individual work, but there are also activities for pair work and group work. The focus is on form and meaning. The source of language or information are the listening and the reading exercises, the sections called *Language links*, the additional material at the end of the book and the exercises on the CD-Rom.

‘What is implied’

The 20 units could also be studied individually but it seems logical to do them in a consecutive order because they are presented in a progressive way. The sequencing of the content is presented in a way which is used by many course book writers. The first unit, *Global English*, is presented as a starting point and offers topics for discussion. The next units cover general topics like socializing

and telephoning and include interesting topics such as *What women want*, where gender and consumer spending are discussed. Only one of the units is dedicated to doing presentations but there are innovative topics such as *Going green* where environmental responsibility is discussed and *Telecommunications*, where teleconferencing is described. The final unit covers the topic negotiating.

By putting the focus on business related collocations and lexical units the course book is based on a lexical approach and combines this with a large variety of communicative activities. In the *Language links* sections Powell tries on the one hand, to increase the lexical range of his students and on the other hand, to consolidate their grammar knowledge. Another focus is strengthening the communicative skills of the learner in both professional and social situations. As regards the distribution of information across teacher and student components the learners have access to all of the components of the course except for the Teacher's Book.

7.5.3. Course book evaluation

First part of checklist – general criteria

✓ Is there a balance of modes of language use, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

The course book covers all four skills but the skills which are promoted most are listening and speaking and the skill which is least promoted is writing. The course book contains more than 100 listening exercises. There are various tasks going with the exercises such as answering specific questions, comparing attitudes, completion exercises, taking notes. Speaking has high priority and every unit contains discussion points and other communicative tasks. Especially the five *Topic debates* units, which are focusing on interesting business issues, contain a variety of longer speaking activities. These units also offer a so-called

Discussion phrase bank covering important phrases for starting conversations or expressing opinion. Many speaking activities are linked to listening or reading tasks. The additional material at the end of the book also contains prompts for role plays and additional speaking exercises.

The reading texts include descriptions of real-life business scenarios, topical business issues, authentic magazine extracts from e.g. the *Newsweek Magazine*, newspaper articles, statistics or quizzes. Most of the reading texts are linked with speaking activities such as discussions and pair-work.

As mentioned before, the skill which is least promoted is writing. Especially in the *Language links* sections there are many completion and gap-filling exercises but there are not many real writing tasks such as answering an email.

✓Presentation of grammar

Every unit of the course book has a so-called *Language links* part, which is subdivided into a vocabulary section and a grammar section. The grammar topics are presented in a progressive way starting with the present simple tense and covering the whole spectrum of tenses, adverbs, comparatives and superlatives, polite question forms, polite requests, conditionals, modal verbs, multi-verb expressions, the passive and reporting. The progressive sequence has of course advantages because students can build on already acquired forms. But presenting grammar in separate parts of the units has one big disadvantage. It makes the teaching of grammatical forms appear very detached and not linked with the other tasks. Widdowson discusses this very issue when he criticizes that with many course books

it is frequently the case that the different sections of the basic formula in course books have no principled connection with each other (1978: 144).

In *In Company* exercises such as *Write the Past Simple of the verbs below* and a lot of matching and gap-filling exercises for the respective grammatical forms

turn this course book, which is in many aspects very innovative, into a partly boring and conventional course book.

✓ **Presentation of vocabulary**

The above mentioned *Language links* sections dedicate one part to vocabulary. New vocabulary is never introduced in an isolated form but the emphasis is on collocations and on useful phrases. New words are always introduced in context. There are, for example, exercises where a reading text uses new and quite challenging vocabulary and where the post-reading task is to guess the meaning of the words and expressions in bold from their context. The suggested interaction-format for such tasks is mostly pair-work (see e.g. p. 79). There are also *phrase banks* referring to a specific context such as *telephoning* or *polite requests* which offer useful phrases for reference and revision. There are for example business phrasal verbs which have to be used in short dialogues or phrases which are useful for discussions and phrases how to express opinions. In this way, a variety of useful phrases and collocations is accumulated and this also justifies why there are no word-lists or glossaries at the end of the book. The lexical approach used here is definitely one of the strengths of the course book.

✓ **How does the course book relate to the needs of learners? Is the content interesting and challenging to the learners?**

On the back cover of the course book the publishers say that *In company* is “for professional adults who need to communicate in everyday business situations”. The topics for the reading and listening texts such as *People socialising at a conference*, *Conversations at the airport*, *Press conference tips*, *Giving a presentation*, *An internet advertisement*, *Articles about technology and change*, *Meetings in different countries*, *Extracts from appraisal interviews*, *Articles about corporate social responsibility* and *People’s views on negotiating* are well chosen and definitely interesting for the learners. Such topics relate very well to today’s typical business situations. The vocabulary sections and the *phrase*

banks equip the learner with useful phrases and the five case-studies reflect real-life scenarios. The *Communication skills* sections offer many ideas and prompts for guided and free speaking activities.

7.5.4. Second part of checklist: ELF criteria

✓ Does the first language have a role in the materials?

Since the course book is written for an international market only the target language English is used.

✓ Is the focus on linguistic forms or on communicative tasks?

Powell uses a lexical approach (which is explained in chapter 5) for his Business English course *In company* and the focus is on useful phrases for business communication. As discussed earlier there are many useful and also interesting shorter and longer speaking tasks. But the large number of matching and gap-filling exercises, especially in the *Language links* sections, transmit the impression that the accuracy of linguistic forms is more important than to use English for spoken communication. If the sequence of activities of the course book *Lifestyle* is compared to *In company*, in Hollet's & Whitby's course book, it becomes much more obvious why certain grammar patterns or phrases are presented and that the aim is always that the learners use the input for speaking tasks. Thus, I would like to argue here that the focus is slightly more on linguistic forms.

✓ Does the course book consider and discuss the importance of communicative strategies such as turn-taking, hedging, repeating, pausing etc.?

By discussing a wide range of communicative strategies and by providing the necessary phrases the section *Communication skills* is one of the strengths of *In Company*. I will mention a few examples how the course book deals with communicative strategies in the following. In Unit 4 the importance of

clarification requests in meetings is discussed and the function of repetition is explained. Unit 6 offers useful phrases for making requests. In Unit 12, which is dedicated to the topic presenting, the function of pausing, pacing and sentence stress is explained. In Unit 14 interruption strategies are explained and by considering cultural differences the function of silences and interruptions are discussed.

✓How much space is dedicated to cross-cultural communication?

As in most other business course books the illustrations in the book show people from different cultural backgrounds. And there are several reading texts and other exercises which mention cultural differences. In Unit 12 which is dedicated to *Presenting*, awareness is raised that “[d]ifferent cultures have different ideas about what makes a good presentation” (Powell 2009: 76). Powell lists the following guidelines for twelve countries, which should help the learner when having to prepare a presentation:

Americans:	strong visuals, slogans
Britons:	stories, humour (but not jokes!)
Spaniards:	warmth, good eye contact
French:	innovation, eloquence
Italians:	style, pace, aesthetics
Germans:	technology, data, expertise
Brazilians:	enthusiasm, extroversion
Chinese:	humility, words of wisdom
Indians:	descriptive language, trust
Russians:	emotion, the little-known truth
Poles:	logic, the personal touch
Arabs:	energy, respect, know-how (Powell 2009: 76)

As discussed earlier, when teaching intercultural communication skills, the teacher should avoid to approach the topic by presenting popular stereotypes. Even if I am aware of it that the above mentioned approach by Powell runs the risk to come close to presenting stereotypes, I would like to argue that the above described approach is a way to make the learners aware of differences between countries. The aim of the course book writer is here obviously to

remind the students that elaborate presentation techniques alone are not enough but that presentation styles have to be adapted to the different countries. In the same unit Powell also provides general presentation tips which should work well for all cultures.

In Unit 14 which is titled *Being heard* and which covers the topic meetings the book *Riding the Waves of Culture* (Trompenaars & Hampden: 1998) is mentioned and the course book writer explains that people from different cultures also have different ways of discussing certain topics. A small diagram illustrates how people belonging to three different cultures handle silences and interruptions. In Unit 16 cultural differences in leadership and management styles are explained. Unit 18, which is about eating out with business partners, contains a *Cross-cultural quiz* on table manners.

In Unit 20, which covers the topic negotiating, Powell argues under the sub-heading *Directness* that in negotiating situations direct or indirect language “is a matter of both cultural background and personal choice” (Powell 2009: 119). I fully agree here with Powell that directness in communication cannot only be linked to the cultural roots of interlocutors but also has to do with the personality of individuals. But it is a fact that different cultures have different ways of using language. Some speak in a more literal way while others are more indirect.

As in *Lifestyle*, the author presents the above described passages of the course book and many other instances, where the locations and interactions demonstrate that the business interaction takes place in a global background, in a subtle way. I argue here that this is one way to create an awareness of cross-cultural differences.

✓ **How does the course book deal with idioms and metaphors?**

Similarly to the authors Hollett & Whitby the course book writer of *In company* does not dedicate special attention to idioms or metaphors and a detailed study of the reading and listening texts has shown that they do not contain any

metaphorical language or idioms. Why Powell does not pay special attention to the above mentioned linguistic forms is also explained in one of his conference speeches. In his key-note speech at the 23rd International IATEL BESIG Conference Powell talked about “streamlining Business English” and “performance without waste” (Powell 2010). What the course book writer meant by streamlining is that business people who communicate in ELF contexts do not want to waste time by searching elaborate expressions, which are used in NS language, but they want to do business and achieve their communicative goals for that purpose. Powell argues that he wants to provide the learner with the “scaffolding” (ibid.), which provides ‘lean language’ and which is language that does not contain idioms and metaphors and that this is more beneficial for the learner. Here, Powell also echoes Hollett (2010) when she says that for learners who will need English mainly for interacting with other NNSs it is not useful to bother them with metaphorical and idiomatic language (see also p. 77 of this thesis).

I fully agree here with Hollett and Powell that it is almost a waste of time to bother the Business English learners with many elaborate linguistic forms which can be mainly used for interactions with native speakers of English and which even complicate communication when interacting with other non-native speakers.

✓ Do listening exercises include more native speaker or non-native speaker production?

The Student’s Book contains a compact CD-ROM with interactive exercises and 3 audio CD’s comprising 100 listening tasks. A closer investigation of the 100 recordings shows that about half of the recordings present production of native speakers of different English varieties, British English being the dominant form. The other half of the tasks includes non-native speakers of English with different first languages. The interactions where NSs of English interact with NNSs are never uni-directional, they always happen on an equal basis. There is only one exception where an instance is recorded, where a native speaker of English

calls a French company where a person with a very basic level of English answers the phone and after some desperate efforts to communicate someone else who speaks better English takes the call.

Some of the listening exercises are statements or opinions presented by one speaker, others include phone-calls, casual conversations, business talks, conference calls or negotiating situations with at least two interlocutors. The listening exercises cover a variety of interesting, entertaining and sometimes also amusing topics. There are some topics which are very interesting in regard to the ELF-focus of this study. Under the sub-headline *Cultural differences*, for example, Unit 14 contains a listening file (listening script 2.32) of a company meeting, where managers hotly debate if English should be introduced as the official company language. In listening file 2.33 of the same unit a person who wrote a letter in English asks a colleague with better English to check it for him. The post-listening task is that the learners should discuss if they would have made the same corrections. The non-native speakers of English in the recordings mostly have a very high command of English and are very fluent speakers.

✓ Is there an orientation on one specific variety of English?

Presumably because the course book writer is British, the basic orientation is on British English but the texts and above all the listening files contain different varieties of English and there are several topics which discuss global and international English. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the next subsection.

✓ Do the course book writers try to create an awareness of English as an international language or do they rather propagate native-speaker language?

In the first unit of the course book, which bears the title *Global English*, Powell refers to House (2003) and opens the unit by the quotation “English is no longer

'owned' by its native speakers". There is a quiz where the learners can test how much they know about English as a world language. In the same unit, a reading text, which is titled *English 2.0*, starts with the sentence "English is to international communication what Google is to search engines, Microsoft to software and Intel to the microchip" (Powell 2009: 7). The reading text deals with the importance of English as an international language but also discusses the question of the ownership of English. The key message of the text is a fervent plea for global English. The final communicative exercise of the same unit is that learners have to discuss questions such as "Do you agree with the author of the article that the growth of the English language in fact presents no threat to cultural identity?" (the source of the article is not provided) or "Do you think that non-native speakers actually find it easier to do business with each other in English than with native speakers?" (Powell 2009: 7).

I argue here that it is a very innovative way to open a course book with such a discussion and the stance of the course book writer is made clear right from the beginning of the course. In his teaching approach, Powell does not only orient towards native-speaker norms but tries to explain the importance and usefulness of international English to his learners. Also in the other units, the described business interactions mostly take place in an international context where either native speakers of English communicate with speakers who have different first languages or where non-native speakers of English do business together and use English as a lingua franca.

7.5.5. Findings and conclusion

The course book *In company* is based on a lexical syllabus and the focus is never on isolated words but on useful phrases and collocations. There are *discussion phrase banks* which offer many useful phrases for starting a discussion or for giving opinion. An important and valuable point is that the introduced phrases are always presented in context. By offering many communicative tasks, Powell combines the lexical approach also with elements of communicative language teaching. The course book offers many innovative,

interesting and also entertaining topics, which can be used for discussions and role plays. The focus of the course book is on speaking and listening tasks. There is a considerable number of 100 listening exercises which are instructive, informing and sometimes also amusing. With regard to the ELF-criteria applied in this study *In company* offers some very useful approaches such as the first unit which is entirely dedicated to *Global English* and the many intercultural aspects in different parts of the course book. The only disadvantageous aspect of the course book is that the *Language links* sections which are dedicated to grammar and vocabulary seem almost detached from the rest of the unit and are not contextualised enough and that the large number of gap-filling and matching exercises creates an impression that the accuracy of linguistic forms is one of the prime aims of the course.

This impression is somehow contradictory to Powell's recent contributions to the topic of ELF at various conferences. But it has to be considered that the course book was published in 2009. Two years later, on the 7th of February 2011 Mark Powell made the following contribution on Vicki Hollett's (2011) blog:

Lexical pedantry is just as bad as structural pedantry when our learners have busy lives and just want to do their job better in English. I sometimes think, in freeing us from the tyranny of grammar, the Lexical Approach has just landed us with another (much more arbitrary) set of rules to internalise. Of course, some errors do need fixing because they are not shared across cultures (Powell 2011).

From Powell's statement we learn that the vibrant nature of the field of ELF and BELF is also a challenge for those course book writers who want to develop state of the art course materials which consider the importance of English as a lingua franca in today's world.

8. COMPARISON OF COURSE BOOKS AND SUMMARY

The research question of this study has been to find out if recent course books for teaching business English in adult education consider the fact that English has become the most widely used lingua franca on a global scale. The analysis of five course books has shown that course books usually share one common aspect, namely that every course book is based on a certain syllabus or teaching methodology. Apart from this common feature, course book writers use very different approaches. The selection of course books was guided by two main parameters, namely that the course book should be as recent as possible and that the stated level should be in the area of B1 / B2 of the CEFR. After flipping through many course books I decided to use at least two course books written by writers who have also made innovative contributions in the recent discussion on ELF and BELF. It seemed more reasonable to look for aspects how a course book that considers the present importance of ELF can be created than to look for aspects which an 'ELF-friendly course book' should not contain. I do not need to go into detail about the fact that there are many conventional course books on the market which orient only towards native speaker norms and do not consider the importance of ELF.

English for Business Communication is based on a CLT approach (cf. chapter 5 of this thesis) and focuses on the skills speaking and listening. From an ELF perspective this is a very useful course book because there are many prompts and guidelines for longer speaking exercises and it offers to the learner ample opportunities to improve fluency. One of the prime aims of the course is also directed towards soft skills such as socializing and small talk. Another focus is on cross-cultural communication and by describing many business instances in a global context, where communication also takes place between speakers of different L1s, students are made aware of the importance of English as a lingua franca. There is one remarkable instance where the course book writer warns of 'unilateral idiomaticity' which describes the use of idiomatic language by a native speaker which is not understood by the interlocutor (cf. Seidlhofer 2004).

If we compare Sweeney's business English course book to the *Short Course Series* we see that the course material published by *Cornelsen* has many deficiencies if the before mentioned ELF criteria are applied. First, the course material can only be used for a very restricted German speaking target group which would in itself not be a disadvantage for an ELF-oriented approach but native-speaker norms are idealized by repeatedly mentioning that certain phrases are frequently used by native speakers. Then, it is not indicated that some features of native-speaker language can create problems when communicating in cross-cultural contexts. Finally, the biggest weakness is that the course book writers do not try to create awareness of the use of English as a lingua franca.

English for Business Life is based on a progressive grammar syllabus and offers a lot of very useful material for teaching business English but if the ELF-criteria are applied that have been developed for this study one of the major drawbacks of that course book is that it is too much form-centred and that the learners get the impression that the meticulous knowledge of all those grammar patterns and lexical structures is a prerequisite for being able to communicate in the business world. But it has to be stated that the course book writers Badger & Menzies make an effort to make the learner aware of the fact that English is an important international language and that it is also used as a lingua franca by speakers who have different first languages.

Also the course book *Lifestyle* is based on a grammar syllabus but Hollett & Whitby take a different approach when relating the presentation of grammar to speaking tasks where the students are offered ample opportunities to use the acquired forms. Compared to the other course books one remarkable feature of this course is that the writers of the book always try to explain to the learner why certain features are presented. If learners follow the course attentively the sequence and selection of certain exercises offer an explanation to them why certain patterns have to be learnt. *Lifestyle* combines a grammar based syllabus with CLT and the prime goal is always speaking. By offering language and

useful exercises in the sub-sections *Communication strategies* and *Interaction* the course book writers prepare the learner for effective international communication in the business world. The course book writers put emphasis on functional language and do not bother the students with metaphorical or idiomatic language. Functional language is presented in a cross-cultural context and it is obvious to the learner that in many of the described interactions English is used as a lingua franca. It is without doubt that *Lifestyle* is the course book which is best in accordance with the ELF criteria and foci applied in this study.

In company, the last of the five course books, which were selected for this study, is based on a lexical approach. By offering many communicative tasks, Powell combines the lexical approach also with many elements of CLT. As far as the ELF-criteria, which are used in this study, are concerned, Powell offers interesting contributions such as an entire unit titled *Global English* and various intercultural aspects in different parts of the book. The CDs contain an impressive number of 100 listening exercises which give an impression that English is mostly used as an international language. The only disadvantage of the course book is that the *Language links* sections covering grammar and vocabulary seem almost detached from the rest of the unit and thus an impression is created that the introduced grammar patterns or new phrases are not enough contextualised and the many gap-filling tasks present an image to the reader that the accuracy of linguistic forms is a major aim.

In the next section, drawing on the insights gained from the analysis and evaluation procedure which has covered five selected course books, implications will be discussed how those insights can be used for teaching Business English as a lingua franca.

9. IMPLICATIONS FOR BELF- ORIENTED TEACHING

Implications for English language teaching (ELT), caused by the unprecedented spread of English as a global language, have been discussed by various scholars. Already in 2002 Meierkord & Knapp (21) argue that “[i]f the foreign language taught will later on be used as a lingua franca, it should be taught as such. Seidlhofer (2011a) argues that new guidelines have to be developed in defining English as a subject. She (2011a: 201-202) suggests that a new orientation in language teacher education is necessary and that a change always presupposes a rethinking of the subject. She describes that one of the key issues is that teachers should

focus attention not on the language as product, on how much English learners manage to accumulate, but on the process of ‘linguaging’, on how learners make use of what they know of the language (ibid. 202).

When Seidlhofer uses the term ‘linguaging’ she refers to Phipps, who defines the term as

the process of struggling to find a way of articulating the full, embodied and engaged interaction with the world that comes when you put the languages we are learning into action. We make a distinction between the effort of using languages that one is learning in the classroom contexts with the effort of being a person in that language in the social and material world of everyday interactions (Phipps 2006: 12).

In my opinion, the above mentioned process of ‘linguaging’ is particularly important for the issue of teaching BELF and will be discussed in more detail later in this section. Seidlhofer also points out that “NS norms are of limited relevance” (2012: 73) and she (ibid. 73-75) regrets that many sources such as curricula, textbooks, dictionaries and the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) still only orient towards native speaker norms.

Gnutzmann & Intemann (2008) edited a book based on conference papers which offers a variety of different perspectives on linguistic and pedagogical

considerations, covering aspects such as teaching pronunciation and attitudes towards native speaker English. Smit (2010) discusses classroom discourse in *English as a lingua franca in higher education*. Kirkpatrick (2010) dedicates one chapter of his book *English as a Lingua Franca in Asean* to pedagogical implications.

The above mentioned literature mainly deals with ELF and not with BELF. I have discussed earlier that the pedagogical implications for teaching BELF are much more obvious and that the implementation of those also easier.

The research question of this thesis has been to find out if recent course books for teaching business English in adult education consider the fact that English has become the most widely used lingua franca on a global scale. In the preceding chapter the outcome of the analysis and evaluation procedure of five selected course books has been discussed and the results have shown that there are still course book writers who follow a very traditional and conventional approach and seem to ignore the growing importance of ELF and BELF, but that there are also innovative course book writers who produce teaching materials which consider the present importance of business English as a lingua franca. What can be deduced from the findings of this small study and which pedagogical consequences can be drawn? Using the mentioned innovative course books as a source I would like to summarize the most important guidelines that should be considered when teaching BELF:

- Different syllabi are suitable for teaching BELF but the important matter is how the materials are used and the focus should always be on communicative functions. As Hollett points out “[t]he top priority of the tasks should always be speaking” (Hollett 2010).
- Communication skills and linguistic strategies need to be taught. Business people need pragmatic strategies in order to be polite, to persuade, to instruct, to share ideas, to express differences of opinion or to negotiate common ground.

- Teaching grammar should always take place in a contextualised form and it should be made clear to the learner why a specific form is learnt. The presentation of new grammar patterns should be related to a final speaking task.
- The learner should be taught how to use functional language and how to use it appropriately. It is essential for the learners to understand the underlying social meaning of certain utterances. Functional language in teaching BELF should cover e.g. language for making requests, making apologies, persuasion, instructions, complaints, agreeing and disagreeing etc.
- The focus should be on “lean language” (Hollett 2010) which also means avoiding ‘unilateral idiomaticity’ (cf. Seidlhofer 2004).
- Learners should be made aware of the importance of accommodation skills. When doing business in international contexts the learner needs to develop a feeling for the language behaviour which is appropriate when interacting with other NNSs in order to avoid communication breakdown.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that the issues crucial for a successful BELF-oriented teaching approach are also valid for ELF-oriented teaching.

10. CONCLUSION

English as a lingua franca offers a rich field for investigation. The motivation for the topic of this diploma thesis comes from my teaching experience in business English and from my interest in ELF, which has developed in the last semesters. The more information I gain the more fascinating the topic becomes and for me, ELF is no longer only a sub-discipline of applied linguistics but it rather becomes a 'philosophy' and an attitude. The decision to undertake a business course book evaluation from an ELF perspective enabled me to combine my interest in ELF and the wish to pursue a research activity in the business domain. The purpose of this study is to find out if recent business English course books consider and reflect the unprecedented importance of English as a lingua franca.

This thesis comprises a theoretical part which tries to clarify the main concepts. In the first chapters of the theoretical part, after defining the notion of ELF in general, I discuss the phenomenon of globalization and the resulting need for English as a lingua franca. Then, the impact of different cultural backgrounds on the language behaviour of ELF speakers as well as different attitudes towards ELF are discussed and the notion of appropriateness is reflected. Also the fact that ELF represents a threat to NSs is briefly described. Finally, in the theoretical part, the focus is directed to the domain business. After clarifying the notion of BELF, one chapter is dedicated to teaching business English where the nature of teaching materials and the role of the business English teacher are discussed. The core part of this thesis is preceded by a description of pedagogical approaches to which the paper will refer to in the practical part.

In the practical part of this thesis, first the analysis and evaluation procedure is explained and the evaluation criteria are discussed. I have tried to develop specific criteria and foci for this study in order to find out if the selected course books reflect the current importance of ELF. I developed a two-part checklist,

the first part containing general course book evaluation criteria and the second part containing specific 'ELF-criteria'. The selection of course books was guided by two criteria. The course materials should be published as recently as possible and I limited the selected course books to the levels B1-B2. The selection of course books was a challenging task but it also offered the opportunity to look into a variety of teaching materials and provided me with many additional and new sources for my own teaching activities.

The findings of my study confirm my initial assumption that there are many conventional business English course books on the market which ignore the ubiquitous presence of BELF but that there are also innovative course book writers who develop state-of-the-art course materials which consider current developments and insights. Those (B)ELF friendly course books present English as an international language, provide the learner with intercultural and relational skills and linguistic strategies which help the learner to achieve successful communication. A (B)ELF friendly course book also offers enough and extensive reading tasks in order to improve fluency.

Since the basic conditions for teaching business English in adult education more easily and also faster enable changes than the secondary and tertiary education systems it is to be hoped that more innovative business English course books will be published soon which offer materials and exercises which support the learner to be prepared for the linguistic and communicative challenges he/she will face in real life business situations. But it is not only course books which need to be changed it is also to be hoped that more business English teachers become aware of the increasing importance of the role of English as a lingua franca in the business world and share their insights with their learners.

Before concluding my thesis I would like to mention that intensively dealing with the topic (B)ELF over the last months has provided me with many valuable insights. I have realized that my attitude towards my own English and that of others has changed considerably. For me the dichotomy native speaker

of English / non-native speaker of English does no longer hold as an assessment tool and I also realize that the knowledge gained is changing my own teaching approaches and that a shift is taking place from grammatical correctness, which always seemed important, to communicative effectiveness.

I would like to emphasize here that the study is based on five selected course books and that the findings are limited to the course materials used. Nevertheless, with this thesis, I hope to make a small contribution to the body of research on the resulting implications for teaching caused by the unprecedented importance of ELF and BELF.

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12. APPENDIX

12.1. Abstract German (Deutsche Zusammenfassung)

In unserer globalisierten Welt gewinnt Englisch immer mehr an Bedeutung als internationale Sprache und als Lingua Franca.

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit befasst sich mit der Evaluierung von Lehrbüchern für den *Business English* Unterricht unter Berücksichtigung der aktuellen Wichtigkeit der englischen Sprache als Lingua Franca. In dieser Diplomarbeit werden zuerst im theoretischen Teil die Begriffe ELF (Englisch als Lingua Franca) und BELF (Business Englisch als Lingua Franca) kurz erläutert und das Thema Sprachkompetenz des Nicht-Muttersprachlers diskutiert. Das allgemeine Wesen von Lehrwerken für den *Business English* Unterricht wird diskutiert und anschließend werden didaktische Grundbegriffe erklärt die dann später im Evaluierungsteil der Studie verwendet werden.

Das Kernstück dieser Diplomarbeit ist die Analyse und Evaluierung von fünf ausgewählten Lehrwerken. Als erster Schritt und um sich einen Überblick zu verschaffen wird eine Analyse von Littlejohn (1998) verwendet, die zur Bestandsaufnahme dient. Für die Evaluierung der Lehrbücher wurde ein zweigeteilter Fragenkatalog erstellt, der für diese Studie entwickelt wurde. Der erste Teil des Fragenkatalogs besteht aus allgemeinen Fragen die zur Lehrbuch Evaluierung dienen.

Der zweite Teil besteht aus Fragen, durch die gezielt herausgefunden werden soll, ob die ausgewählten Lehrwerke die gegenwärtige Wichtigkeit der Verwendung von Englisch als internationaler Lingua Franca berücksichtigen. Die Daten werden von einem qualitativen Standpunkt aus analysiert.

Durch die Fragen soll zum Beispiel herausgefunden werden, ob sich die Lehrbücher nur an britischem oder amerikanischem Englisch orientieren, welches von Muttersprachlern verwendet wird oder ob das Englische auch als

internationale Sprache präsentiert wird, welche in zunehmendem Maße von Menschen als Kommunikationsmittel verwendet wird, die aus verschiedenen Kulturkreisen kommen und verschiedene Muttersprachen haben.

Die Evaluierung der fünf Lehrbücher zeigt, dass es noch immer konventionelle Lehrbücher gibt, die die wachsende Bedeutung von ELF und BELF zu ignorieren scheinen, aber dass es auch innovative Lehrwerke gibt, die den Lernenden das Gefühl vermitteln, dass Englisch heute hauptsächlich als internationale Geschäftssprache zwischen Nicht-Muttersprachlern verwendet wird. In jenen innovativen und ELF-orientierten Lehrbüchern liegt das Hauptaugenmerk auf einer Verbesserung der Kommunikationsfähigkeiten. Den Lernenden werden interkulturelle Kompetenzen und linguistische Strategien vermittelt, mit denen erfolgreiche Kommunikation erleichtert wird.

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSÖNLICHE DATEN

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AUSBILDUNG

1966-1970 VS Saalfelden
1970-1974 HS Saalfelden
1974-1977 FS f. wirtsch. Frauenberufe Saalfelden
1977-1978 Auslandsaufenthalt in England
1978-1980 HBLA f. wirtsch. Frauenberufe
1980 Matura
1980-1987 Studium für Übersetzer und Dolmetscher für
Englisch/Französisch an der
Universität Innsbruck und diverse
Auslandsaufenthalte
1990 Abschluss akademisch geprüfter Übersetzer für
Englisch und Französisch
seit 2008 Diplomstudium Englisch an der Universität Wien

BERUFSERFAHRUNG

1987-1989	METALLWERK PLANSEE in Reutte als Exportsachbearbeiterin und Übersetzerin
1989-1995	SEMPERIT AG HOLDING als Rohstoffeinkäuferin (Referatsleiterin)
1995-1997	SEMPERIT AG HOLDING als Vorstandsassistentin
1997-2000	in Karenz
seit 2000	als freiberufliche Englischtrainerin für allgemeines Englisch und <i>Business English</i> in der Erwachsenenbildung und als Übersetzerin tätig

SPRACHEN UND AUSLANDSERFAHRUNG

Englisch	C2
Französisch	B2
Italienisch	A2
Spanisch	A1

Kultur- und Arbeitserfahrung in:

England, Frankreich, Italien, USA und Mexiko