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**Designing a Business English course**

**MA thesis**

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## ABSTRACT

In this quickly globalizing world, a broad world view and a good command of English is becoming more and more important. Tartu Miina Härma Gümnaasium aims to prepare students for this and provides many elective courses, Business English being one of them.

The aim of this MA thesis is to design a Business English course for Tartu Miina Härma Gümnaasium that focuses on subject matter and Business English related vocabulary which makes it a fusion of English for Special Purposes (ESP) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) course. ESP is an approach where English as a language is central but it is taught within a certain subject area (for example, English for Doctors or Business English); CLIL is an approach where a subject is taught in the target language and students learn both the subject matter and the language at the same time.

The course that is meant for 12<sup>th</sup> graders consists of six units (“Corporate image and supply”, “Marketing”, “Risk management”, “Free trade”, “Investing”, “Working life”) over 60 lessons and its materials come from different Business English textbooks and some are created by the author of this thesis. Modular format with some cyclical course format’s characteristics is used as course outline – this means that the topics do not have to be in a certain order because there is little cumulative knowledge between the topics but revisiting previous topics is done wherever possible. A lot of attention is given to revising vocabulary as this helps students to remember new vocabulary better.

There are two main chapters in this MA thesis. The first one, the literature review, gives a theoretical overview of ESP and CLIL with their main methods, strong and weak sides; it also covers the steps in course development and how to teach vocabulary. The second chapter, covers the process of creating the course from identifying the needs of the students to choosing materials. There are three appendices at the end of the thesis – the course outline, examples of materials, and the Business English vocabulary that relates to these topics.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CAE – Cambridge English Advanced Examination

CLIL – Content and Language Integrated Learning

ESP – English for Special Purposes

MHG – Tartu Miina Härma Gümnaasium

## INTRODUCTION

In this quickly globalising world, speaking several languages is becoming more and more important. Knowing several languages and knowing them well gives people an advantage on the job market, in education, politics, science and in other fields. As a response to this global trend, many schools around the world have implemented programs with varying degrees of immersion, as well as bilingual and second language programs. This is especially true for learning English as, according to the website Ethnologue (2020), it is the most widely spoken language in the world.

English is by far the most widely taught foreign language in nearly all countries at all education levels. Ruiz-Garrido et al (2010: 1) note that the changes which have taken place in higher education within the last decades have contributed to English becoming an important academic language. It would be difficult to underestimate the importance of this language and this is why nowadays a lot of emphasis is put on teaching and learning English. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has been gaining popularity in many countries. CLIL is “an approach or method which integrates the teaching of content from the curriculum with the teaching of a non-native language” (Bentley 2010: 5) and is a good way of integrating more language teaching into curricula. CLIL has been around for several decades but was introduced to Europe in the 1990s (Marsh 2002) and has since become more and more popular at different schools, including schools in Estonia. CLIL can be taught by subject teachers (Maths, Chemistry et cetera), language teachers (English, Estonian, Russian et cetera), primary classroom teachers or classroom assistants; and CLIL helps students to “develop skills to communicate ideas about science, arts and technology to people around the world” (Bentley 2010: 5).

However, it can be argued (Yang 2016) that CLIL focuses too much on the subject matter and CLIL teachers, who are often not language teachers, give too little attention to students’ language skills. This means that traditional language teaching methods are still relevant if the aim

is to help students learn the language well. If the aim is to teach English and subject matter together, considering English for Special Purposes (ESP) approach may be more beneficial.

ESP is “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 19) and it covers a wide spectrum of different areas (English for Medical Studies, English for Technicians, English for Secretaries, English for Psychology, English for Teaching, English for Business, to give just a few examples from Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 17)).

CLIL and ESP do have similarities in that they both aim to teach both language and professional skills. However, they differ in many key aspects - course materials, teaching strategies, and teacher preparation. (Yang 2016)

The line between CLIL and ESP can be blurry at times but a good way to approach their differences is to see CLIL as “a dual focus, i.e. both language and content” while ESP “places emphasis on providing learners with sufficient language skills to master content knowledge” (Yang 2016).

It states on Tartu Miina Härma Gümnaasium (MHG) webpage (Miina Härma Gümnaasium 2019) that MHG is a school where the aim is to help students become well-rounded and independent people with a broad worldview. Since MHG also values language skills (Miina Härma Gümnaasium 2019), it makes Business English a good course that aims to fulfil these aims – its purpose is to give students knowledge of how things work in the world, and do it in English. Business English has been taught in MHG for years and the main textbook has been *The Business 2.0* by Allison et al (2009).

Business English is a broad term referring to language that is used in the context of different areas relating to business; for example, in everyday workplace, financing and trade. If Business English is being taught to people already working in the business world, they may only need to learn certain vocabulary, or maybe people already know the vocabulary but need to improve their

grammar. A Business English course can only consist of one or two topics from the wider pool of Business English topics (for example, only workplace communication or international trade) or concentrate on some aspects of getting by in the business world (for example, speaking in certain business settings or writing a business plan in English). (Dubravka 2017)

Dubravka (2017) writes that

Business English does not only comprise the differences in vocabulary and phraseology, it comprises a wide range of issues, such as business etiquette, business correspondence, reading and understanding of professional and scholar articles, listening and comprehension of communication in English by native speakers and foreign speakers with a wide variety of accents, as well as development of critical thinking in the English language. Teaching Business English does not mean teaching a new foreign language but teaching English in the professional and business context. (Dubravka 2017)

From the summer of 2019, students at MHG take the Cambridge Assessment English examination (CAE) after 11<sup>th</sup> form and those who get at least B2 level will not have to go to regular English classes during their last year of high school but will take different electives in English instead. Most of the electives have been taught before but now they will be taught keeping in mind the fact that most of the students have at least B2 level in English and thus the focus can shift from grammar and vocabulary to subject matter and vocabulary. Business English is one of these electives and the way that it has been taught needs to be revised.

Thus, the purpose of this Master's thesis is to analyse the problems with the current Business English course and design a new version of the course that is taught as an elective for the 12<sup>th</sup> form at MHG. This MA thesis discusses the principles of course creation and the steps taken to design this course.

The thesis has two main chapters, "1 Aspects of course development" and "2 Designing a Business English course for Miina Härma Gümnaasium". They will provide a more detailed overview of the relationship between ESP and CLIL, and how it will be realised in the Business English course; theoretical background of teaching and acquiring vocabulary; the different methods and principles of designing a course; and the course overview (topics, main activities, their purpose, vocabulary, as well as some examples of course materials) itself.

## **1 ASPECTS OF COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

This chapter is a literature review divided into three sections and provides an overview of the steps necessary to design a course, discusses the similarities and differences between CLIL and ESP, and gives a theoretical overview of teaching and acquiring vocabulary.

### **1.1 Course development process**

Dubin and Olshtain (1986: 23) argue that course development consists of four main steps: needs analysis, choosing the format for the course outline, deciding on activities and compiling materials for the course in order for the students to reach the aims of the course, and course evaluation to make necessary changes to the course. They write that learning about learners' needs and knowing about their prior knowledge and abilities are important aspects to consider before moving on to actually creating a course. Dubin and Olshtain (1986: 23) advise identifying the aims and objectives of a course before compiling materials and designing a course. They also stress the necessity to know if the students are a uniform group, coming to the course with more or less the same background and intentions, or whether there are differences. Finally, they recommend considering how the course that is being designed suits its particular school system, community, or language course.

There are many ways to build a course, and the choice of which principles of creating a course to choose depends on the desired course outcomes and the nature of the course itself (Dubin and Olshtain 1986: 51). Dubin and Olshtain (1986: 51) remark that in reality, one mould may not fit the course that needs to be designed, so a mix of different formats may have to be used. The suitable format has to be chosen based on the students' needs, prior knowledge and abilities.

Three common approaches to building a course include the linear format, the modular format and the cyclical format. In the linear format, the topics that are taught build on each other and leaving out a topic or changing the sequence of the topics means that students do not have enough

background knowledge to learn the topics that follow (Dubin and Olshtain 1986: 50-51). The modular format is meant for “courses which integrate thematic or situational language content with a skills orientation regarding the course outcomes” (Dubin and Olshtain 1986: 53). The modular format gives course materials a lot of flexibility: the topics can be covered in various sequences and they do not build on each other in a way that they would in a linear format course; furthermore, the different topics are covered in a similar way, with each topic being taught with more or less the same type of activities (Dubin and Olshtain 1986: 53-54). This format is quite flexible but may cause some unintended gaps in the students’ knowledge, and it may feel jarring if the topics are too different from one another. Students may also forget what they learned in their previous topic once the new topic comes along.

In the cyclical course the topics covered earlier in the course will be revisited from time to time which means that students can see the topic in a new light and in this way consolidate their knowledge about this topic (Dubin and Olshtain 1986: 55).

Once the format of the course has been chosen, suitable materials need to be evaluated (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 96). To do this, the right input needs to be chosen (for example, a text, video, or presentation of new vocabulary). The materials should be critically examined to make sure that the content and language in these materials is suitable for the needs and aims of the course; and then a suitable task should be derived from the materials. The task should give the students an opportunity to “use the content and language knowledge they have built up through the unit” (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 108-109).

According to Hutchinson and Waters, teachers have three options with the materials:

- a) Select from existing materials: materials evaluation.
- b) Write your own materials: materials development.
- c) Modify existing materials: materials adaptation. (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 96)

The availability of previously existing materials can thus considerably affect the time and effort that needs to be put into designing a new course. This is also not an either-or situation where

the teacher has to choose either materials evaluation, materials development, or materials adaptation. For most teachers it is probably a mix of the three options.

The materials that end up being used in the course should offer “stimulus materials for activities; new language items; correct models of language use; a topic for communication; opportunities for learners to use their information processing skills; opportunities for learners to use their existing knowledge both of the language and the subject matter” (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 108-109).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 152) state that the last part of course development is course evaluation, which is conducted after the course is over by looking back on the course and evaluating how the needs and objectives of the course were met. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 153-154), this can be done in many ways: using questionnaires, holding discussions, collecting comments during the course itself, any tests taken during the course and so on. Based on the feedback, changes to the course can be made to make it better fit the needs and objectives of the course (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 154). This means that the final version of a course cannot be designed in a day and is a continuous effort that includes many people and may last for years.

In conclusion, in order to design a course, four steps should be followed: needs analysis, choosing the format for the course outline, deciding on activities and compiling materials for the course in order for the students to reach the aims of the course, and course evaluation to make necessary changes to the course (Dubin and Olshtain 1986: 23).

## **1.2 English for Specific Purposes or Content and Language Integrated**

### **Learning?**

This section gives an overview of the main characteristics of ESP and CLIL, and discusses their similarities and differences as well as a possible fusion of the two.

Traditionally, Business English is considered to be a part of English for Special Purposes (ESP) (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 17; Maican 2017; Munteanu 2018). Usually students who are enrolled in an ESP course already have a real-life need for Business English: getting along in a workplace, or navigating day-to-day issues, for example managing risks and marketing, or in a business setting. Some of the students at MHG may already have entered the workforce but in general this is not the case.

An ESP course is specifically designed to meet the needs of the specific learners and its main question is why the learner needs to use the language (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 8, 19). Its focus is more on the language than the subject matter, even though the language skills given in an ESP course are supposed to help the students get on at their workplace (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 16). ESP does not have its own methodology; instead, its methodology is the same as the methodology used in a regular English classroom (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 18). As a rule, an ESP course is taught by a language teacher (Yang 2016).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 163) assert that in order to teach ESP courses, teachers do not have to be specialists in the area that they are teaching. They write that teachers should know the fundamentals of the area and they should be willing to learn more about this area – this usually happens organically when teaching the materials and interacting with the students during teaching.

As a rule, teachers either teach a language or a subject. However, in CLIL, language teachers need to be able to also teach the subject and a subject teacher needs to be able to teach the language as well (Mehisto 2008; Bentley 2010: 5; Suwannoppharat and Chinokul 2015). This usually means extra work and difficulties which is why teachers need to cooperate more (Bentley 2010: 5). Besides the subject-specific language, the teacher needs vocabulary to give commands and explain to the students what they are doing and why (Llinares et al 2012: 26). Another challenge of CLIL teaching is that usually there are little or no commercial CLIL materials and teachers have to spend

a lot of time on creating them, sometimes with no former preparation for this (Suwannoppharat and Chinokul 2015).

CLIL is a broad concept and can be defined in many ways (Cenoz et al 2013). One of the ways to describe it is to say it is an “educational approach to teaching and learning where subjects are taught through the medium of a non-native language” (Bentley 2010: 5), so the content of the subject and the non-native language (which does not need to be English) are taught together. There are many different methods involved in CLIL teaching, some of them coming from the subject itself, some from language teaching (Bentley 2010: 5; Coyle, Hood et al 2010: 1).

There are many benefits to CLIL. Learners will learn to produce language in the taught subject; the performance of the students in their subject and the new language will improve as well as their confidence in using the language (Bentley 2010: 6). Students’ vocabulary will be “more extensive and varied”. CLIL also helps to “develop thinking skills”, “encourages stronger links with values of community and citizenship” (Bentley 2010: 6).

Reynaert (2019), who studied vocabulary development with CLIL in Czechia, reports that she found that there is not a large difference between CLIL and non-CLIL students after one year but CLIL students do better in vocabulary tests after two years, possibly because getting used to CLIL takes time. Dalton-Puffer (2007: 31-32) writes that when the content of a subject is new to students, they may initially produce less language in the classroom. For this reason, pair and group work is also encouraged (Bentley 2010: 17).

Fernández-Zanjurjo et al (2019) analysed 709 students from 6th grade in Spain and found that the students who were learning Science in their native language slightly outperformed students in CLIL classrooms in content (or subject matter) knowledge. The CLIL students studied Science in English but had to answer the questions in their native Spanish, which may explain the slightly lower results. However, the authors of the study argue that CLIL should also promote knowledge of the subject in the native language as well.

Many other studies have been carried out about content (or subject matter) knowledge as well, and these have yielded positive results. Wode (1999) reported that German CLIL students outperformed non-CLIL students in Geography and History; Bergroth (2006) reported that CLIL students in Sweden performed as well as their peers when they were learning Mathematics in Finnish or even in English (which was their third language). This may be a result of a higher usage of code-switching (Fernández-Zanjurjo et al 2019).

CLIL is not a concept set in stone, it is continually evolving, and this means that CLIL can be realized in different schools and even by different teachers in one school quite differently (Bentley 2010: 6). CLIL can even happen outside the school with varied activities like student exchanges and everyday activities as long as they do not take place in native language in some definitions (Cenoz 2013).

Furthermore, consolidating former knowledge is especially important when students are learning the subject in a non-native language, Bentley (2010: 79) writes. Coming back to the knowledge after a day or two or even a week is important and the activities should be varied so that new associations are made and the students can improve (Bentley 2010: 79).

Over time, ESP and CLIL have come closer together. There are many similarities between ESP and CLIL, the main one being that both of them aim to integrate language and subject matter instruction (Tarnpolsky 2013) and emphasise teaching both language and professional skills (Jendrych and Wisniewska 2010). They both also “confront similar difficulties in implementation such as teacher training, teaching qualifications, peer collaboration, students’ motivation and material design” (Yang 2016).

Yang’s (2016) study conducted in Taiwan showed that, as a rule, neither ESP nor CLIL teachers place much emphasis on language, believing in fluency before accuracy. However, the study concluded, when compared against each other, ESP teachers would focus more on language accuracy and would assess it as well.

Yang (2016) argues that the main differences between ESP and CLIL are that in ESP the focus is on the vocabulary, in CLIL it is on the subject matter. Yang (2016) adds that while in CLIL grades are given, as a rule, for knowing the subject matter, in ESP it is the opposite - grades are given for using the language.

Assessment in ESP and CLIL can be quite different as well, depending on the approach taken by the teacher or institution. Assessing students is also a part of course evaluation because the results of the assessment can show whether the aims and purposes of the course were met (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 144-145).

In ESP, the most common form of assessment is an achievement test (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 147). An achievement test should give students a chance to both understand and produce language; it should not focus on sub-skills (for example, “linking clauses”) but elicit the use of a combination of skills; the content (subject matter) of a test should align with the content (subject matter) of what has been taught before; since as a rule the subject matter is already known to the students, knowing the subject matter should not give an advantage to the students; the test should not “test subject-specific vocabulary, but rather the ability to exploit such vocabulary within a context of general vocabulary”; and “it tests written production” (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 149).

In CLIL, the question of what to assess is more difficult but since CLIL’s focus is both on language and content, theoretically both should be assessed (Massler et al 2014). The problem is, however, that testing both in CLIL may mean that students’ knowledge does not fully reflect in their tests because of potential limitations of their language skills, yet language skills also need to be tested (Lo and Fung 2018).

Before assessing students, it is important to know the reason for assessing them: do we want to know what students know about the subject?; do we want to find out areas of improvement in the subject and language?; monitoring progress?, and so on (Bentley 2010: 84). Often, a summative

assessment to assess what the students know about the subject and “how well they can use the language of” the subject is used (Bentley 2010: 89).

A possible problem with having students write about subject matter is that they are not familiar with it and this may reflect an incorrect picture of students’ language skills because it may lead to “poor quality and development of ideas” (He and Shi 2012). This can be a problem with assessment in regular English classes but not so much in ESP and CLIL classrooms where the subject matter is taught and the teacher can make sure to assess what has actually been taught.

The gap between ESP and CLIL is narrowing because “both ESP and CLIL practitioners have to find a balance between target language culture and professional subject matter in their instruction” (Yang 2016). This means that as time goes on, more interdisciplinary courses may appear as suitable aspects of both approaches are combined by teachers to give their students the best possible learning experience.

### **1.3 Teaching and acquiring vocabulary**

No matter whether a course is an ESP or CLIL course, teaching vocabulary is important because terminology is needed to talk about the subject matter at hand. This section gives an overview of what is vocabulary, what does knowing a word mean, and concludes with good vocabulary teaching practices.

When talking about acquiring vocabulary, it is necessary to talk about what vocabulary is and what knowing a word means. According to Ur (2012: 60), “vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words in the language”. Ur then elaborates on that definition, adding that a vocabulary item can include more than just one word (*post office*) or be an expression (*call it a day, in any case*) that is “stored in the memory as a whole ‘chunk’”.

In order to know a word, students need to know how it is written, pronounced, and used in various contexts (Juel and Deffes 2004; and Nation 2008: 100). This all should be taught in

connection to new vocabulary or otherwise vocabulary development may slow down (Harrop 2012).

Schmitt (2019) is concerned that the amount of research into what learners should know about vocabulary in order to know it is copious compared to the research about what to do with this knowledge and how to help students acquire these things. Nation (2008: 43) has also touched on the topic more than ten years earlier, stating that it is not uncommon for the students to be able to read well but have difficulties with producing spoken language.

Schmitt (2019) writes that research suggests that it is relatively easy to get the students to the level of receptive mastery (students recognise the word in texts and speech) but it takes more work to get them to the level of productive mastery (students can use the word on their own). Other research (Castellano Risco 2015) has found that CLIL students as a rule have a better mastery of receptive vocabulary than their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) counterparts; and Jexenflicker and Dalton-Puffer (2010) report that CLIL students use more less frequent words and their vocabulary is more varied than that of EFL students.

Nation (2008: 1-3; 64; 74-79) has emphasised the importance of meaningful context when first encountering and when producing the new language as well. He states that teachers should draw students' attention to vocabulary items and teach strategies like guessing from context and how to use dictionaries for acquiring new vocabulary. Nation emphasises that this should be concurrent or followed up by developing fluency and making sure that students get a chance to actually practice using their acquired vocabulary in a meaningful way. Schmitt (2019) also suggests that in the beginning it might be useful to use meaning recall formats that require students to recognise the words and to gradually move on to form recall formats to encourage and assess the development of productive mastery.

Sometimes it may be necessary to clarify a word or concept through the students' first language; this does not apply when students have different first languages, although a teacher may

at times use the clarifications with the students with whom he or she has another common language besides the instructional language (Llinares et al 2012: 33-34). The amount of first language usage differs between the different approaches to CLIL by different schools/teachers but should be done as little as possible or not at all “in the interest of foreign language development” (Dalton-Puffer 2007: 203). Even if native language comes into the classroom now and then in the beginning, as the students make progress, it should phase out to the point where students speak to the teacher about the assignments outside the class in the target language (Llinares et al 2012: 34).

When teaching vocabulary, teachers should not focus on individual words only, but deal with various idioms (phrases where the meaning is not clear from the meanings of the individual words) and collocations (words that frequently occur together) as well (Nation 2008: 117-121; Abrudan 2017). Abrudan (2017) also states that:

A native speaker’s active vocabulary is made up of 2000 words, which is a small number if we consider the fact that we are talking about active vocabulary. An intermediate student’s vocabulary is made up of the same number of words. The collocations made up out of those 2000 words by the native speaker makes the difference between that person and the intermediate level student. (Abrudan 2017)

Abrudan (2017), who has been teaching Business English for years, writes that in her experience some of the good ways to teach collocations are explicitly teaching what a collocation is and how collocations work, having students do vocabulary exercises (for example matching parts of a collocation, finding a better word), reconstructing texts and so on. And as always, “activities should be supported by materials” and be interesting and relevant to the students.

Nation (2008: 59-66) suggests that teachers could help the students by pre-teaching vocabulary before a reading or listening exercise. He elaborates that teachers could explain what the word consists of so that in the future a word could be remembered from the individual parts of the word; teachers could teach students ways to guess the meaning from context.

Nation (2008: 22-27) writes that in order for students to learn new vocabulary from listening, they should focus on the message; they should be interested in what they are listening to; they

should know most of the words and have sufficient support for guessing the rest of the words; and finally, they should be given opportunities to encounter the new vocabulary again and again. He also suggests activities like transcribing dictations, encouraging the learners to use the new words in a new way, and controlling the teacher's language through a game where the teacher changes his or her speed of speech, intonation, diction and so on and the students need to ask clarifying questions.

For encouraging speaking, Nation (2008: 44-47) suggests that teachers should teach paraphrasing techniques; teachers could use communicative crosswords where two students in a pair have a crossword with different words filled out and they need to describe their partner's missing words; students could play 20 questions games and the teacher could devise speaking exercises based on reading texts.

Nation (2008: 86-91) also lists many possible activities for improving students' writing. He suggests different ways to teach spelling: for example, through teaching students patterns in spelling, doing dictation, encouraging them to keep notes on their spelling mistakes and use dictionaries. And above all, students should be encouraged and made to write.

All in all, there are many things that teachers can do to aid the students in learning new subject-specific vocabulary, as summarised by Bentley:

- highlighting vocabulary and chunks of vocabulary used in CLIL subjects to help learners build a wide range of vocabulary they will need
- modelling sentences /--/ to help learners see examples of the language they need to produce
- allowing learners to be more relaxed about using the target language because the focus is on the meaning of curricular concepts
- correcting learners by recasting language immediately after they make mistakes, particularly with subject-specific vocabulary
- analysing errors to identify difficulties learners have when producing English (Bentley 2010: 14)

In conclusion, it is important to provide students with numerous opportunities to encounter new vocabulary in different ways so that they would eventually begin to produce the vocabulary themselves in a meaningful way. Teachers can help their students during this process

by drawing attention to vocabulary items, teaching more about a vocabulary item than simply its meaning, and giving students various opportunities to use the vocabulary.

## 2 DESIGNING A BUSINESS ENGLISH COURSE FOR MIINA HÄRMA GÜMNAASIUM

This part of the thesis gives an overview of the process of creating the Business English course. It is divided into two sections: “2.1 Reviewing the existing course”, “2.2 Revising the course”.

There may be some confusion about certain terminology used throughout this thesis, most notably with terms *unit*, *sub-unit*, *topic*, *sub-topic*, and *subject matter*. *Unit* is used in relation to textbooks where different exercises, activities and tasks are collected together to form a unit. A *sub-unit* is a term that is suitable to use in connection with the main textbook *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) where every unit is divided into six parts (or *sub-units*), all with their own particular objective (vocabulary, management skills et cetera). A *topic* in this thesis is an overarching theme of a course segment (for example, “Corporate image and supply”) while a *sub-topic* is a smaller theme inside the main *topic* (for example, “corporate image” and “corporate social responsibility” are *sub-topics* to “Corporate image and supply”). *Subject matter* represents the so-called contents of a *topic* (for example, teaching what “corporate social responsibility” means and how it related to business).

The terms *exercise*, *activity*, and *task* are used in the same way as Professor Jack C. Richards, an authority in the field of second language teaching, defines them: *an exercise* involves “controlled, guided or open ended practice of some aspect of language” (for example, a drill, cloze activity, reading comprehension exercise); *an activity* “refers to any kind of purposeful classroom procedure that involves learners doing something that relates to the goals of the course” (for example, a song, a game, debate, group discussion); and *a task* is “something that learners do, or carry out, using their existing language resources” and it “has an outcome which is not simply linked to learning language, though language acquisition may occur as the learner carries out the task”. (Richards 2020)

## 2.1 Reviewing the existing course

The Business English course designed within this MA thesis is very different from the course that was first taught by the author of this thesis during the 2018/19 school year. Changes to the course have been made based on the analysis of the author of this thesis, in-class feedback, feedback from the students at the end of the course, and changes in the way that English is taught at MHG.

The decision to make changes to the course formed during the 2018/18 school year for different reasons. Firstly, some problems with the suitability of the materials were perceived by the teacher. During grammar sub-units, for example, students seemed bored, they finished the exercises in no time and there were, as a rule, no mistakes or discussions why things are as they are. The examples in the *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook were also dated at times, with people or numbers having changed in the 10 years since the textbook's publication.

*The Business 2.0* by Allison et al (2009) has been used in MHG to teach Business English for years. This is an ESP textbook because it focuses on language, and it covers eight topics in eight units in Business English: "Personal development", "Corporate image", "Supply chain", "Managing conflict", "Marketing and sales", "Risk management", "Investment" and "Free trade". This is not an exhaustive list of Business English topics but a selection of topics that the authors have found the most important. Every unit has six sub-units: reading text with exercises, vocabulary, grammar, management skills, writing, and case study. The material in this textbook covers all four language skills: speaking, listening, writing and reading.

*The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) also costs around 20€ and in MHG tradition, students would either need to buy it or find a way to access the textbook otherwise. There are 48 sub-units in the textbook; out of these 48 sub-units, the two full units and the 6 grammar sub-units from other units that are not completely omitted would not be used, as well as 5 management skills sub-units, giving classroom material for only 25 sub-units out of 48. The number of sub-units is even

smaller because only selected case study and writing sub-units would be used. As this is the case, it seemed that asking the students to pay for a textbook of which they would not get the full use out of did not seem justified.

Since MHG allows photocopying from textbooks in the amount necessary to give this course and in many cases it is possible to show relevant exercises and tasks in PowerPoint instead, the decision was reached to omit the textbook. The materials that end up used in the Business English course at MHG are a mix of materials evaluation, development and adaption processes.

Besides saving paper and presenting some exercises and tasks on screen, PowerPoint serves as a way to sidestep some of the outdatedness of the *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook. The content matter of this textbook is still relevant (logistics is still logistics, companies still need to think about corporate social responsibility et cetera) but some of the examples in the texts are old (in a text about McDonald's (Allison et al 2009: 23), for example, the CEO has changed) or trivia answers have changed (one striking example comes from a logistics quiz (Allison et al 2009: 38) where the answer to the annual cost of returned goods in the USA is 100 billion USD but it has risen to 309 billion USD (Intrado GlobeNewsfire 2020) in the 10 years since the publication of this textbook). When writing the question about returned goods it is possible to write the updated answer and it is easy to change with PowerPoint from year to year. PowerPoint also allows for elaboration on different tasks and exercises as everything does not have to be verbatim to the textbook.

Secondly, the students felt and voiced their concerns as well both in class and in feedback forms filled out at the end of the course. In the 2018/19 school year there were 12 students in the course, and 10 feedback forms were filled out in class. They felt that the grammar sub-units were unnecessary and not needed, the "Personal development" and "Managing conflict" units as a whole were topics that they had covered well during their previous education in other subjects, and that they would appreciate more variety in activities than the textbook provided.

Students from the 2018/19 school year wrote that there should be a limit to how many absences students could have. The reason was that sometimes almost half the students were absent because they did not want to wait through a free period they had before the scheduled class time, or they were absent for other reasons; and the students who were present, although enjoying the classes, were feeling demotivated because of that.

Based on all that, a course overview was created before teaching the course during the 2019/20 school year. The topics of the course are “Corporate image and supply”, “Marketing”, “Risk management”, “Free trade”, “Investing”, and “Working life” and since the school year of 2019/20, the students do not need to purchase a textbook and they will receive handouts from various sources instead.

The course is graded and it was decided that in order for the students to pass they need to present a portfolio of their work throughout the course (handouts and their home assignments to make sure that they keep their materials together and organized even without a textbook to keep everything in one place), do a presentation about marketing strategy, hand in home assignments, and pass three written tests that check if they have learnt the subject matter and that they know the vocabulary. There is no test that covers the “Working life” topic because the job interview monopoly and writing a covering letter, which is compulsory homework, act as a way to revise everything. It was decided that if a student is absent from more than 10 lessons out of 60, he or she needs to do extra work.

Lastly, and possibly most importantly, after the feedback from the 2018/19 school year, the focus of this course was shifted from teaching the language and especially grammar to teaching the subject matter. The vocabulary aspect still remained important, even without the focus on grammar.

Some changes were made to the course outline during the teaching of the 2019/20 school year course, although all the topics remained the same. The changed outline can be seen in

Appendix 1 and will be the basis for the 2020/21 school year's course. It is important to keep in mind, however, that creating a course is a continuous process and the outline may change before the course is taught again in the 2019/20 school year if new material or ideas emerge, and it will certainly be changed during the teaching of the course.

During the teaching of the 2019/20 school year's course, a decision was made which assignments should be given out on paper and which assignments can be written down in a PowerPoint presentation. Timely and relevant examples were found for various topics, new materials incorporated (*Success with Business* (National Geographic 2020) textbook, *Business Vocabulary in Use* (Mascull 2018), communicative crosswords, taboo cards, and job interview monopoly) and various assignments added. More information about them can be found in the next section "2.3 Course materials and activities".

Further changes to the course were made based on the in-class feedback and the feedback form filled out by the 2019/20 school year's students. In the 2019/20 school year, students (10 out of 24) filled out the feedback online as the course was finished online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There were 24 students enrolled in the course in the 2019/20 school year. The limit was requested to be 15, or a maximum of 18 students but for different reasons the number was higher during this year. The students felt that 24 students in a classroom is slightly too much for this kind of a course (mostly there were 20 students present) and with a smaller class even better group work and discussions could be had. This was felt by the author of this thesis as well and hopefully there will be fewer students enrolled in the course in the future.

The grammar sub-units that were completely omitted from the *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook based on the 2018/19 school year students' feedback, seemed not to be missed and no one of the 2019/20 school year students mentioned that they would have liked more focus on grammar.

As a rule, students from the 2018/20 school year said that they were happy with how much they learnt about the business world, and most of the students who gave feedback brought out the fact that they learnt a lot of new vocabulary. There was one student who wrote that new vocabulary items could have been explained more thoroughly.

Due to schools in Estonia shutting down in the middle of March 2020 because of COVID-19, the last three weeks of the course (which covered “Investment” and “Working life” topics) were finished during distance studies with a combination of handouts and Zoom lessons. “Investment” is one of the most difficult topics in this course and at least one student felt that it could have been covered in more depth. This is an issue that should be fixed with in-class meetings where all students have more freedom to ask if there is anything they do not fully understand.

Students of the 2018/19 school year were happy with the handout system and no one who gave feedback felt that they would have preferred to buy a textbook. The quality of copies was brought up a couple of times and this is something that can be improved upon – usually the quality of a handout suffers when a photocopy is made of a photocopy, so in future years, if possible, new photocopies will be made straight from the source (textbooks or by printing out digital materials again) and not from the existing photocopies.

Students reported enjoying the amount of discussion, group work and varied activities as they were a good change to the handouts and entertaining as well. One of the students (Business English course feedback 2020) wrote that “I think it would've been cool if we gathered into groups at the start of the course and made imaginary businesses and then would've approached different topics considering our companies for example what risks we might run into or what would our corporate image look like and so on,” which the author of this thesis thinks is an excellent idea and would help make the students interact with the content of the course even more. As the suggestion came in late in the writing of this thesis, it has not yet been implemented but it will be strongly considered.

This last point brings out the nature of course development. It is a continuous process that lasts throughout years as new materials, suggestions and feedback is considered and incorporated into the course. The course outline, and especially the number of lessons allocated to one topic, needs to be flexible because various holidays and school functions may take away lesson time. The product of this MA thesis makes a good foundation for building an even better course in the future.

As a result of the second year's teaching experience review, the following changes were seen as necessary: even more focus should be given to explicitly teaching vocabulary, improving the quality of handouts, changing the allowance for absences from 10 to 15 lessons, and diversifying the lessons with a presentation, debate, and so on. The decision to shift the focus from language and grammar to mainly the subject matter and vocabulary of Business English proved to be the correct decision as students and the teacher alike felt that this was working and focusing on grammar was not missed.

## **2.2 Revising the course**

In this part of the thesis, changes made to the course outline and topics chosen for the course as well as the materials selected for teaching this course are discussed.

### **2.2.1 Revising the course outline**

There are three main formats for creating a course outline as described by Dubin and Olshtain (1986: 50-54) and these are linear, modular, and cyclical. The linear format presupposes that the topics in a course build on each other and that students cannot learn new material before they have mastered the previous material. The topics in this course (“Corporate image and supply”, “Marketing”, “Risk management”, “Free trade”, “Investing”, and “Working life”) all stand on their own and have few natural connections which means that the linear format does not work. The course will be built on modular format's principles: every topic stands on its own and they can be

taught in any succession. To help with the retention of vocabulary and subject matter, comparisons and connections are drawn whenever possible which is characteristic to the linear format.

Students will first meet the words in written texts and listening but through discussions, pair and group work they should gradually move towards productive mastery. Of course, there is an issue of spaced repetitions (Schmitt 2019) which will be difficult to put into practice when the topics covered are quite different from each other, as is the case with this course. Here, the cyclical format characteristics help with drawing connections to earlier topics as often as possible to provide repetition.

This course is a fusion of ESP and CLIL. The materials will come from ESP textbooks for Business English and a lot of attention will be given to the vocabulary. What is different from ESP is the fact that grammar will receive little or no attention throughout the course (grammar will be discussed if need arises and will not be considered when students take tests) and instead a lot of focus is given to the subject matter at hand, bringing in CLIL. Built into this course is a lot of group work and discussions that are very important to CLIL and an important part of language learning in general.

Looking back on previous learning is important in any kind of learning, but especially in CLIL and vocabulary acquisition, so parallels are shown as often as possible in new ways so that the students could improve.

The aim of this course is not to make the students freely produce every single new vocabulary item that they encounter. This would be ideal but unfortunately not possible as the nature of the topics does not provide them with enough repetition of a lot of vocabulary. The aim is to get the students far enough so that they could recognise the meaning of the words when they encounter these items outside the classroom (that is, to get them to receptive mastery of vocabulary). If the words are important and pertinent for them, they will learn them despite the lack of repetition. This will be individual from student to student.

However, the sequence of materials is such that at first students need to receive the vocabulary (in reading and listening exercises) and slowly the exercises and tasks change in a way that prompt them to use the vocabulary items (discussion questions, communicative crosswords, taboo, other vocabulary exercises) and eventually elicit the vocabulary without former input (case studies, role plays, discussions).

The 60 lessons that are given to the Business English course are also not enough to cover all the material in the textbook so Business English teachers at MHG have omitted two units every year. The units omitted by the author of this thesis after discussing it with the 2018/19 school year students are “Personal development” and “Managing conflict”. The decision was reached because these topics are quite universal and covered quite well in regular English classes and other subjects that the students have, and would be less beneficial when it comes to the students’ overall knowledge of the business world than the other units. Five of the management and four writing skills related sub-units were omitted for the same reason. There is a sub-unit about time management under “Corporate image”, for example, which covers the skills that students have received in other subjects before. When the author of this thesis taught the course for the first time, it also appeared that the grammar sub-units were too easy for the students making another big part of the textbook redundant.

The last topic, “Working life”, was added to the list of *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook’s topics because students from the 2018/19 school year found this topic relevant to their needs as potentially soon-to-be employees. A topic that was considered for the course based on the feedback but did not fit in due to time constraints is “Start-ups” which is also a relevant topic in today’s world.

After feedback from the 2018/19 school year’s students and teacher’s own analysis, the following topics were chosen for the course: “Corporate image and supply”, “Marketing”, “Risk management”, “Free trade”, “Investing”, and “Working life”. These topics were chosen based on

relevance to students' needs (so that they are not too repetitive of their previous studies and help broaden their world view while simultaneously helping them improve their English). The first five topics come from *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook and the last one, "Working life", is largely based on *Success with Business* (National Geographic 2020) textbook, and the teacher's own materials.

However, in the 2019/20 school year feedback, two students said that "Working life", while an important topic, felt slightly redundant to them because it has been covered in other classes numerous times, so in the future it might be switched out for "Start-ups" which was requested by one student from 2019/20 feedback. This step will be considered carefully in the future, however, since one-two students' wishes are not the majority's wishes and there were several students who found that they still learnt new things with "Working life".

Based on students' feedback from the 2018/19 school year, students were also given a limit of lessons that they can be absent from before they need to do extra work, even if they have passed all the tests (of which there were four in that year) and fulfilled other conditions for passing the course. The 10 absences rule that was established turned out to be too strict, however, as the 2019/20 course students felt that it put too much pressure on them with the extracurricular activities that they have. The new adjusted amount is 15 absences.

There are three graded tests throughout this course. The tests will assess whether the students have acquired the new vocabulary and the subject matter that was taught in class. The main aim of the course is to give students knowledge of the subject matter and teach them subject-related vocabulary (through reading, listening, writing, and vocabulary exercises; discussions) while also encouraging them to synthesise their learning and support discussion (through discussions and group work).

After the course of the 2018/19 school year had ended but before the beginning of the 2019/20 school year's course, the author of this thesis kept an eye out for possible extra materials

to be used in the future. REGIPIO's Business English taboo cards (released in 2018), and *Business English Vocabulary in Use* by Mascull (2018) were added to the repertoire, as well as *Success with Business* (National Geographic 2020) during the teaching of the 2019/20 course. In addition, own materials were created or reused from teaching other courses.

In its current form, the course covers six topics. Most of these topics begin with a reading text, followed by various activities for learning the subject matter and acquiring the new vocabulary. These activities range from vocabulary exercises and games to case studies and simulations about possible business-related scenarios. There will be three tests to assess whether the students have learnt the subject matter and vocabulary as well as ongoing feedback to their home assignments and in-class activities.

### **2.2.2 Course materials and activities**

A list of topics for the course was chosen and materials used to teach these topics (their vocabulary and subject matter) were selected. The materials of this course are a product of evaluating existing materials, developing new materials, and adapting existing materials. The aim of these materials is to support the purposes of this course and provide versatile activities that help the students to acquire the subject matter and the vocabulary.

The texts and vocabulary exercises in *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) will remain the main sources of language and subject matter input in the course because they give quite a good overview of the subject matter at hand and provide a lot of extension exercises and discussion opportunities. The texts and vocabulary exercises also give a good base for the students going deeper into the subject matter and leading up to the case studies where they can show what they have learnt throughout the previous sub-units and extra materials. Reading texts are always preceded by activating questions to make students think about the topic. There are several reading comprehension exercises, further discussion points and a listening exercise after reading the text.

All these activities provide the repetition of the vocabulary needed to talk about the topic at hand. All reading texts and vocabulary exercises from *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) are used in their original form, unless some facts need to be updated in which case it will be done before sharing the materials with students.

To further consolidate the new vocabulary and show students different collocations, the vocabulary sub-unit of *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) is used. These exercises, while covering similar vocabulary, provide more information and activities related to the current topic. Often many collocations and idioms are shown in context. Vocabulary is learnt through written, listening, and speaking exercises.

At times, vocabulary exercises from *Business Vocabulary in Use* (Mascull 2008) are used. Exercises from this textbook were first used in the 2019/20 school year and they proved to be useful for consolidating previous vocabulary while also providing more content for discussions. These vocabulary exercises are perhaps more traditional than the ones in *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) with most of the exercises being gap-fill exercises. This material provides students definitions, examples of the vocabulary items in use, and some background information. Vocabulary exercises from this textbook are selected only when they in most part cover the same vocabulary items as the main textbook to provide additional repetition. However, there is usually some new information which provides good material for extra discussion in smaller groups and in class.

In Appendix 3 are the vocabulary lists for every topic that is covered in this Business English course. These are the vocabulary items that students should learn in Business English if they are not already familiar with these before the course.

National Geographic's textbook *Success with Business* (2020), which was incorporated during the 2019/20 school year, mostly concentrates on Business English vocabulary as well. The vocabulary covered is versatile and pertinent to the course but since it does not give much

information about the subject matter, it is good as part of a pool of more versatile materials and extra discussions not provided by the textbook. It does supplement other topics covered in the course quite well and is used as a basis for the topic of “Working life” and as extra materials for the topic of “Investment” and “Marketing and sales”.

The course will include three case studies from the *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook in their original form. They were used during the 2018/19 school year already as they are a good way to revise everything learnt within the topic because they combine the knowledge, vocabulary and skills acquired during a topic and do so in a versatile way: there are listening and writing exercises, discussions and group work where students need to make strategic decisions to help the companies. This makes the students use both their newly acquired vocabulary and knowledge about the subject matter.

Writing skills are no less important and in business people need to write quite a lot as well, be it quick emails or something longer and more intricate like a financial report. The aim of the activities related to writing is to make students think about the connotations that different vocabulary can have, and train them in ways to write effectively and in consideration of their audience. Here *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) sub-units are also used as the exercises make students analyse different writings and hone their writing skills. Different vocabulary items and collocations are important in the writing part as well and it both reflects on previous learnings and introduces new useful vocabulary to use in their own writing. They were used already in the 2018/19 year’s course and will continue to be used in their original form for the foreseeable future.

At the end of the “Working life” topic, students play job interview monopoly (a picture of it can be found in Appendix 2.1) which is a game where students need to take turns to answer job interview questions from different categories (experience and education, strengths and weaknesses, personal life, and miscellaneous). Categories are determined by the space the student’s game piece reaches after a die is rolled. There is a maximum of 6 students around one

Monopoly board and while one student is answering the others need to decide how much money out of 100€ to give based on the answering student's answer, fluency, and body language (there is a helpful matrix for that). This game helps to revise the tips for answering questions, students get to speak quite a lot and improve their skills in answering job interview questions. The questions are also built in a way that vocabulary for working life is represented as much as possible. This is a new addition since the 2019/20 school year.

At the end of the "Investing" topic, students watch a 2015 movie about the 2008 financial crisis (*The Big Short*), followed by a discussion and a short writing assignment to reflect on their learning. It was decided on after the 2018/19 school year when effort was made to give more variety to the course. This movie serves as a change from the handouts and group work, and helps them to broaden their world view and consolidate vocabulary related to investing. Since the 2019/20 school year's course ended during the COVID-19 pandemic and everyone may not have access to this movie, a decision was made to omit the movie this year. This means that the movie may be omitted in future years if reflection from the 2020/21 school year's course results in the movie not working within the framework of the course.

In addition, vocabulary exercises made by the author of this thesis (for example, communicative crosswords which are two sets of crosswords where two students have a different version of filled in words and they need to find out the words their partner has by communicating – can be found in Appendix 2.2), and taboo cards featuring the vocabulary from this course (both made by the author of this thesis), and a commercial Business English taboo card game "Beat About the Bush in Business" by REGIPIO (2018) will be used throughout the course since the 2019/20 school year.

Taboo is a card game where people need to explain words without using some other words that are written on the card (for example, they need to explain the word "logistics" without saying the words "supply", "reverse", and "manufacturer") until others guess the word. This game can be

made more difficult by asking the students to use the word in a sentence before moving on. The cards of Business English can be sorted by topic by the teacher beforehand and used by the students throughout the course during downtime. As the course goes on, newer vocabulary can be added to the card deck so that the students can revise older vocabulary as well. Topics can also be mixed with communicative crosswords with different sets of communicative crosswords with different vocabulary from different topics on them.

Students also need to do a presentation about a marketing campaign which they find interesting and noteworthy for one reason or another. This will be done as group work to provide further opportunities for communication and cooperation. Doing this as a group work is also smart time-wise because it allows students to make more in depth presentations in a shorter time frame thus saving class time. This task gives them a chance to draw from their learning, make new connections, and analyse content - all important aspects of CLIL and learning in general. This was implemented for the 2019/20 year's course and will continue to be a part of this course.

A debate about different investment types (and other investment-related topics that students propose) gives the students a chance to stretch the limits of their language and improve their cognitive skills. It also encourages team-work as it is team against team not student against student. This was implemented for the 2019/20 year's course but unfortunately because of COVID-19 it had to be omitted this year. Evaluation whether to omit it or not, or whether to change it and how, will be made during the 2020/21 school year.

In the 2018/19 school year, textbook-provided assessment that concentrates on grammar and vocabulary (which would be considered an ESP assessment) was used. Due to the shift in focus, the assessments now combine elements from the assessment practices of both ESP and CLIL. They will assess vocabulary acquisition (ESP) but it is subject-specific vocabulary that is being assessed (CLIL); it also assesses how well the students have acquired the subject matter (CLIL). An example question from a test would be "What is the difference between outsourcing

and offshoring? What are the drawbacks and benefits of each?” This will give the students a chance to show that they know what each of these terms means and what is the subject matter related to the terms. While the drawbacks and benefits are discussed in class beforehand, the students should be able to deduce them by synthesizing the rest of their learning from the topic as well.

There will not be vocabulary exercises in the tests because the aim has been to help students get from receptive mastery of vocabulary to its productive mastery. This is why using vocabulary items in a meaningful context is assessed. In traditional ESP classes, grammar would be graded as well but since this course does not explicitly teach grammar, it is not assessed. Any grammar mistakes made can be pointed out but will not be reflected in the grade of the test. Feedback will also be given throughout the course to different writing assignments, presentations and so on either orally or in writing but they will not be graded.

Students will learn about the business world with six topics (“Corporate image and supply”, “Marketing”, “Risk management”, “Free trade”, “Investing”, and “Working life”) over 60 lessons. All these activities serve the aim of teaching the subject matter of Business English and Business-related vocabulary in English. The activities are chosen to provide a good overview of the subject matter, help students get from receptive to productive mastery of the new vocabulary, and give them opportunities to use their new knowledge in various tasks (reading and listening exercises, a debate, a presentation and so on).

## CONCLUSION

Broadening students' world view, teaching English and important life skills is important to MHG and the school provides different courses to provide all that. Many of these courses are in English and Business English is one of them.

The Business English course has a long history at MHG but as textbooks often become out of date and every teacher has a different approach to teaching the same subject, it will not always be taught the same way.

As the students' command on English is getting better and better, it is possible to shift the focus of the course from the side of simply teaching English in Business context towards the side of teaching Business in English.

Business English is language that is used in the context of different areas relating to business; for example, in everyday workplace, financing and trade. Business English courses, however, can vary a lot based on the needs and purposes of the students who sign up for the course. This means that Business English can cover only one topic, or it can cover several; it can cover only different situations at a workplace, or subject matter that is related to business, for example international trade.

In MHG, based on the students' language skills (they are mostly students who have received at least B2 level in CAE) and MHG's aims in preparing them for the world, the course will be taught as a fusion of ESP and CLIL with principles derived from both. The focus on vocabulary comes from ESP, and the focus on the subject matter comes from CLIL. Since the students of this course already have a high level of English, the focus is lifted from language constructions and moved towards the content matter and the vocabulary of Business English. There is plenty of Business English related vocabulary that the students may pick up from their regular English classes or in their everyday life, but there is also a big chunk of vocabulary that most of them are unlikely to have encountered outside the classroom on their own. Emphasis is put on

revising vocabulary throughout the course to give the students a higher chance of not only understanding the language in receptive vocabulary but also in productive vocabulary.

Due to time constraints and the fact that there are few natural connections between most of the topics covered in this course, Business English at MHG will be a mix of modular and cyclical course format. The course is modular because the knowledge does not build on itself and the topics could be covered in any way the teacher (or students) wish. In order to give students more chances of repetition, as is characteristic to CLIL and good teaching practice in general, connections are made between topics as often as possible, and vocabulary from previous topics is also revised often.

The Business English course at MHG covers six broader topics: “Corporate image and supply”, “Marketing”, “Risk management”, “Free trade”, “Investing”, and “Working life”. The materials for the course are mostly chosen from *The Business 2.0* (Allison et al 2009) textbook with supplementation with relevant materials from *Success with Business* (National Geographic 2020), *Business Vocabulary in Use* (Mascull 2018) and teacher’s own materials.

Most of the topics begin with a longer reading text with exercises accompanying it, followed by work with vocabulary, and ending with a case study. Every topic includes a lot of discussions and group work. To mix things up and make the students interact with the subject matter more, there are some games (vocabulary games and job interview monopoly), a debate, a presentation, and short home assignments.

Most of the materials will be photocopied and some will be presented as a PowerPoint presentation. Students need to present a portfolio of their handouts, pass all three tests, present their home assignments, and be present for 50 out of 60 lessons. If there are more absences, they need to make up for it in the form of extra assignments.

This will not be the final version of the course at MHG as new materials and thoughts are constantly appearing. National Geographic’s (2020) *Success with Business* textbook was published

in the beginning of 2020 but quickly became a good and used source for this course in the middle of its 2019/2020 duration at MHG. This means that revisions will constantly be made to keep the course as up to date and relevant as possible.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 – THE COURSE OUTLINE

There will be 60 lessons and students can be absent from up to 15 lessons. The course is graded: three tests, home assignments and presentations need to be done, class portfolio presented.

Sources for activities are in brackets before the full stop. In case the source is the author of this thesis (Sille Eero), the material can mean either a handout, a teaching prop like cards or a game, or that teaching happens with a chalk and a blackboard.

*The Business 2.0* by Allison et al (2009) – TB

*Success with Business* by National Geographic (2020) – SWB

*Business Vocabulary in Use* by Mascull (2018) – BVU

Sille Eero - SE

<b>Topic</b>	<b>No of lessons</b>	<b>Sub-topics</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b>
Corporate image and supply	9	Corporate image, corporate social responsibility, outsourcing, logistics, business emails	Reading text about corporate makeover “The BIG McMakeover”, discussion, listening and vocabulary exercises (TB). Corporate social responsibility vocabulary exercises (TB + BVU). Corporate social responsibility examples, matching exercise handout (SE). Reading text about outsourcing “The Indian Machine”, discussion and exercises, listening exercise (TB). Reading text “Free trade or fair trade?”, exercises, discussion (TB). Listening, matching and gap-fill exercise about types of logistics (TB). Vocabulary exercises about logistics and vertical integration (BVU).	Students will improve their critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills; they will acquire new vocabulary and concepts related to corporate image and supply.
Marketing	2	Marketing strategies	Reading text about strategic marketing “A recipe for success:	Students will improve their

			<p>how to develop a strategic marketing plan”, discussion, listening and vocabulary exercises (TB).</p> <p>Reading text about active listening, exercises, discussion (TB).</p> <p>“The Art of Selling” handout (SWB).</p> <p>Overview of presentation do’s and don’t’s (SE).</p> <p>Selling useless items to coursemates; group work: marketing campaign + presentation (SE).</p> <p>Individual work (research at home + presenting in class): presenting a clever marketing campaign (SE).</p> <p>Case study: Presnya Taxi (reading, discussion, listening) (TB).</p>	<p>critical thinking, reading, speaking and listening skills; they will acquire new vocabulary and concepts related to marketing; they will improve their presenting and active listening skills; they will improve their skills of finding information and organising it.</p>
Test	1		Corporate image, supply and marketing test (SE)	
Risk management	7	Risk management, types of risk (strategic, operational, hazard, financial), crisis management, crisis communication	<p>Reading text “Enterprise risk management”, vocabulary and listening exercises (TB).</p> <p>Risk management homework, written: managing the risks of one company (SE, based on an exercise from TB).</p> <p>Reading text about crisis communication “It will never happen to me”, listening and writing exercises (TB).</p> <p>Role play: communication in crisis press conference simulation (TB).</p> <p>Case study: Périgord Gourmet (reading, discussion, listening) (TB).</p>	<p>Students will improve their critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills; they will acquire new vocabulary and concepts related to risk management; they can identify risks and manage them.</p>
Test	1		Risk management test	
Free trade	5	Free trade	<p>Reading text about “hot” and “cold” cultures “The price of being a fortress”, discussion, listening and vocabulary exercises (TB).</p> <p>Vocabulary exercises about trade area, protectionism and fair trade (BVU).</p> <p>Case study: The cartel (reading, discussion, listening) (TB).</p>	<p>Students will improve their critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills; they will acquire new vocabulary and concepts related to free and international trade.</p>

Investing	7	Types of investment (bonds, stocks, mutual funds, real estate), free vs regulated markets, decision-making, financial reporting, Warren Buffet	<p>Reading text about investment banking, free and regularized markets “Investment banks: heroes or zeroes?”, discussion, listening and vocabulary exercises (TB).</p> <p>Discussion and exercises about types of investment (SE + SWB).</p> <p>Debate about best investment types – prepare at home, debate at school) (SE).</p> <p>Decision-making reading text, matching and listening exercises (TB).</p> <p>Financial reporting exercises (reading, answering questions, matching words and phrases, writing a short financial report) (TB).</p> <p>Listening exercise about SourceMedia’s stock market report, writing a short financial report (TB).</p> <p>Vocabulary exercises about investing (SWU).</p> <p>Movie: The Big Short. Movie discussion, answering questions, relating it to what we have learnt (SE).</p> <p>Case study: Lesage Automobile (reading, discussion, listening) (TB).</p>	Students will improve their critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills; they will acquire new vocabulary and concepts related to investing.
Test	1		Free and international trade, investing test	
Working life	7	Job interviews, CV, cover letter, appearance, conduct at a job interview	<p>CV-related exercises and hand-out; evaluating different CVs (SWB + SE),</p> <p>Covering letter handout (SE).</p> <p>Homework: Writing a covering letter for a desired job; evaluating each other’s covering letters (SE).</p> <p>Job interview do’s and don’t’s (SE).</p> <p>Job interview monopoly (SE).</p>	<p>Students will consolidate their knowledge of how to write a good CV and a cover letter, they will practice answering questions at an interview.</p> <p>Students will improve their critical thinking, writing, speaking and listening skills.</p>



Appendix 2.2 – Communicative crosswords, A and B

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the crossword puzzle below *A*

The crossword puzzle consists of the following words:

- Across:
  - 5. A N U F A C T U R E R E S H I N G S T O C K O U T I N G
  - 6. U N I T S
  - 7. S C R E E N
  - 8. F A C T O R Y
  - 9. G R E E N W A S H I N G
  - 10. A D V E R T I S E M E N T
  - 11. R E S E A R C H
  - 12. L I Q U I D A T I O N
  - 13. R E S E A R C H
  - 14. O F F S H O T
  - 15. S H I N G
  - 16. L O G
  - 17. R E S E A R C H
  - 18. T A I L
  - 19. S T O C K O U T I
  - 20. T R I G G E R
  - 21. T A I L
  - 22. G
  - 23. L
  - 24. S
- Down:
  - 1. A U D I T
  - 2. S A L E S
  - 3. S M O K E
  - 4. M A N U F A C T U R E

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the crossword puzzle below B

A crossword puzzle grid with 24 numbered squares. The words filled in are:

- 1. ALLITERATION
- 2. CONSUMER
- 3. IMPACT
- 4. BUYER
- 5. BUSINESS
- 6. CYBERSQUATTING
- 7. TOKENISTIC
- 8. FRANCHISING
- 9. OUTSOURCING
- 10. MARKET
- 11. SUPPLY
- 12. MARKETING
- 13. RISK

## APPENDIX 3 - VOCABULARY

### Corporate image and supply

- franchising
- franchisee
- franchisor
- TM
- © □
- (®)
- green on the inside
- green on the outside
- greenwashing
- eco-efficiency
- corporate philanthropy
- cause-related marketing
- sponsoring awards
- codes of conduct
- codes of ethics
- corporate social responsibility (CSR)
- community investment
- run the risk
- smokescreen
- sidestep
- pay lip service
- tokenistic
- expose the fraud
- offshoring
- outsourcing
- insourcing/in-house
- lift-out
- knowledge drain
- supply
- ethics
- ethical behaviour
- ethical lapse
- ethical dilemma
- ethical standard
- ethical stance
- ethical issue
- to be accountable
- dealings
- transparent
- to act with integrity
- probity
- professional misconduct
- above board
- environmental protection
- pollution
- endanger
- climate change
- corruption
- bribe
- corporate citizens
- stakeholders
- logistics
- reverse logistics
- raw materials
- manufacturer
- distribution warehousing
- customer
- consumer
- fair trade
- reposition
- resell
- liquidation
- vendor
- audit
- retail
- outlets
- Scan-based-trading (SBT)
- returns
- stockout
- stales
- unsaleables
- cradle-to-grave
- free trade

### Marketing and sales

- marketing
- sales
- identify and understand your customers
- keep an eye on what the competition are up to
- identify opportunities for growth, profit or volume
- plan and polish your message
- follow up results and make adjustments
- market segment
- salesman
- unique selling point
- competitive advantage
- added benefits/value
- emotional value
- after-sales service
- buying signal
- prospective customer
- advantages
- disadvantages
- advertisements
- point-of-sale promotion
- direct mail
- word-of-mouth recommendation
- billboards
- viral marketing
- competition
- sales technique
- relationship selling
- individual needs
- hard sell
- soft sell
- perceived benefits
- buyer
- average sales
- move in and close the sale
- quantities
- delivery arrangements
- payment terms

**Risk management**

- risk
- hazard risk
- strategic risk
- operational risk
- financial risk
- supply chain problems
- cost overruns
- customer shortfall
- competitive pressures
- property damage
- face risks
- deal with risks
- examine risks
- manage risks
- mitigate risks
- identify risks
- quantify risks
- prioritize risks
- to trace to
- to take the appropriate steps
- to account for
- to have one's bases covered
- to impact company performance
- to cite as the reason for
- to be material to business performance
- to attribute to
- to measure the potential impact
- to have an impact on the long-term viability of the company
- passing off
- cybersquatting
- hacking
- protest issues
- desist
- litigate
- monitor
- pursue reversal
- a sound bite
- to strangle at birth
- alliteration
- the essence of
- focus on the positives
- legitimate question
- even more to the point
- briefly sum up
- quietly confident

**Free and international trade**

- trade
- free trade
- fair trade
- protectionism
- regulations
- restrictions
- tariffs
- quotas
- economic growth
- job losses
- tax havens
- specialization
- competition
- goods
- imports
- exports
- borderless economies
- digital islands
- universal protocols
- global archipelago
- consumers
- consumer behaviour
- hot cultures
- cold cultures
- technology gap
- economies of scale
- exploitation of children
- foreign intervention
- prospects
- sales
- shareholders

**Investing**

- invest
- investor
- save
- earn
- withdraw
- owe
- bet
- repay
- invoice
- lend
- borrow
- spend
- cost
- worth
- bank loan
- loan applicant
- financial crash
- mortgage
- remortgage
- down-payment
- assets
- equity
- expenditure
- loss
- debtor
- profit
- turnover
- revenue
- income
- liabilities
- bricks and mortar
- real estate
- buy-to-let
- diversify
- recession
- downshift
- go pear-shaped
- bull market
- bear market
- property
- IMF
- World Bank
- go under
- stocks
- shares
- price
- tax
- pre-tax profits

**Working life**

- employee
- employer
- self-employed
- unemployment
- retire
- resign
- to apply for a job
- pay
- salary
- lay off
- dismiss
- education
- to recruit
- flexible hours
- overtime
- temporary contracts
- part-time contracts
- strengths
- weaknesses
- competition
- gig
- working environment
- training
- career prospects
- interview
- interviewer
- interviewee
- CV
- covering letter
- applicant

## RESÜMEE

### TARTU ÜLIKOOL ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Sille Eero

Creating a Business English Course / Inglise ärikeeles kursuse loomine

Magistritöö

2020

Lehekülgede arv: 52

#### Annotatsioon:

Kuna tänapäeva globaliseerivas maailmas on inglise keele oskus üha rohkem tähtis, üritab Tartu Miina Härma Gümnaasium (MHG) õpilasi selleks ette valmistada pakkudes erinevaid ingliskeelseid valikkursusi. Inglise ärikeeles on üks nendest kursustest ja selle magistritöö eesmärk oligi panna kokku Inglise ärikeeles kursus MHG 12. klassile.

See kursus keskendub Inglise ärikeeles sõnavara ja ärimaailma põhimõtete õpetamisele, mis teeb sellest *English for Special Purposes* (ESP) ning lõimitud aine- ja keeleõppe (LAK) kursuse segu. ESP on lähenemine, kus keskendutakse inglise keelele, aga seda teatud ainevaldkonna raames (näiteks “Inglise keel arstidele” või “Inglise ärikeeles”); LAK-õpe on lähenemine, mille puhul ainet õpetatakse sihtkeeles ja õpilased õpivad nii ainet kui ka keelt samal ajal.

12. klassile mõeldud kursus koosneb kuuest peatükist (firma kuvand ja tarnimine, turundus, riskijuhtimine, vabakaubandus, investeerimine, tööelu), mis jaotuvad 60 tunni peale. Kursuse materjalid tulevad erinevatest Inglise ärikeeles õpikutest ja mõned materjalid on selle magistritöö autori loodud. Kursuse plaan järgib modulaarse formaadi (*modular format*) põhimõtteid koos tsükilise formaadi põhimõtetega – see tähendab, et teemad ei pea olema kindlas järjekorras, sest järgmise teema võtmiseks ei ole reeglina vaja eelmise teema teadmiseid, aga eelmiste teemadega tuuakse paralleelsele nii tihti kui võimalik. Palju tähelepanu pannakse sõnavara kordamisele, sest see aitab õpilastel sõnavara paremini meelde jätta.

Selles magistritöös on kaks põhilist peatükki. Esimene, kirjanduse ülevaade, annab teoreetilise ülevaate ESPst ja LAKist ning nende põhilistest meetoditest, tugevatest ja nõrkadest külgedest; see katab ka kursuse loomise sammud ja selle, kuidas sõnavara õpetada. Teine peatükk, meetod, katab kursuse loomise protsessi alates õpilaste vajaduste selgeks tegemisest kuni materjalide valikuni. Magistritöö lõpus on kolm lisa – kursuse ülevaade, teemade juurde käivate materjalide näited, ja Inglise ärikeeles sõnavara, mis nendest teemadest läbi jookseb.

Märksõnad: LAK-õpe (lõimitud aine- ja keeleõpe), *English for Special Purposes* (ESP), lõimitud ained, õppematerjal, gümnaasium, inglise ärikeeles, sõnavara õpetamine, sõnavara õppimine, kursuse loomine.

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*Sille Eero*

**24.05.2020**

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Sille Eero

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**Lõputöö on lubatud kaitsmisele.**

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