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M. Sc., M. Ed.

**LINKING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO THE WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT:
THE CASE OF BUSINESS ENGLISH IN GREECE**

Doctor of Education (EdD)

The Open University

Education

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Abstract

The focus of this research is Vocational Education (VE) of secondary level and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Research shows that despite the significance placed on VE (UNESCO 2012), a number of discrepancies are found regarding its link with the employment market worldwide, mainly attributed to the appropriateness of the material. Against this background, this study investigated the link between the English language needs of businesses in Greece and the English language skills VE schools offer at present.

The study employed a mixed methods research methodology. It consisted of business English language needs questionnaires with businesses (N=136), interviews with teachers (N=10), and a focus group discussion with learners (N=8) as data collection tools. Additionally, an evaluation of the “English for Economics and Administration” VE textbook was conducted and the impact of newly designed ESP material on learners was examined through pre-post-tests.

The findings of the businesses survey revealed the need for more emphasis on speaking and listening skills than writing or reading. The evaluation of the target textbook suggested a lack of these skills and lack of authenticity, interactivity, motivation, contemporary content and communicative tasks required by the workplace. To address this gap some new ESP materials were designed to supplement part of the target textbook. The findings show that both learners and teachers found these materials communicative, contemporary, authentic and relevant to learners’ future working needs.

In the Greek context this research is unique in that it investigates the link between VE of secondary level and workplace, which has not been addressed in the Greek literature so far. The research has implications for practitioners who could participate in materials design, and for policy makers who should base ESP materials design on learners’, and workplace needs analysis.

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List of Key Abbreviations

- BELF** - Business English as a Lingua Franca
- BERA** – British Education Research Association
- EAP** - English for Academic Purposes
- EIL** - English as an International Language
- EGP** - English for General Purposes
- ELF** - English as a Lingua Franca
- EPA.L.** – [EΠA.Λ. in Greek =Vocational Lyceum (Lyceum=Senior High School)]
- EOP** - English for Occupational Purposes
- ESP** - English for Specific Purposes
- EVP** - English for Vocational Purposes
- HR** - Human Resource
- HREC** – Human Resource Ethics Committee
- ICT** - Information and Communications Technology
- IE** - International English
- PI** - Pedagogical Institute
- VE** – Vocational Education
- VET** - Vocational Education and Training
- VSE** – Vocational Secondary Education
- VSS** – Vocational Secondary Schools

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Rationale for the research study

The employment market today is developing rapidly due to advances in technology and economic changes that bring about new challenges to the workplace and to all walks of life. These challenges correspond to a high demand for specialized skills and qualifications on behalf of candidate employees who strive to set out on career paths. This new era of qualifications is intensifying and the employment criteria set by the employment market often become a nightmare for job candidates and would-be employees. The need to meet businesses' prerequisites in the hope of a prominent profession or just any profession today is so high that it is often quite difficult for learners and future employees to "survive" professionally and respond to such skills successfully unless they are properly trained (Daragmeh, 2011).

The task of appropriate training in order for learners and future employees to cope with professional skills needs is mainly the task of educational institutions. They are the basic axon of educational decisions making and responsible for preparing learners accordingly. To this end, curricula and teaching materials (textbooks, audio/visual material/educational software) and appropriate teaching and learning guidelines lie under the umbrella of their supervision. Their main goal is to fulfill the educational targets set by the authorities and policy makers of each state.

In the Greek context, and within the framework of the educational authorities' responsibility, there are a variety of different types of educational level institutions: primary and secondary General or Vocational education schools and universities or colleges of tertiary level. Within these educational contexts English is one of the main subjects taught to learners at all levels of education (primary to tertiary). English is described in their curricula as one of the major qualifications and a lingua franca for both academic and professional purposes. The kind of English used for professional purposes is called English for Specific purposes (ESP) and addresses the specific needs and the purposes of learning the language in a variety of contexts (e.g., tourism,

accounting, health sector, businesses) and for a variety of corresponding professions (Dudley Evans & St John, 2001).

In the Greek educational context, ESP is taught, among other institutions (i.e. tertiary level), in Vocational Education (VE) of secondary level and their learners can be called the “first phase source of candidate employees” as they are the majority of the workforce in Greece because they are trained to enter the workplace immediately upon graduation. Tertiary level graduates are considered the second phase source, whereas PhD holders or highly specialized personnel constitute the third phase and smaller group as source of candidate employees in Greece.

As an educationist myself, and an English language teacher for many years (in the public and private sector), I have long been interested in the field of ESP which I have taught in technical institutions, private English language schools and Vocational state secondary schools in Greece and for a variety of specialisms. For the past five years I have been working for the ministry of education as a school advisor for the English language. My duties comprise seminars, workshops, lectures, or microteaching for English teachers in the region of my responsibility. Inspecting the implementation of the curricula guidelines and suggesting methods or solutions for teaching practices are also among my duties.

Throughout my years of teaching I have been very concerned about the effectiveness of VE learners’ preparation for their successful integration in the workplace. I was especially preoccupied when often enough I came across VSE graduates who were either unemployed or working in positions irrelevant to their specialism courses even though, based on the Greek Governmental Gazette and VE curriculum aims (2006), VE schools - [EPA.L. (EIIA.Λ. in Greek)] - aim to train learners for an immediate access to the employment market upon graduation. My concern was intensified, when after my assignment as a school advisor, I realized other teachers shared the same anxiety as me, a fact that became a determining factor for the implementation of this research. These worries as well as the authorization I have to investigate educational problems, search for solutions and forward them to the Greek government to confront the

situation that arises, led spontaneously to the following questions and motivated me to look for their answers: what does the current employment market need? Where do VE schools stand as regards these needs? Is there any differentiation between the workplace and VE and how can we bridge a possible gap between them?

Learners' appropriate preparation for the workplace is a task which is accomplished through the teaching of the corresponding ESP material. Nevertheless, research shows that ESP materials, all too often do not comply with the expected ESP demands of the employment market (Carbajosa Palmero, 2003; Harwood, 2005). Additionally, textbooks do not always provide learners with the necessary linguistic input or skills practice, thus failing to prepare them for their specific language needs (Bouzidi, 2009; Angouri, 2010). The literature review revealed that there seems to be a gap between the needs of the workplace and the skills learners are trained for through their corresponding ESP material (Kaur and Clarke, 2009; Bagadir et al., 2011; Wisniewska, 2012). However, this gap mainly addresses the tertiary rather than the secondary level. This gap is quite evident in the Greek context but mainly refers to tertiary level (Kantaridou, 2003; Hatzitheodorou and Mattheoudakis, 2009) rather than the secondary level.

To address this gap and to investigate the research issues I mentioned earlier I embarked on this study. The purpose of the research was to investigate whether there is a link between VE ESP and business English language skills in the workplace. Dudley-Evans and St John (1996) consider Business English as a branch of ESP which is "designed to meet specified needs of the learner" (Stevens, 1988, quoted in Dudley-Evans & St John, 1996:1). In the literature one can come across a variety of terms such as, "workplace discourse" (Koester, 2010), "business discourse" (Bargiela-Chiappini et al., 2013), "professional communication" (Koester, 2010), "Business English" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987) and more to refer to communication in English for business which are often used interchangeably and which will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

To this end, I chose to look into the English language material of the VE sector "Business and Administration" which addresses the needs of a variety of specialties like "Economics and

Administration Services Employees”, “Warehouse and Supply Systems Employees”, “Marketing and Advertising Employees”, “Customer Service” and “Tourist Offices Employees”. Despite the variations in activities of the aforementioned specialties they all demand English for business which is considered a major qualification for employment purposes in the workplace (Greek VE curriculum, 2006). Therefore, the research focused on investigating the kind of English language skills (speaking, listening, reading or writing) that are mostly needed for communication (oral or written) in the business settings and for the purposes of working transactions and whether or not these are addressed through the ESP materials that are taught at present. Communication, oral or written, is defined as “the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another” (Lunenburg, 2010:1) and regardless of the professional environment and activity one works in, it is considered significant because efficient interaction in a business context with colleagues, superiors or clients can lead to written or oral comprehensive messages allowing tasks to be successful and efficiently accomplished.

In addition to the gap indicated by the ESP literature, there are two other reasons, social and economic, that motivated this study. These relate to the fact that the needs of the workplace depend on the demands of local communities and economies which may vary throughout the years due to constant technological and social changes. Therefore, even though high skilled workers are not the only factor that could lead to successful business transactions and prosperity, but also factors such as social, financial or political, it is equally important that educational institutions aim at students’ preparation to fulfill the contemporary needs of businesses. This is because educational institutions are responsible for people’s education and training for their successful integration in the society and world market. In a different case, failing to comply with these obligations could imply a number of economic and social side effects (UNESCO, 2012):

a. Economic

According to Nilsson (2010) VET can enhance the possibilities of young people to find a job in the workplace and avoid unemployment. Nilsson claims that when VE students are effectively

prepared phenomena like “underutilization of human capital, possible skill shortages in various sectors of the economy, low income among young people and potentially increasing drug abuse and criminality” may be avoided, diminished or even eliminated. In the case of VSE in Greece, students’ ineffective preparation would make them low skilled candidate employees and consequently an unattractive group of workforce for the employment market. For VSE graduates this implies seeking different working positions, perhaps of a lower status (i.e. coffee makers, running for errands, street cleaners, etc), which are underpaid in comparison to their target job and therefore causing a low standard of living for them and their families. Especially today, that Greece is suffering from a severe economic crisis, this situation may well lead to unemployment, poverty and possibly migration to other countries, thus, causing a significant drop in the local economy and financial welfare of the country.

b. Social

Regarding social side effects, Nilsson (2010:251) argues that, despite the fact that VET is considered a “suitable means of promoting economic growth” and “a potentially powerful tool for fostering social inclusion” it is not certain that this happens after all due to institutions’ lack of ability to provide better education and training opportunities. Nilsson suggests that appropriate preparation for transition from VE schools to workplace can be the key to foster VET, thus offering not only economic but also social beneficial effects. Additionally, by preparing learners to enter the workplace effectively problems like dropping out of school or social exclusion may be prevented (Nilsson, 2010). Social exclusion is also an important issue which Ling (2010) discusses about VET migrants in China. According to the author, VET migrants find it hard to enter “reputable vocational schools that promise better jobs” but are forced to attend VET schools that are not of good level because they do not prepare learners appropriately as they “are considered low quality” (Ling, 2015:123) and even hire retired teachers to reduce costs. There are also other social side effects that relate to migration problems due to unemployment. Unemployed VE graduates who are forced to migrate to find a job are often also obliged to change their entire

lifestyle in order to adapt to a new environment. This may lead to psychological and socialization difficulties but also to a large gap in the workforce of the countries. Especially for Greece, this shortage in workforce can be a significant drawback both for the economy and the society because it is necessary for the country to retain its source of employees given the significance for a rise in the economy and consequently the improvement of the standard of living of its citizens and their families.

Thus, based on the above, I decided to investigate two major issues: one, the English language skills currently needed for Business offices employees in the Greek employment market through the “Economics and Administration” VE language textbook in order to reveal to what extent it prepares learners for their future working needs as regards the use of English language skills. Based on the findings and if discrepancies were found between business English language skills needs and the textbook skills provision, I intended to design new materials supplementary to the target book and measure their effects on VE students’ English language skills relevant to businesses.

1.2. Research questions

The research questions were based on the research issues stated earlier. Therefore, they were designed to provide the data needed to answer the main issue of the investigation: the extent to which there is a link between the ESP English skills taught at VE to the current ESP skills needed by businesses today. Thus, four questions were designed:

1. What are the English language skills currently needed for business offices employees in the Greek employment market?

2. Which English language skills does the “Economics and Administration” Vocational School textbook focus on and to what extent does it prepare learners accordingly, so as to help them keep abreast of the latest workplace English language skills and demands?

3. Is there a gap between the business English language skills offered in the English language textbook of the “Economics and Administration” sector and the contemporary English language skills needed for businesses today?

4. To what extent can the new material enhance learners’ communicative skills competence in Business English?

1.3. Research context

The context of this research is structured around two basic axons: the employment market and VE. Firstly, the employment market is that of businesses in Thessaly, Greece. Thessaly comprises four prefectures (Larissa, Magnesia (Volos), Trikala and Karditsa). In Thessaly there are currently approximately 4,000 active small, medium and large businesses the number of which is gradually being reduced. This is due to the current economic crisis which has caused a big number of firms to shut down, unable to pay their debts in order to continue with their activities. The remaining ones, however, are very dependent on Vocational education graduates mainly because this group is a significant source of workforce as these learners are trained accordingly for immediate employment right upon graduation, though a small minority of them decide to continue with college studies.

There are two reasons why I chose businesses as the source of data input for my research. Firstly, I wanted to investigate the kind of English they demand from their employees at present and the extent to which learners are effectively prepared for it and therefore addressed the “Economics and Administration” business course. Secondly, I was unable to encounter any secondary data, because the “Chamber of Commerce” in Greece or any other source (state sector) does not provide any demographic or other details about the firms, unless these are asked by businesses themselves as being its official members (N. 3419 of 2005 Chamber of Commerce). Therefore, I had to turn to businesses in order to gather primary data to address the purposes of the research and find possible answers for the first research question.

The research context is that of VE secondary schools in Thessaly. The students that attend them range between 15 to 18 years of age but adults up to the age of 20 may also attend the courses by law. According to the state framework for VE Schools in Greece studies last for three years. In the first two years learners attend both general subjects (i.e. math or language) and specialism subjects (e.g., accounting, computing etc.) to have a broad knowledge. During the third year they specialize in particular courses (i.e. accounting, tourism, computing, office administration) (Vocational secondary education law 116605/Γ2/2211/9/9/2013).

English is one of the subjects in question and the only foreign language that students are taught in the “Economics and Administration” sector of VE schools in Greece. It is worth mentioning that, based on the Cedefop report (2013), Greece, together with Denmark, Germany, Hungary and Portugal, is one of the few countries where the average number of foreign languages taught in Vocational schools is one. During the third year of study, the particular sector offers specialisms such as “Economics and Administration Services Employees”, “Warehouse and Supply Systems Employees”, “Marketing and Advertising Employees” “Customer Service” and “Tourist Offices Employees”.

The students of this sector attend English lessons throughout their three years of study. During the first two years, English is taught for two hours per week (Vocational secondary education Timetable 4386/2016). In the third year, students of all specialisms of the “Economics and Administration” sector are taught Business English, except those of “Tourist Offices Employees”, that are taught tourism English (Vocational secondary education Timetable 1481/2016). Nevertheless, graduates from all specialisms have the same qualifications to apply for the same positions in the employment market.

Based on the curriculum of this sector (EPA.L. curriculum aims, 2006), the purpose of the course is to provide learners with the necessary theoretical background and practical knowledge to become responsible and effective working members of businesses, firms or organizations in the local and international community. Therefore, they are trained accordingly for immediate

employment after their graduation. Their expected skills are to handle correspondence or reports, classifying and archiving incoming/outgoing documents, organizing and carrying out meetings and interviews, gathering financial information, handling public relations, serving customers, monitoring their accounts, arranging bills, repaying debts, monitoring supplies and generally being appropriately prepared to be employed as clerks with various administrative responsibilities. For all the above duties learners need to communicate both in Greek and English and given that a lot of Greek companies maintain transactions with international businesses, English is considered a prerequisite and an important qualification for them.

According to the curriculum, foreign languages, and especially English, are considered to be basic to the workplace. This, however, is contradictory to the findings based on which English is the only language included in the curricula of Greek Vocational secondary schools (Cedefop, 2013). Additionally, it is contradictory to the minimum hours of teaching per week as aforementioned, despite the significance English displays as an international and business language (Seidlhofer, 2003) for employment purposes (EPA.L. curriculum aims, 2006).

1.4. Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured according to seven further chapters, which are organized as follows:

Chapter two presents the literature about Vocational Education and is structured in seven sections. It discusses issues such as Vocational education terminology and refers to its different perspectives both globally and in the Greek context. Lastly, it discusses past research on Vocational education and its link to the workplace both internationally and in Greece.

Chapter three discusses the literature review in the field of ESP. It first introduces the use of English as a lingua franca and as an international business language. It discusses the concept of ESP and refers to its link with needs analysis. It discusses the ESP material, ESP materials evaluation and design principles. It presents past research on the link between ESP material and workplace needs. Finally, it discusses studies on teachers' perceptions of materials evaluation.

Chapter four concerns the methodological approach of the research. It presents the way the research is structured, the rationale behind the methodology used and critical issues such as data collection tools, data analysis methods, participants, validity, reliability, ethical issues and problems encountered throughout the research phases.

The following three chapters (five to eight) present the research findings that address the research questions:

Chapter five reports on the findings about the English language needs in the Greek workplace. The chapter presents the steps of the research and the findings which answer the first research question offering valuable data for the purposes of the research.

Chapter six addresses the second and third research questions. It presents the steps taken for the “Economics and Administration” Vocational business textbook evaluation and the teachers’ views on the textbook, and further discusses the rationale behind the studies, the process and the key findings.

Chapter seven relates to the fourth research question. It is about the design of new material based on the findings of research questions one to three. It presents the rationale, method and key findings of all the steps taken: comparative study results, and students’ and teachers’ views on the new material.

Chapter eight presents the conclusion and the findings in relation to each one of the research questions. It also discusses the implications for researchers, practitioners and policy makers. Finally the chapter states the limitations of the research and suggests potential future studies.

Chapter 2: Research on Vocational Education

2.1. Introduction

This chapter begins with the definition of the context of the research, namely Vocational Education. It comments on Vocational Education in the world, as seen from different perspectives in different countries. Finally, it discusses past research on Vocational Education and its link to the workplace both in the world and in the Greek context.

2.2. Vocational Education

Vocational Education is defined as “every form of education that aims to the acquirement of qualifications ... so that students are able to exercise a profession ... even if the training program contains also elements of general education” (Mortaki, 2012). However, in May 2012, in Shanghai, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), agreed that defining Technical and Vocational Training Education (TVE) is part of a worldwide debate, due to a variety of terms used by different countries, depending on their culture and their educational system articulation (UNESCO, 2012). Nevertheless, UNESCO broadly defined TVE as education aiming at knowledge and skills acquisition for the workplace (UNESCO, 2012). In this thesis I will mainly use the term VE (ΕΠΙΑ.Α. in Greek) which is used by the Greek Educational system (Organization and Operation of Vocational secondary education, 2006). Additionally, I will use the terms VSE (Vocational secondary education) and VSS (Vocational secondary schools).

In addition, UNESCO (2012) reached a consensus regarding the role of VE in work and life. Members agreed that the importance of VE is “increasingly recognized” and therefore measures should be taken in order to “update and develop mechanisms and tools to identify current and future skills needs, to ensure the relevance of VE programs to rapidly-changing labour markets, economies and societies” (UNESCO, 2012:2). The members suggest the improvement of teaching methods and learning procedures and the provision of skills that are relevant to the demands of the current market. They stress the importance of VE in minimizing unemployment, poverty and

hardship and/or other social phenomena such as poor health service or malnutrition. They also discuss the role of VE in the enhancement of cultural diversity, as well as the importance of the link between Vocational education and training to confront the emergence of higher skills demand that increases day by day in the labour market.

Similarly, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) declared that VE is very important for our society (Cedefop, 2013). The committee stressed the need to make VE “an attractive learning option with high relevance to labour market needs” (Cedefop, 2013:8). Therefore, European members have attempted to reach an employment rate of 75% for 2020 and VE has a very crucial role to play in fulfilling this target with; the provision of appropriate and high level skills to its learners, so as to prepare them for the demands of the workplace.

2.3. Research on Vocational secondary education in the world

Despite the value attributed to VE (UNESCO, 2012; Cedefop, 2013) for the society, it has not always been considered of great importance by governments, educators, parents and students regardless of its significant role in learners’ training, mainly for technical occupations. Nevertheless, there are various differences in context and attitude towards VE that can be seen from country to country or continent to continent (i.e. U.S., Canada, India, Japan, China, Australia, Europe) (Piltz, 2012). In the U.S., for instance, VSE (including Vocational institutes) has given up its “VE” title for “Career and Technical Education-CTE”, as the former designation was insinuating a Vocational Education of a low status (Zirkle and Martin, 2012) which was therefore considered inferior to other types of education. In Canada, interest in VSE is not high, as “only 12% of the Canadian labour force is certified in a skilled trade... and... less than 2% of the total labour force was registered in an apprenticeship....” (Lehmann, 2012:25). What is more, less than 1% Vocational secondary school graduates continue their education in an apprenticeship (Lehmann, 2012:25). However, according to this author there is a shift in interest towards VE, due to the emergence of problems in the market world caused by workers’ lack of skills.

The availability of labour in India is inconsistent with the requirements of the labour market. Business owners find it difficult to staff their companies with Vocational secondary school graduates, as the latter lack the necessary skills. Meanwhile, only 3 to 4% of the young population (15-29 years of age) has some kind of formal Vocational Education, which means “a high unemployment rate for vocational graduates” (both secondary and Vocational Training Institutes) (Agrawal, 2012:470). For this reason companies either hire graduates of general secondary education or university graduates. Based on the above, India’s intention is to reduce unemployment, by equipping young people with the necessary skills required by the labour market (Venkatram, 2012:177).

In China, VSS for students from 15 to 19 forms the largest part of Vocational education. However, although there is pressure from the labour market to improve the workforce skills, the majority of VE students consider this type of school of low status and are not interested in further training. This feeling is enhanced by their rejection from General Secondary schools, which makes their choice for VSS their only option. Thus, China has embarked on developing an appealing and competitive VE of good quality, aiming at students’ appropriate preparation for the future labour market (Weiping, 2012).

Likewise, VSE in Japan “is lacking a bridge of transition” to working life (Terrada, 2012:101). This is to some extent evident in that 34% of the employed high school graduates derive from General education. To confront this issue, Japan has considered an innovation and is planning to introduce Vocational educational courses embedded in General Secondary High Schools, allowing students to choose the courses of their choice (General or Vocational). This way, Japan believes, will promote Vocational training and thus help prepare secondary education graduates appropriately who wish to apply for a job according to the world market needs.

In Australia, VSE aims at even further development of learners’ skills for successful transition to the labour market as, according to their policies, Vocational education and training play a very important role in their economy. This is justified by the participation in Vocational

secondary public schools of about 1.9 million learners, while more than 5,000 training organizations are registered to offer successful skills training to all interested parties (Dawkins, 2013).

In Europe, according to the “Vocational education and training for better skills, growth and jobs” document (European Commission, 2012a), VE is high on the list of EU members’ priorities. However, presently, 80 million European citizens are low skilled (Tessaring and Wannan, 2010:4). Therefore, in order to address the lack of high skills issue and meet the challenges of today and the rapid developments, the European Union is confident that investment in quality training is of vital importance in order for the workforce to acquire “job-related competences” (Cedefop, 2013:9).

More specifically, EU members are aiming to modernize VSE with highly qualified teachers and trainers, innovative teaching and learning methods and a link to the global market, through work-based learning. Their goal is to equip learners with such skills that will help them develop their ability to respond to market needs and be successful in their future careers. Indicatively, the European commission aims at:

....attractive and inclusive VE...innovative learning methods...a high labour market relevance...high quality initial VE, which enables learners to acquire specific vocational skills combined with key competences...work-based learning is included in all initial VE courses, ensuring that young people have the knowledge, skills and competences they need for a successful first step into the labour market. Companies are engaged as training providers, together with VE schools or other education/training institutes...easily accessible and career-oriented continuing VE for all employees, irrespective of their educational background (European Commission, 2012b:2-3).

The above literature review has shown that VE is not always considered an attractive type of education by learners and the workplace. Some of the reviewed studies (Weiping, 2012; Lehmann, 2012) have shown that learners opt more in favour of general education while others (Agrawal,

2012; Terrada, 2012) report that according to the labour market the VE workforce is low skilled, due to the lack of efficient transition from VE to working life. However, all the above studies and others (UNESCO, 2012; Cedefop, 2013) agree that because of this situation authorities intend to invest in VE of higher status and better quality in order to prepare learners effectively for the workplace needs. The findings of the above studies were based on numerical data drawn from historical overviews and workplace surveys and have given me a clearer view of VE and its place in the society and the employment world. Their methodology was considered in the design of this research and their findings compared with the findings of this study.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that the majority of the studies (Tessaring and Wannan, 2010; Agrawal, 2012; Venkatram, 2012; Weiping, 2012; Terrada, 2012) investigated the inadequacy of VE to address the employment market needs, none of them investigated the effect of materials on VE learners' skills efficiency in relation to the workplace needs and especially the importance of English language materials in secondary level VE. The use of materials per se however is considered important because their appropriacy for secondary level VE can improve its quality and its link to the workplace (Okolie, 2014). Therefore, the literature review findings indicate the need for further research on this issue which this study aimed to explore. Thus, this study investigated the business needs in relation to English but it differs from the above studies in that in addition to the quantitative methodology used (business survey questionnaires) it also drew data from a textbook analysis and qualitative research interviewing students and teachers to expand further on the issue, in an effort to fill the gaps in literature.

To sum up, Vocational education is seen from a different perspective in a variety of places in the world but despite the significance they place on it, VE is confronting a number of discrepancies in relation to its link with the employment market worldwide. The following section presents some of them.

2.4. Research on Vocational Education and its link to employment market needs in the world

To some extent, the literature addresses the link between businesses and VE. However, there are few empirical studies about VE and its link to the employment market needs, as most researchers have based their work on literature reviews. I will discuss some empirical studies below.

Secondary data were drawn by Agbola and Kenneth (2010) from a historical overview of VE which was conducted to identify the factors that lead to successful VE in the Australian workplace. The findings revealed that there was a need to place even more emphasis on the link between VE and business needs than the already existing one and suggestions were made for the establishment of a Vocational Education and Training of even higher status to address this issue. Despite these useful findings the research was not based on current data, nor did it focus on a specific subject or field (i.e. the use of English).

Secondary data were also used by the government of Namibia (NAMCOL) in 2011 to measure the link between the workplace and VE. According to their findings their VE system was “running in isolation from industry” (ibid: 5), as companies did not think highly of VE, thus, causing a rise in unemployment to 43% of VE graduates. To remedy the problem, the educational authorities embarked on the “Education and Training Improvement Programme” (ETSIP), in order to narrow the skills gap. They planned interventions for all VE sectors (i.e. manufacturing industry, business and financial services, etc.) and all school subjects. However, they make no reference to English, and it is not clear whether this is due to its absence from schools, lack of interest or due to other reasons.

Similarly, the literature was reviewed by Rufai et al. (2013) in order to find ways to bridge the gap between the job market and VE institutions in Nigeria. Better funding for both parties, collaboration between industries and VE, seminars and field trips were suggested. Nevertheless, the opinion of the world market or VE stakeholders (i.e. teachers, educational authorities) is absent here. Likewise, the existing literature on Career and Technical Education (CTE) was

reviewed by the Industry Workforce Needs Council in the U.S. (IWNC: 2013), consisting of American business leaders, whose role is to improve CTE. The findings revealed that “businesses feel the pain of the skills gap” (ibid: 5). To address the problem, appropriate measures were suggested in order to “align CTE to business needs”, so as to allow CTE “to be equipped with the training and capabilities necessary to be successful and competitive in the global marketplace” (ibid: 8). Again, VE stakeholders (teachers/learners/educational authorities) had no share of the findings; thus, their opinion is absent.

Two interesting empirical studies were conducted in Australia and Saudi Arabia, both in 2011. In one of them, the skills gap on behalf of the workforce was investigated by Lindorff (2011) in small, medium and large firms in Australia, and their implications for VE. A survey was conducted with 2000 Australian managers who were questioned about the existence or not of a skills gap in their companies, and were asked what they should do to remedy the problem. The results revealed a variety of skills gaps due to employees’ stress regarding company strategic changes or candidates’ minimum qualifications. Suggestions were made for further measures by VE to increase candidates’ qualifications. However, there was no attempt to obtain the perspective of VE stakeholders, in order to form a more accurate opinion.

Another research project based on empirical data is reported by Bagadir et al. (2011) in Saudi Arabia. The researchers reported on findings from data drawn from doctoral research on the extent to which there was a gap between vocational education practices and employees’ needs. They conducted a survey with teachers, students and companies using questionnaires with a five point Likert scale to draw on the respondents’ opinion. Their findings revealed that there was a gap between Vocational secondary education and market demands, due to factors such as lack of specialized knowledge and generic skills. More specifically the gap referred to technical skills and labour market literacy. Suggestions were made for further financial investment in post-secondary education and training, re-thinking of courses offered and whether or not they are methodologically suitable for the purpose they are introduced. They also suggested the employers’

role in successful training rather than thinking of investing on employees' training as an added cost.

The studies reviewed in this section have explored the link between VE and workplace and have found a gap between them. Some of the studies (Agbola and Kenneth, 2010; NAMCOL, 2011; Rufai et al., 2013; IWCN, 2013) drew their findings on secondary data based on historical overviews. Other studies (Lindorff, 2011; Bagadir et al., 2011) based their results on empirical research. However, none of them addressed VE education of secondary level but of tertiary except that of Bagadir et al. (2011). Additionally, none of the researchers in these studies investigated the need for English in the business world. What is more, none of the studies cross checked their findings using triangulation methods (as Bagadir et al., 2011 have done with the involvement of educational stakeholders' opinion). Thus, a study that investigates these issues seems worth pursuing for the following reasons:

Firstly, English is considered a major qualification for the workplace (EPAL curriculum, 2006) in Greece and is a significant asset for educational, socio-cultural and economic aspects of life (Nicholson, 2015). Secondly, the use of primary and current data is important because it can provide the researcher with information about the contemporary needs of the workplace (in the case of this research the contemporary needs for English language skills), which, when derived from secondary data, might not be updated. Additionally, the opinion of VE stakeholders (i.e. teachers, learners, authorities) is considered essential because they are the actual source of workforce (students), qualifications trainers (teachers), or policy makers (authorities), therefore, they know better than anyone the materials used to train and prepare the would-be employees and to what extent these address or should address the workplace needs.

The above studies relate to this research as they have provided me with useful information regarding the absence of a link between VE and workplace needs and their methodology was considered in the business needs survey I conducted in this research. The analysis of the businesses needs in English is regarded important to carry out in this study for the following

reasons: firstly, in order to determine the course of action for the main study; secondly, because as Montazeri and Hamidi (2013) point out needs analysis can provide information about the “what” and the “how” of a course/textbook and in the case of this study of the “Economics and Administration” textbook; thirdly, because it provided me with valuable information for the design of the supplementary material I produced in order to address the English language needs of the workplace.

The studies reviewed above however display some weaknesses. These relate to their lack of primary data and use of triangulation in their methodology. To this end, this study differs from the aforementioned ones in that this study was an action research study which based its findings on primary data. Additionally, it employed triangulation with a variety of instruments and sets of participants (business survey questionnaires, textbook analysis, teachers’ interviews, students’ pre/post tests, and focus group discussion). Finally, it explored the under investigated area of VE of secondary level and its relation to the English language in an attempt to bridge the relevant gap in the literature

2.5. Research on Vocational Education in Greece

As mentioned in the previous section, the world community, including Europe, aims to invest in highly competitive and productive Vocational Education, which will increase employability, mobility and entrepreneurship worldwide. Nevertheless, VE in Greece is not given so much attention by educational policies and society. This is because Greek education in general, has always been characterized by a great demand for general education courses, and/or university studies rather than vocational education and training (Zachilas, 2012:113).

Thus, traditionally, VE has had little appeal to young people, and up to the present, the situation has scarcely changed as VE is still regarded as a low status and/or a last resort by young people. Moreover, VE in Greece has been devalued for several decades now, despite the fact that the demand for skilled employees has always been high (Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013). Thus, as

these authors argue, there is a need for a Vocational educational system of high quality and with a close link to business training in Greece, facilitating transition from school life to working life.

2.6. Research on Vocational Education and its link to the labour market in Greece

Very little research has been conducted with regard to the link between VE and the workplace, in Greece. Most surprisingly, there is no information in the literature regarding English in VSE and its relation to market needs. I will discuss here a few available studies.

The link between education in general and the labour market has been examined by Kanelopoulos et al. (2003) in a study with secondary data regarding unemployment rates and their differentiation being used, based on graduates' educational level. Although the findings revealed that VSS graduates display the highest unemployment rates, the authors look very broadly into the matter leaving issues such as the English language skills need aside. Similarly, the prospects of Vocational education reform in Greece were looked into in another study conducted by Ioannidou and Stavrou (2013). The study presents indifference on behalf of educational policies towards VSE and stresses the scarce scientific support for effective VE design. However, further research should be conducted on this, as this work is not based on empirical data. Moreover, despite the suggestion for attractive VE through a curriculum reform, as a way to effective Vocational education, there is no reference to English as a key subject and factor in graduates' occupational success (EPA.L. curriculum aims, 2006); neither is there any reference to the significance of effective materials or teaching approaches in VE as these are stressed by the corresponding curriculum (EPA.L. curriculum aims, 2006). Additionally, the current state of the Greek labour market and the efforts made to build a bridge between Greek Vocational education and training and the labour market were discussed in another study by Zachilas (2012). Nevertheless, this paper does not refer to the significance of English language skills, as a qualification for employment needs, as aforementioned, either.

Perhaps the research studies of the greatest interest on this issue, due to the very useful and extensive data they report, are those of the Pedagogical Institute studies (P.I., 2008). In 1998, the

P.I. conducted two nationwide surveys; one on VE graduates' employment situation, and another on the improvement of VE curricula, in order to address labour market needs. The results, however, were not presented until 2008 (P.I., 2008) due to the fact that there was no personnel to continue the study.

In the first research study, the participants were VE graduates and in the second one the participants comprised a school advisor per sector and specialism, and one representative per small, medium and large companies, whose field of activity corresponded to a Vocational school specialism. The VE graduates answered questionnaires, while the School advisors and business representatives assessed the content of the curricula. For the "Economics and Administration Sector" the findings for the first study revealed that 66.3% of the graduates were employed, 21.8% of them worked in positions relevant to their studies, while 44.5% of them were employed in posts irrelevant to their specialism (P.I., 2008:131).

For the second study, the findings revealed a large number of discrepancies between the curricula and businesses. Regarding the "Economics and Administration" sector, the results showed that there was insufficient training for learners through the content of the specialism courses and a lack of cooperation with businesses (P.I., 2008:32). However, the research did not look at English language skills and their link to the labour market skills needs, regardless of the fact that English is considered a very important qualification, as mentioned in the curriculum (EPA.L. curriculum aims, 2006).

As shown in the literature review in this section there is very little research that investigates the link between VE and the workplace in Greece. The few studies found explore the situation from a different perspective. Thus, while Kanelopoulos et al. (2003) focus on unemployment as a major drawback of VE skills shortage in the Greek workplace other studies (Zachilas, 2012; Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013) discuss the indifference of educational policies to build a bridge between VE and employment market. Only the Greek P.I. (2008) investigated the role of curricula of a variety of VE specialisms.

However, all studies have something in common: none of them addressed the secondary level (except that of the P.I., 2008) and none of them investigated either the role of materials in secondary VE level or the use of English in relation to the workplace needs. Finally, all studies based their findings on secondary data and literature reviews. Thus, research which explores the current connection between VE of secondary level in Greece in relation to the use of English in the employment market seems necessary to address the aforementioned gaps.

To this end, this research explores the existence of a link between secondary level VE and the workplace but it differs from the existing literature in that it is an action research study based on empirical data and not on literature review findings. Additionally, it uses triangulation in order to validate and strengthen the results in an effort to provide possible answers for the research questions and fill the gaps in the literature.

2.7. Summary

The aim of the research in this thesis is to investigate the English language skills needed in the current workplace in Greece and their link to the relevant skills taught through the “Economics and Administration” Vocational secondary course textbook. Therefore, in this chapter I discussed Vocational Education by looking into definitions of this term, and have decided to use the term VE as this is used by the Greek educational system which is my research context. I presented the place of Vocational secondary education (VSE) in the world and discussed the different perspectives employed for VE in various countries. Additionally, I discussed past research that refers to VE in relation to the labour market. The findings of the literature review point to gaps in the link between learners’ skills and workplace needs, mainly in tertiary education. They have also demonstrated that the gap is attributed to materials, whose content is not always linked to the workplace needs. Especially for VSE this is an issue that has not been addressed to a large extent whereas it is absent in the Greek context. These are the gaps in knowledge this study aimed to address.

Chapter 3: The literature review on ESP

3.1. Introduction

This chapter concerns the core of this thesis, namely English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Vocational education for business purposes. It presents the theory relating to the key issues of the ESP research and discusses the literature findings. It begins by introducing the importance of English as an International language and a lingua franca in the employment market. It examines the concept of ESP and its link to needs analysis, to materials evaluation and materials design. It then discusses past research on ESP in Business, focusing on ESP materials, ESP materials evaluation and their link to the workplace needs. Finally, it discusses the literature about teachers' perceptions with regard to their participation in ESP materials evaluation and development.

3.2. English as an International Business language and a Lingua Franca in the workplace

English is used internationally (Crystal, 2003) for both academic and professional communication. This status of English has relevance to the current study. This kind of English is called International English and "... is used by native speakers of English and bilingual users of English for cross-cultural communication..." and "... can be used both in a local sense between speakers of diverse cultures and languages within one country and in a global sense between speakers from different countries" (Seidlhofer, 2003:8). There are various terms for "International English" (IE), which mainly refer to a specific variety of English (American, British), (Seidlhofer, 2003:9). Nevertheless, the term "English as an International Language" (EIL), referring to English as a global language for communication purposes, seems to outbalance the others (Sharifian, 2009:2). The term "English as a global language" is defined as a language which "...is recognized in every country.....and (people) give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother-tongue speakers" (Crystal, 2003:3-4)

EIL is considered to be very important for communication (Sasaki et al., 2006) and a significant asset in dealing with many issues in all areas of educational, socio-cultural and economic life (Nicholson, 2015). By providing access to all kinds of information, the knowledge

of English helps to eliminate the language barriers which obstruct communication and, notwithstanding it not being spoken by the majority of people worldwide, it is regarded as a basic means of “survival” in both the academic and professional world (Sharifian, 2009). Consequently, the need for a high level of English is rising rapidly and its efficient use is presented as a state-of-the-art key to success and career potential, irrespective of origin, nationality, genre, social or professional background (Ruiz Garrido et al., 2010). To this end, governments, schools, organizations and institutions of all levels struggle their way through curricula, syllabuses and teaching materials, aspiring to cater for the linguistic needs of multicultural global student communities, preparing them accordingly for the high competitiveness of the international contemporary workplace (Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE), 2008).

International English, which is used in the workplace, is often called English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and is defined as “English used as a contact language among speakers of different first languages whether from choice or through some kind of coercion” (Jenkins and Leung, 2013:1). Seminars, conferences, academic, medical or business meetings, social media contacts, business and leisure travel are all areas where English as a common language - lingua franca - supports communication (Kecskes, 2007). Thus, English as a lingua franca is used widely as English keeps spreading rapidly, widely and in an unlimited way in areas such as education, entertainment, research or technology with a high rank in its use in international business (Nickerson, 2005).

In the employment market, and due to the expansion of the international trade, existent skills are being developed or new ones begin to arise. Being sociable, collaborative, specialized in one’s field and a fluent speaker of English are some of the skills which define the intercultural nature of business qualifications in the communities across the nations (UNESCO, 2009). Hutchinson and Waters (1978) refer to English which is used in businesses as “Business English” and according to Ellis and Johnson, (1994) quoted in Zhu (2008:29) business English “should be included in the range of ESP as a sub-branch because it shares similar features with ESP, such as the analysis of

demand and the selection of language materials”. Although Business English, is not a panacea, is considered by businesses one of the most significant and common skills, albeit English being the second language (L2) for the majority in the workplace. Efficient communication in Business English is regarded as high priority among other skills (Morreale et al, 2000). Thus, entrepreneurs and enterprises of all kinds demand all the more a higher standard of the Business English language, increasing the need for skills development, on behalf of their human resources (Minodoraotilia, 2014). In this business environment, English is required for communication among employers, employees and businesses residing across the continents. This kind of communication is also referred to as “Business Communication” which is defined as “any means supporting the process of business” Haase (2013:57). Haase expands on this interpretation by quoting the following:

Business Communication is goal oriented. The rules, regulations and policies of a company have to be communicated to people within and outside the organization. Business Communication is regulated by certain rules and norms. In early times, business communication was limited to paper-work, telephone calls etc. But now with advent of technology, we have cell phones, video conferencing, emails, and satellite communication to support business communication. Effective business communication helps in building goodwill of an organization (Management Study Guide quoted in Haase, 2013:55)

Based on the aforementioned points, I will regard “Business English” as the kind of specific English used worldwide in the global market, including corporations and industries of all kinds facilitating interactions and transactions and bridging the communication gap in the international and local commerce. However, the literature shows different terms being used to refer to interactions for the purposes of communication in English for business and therefore they deserve some attention. Particularly, “workplace discourse”, “Business discourse” and “professional communication” are the most common. These terms are often used interchangeably when it comes to business communication by many people. For example, according to Koester (2010: 5),

“workplace discourse” refers to “interactions occurring across all kinds of occupational settings”. On the other hand, “business discourse can be considered a specific kind of workplace discourse occurring in the commercial sector” (ibid: 5) or as Bargiela –Chiappini et al. (2013:3) argue “all about how people communicate using talk or writing in commercial organizations in order to get their work done”. The authors purport that investigating business discourse entails referring to a variety of different approaches like genre theory, discourse analysis or organizational communication making it an “interdisciplinary space” (ibid: 4).

Among these approaches “Genre theory” of Swales (1990) looks into the type of oral and written discourse, whereas “discourse analysis” focuses on the ways language is used in a specific text and context (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). Similarly, “organizational communication” refers to the discourse patterns, processes and constructs of the language that lead to effective communication (Putnam and Fairhurst, 2001). According to the authors English for Specific Purposes (ESP) seems to be a branch that has developed within applied linguistics as back as in the 1980’s while investigating how English is used in specific context for specific purposes.

Similarly, the term “professional communication” refers to a variety of meanings by different scholars who describe it as “communication in workplace settings: institutional talk, professional discourse, organizational communication, workplace discourse, business communication and many more” (Koester, 2010: 11). In the literature we also come across the term BELF (Business English as Lingua Franca) for ELF which is used for business purposes. BELF is used “for conducting business within the global business discourse community” (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005:403-404).

In this thesis, I will employ the terms “Business English” or BELF because they are considered a branch of ESP even though they differ in that they are often “a mix of specific content (relating to a particular job area or industry), and general content (relating to general ability to communicate more effectively, especially in business situations)” (Ellis and Johnson, 2002, quoted in Zhu and Liao, 2008:90). This decision is based on the fact that VE secondary

level ESP studies aim at learners' immediate employment (therefore their needs are closer to a specific content) or academic studies (therefore their demands lie more around their general ability to handle the language for their studies) (VE curriculum aims, 2006).

3.3. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

ESP emerged in the decade of the 1960's as a need to confront the rising globalization of world economy, envisaging the expansion of knowledge through English for many purposes (Ramírez, 2015). The spreading demand for ESP, that became an international language, was triggered by the global economic growth in the 1950's and 1960's. Shortly thereafter, in the early 1970's, the oil crisis resulted in the financial welfare of the oil-producing countries and the call for sciences and technology (Ramírez, 2015). In the meantime, and as a consequence of the aforementioned reasons, the number of foreign students in English speaking countries (the U.S.A., the United Kingdom, Australia) increased dramatically (Ramírez, 2015). The demand to take part in international conferences or business meetings, for instance, was intense and increased the need for a sufficient level of knowledge and/or specific skills in English, thus altering the rationale of English language teaching (Lesiak-Bielawska, 2015).

Back in the 1980's, ESP was defined based on two criteria: purpose and needs analysis, (Robinson, 1980:3) to be based on someone's motive to learn English (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Thus, the purpose of the language program is actually the core of the language learning. ESP was also considered as a variety of educational programs, which differed according to the needs of learners. They were categorized under the umbrella term ESP (Johns, 1991:298) and were referred to as "language programs which are designed for learners' specific needs" (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998:150). The emphasis of these ESP programs is on the language, activities and skills, relevant to learners' specific needs (Dudley Evans and St John, 2001; Chilingaryan, 2012), and on methodology approaches, which differ from those used in teaching EGP (English for General Purposes).

Based on Johns (1991) categorization, I will regard the kind of Specific English taught at the “Economics and Administration” Greek Vocational education specialist course, as EVP (English for Vocational Purposes) or EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). This is due to the fact that the majority of the VE students (66%) (P.I., 2008:129) choose to work directly upon their graduation; thus they focus on the English they will need for their professional steps. Interestingly enough, only 21.8% of them are employed in positions relevant to their studies, while 44.5% are employed in jobs irrelevant to their specialism (P.I., 2008:129).

However, the “Economics and Administration” course could also be categorized as EEP (English for Educational Purposes), as 27% VE students (P.I., 2008:129) continue their studies at a technical college before they seek employment (EPA.L. Curriculum aims 3475/2006). Therefore, they also need English for General Purposes (EGP) – i.e. vocabulary or skills - which will enable them to get through the demands of their college curricula (specific terminology in English for assignments and laboratory work).

ESP is also linked to the concept of ‘genre’ as presented by Swales (1990): “genre analysis is a means of studying spoken and written discourse for applied ends” (Swales, 1990:1) and reveals the ways in which we select the kind of words we use to link with others and make sense (Hyland, 2015). Additionally, according to Swales, “a genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purpose. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre; this rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constraints the choice of content and style” (Swales, 1990:58).

Swales has mainly been interested in the written form of the language. Particularly, he examined the discourse structures and language characteristics of a variety of texts with a specific content and purpose (academic papers, official letters, articles and/or business documents) and refers to certain “moves and steps” ESP learners should follow (Swales, 1990). Genres are also referred to as “repositories of communal knowledge” (Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010:138) and are

emphasized in the workplace and professional contexts for “the ways in which genre constrains or enables the social actions of participants in professional organizations” (Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010:132).

3.4. Differences between ESP and EGP

The main difference between ESP and EGP lies in learners’ reason for learning English (Kitkauskienė, 2006:90). Unlike EGP, ESP focuses on the genre and context rather than grammar and structure of the language. It concerns issues such as computers, management, tourism, medicine, accounting, finance or business and it is directly linked to real life needs; consequently, ESP is specified as based on particular needs and skills or specific text style as opposed to EGP, which focuses on all skills for general purposes (e.g. certificate acquisition), in Primary and General Secondary or Adult Education (Kitkauskienė, 2006:90)

Contrary to EGP, ESP is the focus of Vocational schools, technical colleges, and universities or adult seminar programs and has a different orientation, which is defined by professional, social, academic or other needs. In this sense, ESP emphasizes the motive, topic and content of the language program and comprises specific language input, aiming at learners’ communicative development in a particular field (Netiksiene, 2006). Thus, the ability to be communicative in one’s area demands specific vocabulary, genres and skills rather than a general knowledge of English (Netiksiene, 2006).

In the case of ESP, teaching and learning are predetermined by learners’ need to familiarize themselves with the kind of English applicable to their future or current expertise, thus expanding simultaneously on their professional knowledge. For this reason, ESP teaching is determined by the need for specialization and learners’ appropriate information and preparation for real life specific needs. It also emphasizes special vocabulary, activities and skills, directly associated with the purpose of learning (Wai Mui Yu, 2010), in order to enhance VE learners’ communicative ability (Netiksiene, 2006).

3.5. ESP and needs analysis

As aforementioned, ESP focuses on the particular needs of the learners and therefore, it is fundamental to make sure that choices made for teaching and learning purposes are effective and appropriate. It also focuses on genre (Swales, 1990), which emphasizes the form of what needs to be produced. With these points in mind, we need to question ourselves on the kind of material and language input we plan to teach, whether the lexis, structure or activities learners are about to be taught are in relation to their particular needs and will enable them to be proficient in their field. Thus, prioritizing our goals as teachers, syllabus or curricula designers are issues of high importance for learners' skills development.

Needs analysis is the key to making the right decisions for the successful implementation of our targets. The term "needs" has been used as far back as 1978, with Munby being one of the prominent scholars who talked about "needs" in his "Communicative Syllabus design" book. Since then, a big variety of terms have been used to categorize "needs" (e.g., Target Situation Analysis (TSA), Present Situation Analysis (PSA) or Learning Situation Analysis (LSA) (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987:155; Dudley Evans and St John, 1998:123). Thus, the term "needs" encompasses what is referred to as TSA, LSA or PSA (Dudley Evans and St John, 2001:124). TSA actually involves the situations in which English is used to form the teaching framework and the language input to be taught, whereas LSA is a strategy analysis and refers to the learning of skills needed (Lowe, 2009:124) and PSA refers to learners' present linguistic level or lack of knowledge.

When all the above terms (TSA, LSA, PSA) are used to define "needs analysis", they are epitomized in one sentence: "Needs analysis is the process of establishing the "what" and "how" of a course" (Dudley-Evans and St John, 2001:121). They also imply "a device to know the learners' necessities, needs and lacks in order to develop courses that have a reasonable content for exploitation in the classroom" (Montazeri and Hamidi, 2013:105). Similarly, they are seen as a

way for someone to come up with what the learners already know, what they need to know and finally, what they want to know (Mohammadi and Mousavi, 2013).

Needs analysis is actually what is defined as a “pre-course design process in which information is gathered to help the teacher or course developer decide what the course should focus on, what content in terms of language or skills to include and what teaching/learning methods to employ” (Basturkmen, 2010:26). It is also defined as a process which concerns information about “necessities, wants and lacks” that give a clearer picture of the ESP course/materials orientation and content (Dudley Evans and St John, 2001:123).

3.6. ESP material

As aforementioned, ESP teaching materials should be based on needs analysis in order to include the appropriate input (e.g., vocabulary, concepts, structures) linked to the learners’ specific needs. They should also focus on form of what needs to be included in them in relation to the students’ needs and purpose of learning their ESP course content/program. To achieve this goal, ESP materials should emphasize specialized vocabulary or activities that are directly associated with the purpose of learning, linked with real life communicative situations (Netiksiene, 2006:80). Especially for Vocational school learners their teaching material should also be followed by appropriate teaching methods (Wai Mui Yu, 2010), to enhance their “entrepreneurial attitude and self-efficacy” (Pihie and Bagheri, 2010). Moreover, ESP materials should focus on ESP learners’ skills training, based on needs analysis (Gilmore, 2007; Xiaorong and Lili, 2009). What is more, ESP textbooks’ text/task authenticity and/or audio/visual authentic input are considered opportune for syllabuses, and a direct link to real life working situations (Meng Choo, 2005; Bojovic, 2006).

ESP materials are suggested to include project activities (Smith, 2000), simulation tasks (Rush et al., 2010), gaming or case studies, enhancing learner participation and preparation for real life business needs (Ates, 2012). Further to these, group work activities fostered by the use of social media or the Internet (Abdulaziz et al., 2012) are considered effective teaching practices for

ESP materials and particularly for Business English language classes because they can promote communication cooperation and interaction among learners (Boarcăș, 2009).

With the launch of technology, a plethora of researchers have invested significant effort in investigating ICT effectiveness in the classroom. In more than 250 studies being examined, which compared teaching with or without the use of ICT, results revealed that ICT had a positive effect on language learning (Kulik and Kulik, 1991). Today, even greater emphasis is being placed on the link between English language teaching, ICT and teaching materials, with researchers prompting ICT use in the English language classroom (Duran and Cruz, 2013). ESP teaching materials are suggested as including ICT-based tasks as they have been found to arouse learners' interest, motivation and active participation in the learning process supporting their scaffolding all the way through linguistic needs until they become autonomous and communicative learners (Daragmeh, 2011; Vahabi and Sadeh, 2011).

Nevertheless, research shows that all too often, ESP materials do not comply with the expected workplace ESP demands (Carbajosa Palmero, 2003; Harwood, 2005) and ESP textbooks do not always provide learners with the necessary linguistic input or skills practice, thus, failing to prepare them for their specific language real life professional needs. This gap between the features that ESP materials should employ and English language needs in the workplace is the focus of this research. Thus, based on the aforementioned points the present research seeks to investigate the extent to which the ESP features of the target textbook are consistent with the employment market demands.

3.7. Materials evaluation in ESP

There are extensive references to the definition of materials evaluation. It is described as the process which measures the value of learning materials (Alamri, 2008). It is also defined as a process which “involves judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them”, (Wing Lawrence, 2011:11). In this research I will regard materials evaluation as the “systematic

appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and to the objectives of the learners using them” (Tomlinson, 2011:15).

Developing criteria for materials evaluation is considered as quite demanding, in that the whole process can be subjective due to the different instructive needs and teaching contexts which determine materials evaluation (Cakit, 2006). Nevertheless, due to today’s global competitive community of the workplace materials evaluation seems to be of vital importance due to a demand for higher qualifications for learners’ successful preparation to match their needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Consequently, the choice of textbooks one makes can determine the learning outcomes positively or negatively (Wing Lawrence, 2011) and thus, materials’ evaluation will enable educators to examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of materials (Fredriksson and Olsson, 2006) and if necessary, proceed to alterations or amendments in order to fulfil the teaching targets that apply to their intended group of learners.

Although it is claimed that textbooks do not offer much assistance, due to certain limitations (Tomlinson, 2011), teachers depend on them for many reasons: they offer ready material; they constitute a guideline for classroom management; they release them from materials design obligations; or they are simply obliged to use them, especially when these are imposed on them by their institution. Whatever the case, the right materials selection is regarded as highly important because it is all about “choosing, from the available resources, those materials considered to be the best, most appropriate and/or most suitable for the particular learning activity, and rejecting what is inferior, inappropriate, unsuitable or unacceptable” (State of South Australia, Department of Education and Children’s Services, 2004:7).

In addition, and according to Alarmi, (2008) materials evaluation can prove to be valuable as the right textbook can influence learners’ behavior or learning attitude consequently constitute one of the most significant and effective motives to learning. Furthermore, as Wing Lawrence, (2011) purport materials evaluation may reveal important educative drawbacks or deficiencies which may impede learning. Mainly however, and based on Danaye Tous and Haghghi, (2014) materials

evaluation and particularly that of ESP, will lead to appropriate ESP materials selection or appropriate interventions, so as to correspond to learners' future professional English language needs

ESP materials evaluation is important in order to detect their efficiency and identify a possible skills gap. Basturkmen (2010:64) argues that despite this significance, there appears to be little interest in ESP materials evaluation by authorities or teachers. In the Greek context, research in this field is limited. Especially in VSE, which is the context of this research, this interest is non-existent, at least to the best of my knowledge. In other countries, there have been a number of studies in this area and the key relevant studies are reviewed below.

The evaluation of a textbook for a Korean University conversation course was conducted by Jones, (2009) but there is no reference on the exact cognitive field. In the study, McDonough and Shaw's (2003) model was used, which emphasizes on both internal and external evaluation and according to the findings, the book met the needs of the specific course it was used for.

Similarly, published materials for general business purposes were evaluated by McGuinness (n.d.) so as to select the most appropriate one for a group of middle management employees in a Thai company. Criteria such as practicality, pedagogic features, intended audience, aims, content, methodology and motivational factors were set. The findings were then compared to the needs of all parties involved (sponsor, provider, participants, teachers, school, training manager) in order to select the final materials.

McDonough and Shaw's (2003) model was also used by Davari et al. (2013) to evaluate University ESP textbooks in Iran. Drawbacks such as lack of materials updating, low face validity and ineffective exercises and drills were detected. Based on the drawbacks, solutions were suggested: in-depth needs analysis of the ESP objectives, revising and updating of the material, taking into account new approaches or teachers' views on textbook development. In another study by Danaye Tous and Haghighi (2014), the Irani "English for students of computer engineering" ESP material was evaluated. A questionnaire was used for the data collection addressing college

students aiming to examine whether the textbook conformed to the University ESP textbooks characteristics. It was found that the textbook lacked features such as illustrations, organization and design, language content, skills and strategies but no suggestions were made by the researchers. Likewise, a textbook for Dentistry students was examined by Kazem and Fatemeh (2014). McDonough and Shaw's (2003) model and the ACTEFL (American Council on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) evaluation checklist were used for an internal and external evaluation. The findings revealed that the textbook did not meet the desirable standards for the specific ESP teaching situation and adaptations for its improvement were suggested.

The reviewed studies in this section explore the role of materials evaluation in ESP. These studies (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Cakit 2006; Fredriksson and Ossoin, 2006; Danay Tous and Haghighi, 2014) reviewed the literature to discuss the importance of materials evaluation as a way to determine the choice of textbooks and the learning outcomes. Despite the usefulness of ESP materials evaluation however, according to Basturkmen (2010) there is little research interest in the field.

Some empirical research findings reviewed in this section (Jones, 2009; Davari et al., 2013; Kazem and Fatemeh, 2014) have revealed the use of Mc Donough and Shaw's model for the evaluation of ESP materials which were found to have discrepancies in relation to their aims. Other studies (Mc Guinness, n.d.; Davari et al., 2013; Kazem and Fatemeh, 2014) went on to suggest ways to remedy the lacks found. However, all the above studies addressed the tertiary level of VE and not vocational secondary education. Additionally, even though they suggested ways to address the discrepancies found none of them designed any material but their contribution remained at the level of suggestions.

This study explored the role of VE materials in relation to the workplace needs by evaluating the "Economics and Administration" VE textbook. This is because materials constitute a useful guideline for the implementation of a course targets, even though there are those who claim that books do not offer much assistance due to certain limitations (Tomlinson, 2011). This view,

however, is contradictory to what Alarmi (2008) purports regarding the positive effect materials evaluation can have on learners' training, behaviour and motives in the learning process with beneficial effects for the labour market. I am consistent with this thesis of Alarmi especially because for a country like Greece, whose bad economy cannot support the use of digital tools and educational materials in the classroom (i.e., tablets, notebooks, e-books), printed books are perhaps the only solution at the moment and will perhaps be for quite a long time in the future, due to their lower cost than that of a computer laboratory for instance. Therefore, the evaluation of existing materials that will determine their ability to address the learners' and the workplace needs, especially for VE seems quite crucial at the moment.

The reviewed studies drew their data on textbook analysis or published materials reviews (except that of Danaye Tous and Haghghi, 2014 who used data from an empirical study). The aforementioned studies relate to this research in the methodological approach of textbook analysis that employed for the evaluation of the "Economics and Administration" textbook. However, this study differs from the reviewed studies in that it employs triangulation with different sets of participants and methods (students' questionnaires, students' focus group discussion, teachers' interviews, students' pre/post tests) for the strengthening and validation of the results. Last, this study differs from the other studies in that it addresses the secondary level of VE, as a way to fill the relevant gap in knowledge.

3.8. Materials evaluation models and criteria

According to Davari, et al. (2013) there are a variety of models that are employed for materials evaluation, based on which specific criteria are set to examine and assess materials. For instance, one might use the two-phase materials evaluation model of Candlin and Breen (1979): 1. usefulness/appropriacy and 2. teaching/learning procedures (Candlin and Breen, 1979). There is also the preliminary, summative and formative evaluation model of Robinson (1980) which emphasizes a distinction "between process and product evaluation" (Davari et al., 2013:817).

Similarly there is a model by Rea-Dickens and Germaine (1992) based on which the emphasis is on what the materials mean to teachers as well as their relation to the social context and the model by Tomlinson (2008) which focuses on pre-use, whilst-use and post-use, materials evaluation. The latter is quite thorough as it aims at an analytical evaluation, focusing on matters such as clarity, practicality, flexibility or achievability. However, though each one of the aforementioned models looks into very important and different elements of materials, they fail to suggest an evaluation of an overall picture (both internal and external) of the content and presentation of materials.

Another model which focuses on both internal (micro-evaluation) and external (macro) evaluation of materials, thus, taking into account all aspects of materials is that of McDonough and Shaw (2003). In this model, internal evaluation, refers to the examination of issues and setting of criteria such as the presentation of skills, their grading and sequencing or the relationship between tests and exercises. It also means the treatment and presentation of the skills, the type of skills contained in the materials, appropriacy of tests and exercises, self-study provision, and so on.

This kind of evaluation is an in-depth one, that is, evaluation done on specific sections (two units at the most) of the entire book. Similarly, McDonough and Shaw's external evaluation of materials refers to the blurb (in other words, the impression the book gives to the reader at a first glance through cover, content pages etc.), the intended audience, proficiency level, context of use, author's view on language and methodology and so on (McDonough and Shaw, 2003). In general, the aforementioned criteria are usually presented on an in-depth checklist, which is considered very effective as an evaluation method and preferred to the impressionistic one, which is used to evaluate mainly external characteristics and presentation and not content and use (McGrath, 2001).

Very similar external and internal criteria in materials evaluation have also been developed by Mukundan et al. (2011) and AbdelWahab (2013). Additionally, the same authors have

developed textbook evaluation criteria that focus on skills provision (reading, writing, listening and speaking). In this research, and for the purposes of the “Economics and Administration” book evaluation I have employed the criteria developed by McDonough and Shaw (2003), Mukundan et al. (2011) and AbdelWahab (2013) as they all address the purposes of this study.

These relate to an in-depth analysis of the target textbook which was based on both internal and external features of the book. There are a number of reasons for this: firstly, the particular textbook was designed to address the needs of the corresponding VE specialism, which means that it has a specific aim and was designed for specific purposes (EPAL curriculum aims, 2006). If we accept that the appropriacy of educational secondary VE materials can improve the quality of Vocational education and its link to the workplace (Okolie, 2014) then ESP materials have a crucial role in learners’ preparation for specific linguistic purposes; secondly, given that technology advances rapidly, competition among businesses seems to be a demanding and continuous reality. By bringing the real working life into the classroom through effective materials learners are properly trained, successfully integrated in the workplace and thus, better equipped to help boost productivity in the employment market. Especially in Greece, which is confronting a major economic crisis at the moment, printed materials are the only educational sources that the government can currently afford in order to educate and train learners as digital options and laboratories are excluded due to their high cost of purchase or formation. Additionally, due to the fact that English is a second language for Greek VE learners and not spoken outside school, materials are probably the only source and opportunity to practice business English in the classroom and offer learners a picture of their future working context.

To this end, it seems important to focus on all features of a book (internal and external) that ought to promote learners’ motivation, participation, effective preparation and training. Therefore, both internal and external elements of a book (language, skills, lexis, organization, authenticity, clarity, organization, illustrations, relevance to purpose and aims) are equally significant for the purposes of learners’ specialism studies. The evaluation model by McDonough and Shaw (2003)

was considered to cover these points and address the aims of this study. However Mukundan et al. (2011) and AbdelWahab's (2013) criteria are also considered as they are similar to those of McDonough and Shaw's.

3.9. ESP materials design

As discussed above, the role of materials is considered very important in ESP. Materials are defined as whatever teachers may use in linguistic, visual, auditory or kinaesthetic form to achieve the teaching and learning purposes (Tomlinson, 2008). ESP materials play a very important role in learning because they are perhaps the only medium of language input for learners (Dudley Evans and St John, 2001), and can "present real language, as it is used" in the real world (Dudley Evans and St John, 2001:171). Over the years, researchers have suggested a number of elements which are considered to be significant in ESP materials design.

For instance, Vičič (2011) suggests that ESP materials need to be challenging, creative, enhancing communication, taking into consideration learning needs, having a clear purpose and matching to the objectives of the course. Authenticity is considered another important factor in ESP materials design because it presents real situations the language is used at. This is so because as Basturkmen, (2010) purports authentic texts and situations can give learners an idea of the language they need to produce and "get the students doing things that they actually need to do in their work" (Harding, 2007, pp. 10-11, quoted in Basturkmen, 2010:63). For instance, according to Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) authentic audiovisual material can be a means of effective teaching and learning and Fiorito (2005) argues that authentic tasks can link classroom to real life and learners' future working conditions.

ESP materials are suggested by Pérez Cañado and Almagro Esteban (2005) to use authentic supplementary material to cover for any deficiencies, thus leading to better learning outcomes, as, according to Bojovic (2006) contemporary authentic material reflects learners' actual needs and their reasons to learn their English. Especially for those studying Business English, it is argued by Meng Choo (2005) that text authenticity can be achieved by the use of input linked to learners'

present and future needs, thus, promoting class engagement and improving all four skills (reading, listening, speaking and listening).

Further to the above, ESP materials need to emphasize the importance of group work and cooperation among learners as elements of a course, which, as it is claimed by Ates (2012) enhance their “critical thinking through global business cases”, thus expanding on a textbook which might not offer such opportunities for use of the language. Additionally, it is supported by Boarcăș (2009) that team or group work can enhance communication among learners in the ESP English classroom and especially through the use of activities based on social media as they can be motivating for learners, offering opportunities for interactions and skills practice.

Moreover, according to Tomlinson (2008), materials design should be based on input which provides the necessary amount of information for learners’ specific needs and should help them explore their background knowledge and experience, thus, focusing on experiential learning. Additionally, ESP materials designers should follow criteria such as matching real content (the aim of the course) to carrier content (the kind of English used for the aim of the course) (Dudley Evans and St John, 2001:176-180), or else “pedagogical aims” (Basturkmen, 2010:62). Similarly, when designing ESP materials, important features such as their usefulness for students, their ability to stimulate their curiosity or their relevance to learners’ needs should also be considered (Vičič, 2011).

The use of ICT is another criterion that is suggested in ESP materials design to foster ESP learning. More analytically, learners’ linguistic improvement is attributed to the implementation of ICT as according to Daragmeh (2011) it can arouse student interest and based on Vahabi and Sadeh (2011) can promote student participation. It can also activate students and focus on communication, supporting their scaffolding all the way through linguistic needs until they become independent learners (Mamakou and Grigoriadou, 2010). This is because as Kavaliauskiene and Kaminskiene (2010) argue communication is a feature which is considered of high importance for ESP, because it promotes learner interaction in the target language and offer

vast opportunities for listening, reading and writing skills practice. Another criterion is the variety of skills, of types of activities and interaction exchanges (group work/pair work etc.). The grading of the exercises is also important as it should range from fully supported to unsupported tasks (Nunan, 1988). Prior to materials design it is necessary to identify the type of syllabus (Widodo, 2007) and follow a certain approach (Widodo and Savova, 2010).

Several researchers have dealt with ESP materials design. For instance, a course for tertiary level Vocational institutes computing learners was designed in Greece by Hadziyiannoglou-Xenodohidis (2002). The design was based on needs analysis and the course was evaluated administering questionnaires. Based on the findings, the students liked the course but the researcher failed to include the workplace opinion regarding ICT needs.

Similarly, the needs of tertiary level Hotel and Catering course learners and those of the hospitality industry personnel were analyzed in Malaysia by Mohd and Siti (2008). The questionnaire answers revealed discrepancies between the students and the personnel responses regarding listening and speaking skills. Thus, a syllabus was designed to cater for the problems, which however was not trialed with the learners.

Likewise, a survey with HR Managers and engineering tertiary level technical students was conducted in India by Al Muzzamil Faren and Namakkal (2010) aiming at a communicative model syllabus design which was trialed with the students who found it interesting. However, there is no reference to the syllabus design steps, nor to the data analysis method. In another study, tertiary level tourism students', hotel receptionists' and hotel managers' needs were analyzed in Tehran by Masoumpanah and Tahririan (2013). Based on the lack of communicative oral skills, the researchers evaluated the available books in the market making suggestions regarding their appropriateness but did not design materials of their own.

The aforementioned studies reviewed here discuss the features of materials design and their importance for ESP. Many studies (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001; Perez Cañado and Almargo Esteban, 2005; Bojovic, 2006; Tomlinson, 2008; Boarcăș, 2009; Vičić, 2011; Vahabi and Sadeh,

2011; Masoumpanah and Tahririan, 2013) rely only on literature reviews to present the characteristics ESP materials should employ. Other studies designed materials based on the suggested ESP features but did not trial them with learners to test their efficiency (Mohd and Siti, 2008), did not include the workplace opinion in their design (Hadzigiannoglou-Xenodohidis, 2002) or did not follow a clear methodology and/or analysis method (Al Muzzamil Fareen and Namakkal, 2010). However, those studies that did design material and tested it with the students using questionnaires to detect their opinion (Hadzigiannoglou-Xenodohidis, 2002; Meng Choo, 2005; Al Muzzamil Fareen and Namakkal, 2010; Vičić, 2011; Daragmeh, 2011; Ates, 2012) did not address VE of secondary level but of tertiary.

Despite the fact that the above studies investigated the characteristics of ESP materials design, they leave gaps in knowledge due to the following: none of them designed ESP materials for VE of secondary level; many of them relied their design suggestions on secondary data lacking current information; others did not add the workplace opinion in their materials design or did not clarify the methodology they used, thus lacking reliability, credibility or trustworthiness.

The above studies relate to this study in the methodological approach they have used as regards the design of material to fill gaps found. However, this study differs from the above studies in the following ways: one, it addresses the secondary level of VE as opposed to the tertiary the studies in this section have explored; two, as will be explained in Chapter 4, it designed topic/theme-based ESP supplementary material in English (Widodo and Savova, 2010) based on the reviewed aforementioned criteria of ESP materials design and the business survey findings; three, it employed triangulation with a variety of instruments and participants (students' questionnaires, students' pre/post-tests, teachers' interviews, students' focus group discussion) to validate the results found.

3.10. Research on ESP in Business

There is extensive interest from researchers in ESP and Business as “students need to concentrate on things that are likely to help them become good business communicators”

(Jendrych, 2011:665). Focused on this need for example, the design of an ESP course for Chinese University Business students was investigated by Jiajing (2007). The course was based on learners' needs analysis and issues such as the importance of the use of authentic supplementary materials, business terminology, all four skills and self and peer assessment, in order to enhance learners' motivation and interest. However, although the material was designed, there was no effort to investigate its effectiveness.

Similarly, based on the interest in the link between ESP and Business, email tasks for Business tertiary ESP courses were designed by Evans (2012) due to their lack of presence in relevant textbooks. Semi-structured interviews, "week-in-the-life" case studies, analyses of email chains, and a questionnaire survey with professionals were conducted. The findings revealed the importance of appropriate email frameworks regarding style and grammar for business purposes, and their implications for teaching purposes. Nevertheless, no actual suggestions were made.

Likewise, the way business English students' writing was received by eight international business practitioners was investigated by Zhang (2013). The results demonstrated the emphasis that professionals place on both linguistic and transactional aspects of writing and BELF. However, though the aforementioned studies have looked into BELF and ESP they have focused on tertiary level learners' needs, whereas there is nothing relevant, at least to my knowledge, on VSE.

3.11. Research on the link between ESP material and workplace needs

Regardless of the importance of appropriate ESP material for learners' effective preparation for their future professions, research shows that too often, ESP materials do not comply with the expected ESP demands (Harwood, 2005). I will discuss some of these research findings below.

In order to study turn taking and overlapping talk in Business English textbooks in the U.K., data drawn from sample meetings in companies were analyzed by Angouri (2010:373). According to the findings, there was a discrepancy between the language used in the textbook and the language used in business meetings. Thus, it was suggested that "the language classroom should

become a workshop... with discussions of authentic real-life workplace data from the target workplace” to fill the gap (ibid: 389). Nevertheless, no reference is made to the educational level (secondary or tertiary) addressed. Similarly, the findings of empirical studies were looked into by Wisniewska (2012), in order to investigate the effectiveness of ESP textbooks. The data taken revealed that textbooks do not always have the “potential” needed and it was suggested that teachers should adapt the material according to learners’ ESP needs. However, it is not clear to the reader whether the paper refers to secondary or tertiary level.

Likewise, an extensive literature review regarding the issue of authenticity in ESP textbooks was conducted by Pérez Cañado and Almagro Esteban (2005). Based on the findings, it was pointed out that although there are ESP textbooks that contain authentic materials, they can be efficient only if their selection is based “on the correspondence between students’ learning and target needs” (ibid: 9). However, it is not clear which educational level is addressed here.

On the other hand, other researchers looked at the tertiary ESP level specifically. For instance, the tertiary ESP level of material was the focus of research conducted by Carbajosa Palmero (2003) which examined its suitability, emphasizing the analysis of a sample teaching unit of Technical English . The findings suggested that ESP materials will only be suitable if they consider issues such as authenticity, interdisciplinary features, flexibility and ESP context relevance.

Additionally, the importance of ESP materials was discussed by Jiajing (2007) whose motive was her senior international business learners. Empirical studies were reviewed and a sample ESP course framework was suggested, analyzing important issues such as needs analysis, determination of goals and objectives, skills acquisition, assessment and evaluation. The above were suggested based on the importance in ESP course design the author placed in her study, aiming at learners’ appropriate preparation for their future career. It is not clear, however, if the course framework was more than a suggestion or if it was also taught in class.

More information on the issue can be drawn from a number of empirical studies regarding the effectiveness of ESP material. For instance, the effectiveness of literature (stories) was

investigated by Meng Choo (2005) as a way to fill the gap between a tertiary level business textbook and learners' needs. Some material was developed (it is not specified what exactly), which was tested with four groups of 65 learners (two control and two experimental ones). The pre- and post-tests findings showed that the suggestion made had positive effects as a supplement for inadequate textbook material in the long-term, though it was pointed out that there was no evident improvement in the short-term. Similarly, a study with 30 participants of a sociology tertiary Vocational course regarding the link between the textbook and the course needs was conducted by Baleghizadeh and Rahimi (2011). The resulting finding (drawn from questionnaire data) was that the textbook material did not correspond to the ESP course demands and suggestions were made for modifications and/or activities in addition.

Another research study was carried out on the link between ESP material and workplace in 2009 in Morocco by Bouzidi (2009). The researcher investigated the link between the ESP hospitality industry textbook and the workplace. A survey with employees and employers was conducted, so as to gather their opinion on skills needs and based on the results, to evaluate the relevant textbook. The interview results showed that managers considered English a major qualification that could lead to better payment. Additionally, it was found that although employees considered English an important qualification, they admitted they were not so good at it, especially in speaking and listening skills. Based on these findings, there was an evaluation of the extent to which the textbook corresponded to the hospitality industry needs. The results demonstrated that the textbook was not communicative enough, it did not promote speaking activities and was suggested to be supplemented with extra material to address the course needs. Nevertheless, the opinion of VE teachers, for instance, was not considered. What is more, the researcher failed to ask the employers' opinion about the employees' English language skills level, which would give more insight into the gap between textbook and employees' needs. Last, this work does not address VSE but the tertiary level.

During the same year, the English language needs of human resource staff in multinational companies were analyzed by Kaur and Clarke (2009). The qualitative and quantitative data

analysis revealed that there were gaps between the actual level of the staff and the expected one and particularly in their communicative skills. In the paper it is pointed out that the findings were very useful, because the staff expressed their wish to improve their level of English, which they had learned in school, and the researchers suggested in house ESP training courses. Nevertheless, it is not clear in the paper which type of education (General or Vocational) the staff had attended in their school years, exactly.

The studies reviewed in this section explore the connection between ESP materials and workplace needs. Some of the studies (Pérez Cañado and Almargo Esteban, 2005; Jiajing, 2007; Angouri, 2010; Wisniewska, 2012) used secondary data and literature review findings to discuss the importance of ESP materials to link to the employment market due to discrepancies found. Other studies conducted empirical research (Meng Choo, 2005; Baleghizadeh and Rahimi, 2011) delivering questionnaires to students or to employees as Kaur and Clarke (2009) have done in order to investigate the link of the ESP materials to the needs of the specialty course.

Even though the above studies provided me with useful information on the link between ESP materials and workplace demands, the study which contributed most with its findings is that of Bouzidi (2009). This is because Bouzidi attempted to bridge the gap between the ESP classroom and the workplace employing triangulation with interviews and questionnaires to employees, employers and teachers as well as textbook analysis. However, this study differs from that of Bouzidi and the other studies reviewed in this section in that it designed supplementary material based on the business survey findings and textbook analysis as opposed to Bouzidi who did not exploit his findings to design material to cover the lacks of the material. What is more, this study differs in that it also attempts to test the efficiency of the suggested material with a group of learners.

Finally, this study addresses ESP material of VE of secondary level. Especially for the Greek context this attempt is unique given that secondary level VE ESP materials and their relation to the workplace needs have not been investigated so far, leaving a large gap in the field. Additionally,

the findings of the literature review have been used to compare with the findings of this research with possibly valuable implications for researchers, practitioners, policy makers and the workplace representatives as regards the importance of the link between ESP materials and contemporary business needs.

3.12. Research on teachers' contribution to ESP material evaluation and development

Materials evaluation is based on needs analysis (students', course features, curriculum) which will lead to decision making for the appropriate selection or design of the relevant material content leading to successful implementation of teaching and learning goals (Mohammadi and Mousavi, 2013). For the implementation of any course needs analysis, a number of stakeholders can take part: governmental authorities, materials designers or teachers. Teachers' role is very significant as they are actively involved in teaching materials and well informed of their context and their students. Therefore, their contribution is valuable. The notion of teacher engagement in ESP materials selection is thought to be a crucial factor for successful learning to take place (Abdulaziz et al., 2012). Similarly, the importance of teachers' role towards effective materials design has been outlined by many researchers. For example, it has been argued that teachers' involvement in materials design is a significant factor for learning, to enhance students' active participation and interest in the lesson (Harding, 2007).

It is believed that ESP teachers should be the ones to choose among many other parties (i.e. educational authorities) the most appropriate textbook to cater for learners' specific needs (Carbajosa Palmero, 2003). Additionally, teachers' role is seen as determinant for the selection of textbooks, especially when mixed ability classes are involved. As materials are not usually designed based on individual needs, but on a specific level of the language to be taught, it is the teachers' decision to adapt them accordingly and satisfy their learners' ESP linguistic needs (Balteiro, 2007).

Based on the issue of teacher participation significance in materials selection or development, six Elementary and High School teachers' views on English language digital educational tools

were examined by Çelik and Aytin (2014) through interviews. According to the findings, teachers considered such tools very motivating for learning. Furthermore, open-ended interviews were used by Kayapinar (2009) to investigate forty teachers' views on the quality of beginner to intermediate foreign school textbook packages. The findings showed that teachers thought negatively of these books and suggested their development to meet their students' needs.

Similarly, three secondary school teachers were questioned by Johansson (2006) regarding their considerations about teaching material decisions. We are not presented with the methodology of data analysis but according to the teachers, school books should not be the only source of teaching material and that variety is important for effective learning to take place. In another study, six University English language professors were approached in order to explore their opinion on a textbook developed by Zohrabi (2011). Semi-structured interviews were conducted and after a thematic analysis of the data, it was found that the textbook should be more interactive and communicative.

As shown in the literature review above teachers' opinion in textbook evaluation and design is considered critical. The majority of the above studies (Çelik and Aytin, 2014; Kayapinar, 2009; Johansson, 2006) interviewed teachers and explored their views regarding features that effective materials should employ. However, only Zohrabi (2011) asked teachers to evaluate a textbook developed by the researcher. The above studies relate to my research in that they present methodology which I also employed here (interviews with teachers). However, this study differs from the above in that the teachers in this research were approached to express their opinion on ESP material for secondary VE as opposed to material for general English purposes in the studies reviewed. What is more, their opinion was exploited in order to design supplementary material to address the course and workplace needs. Especially for Greece, teachers' involvement in ESP materials evaluation and design has never been considered before, thus leaving a relevant gap in knowledge. The study aspired to exploit teachers' contribution in materials evaluation and design to make relevant recommendations to policy makers in Greece and elsewhere.

3.13. Summary

In this chapter I discussed the theoretical framework of my research which is about ESP and Business English. I referred to the differences between ESP and EGP and needs analysis. I presented the literature on ESP material evaluation and design. A variety of gaps found relate to the fact that ESP materials are not always compatible with the workplace ESP needs. Furthermore, they relate to discrepancies in the link between ESP materials, learners' needs and workplace demands, mainly addressing the tertiary education level rather than VE secondary level both in the world and in Greece. These are gaps in knowledge that this research has attempted to address.

Chapter 4: Methodological approach of the research

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the methodology adopted within the framework of the research of this thesis. Methodology “is concerned with how we come to know, but it is much more practical in nature and focuses on the specific ways-the methods-that we can use to try to understand our world better” (Trochim, 2006). Thus, this chapter discusses the structure of this research and the rationale that underpins the research design. It presents in brief the philosophy it draws upon, the research methods, the data collection tools and the data analyses methods used in it. It also discusses validity, reliability, and ethical issues. However, the full analytical description of issues such as data collection tools, data analysis or sampling process and participants that relate to each of the research questions of this research (Chapter 1) are presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that follow. Finally, this chapter refers to problems encountered throughout the research.

4.2. Rationale for the design of the study – action research

For the purposes of this research project I employed action research which is “a disciplined process of inquiry conducted by and for those taking the action. The primary reason for engaging in action research is to assist the “actor” in improving and/or refining his or her actions” (Sagor, 2000:3). Action research involves a process with certain steps (Sagor, 2000:4):

1. Selecting a focus (what element/s or aspects need to be investigated)
2. Clarifying theories (identify the values, beliefs and theoretical perspectives related to the focus in order to clarify the approach or strategy to follow)
3. Identifying research questions (to guide the inquiry and receive possible answers)
4. Collecting data (usually employing triangulation by using multiple sources of data to answer the questions. This data can be observational: photographs/diaries/ shadowing students or probes: tests/interviews/surveys/focus groups (Sagor, 2000:19))
5. Analyzing data (to have an understanding of the issue under investigation)

6. Reporting results (formally –to authorities/institutions – or informally – to colleagues)
7. Taking informed action (or action planning to improve the situation investigated)
8. Reflecting on the process and the results.

Based on the above points of action research I proceeded with the following steps:

1. *Selecting the focus of the research:* The subject of this research concerns two key issues: ESP in VSE and workplace. They are both umbrella concepts with sub-categories and topics related to them as explained in the two previous chapters. In this research, and within the framework of ESP, my intention was to investigate relevant material (the “Economics and Administration” VSE textbook). Additionally, my aim was to investigate its link to the current workplace needs (the businesses in Thessaly Greece) and the impact of newly designed material on learners’ linguistic competence.

2. *Clarifying theories:* The core of the thesis is Vocational Education and ESP. Therefore, I decided to investigate the literature behind key aspects such as: Vocational education in the world and in Greece and its link to the workplace; the importance of English as a Lingua Franca and an international business language, ESP and needs analysis and ESP materials; ESP materials evaluation principles, models and criteria, ESP materials design principles, and ESP linked to labour market needs.

3. *Identifying research questions:* the purpose of the research formed the design of the research questions (see Chapter 1). Consequently, the research questions guided me to the choice of the research study procedure, participants, data collection tools, and data analysis methodology. Thus, having formed the research questions I designed the research process for each one of them.

4. *Collecting data:* To provide me with possible answers for the research questions I used a variety of data collection tools (see section 4.9. ‘*Data collection tools*’), following a mixed method approach which is presented analytically in the section 4.7 (‘*the Mixed method approach*’) below.

5. Analyzing data: The analysis of the data was implemented by using the SPSS statistical package for the questionnaires and the pre-post tests and content analysis for the interviews and focus groups. This is presented analytically in the section 4.11 (*Data analysis methodology*) below.

6. Reporting results: The results were taken down, analyzed and formed the basis of the action taken (the design of new material).

7. Taking informed action: This was newly designed material based on the results of the research which aimed to address the gap found.

8. Reflecting on the process and the results: This involved reflection on the findings and considering their implications.

4.3. Structure of the research

4.3.1. Pilot study

In order to determine the course of action for the main study of this research I conducted a pilot study. The pilot study aimed at providing me with important data as regards the English language needs the businesses demand in the research area in order to compare with the English language skills provided in the textbook “Economics and Administration” and based on these, to design new supplementary material to address the needs of the businesses. To do this and for the purposes of the first research question (see Chapter I), I surveyed businesses in Thessaly. Therefore, I administered questionnaires to business owners or HR officers and conducted conversations with them after the questionnaire gathering. A detailed description of the pilot study process is presented at Chapter 5.

4.3. 2. Main study

The findings of the pilot study were used in order to proceed with the design of the main study (Chapters 6 and 7) which focused on the evaluation of the target textbook and suggestions for supplementary material. Specifically, for the purposes of the second research question (see

Chapter I), I decided first to evaluate the “Economics and Administration” Vocational textbook to understand its content. To validate the results, I decided to conduct interviews with the teachers that taught the book. The data of the first and second research questions were actually intended to provide answers for the third research question: the extent to which there is a gap between Vocational ESP skills and business English skills demands. Based on the results, I proceeded with the research for the purposes of the fourth research question.

To address this question, I designed sample materials to substitute Unit two of the target book and taught them to an experimental group of learners conducting a comparative study (control vs experimental). To detect the learners’ level before and their level of improvement after the teaching interventions, I gave a pre- and post-test to them. A questionnaire was also delivered to learners and follow-up conversations with the students (focus group discussion). Furthermore, interviews with the teachers who observed the teaching of the new material were designed. These were based on notes the teachers followed based on a specific evaluation checklist protocol (Appendix XXIII), provided by the researcher in order to evaluate the newly designed material. The interviews aimed at more profound answers for the purposes of the fourth research question (see Chapter I). A detailed description of the process is presented in Chapter 7.

4.4. The research epistemology

Epistemology is “the philosophy of knowledge or of how we come to know” (Trochim, 2006). More specifically, the research philosophy, also known as paradigm or model, describes “the overall framework used to look at reality based on a philosophical stance” (Clarke, 2005:13). In other words, it is the theoretical framework, which affects “the way knowledge is studied and interpreted” (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). This particular research is a social, applied research study.

4.5. The philosophical paradigm

The philosophical approach of the research draws mainly on the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm relies “on qualitative data collection methods and analysis or a

combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed approach)” (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). It has “the intention of understanding the world of human experience” and “relies upon the participants’ views of the situation being studied (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). It also “assumes the meaning of experiences and events are constructed by individuals and therefore people construct the realities in which they participate” (Lauckner, 2012). In this sense, the purpose of research which draws on this paradigm is to look deeper into the way people build and shape their idea of the world and the meaning they render it (Lauckner, 2012).

Interpretivist research uses qualitative methods such as interviews, observations, document reviews or visual data analysis (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). However, as aforementioned, an interpretivist paradigm may rely on a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed method approach). This view is supported by Punch, (2005) who claims that a single approach is not always adequate to give a profound picture and an in-depth analysis of the research issues and suggests a combination of qualitative and quantitative research for a better understanding of the research issues. This combination can be done for a variety of reasons (Hughes, 2006): for triangulation purposes; for the qualitative research facilitating quantitative and vice-versa, thus providing more information; to provide a general picture; to facilitate the interpretation of relationships between variables and so on. Therefore, this research has combined both qualitative and quantitative methods using a mixed method approach as mentioned above to strengthen the results and make them more credible and comprehensive.

4.6. Social sciences

Social studies as a discipline draws on social sciences and focuses on an understanding of human social behavior within a social framework. It is defined as “the science of people or collections of people, such as groups, firms, societies, or economies, and their individual or collective behaviors” (Bhattacharjee, 2012:1). Social studies uses data collection and data analysis in order to validate theories and follows either a systematic quantitative or qualitative design (or a mixed method of both), in order to explore, describe and explain data (Hunt and Colander, 2010).

Applied social sciences research focuses on a specific problem and/or offer a direct solution to it. It is conducted for a pre-determined purpose and the results are directly exploited or applicable, aiming to improve a certain issue addressed.

Applied research is designed in two main phases (planning and execution) and another four stages in between, namely definition, design/plan, implementation and reporting or follow-up of the data and their application to the purposes they are meant for (Bickman and Rog, 2008). The results of this research are directly applicable to the purposes of the thesis: the results of the textbook analysis and the teachers' interviews answers, compared to the business survey results, have revealed a gap between the businesses English language needs and the target textbook English language skills offered. This result in turn is applied in the design of new supplementary material for the "Economics and Administration" book of the VSE business Sector.

4.7. The mixed method approach

In this research I have chosen to follow a mixed method approach (quantitative and qualitative). Mixed method research is "the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration" (De Lisle, 2011). Some of the strengths of this method are that it "can answer a broader and more complete range of research questions because the researcher is not confined to a single method or approach and can add insights and understanding that might be missed when only a single method is used" (Johnson et al., 2004). Nevertheless, this method presents some weaknesses (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2004). These relate to the fact that it is time consuming and expensive, and the researcher needs to be experienced in both qualitative and quantitative research and know how to mix them effectively. Additionally, methodological purists believe that a researcher should either pick the qualitative or quantitative paradigm and not both; finally, the fact about how to interpret

conflicting results and analyze quantitative data qualitatively is something that still has not been solved.

In this study I have employed a mixed method because I felt it would help me have a better and broader insight into the issues I wanted to investigate, using triangulation with a variety of data collection tools (questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussion, pre-post tests). These are well established methods of data collection, demonstrating reliability, credibility, internal validity and trustworthiness (Cohen and Manion, 2000). More specifically, I used a quantitative method in the pilot study to conduct a business survey with 136 participants using questionnaires as a research tool, looking for facts to be statistically measured and analyzed focusing on the collection of numerical data (Easterby-Smith et al., 2006). Additionally, in the pilot study I used a quantitative research method as my intention was to look into whether and/or how the independent variables of the survey affect the dependent variables and for this, a quantitative study is preferable, as it looks at cause and effect and uses survey questions, to produce objective, measurable, statistically analyzed data, with the study of certain variables (Johnson and Christensen, 2008:34). Similarly, I used a quantitative method for the purposes of the last phase of the main study in which I conducted a comparative investigation with the learners, through pre and post-tests, to receive again measurable data statistically analyzed.

On the other hand, when it comes to educational research, certain research questions cannot be addressed quantitatively, and rely on qualitative analysis. This is because the qualitative method “seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings ... in which ... the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002:40). In particular, when one seeks profound research data collection, a qualitative research method can address the issue effectively, usually through one-to-one interviews, focus groups, observations or field trips (Sellers, 1998:1). Thus, a qualitative method aims at interpreting social interactions and addresses the how and why of things, providing in-depth understanding of what is being investigated (Acaps, 2012). In general, such a method is inductive, subjective, and emphasizes focus groups,

in-depth interviews, observation or document analysis. It is descriptive, very analytical and unlike the quantitative study, it seeks attitudes, behavior or the quality and not the quantity. Its data are represented with words or pictures, whereas quantitative data are represented with numbers (O'Leary, 2004). Additionally, qualitative research is used to draw a large amount of data from a small number of participants, as opposed to a quantitative method.

For all the above reasons, and in addition to the quantitative method I employed, as described above, I used a qualitative research method to address the second and third research questions that concerned the content of the book. Therefore, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers that taught it. Additionally, I employed this method to address the fourth question and detect learners' opinion on the newly designed material, and therefore, I conducted a focus group discussion with them.

4.8. The eclectic method approach

Additionally, this research employs an eclectic method approach which is "a combination of different methods of teaching and learning approaches" (Praveen Kumar, 2013:1). When applied to learning English it emphasizes real life tasks, peer work, group activity and spoken English, involving learners in role-play activities to generate discussion and make learning more comprehensible (Praveen Kumar, 2013).

The eclectic approach that was followed in this research may be seen in the material that was designed to cover for the discrepancies that the research revealed. More specifically, the material was designed to be interactive, with role-plays and group work activities, and thus communicative, as suggested by the needs of the businesses. Moreover, the activities were designed and based on everyday life working situations and the office needs of firms to simulate the current business environment that learners will need to experience in their working context (Chapter 7).

4.9. Data collection tools

As has been mentioned before, this research used triangulation employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools (mixed method). Survey questionnaires, face to face interviews, focus group discussion, document analysis (i.e. textbook) and pre and post-tests were the data collection tools. Other tools such as video recording, for instance, were not used as it is not allowed by the Greek law. Similarly, email or skype and other technologies interviews, or online survey, for example, were not decided to be used either, as they would be time consuming or this would not be convenient, as there were time limitations.

4.9.1. Pilot study

The pilot study was designed to determine the course of action for this research and provide answers for the first research question. The data collection tools used were survey questionnaires. However, informal discussions with some of the respondents also followed.

Survey questionnaires

For the purposes of the first research question (see Chapter 1) in the pilot study a survey was conducted with the businesses who took part in it (Appendix II). The questionnaire was chosen as a data collection tool as it is more appropriate when one wants to address a large number of populations and ask their opinion on something (Lichtman, 2006:7-8) “so as to gather as representative a picture as possible” (Acaps, 2012:5).

Informal discussions

In addition to the questionnaires informal discussions were also conducted with some of the businessmen. The aim of the discussions was to shed more light into the questionnaire answers. The average duration of each conversation was about 10 minutes, and they were realized only with some of the participants who voluntarily accepted to continue expanding on their answers (23 people).

4.9.2. Main study

The main study was designed in order to provide possible answers for the main issue of this research: the extent to which there is a link between secondary level VE English language skills and workplace needs, thus, answering questions two, three and four (Chapter 1). For this purpose triangulation was used with a variety of data collection tools (interviews, focus group discussion, questionnaires, pre/post-tests).

Interviews

Interviews are a way to collect the interviewees' perceptions and take place between people who are essentially strangers to each other, thus, ensuring objectivity (Cohen and Manion, 2000:307-308). They can be structured or semi-structured (else in-depth) (Bernard, 2006:210) and issues such as privacy, anonymity, informed consent, appropriate behavior, data interpretation and confidentiality ought to be taken into consideration throughout them (Lichtman and Tech, 2013). The interviewer records and takes notes from a rather small sample of participants (Johnson and Christensen, 2008; Lichtman, 2006), making use of all the elements encountered in the interviews (respondents' comments, observations, facial expressions, even seating posture or talking mode).

Based on the above, in-depth semi-structured interviews (Appendices V, VI, VII) were used in this research, as a set of general questions pre-defined by the researcher, which do not necessarily appear in specific order (Paraskevopoulou-Kollia, 2008). The interviews were conducted in order to receive as profound answers as possible which would expand my knowledge on the subjects of investigation (the content of the "Economics and Administration" book and the impact of the suggested material). They were chosen as a data collection tool as they focus on interaction and communication between research participants and served the purposes of the second and fourth research questions aiming at teachers' views on the target textbook (Appendices V, VI, VII) and on the newly designed material (Appendices XVII, XIX).

Experimental approach (Pre-post tests)

For the purposes of the fourth research question and triangulation reasons pre and post-tests were employed to detect the English language level of two groups of learners (experimental and control) before and after the teaching of the lessons (Appendix XIII). The two tests were the same version of the “Business Vantage Cambridge English” test, which is an independent user B2 (Based on the Common European Framework of References for Languages) level exam. The post-test was given two months after the pre-test, and the students had not been provided with any of the answers for this.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were also delivered to the experimental group of learners. The questionnaires aimed to draw learners’ opinion on the newly designed material (Appendix XV).

Focus group discussion

To validate the findings of the questionnaires and for the purposes of the fourth research question, a focus group discussion was conducted with some students from the experimental group (Appendices XVI, XVIII) aiming to gather their opinions on the newly designed material. A focus group is a “discussion designed to obtain perception on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment” (Krueger and Casey, 2009:2). Focus groups can be structured, unstructured or semi-structured and offer researchers “the opportunity to interview several respondents systematically and simultaneously” (Boateng, 2012). In this research the focus group discussion was semi-structured. Nevertheless, focus groups present some limitations. These may relate to the fact that they tend to become influenced by one or two dominant people in the session, thus, making the output biased and they are an artificial environment which can influence the responses that are generated (Fern, 2001). In this research, I worked with a focus group which derived from a class with students that had been together for six years and had maintained a good relationship. Though, I must admit I was quite concerned about having students being dominant on others, I realized this was not an issue because of their intimacy with one another, but at the

same time dynamic and independent enough to share their different opinion on the discussed issues. Moreover, the focus group was implemented in the school premises, and particularly in the school library, which was a natural school environment for the students and therefore, they were familiar with it and did not consider it “artificial” or “especially” organized for the purposes of the focus group discussion.

4.10. Participants’ profile

There were three sets of participants in this study: business employers/HR, teachers and learners.

4.10.1. Pilot study

Businessmen/HR of the business

These were the participants in the pilot study. They all came from Thessaly, which is in the center of Greece, and one of the 13 regions with a total population of around 800,000 people out of approximately 10,000,000 that live in the country. It comprises four prefectures (Larissa, Magnesia (Volos), Trikala and Karditsa). Most of the participants came from the prefectures of Larissa (the largest in the area regarding the population) and some from Magnesia but fewer from the prefectures of Karditsa and Trikala, as these prefectures constitute my professional context location, and I did not feel comfortable questioning people I might happen to know, as I might not be objective. The population I wanted to generalize was businesses in Greece and elsewhere. My sampling frame, (the list I drew my sample from), was businesses from the research location. The sample that was actually selected to participate in the research was the business managers (in case of small companies) or the human resource officers (HR) (in case of big companies) per randomly selected company. A human resource officer is responsible for recruitment, reviewing résumés, posting job descriptions, interviewing applicants etc.; therefore, they have a good knowledge of the kind of skills needed in their business. In the case of an HR absence due to a small number of personnel and therefore small size of a company, the business manager undertakes the aforementioned roles and duties.

In a way, this was a purposive sampling strategy as I chose this sample because they were the appropriate people to provide me with the information I wanted. In total, 136 randomly selected businesses participated in the research (out of 198 approached) responding to a relevant questionnaire (Appendix II) which was thought to be an adequate sample (Roussos and Tsaousis, 2011) to provide me with possible answers for the first research question (see chapter 1). Moreover, using a large data sample, can be generalizable and the results of the study can be used to make recommendations. I did not have to face any gender issues with my sample as, according to the Greek constitution, all Greeks, both men and women have the same working rights and opportunities (Greek Constitution, FEK 85/A/18-4-2001, article 4, paragraph 2 – “Greek men and women have equal rights and responsibilities”).

4.10.2.Main study

Teachers

Additionally, and for the purposes of the second research question, interviews (Appendices V, VI) were conducted with eight teachers who taught the target textbook. These teachers derived from a total number of 10, who were the only VE teachers in the location available (who taught the target book) and therefore, the number could not have been larger. The eight participants who consented to the participation had an experience of 10 to 30 years of teaching English and two to 15 years of teaching the target book. This implied their quite extensive experience in teaching English, teaching ESP, and teaching the specific book and therefore being well aware of its content. Seven teachers were female and one male, all working in state Vocational schools of Thessaly, Greece. For confidentiality reasons, pseudonyms are used in the presentation of the results and quotations. All teachers wished to speak in Greek as they felt insecure or embarrassed to speak in English. Last, all teachers gave their consent voluntarily in this research.

Participants in this study, and for the purposes of the fourth research question, are also considered the three teachers of the experimental and control groups who observed my teaching. However only the two teachers of the experimental group were interviewed. These teachers were

female and at the time of the study they had already had a general teaching experience of 17 to 21 years. Additionally, they taught the target book for 11 and 18 years respectively in various Vocational schools in Greece. The third teacher of the control group was also female and her teaching experience was almost 18 years, 13 of which she taught the target textbook.

Students

A total of 43 students (22 for the experimental group and 21 for the control group) participated in the research. Additionally, eight students (from the experimental group) participated in a focus group discussion for the purposes of the fourth research question. The participants in this study were two randomly selected groups of third grade VSS learners attending the course “Economics and Administration”. The selection of the schools was also random. In the experimental group all learners were 17 years old except two who were 18. It was the last year of studies in VSE for both groups. According to their teachers the majority of the experimental group intended to work right after graduation whereas only four learners wished to continue their studies in tertiary Vocational colleges. In the control group all learners were 17 years old. They all wished to work except five or six (the sixth learner was not certain yet) who expressed their intention to attend a technical college. Both groups were taught Business English for two hours per week through the “Economics and Administration” sector textbook. Furthermore, eight students participated in the focus group discussion (Appendices XVI, XIX), organized to detect their views on the new material. These came from the experimental group of the 22 students but it was only eight of them that participated because they were the only learners whose parents gave their consent for the focus group discussion to be recorded. Table 1 displays the different sets of participants in the research:

Table 1: Participants in the research

BUSINESSES/HR MANAGERS	
• Industrial/craft businesses	32
• Trading businesses	35
• Tourism and catering businesses	38
• Service businesses	31
<i>Total number of businesses</i>	
	<i>136</i>
TEACHERS	
• Participant teachers in the interviews about the target textbook	8
• Participant teachers in the interview about the new material	2
<i>Total number of teachers</i>	
	<i>10</i>
STUDENTS	
• Participant students in the teaching of the new material	22 (experimental group) 21 (control group)
• Participant students in the questionnaire answering	22 (from the experimental group)
• Participant students in the focus group discussion	8 (from the experimental group)
<i>Total number of students</i>	
	<i>43</i>

4.11. Data analysis methodology

Quantitative method

For the purposes of the pilot study and the first research question, the analysis of the questionnaires data delivered to the businesses (research question one, chapter 1) and of the questionnaire handed to the students (research question four, chapter 1) statistical analysis was undertaken using the SPSS statistical package. A statistical analysis involves “collecting and scrutinizing every data sample in a set of items from which samples can be drawn. A sample is a representative selection drawn from a total population” (Rouse, 2014). Statistical methods are needed to ensure that the data are interpreted correctly. The concepts of “population” and “sample” are important in statistics. The population is a “theoretical concept, an idealized

representation of the set of all possible values of some measured quantity...” and “a sample is what we actually see and can measure” (Wigley, 2005). The statistical analysis of the business survey questionnaire (Appendix II) is presented on section 5.7. Furthermore, and for the purposes of the fourth research question (see chapter 1), a statistical analysis was employed for the pre and post-test (Appendix XIII) administered to the learners to detect their linguistic level. The full analysis of these is presented in section 7.11. Finally, a statistical analysis was used for the questionnaire (Appendix XV) administered to students in the main study of the research in order to receive their opinion on the newly designed material (section 7.12.).

Qualitative method

Additionally, and for the purposes of the main study and the second research question (see chapter 1) a content analysis method was used for the interviews conducted with the teachers. Content analysis is qualitative analysis of texts, interviews, images, films, etc., but also an analysis method of social interactions (Krippendorff, 1980). According to Iosifides, (2003:63), it is a systematic technique of textual words conversion into smaller categories of content, taking specific steps, which I also followed:

- Theoretical elaboration and clarification of the research purpose and research questions.
- Appropriate determination of the qualitative material sources.
- Determination of the recording unit and analysis, i.e., parts of text or entire texts presenting research interest.
- Systematization of conceptual categories, under which the qualitative data are classified and on which the content analysis is essentially based.
- Codification of material within each category and between different categories.

During content analysis, when data are gathered, they are categorized into smaller units/words with research interest, they are described and are interpreted having been analyzed thematically and based on their content, highlighting the most essential points (Eisner, 1991). A

full description of the interviews analysis in this research is presented in section 6.3.6. Finally, and for the purposes of the fourth research question (Chapter 1), the same method of content analysis was employed for the students' focus group data (section 7.9.).

4.12. Validity – reliability issues

Validity

Validity is an important issue for the effectiveness of any research. Validity is “the degree to which a test or measuring instrument actually measures what it purports to measure” (Oluwatayo, 2012:391). In order to enhance the validity of the research instruments I designed (e.g. questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions) I had to think of several factors and follow specific steps, such as what to include, what information I wanted to collect or how to conduct the studies. Thus, in order to receive data that would fulfill the aims of the research questions one and two (see chapter I), I questioned myself on the following issues:

- How will I manage to be objective?
- How will I ensure that I am asking the right questions to cover/address the issues I am investigating?
- How do I avoid ambiguity?
- Will the wording and the reading level of the questionnaire be appropriate?
- Will the respondents be able to understand and answer the questions in both the questionnaire and interviews?
- Will the questionnaires measure what they intend to measure?
- Will the interview questions address what I am investigating?
- How will I ensure that the data can be generalized to other populations?
- How will I ensure reliability of the research?

Therefore, the first thing was to make sure I was very clear about what my research questions investigated and therefore what the research instruments (questionnaire/interview/focus group questions) should contain.

For the purposes of the first research question (chapter 1) I knew that the aim of the research was to reveal the English language skills demands in the current employment market. These would be the dependent variables of the research. My aim was also to see whether and/or how the independent variables (business activity/size/number of employees with specific posts) affected the skills demand (dependent variables). I also wanted to discover whether there were any Vocational school graduates among the employees of a business and their English language skills competence (dependent variable). Thus, the questions I designed were relevant to these issues (Appendix II).

I ensured that the questions were carefully structured and worded in such a way that they would be meaningful for the participants. Therefore, I put some effort into using as simple statements as possible, for the reader not to be confused. The wording of the questions was carefully constructed so as to avoid bias, leading or ambiguity. For my questionnaire to have face validity I asked one professor from Thessaly University, who teaches Educational research methods and is very experienced in the field, as well as a Greek language professor to read for vague or ambiguous points. After careful reading, they suggested that, I should place each section on a different page, as well as highlight some sentences or key words like skills (see Appendix II, for clarification purposes, which I did).

I grouped the 11 questions of the questionnaire into three main sections, depending on the similarity of the content: Section A. *Company information*, Section B. *English language skills needed in Businesses*, and Section C. *Vocational school graduate employees' skills competence* (Appendix II). This "...can increase respondents' ease in answering the questions and reduce the chance of response errors" (Parasuraman et al., 2007:282). It was also necessary to ensure that the questions were not excessive but as many as needed, for the reader not to be bored or disturbed.

Closed questions were designed, as they are easier to answer, but could still provide me with the data needed. However, there was an open-ended question for the participants to add anything else they wished, regarding additional needs of English language use in their businesses. To maintain objectivity and avoid bias, the sample selection (participants) was done randomly. Moreover, in order to have generalizable data, I chose to administer the questionnaire to a big sample, representative of the population. In the beginning I aimed to address 112 businesses in Thessaly, a region which corresponds to one tenth of the Greek territory but I decided to expand the number and I concluded with 136 participants. Finally, the research tool had to be piloted to validate its effectiveness. Therefore, when the first draft of the questionnaire was ready I proceeded with the pilot phase for validity purposes. Meanwhile, in order to validate the research tool I used statistical analysis of the data with the help of SPSS statistical package.

A similar procedure was followed for the purposes of the second research question (Chapter 1). To gain possible answers, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers. For external validity of the study and the research tool (the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other groups and other contexts), I ensured that the steps I took were as thorough and detailed as possible, offering clear information about the context and the characteristics of the participants (Golafshani, 2003). For the objectivity of the results (when the findings correspond to the participants' answers), I presented the findings accompanied by the participants' quotations where needed, but tried not to overuse them in the fear of weakening the analysis (Elo et al., 2014). For internal validity (refers to the validity of the measurement and test itself) I was careful to match the right data with the relevant categories for analysis (Elo et al., 2014).

The same process as above was followed for the fourth research question (Chapter 1). In order to investigate this question, I administered pre/post-tests to learners which were analyzed with the SPSS statistical package. I also made sure to select an already stabilized test (Vantage Cambridge English exams assessment) to detect learners' level and change of competency. Additionally, I conducted a focus group discussion with the experimental group of the students

who participated in the teaching of the new material and interviews with the teachers of the experimental group that observed the lessons. The questions used were designed based on the same criteria I employed for validity issues as in the previous studies (Golafshani, 2003; Elo et al., 2014).

Reliability

Reliability refers to “the extent to which other researchers would arrive at similar results if they studied the same case using exactly the same procedures as the first researcher” (Gall, 1996:572). To ensure the research reliability I was careful to follow all the above steps in the design of the tools and be very analytical to enable anyone researcher to arrive at similar findings in case of the research process repetition. In general, I ensured that I followed established scientific protocols (appropriate sample size, relevant to the research, up-to-date and primary source data for analysis, statistical analysis method etc) that led to the statistical data for this research.

4.13. Ethical issues

Ethical issues such as privacy, anonymity, informed consent, appropriate behavior, and confidentiality are very important when conducting research (Lichtman, 2006). One must be really careful with people’s rights and avoid the possibility of being unethical or putting them in an embarrassing or difficult situation. Additionally, it is significant to ensure the appropriateness of issues like ethical guidelines, access, consent, confidentiality, sensitivity or power relation. Based on the above points the study ensured the following:

Ethical guidelines

The study began by having the approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at the Open University of the U.K. As a next step and for the purposes of the study with the businesses I first searched whether there are any data protection guidelines such as British Education Research Association (BERA), in Greece. However, I found that such guidelines exist

only for research studies in schools (for external researchers or teachers and not school advisors like me) as well as that there was no need to get an official permission from authorities as this applies only to research conducted within school premises. Given the absence of the specific ethical guidelines in Greece, I followed the OU HREC guidelines, the ethical guidelines of BERA and Patras University in Greece that apply to all levels and institutions.

Access

Due to my position as a school advisor of English in my district, part of my duties is to visit schools and talk to teachers and students about educational and pedagogical matters. I am also authorized to conduct educational research without obtaining specific permission (Appendix III) from authorities. I am also encouraged to teach lessons myself (Appendix III) . Therefore, I did not need official permission to have access in the schools and conduct the research even though I asked the principals' and the teachers' consent for ethical reasons (Appendix XX).

Confidentiality

All the respondents were reassured about their anonymity and were told that they could have a copy of the results of the survey, if they asked for it. All participants were informed of the expected duration of the business and students' questionnaires filling (not more than five minutes), in order for the businesses to be able to allocate the necessary time to its response without this task impeding their work schedule and the students not to get bored. Additionally, I ensured that the interviews with the teachers and the focus group discussion with the learners would take place where and when it would be most convenient to them so as to make them feel as comfortable as possible. I did not wish to set any time limitations at neither of the two (interviews/focus group discussion) though I tried not to extend the conversations more than an hour. I intended to make all participants feel at ease and relaxed so as to allow them to provide me with as analytical answers as possible for the purposes of the research questions. I did not wish to set any restrictions regarding the language they wanted to use either. I did this out of respect for their choice and for ethical reasons so that they could express themselves freely.

Additionally, all students of both groups (experimental and control) and their teachers were ensured their anonymity and were explained that they could withdraw any time. They were also told they could receive a copy of the results. I also ensured that experimental and control group students felt comfortable and not threatened by my presence. Therefore, I explained to the learners of both groups that the lessons that were going to follow would not affect their level of performance and that their purpose was only to contribute to my study. Additionally, I reassured them that the pre and post-tests they were going to take were only for the purposes of my research and would not affect their term/semester report grades in any way. I also visited the classes at least two times before the study had begun to allow them time to familiarize with my presence during the lessons.

Consent

Based on the ethical guidelines I followed, I made sure that all respondents understood the purpose of the research, and gave their informed consent to participate in it. The majority of the businesses filled in their company information data and even added the company signature and stamp. They were also given my personal contact details in case they needed further clarifications. All survey respondents participated in the research voluntarily and of their own free will. However, there were some businesses (20) that did not respond to my mail asking for participation and some others (four) that declined their participation upon my calling them. For ethical reasons, I proceeded with other companies from my initial list, which comprised 158 companies in the beginning and another 40 later.

Similarly, for the study regarding teachers' views about the material, I made sure the participants were well informed of the purposes of the research and would voluntarily give their consent to this (Appendix XX). Additionally, in the last phase of the main study I conducted a comparative study with two groups of learners in order to detect the efficiency of the material I designed. Before the beginning of the lessons, and for ethical reasons, I took the particular teachers' consent and their school principals' permission (Appendix XX) so that the school time

tables would not be disturbed. Then I informed the students of both groups about the study but I did not need to get a formal consent by them as teaching and experimenting new methods or materials are part of my duties as a school advisor and based on these I often visit schools and conduct sample teaching sessions. Additionally, even though I did not have to take the parents' permission in order to teach, due to my duties, I had to have their consent for the recording of the lessons. As only eight parents consented instead of all parents I did not proceed with it. In addition, and based on the Greek educational law for privacy rights (2472/1997), I was not allowed to video tape the lessons either. However, I managed to conduct a focus group discussion with eight students, whose parents had already given their consent for the focus group conversation to be recorded (Appendix XX).

Power relation

For ethical reasons and to ensure objectivity, I decided to recruit participant teachers from different regions and schools that I did not supervise. I did this because I wanted to avoid making teachers of my region and under my supervision feel "obliged" to participate or be reluctant to refuse out of fear of being penalized by me as their school advisor. Nevertheless, I still was quite concerned regarding issues such as power relation due to the fact that even though they were not under my supervision I was still a school advisor and this might affect their answers. Additionally, I was concerned about whether teachers were free after all to "opt out" and "appear uncooperative or unprofessional" as Jones and Stanley, (2010) quoted in Banegas and Villacañas de Castro, (2015) point out. However, their voluntary participation and the absence of any previous relationship ensured objectivity. Additionally, throughout the whole interviews process I was very careful to avoid being superior in any way and tried to be as objective as possible focusing on the research issues, making it very clear to the teachers that they could withdraw any time they felt uncomfortable.

Another aspect I had to consider was the possible halo effect when conducting the focus group discussion with the students from the experimental group and interviewing their teachers,

which might affect the answers given during our conversations. According to Nisbett and Wilson (1977) the halo effect is a type of cognitive bias in which our impression of somebody affects the way we feel about this person; it is a situation that we do not become aware of as it happens unconsciously. However, in terms of this, I did not feel concerned for a number of reasons: one, I was not the regular teacher of the students and therefore we did not have time to develop a certain intimacy which might affect their answers by telling something I “liked”; two, the students had already been explained that their performance in the study would not be linked to their school report grades at all but would serve only the purposes of the study; three, their two teachers had no previous relationship with me, they did not participate in the lesson and were only asked to observe following a specific material evaluation protocol given by me. Finally, they were familiar with the process as part of the school advisors’ duties in Greece is to conduct sample teaching lessons asking teachers to evaluate their methodology based on certain criteria given to the teachers.

Another issue I was concerned about was a possible dominant behavior some students might display during the focus group discussion, which is too often one of the drawbacks of focus group discussions and may affect the reliability of the data. Nevertheless, the group I worked with had been attending the same school for at least six years and they had developed a very good relationship. This was evident to me during the teaching of the lessons in which all students worked very well together, maintaining a good behavior which continued during the focus group discussion.

Finally, it is worth mentioning at this point that one of the important aspects of ethics is whether any study like this is ultimately useful and who benefits in the end. I firmly believe that this was a study that addressed the students’ needs and is strongly linked to their adequate preparation for the workplace, hopefully, eliminating unemployment. My argument is strengthened by the fact that according to the business survey, a large number of employers are not happy with VE graduate employees’ English language skills, which implies their

unwillingness to hire them. To this end, having the possibility to know whether or not the students were satisfied with such material, would mean that it would address or not address their needs. This in turn would mean that, if the material addressed their needs, it would be motivating leading to their interest, participation in the lesson and thus their adequate preparation for the workplace. This could imply that if the students were appropriately prepared, unemployment risk could diminish for the benefits of the learners and future employees.

4.14. Problems in the study

During the research I had to confront a number of problems. One of them was time constraints. Especially, during the business survey, while addressing departments of large-scale companies, I had to wait for their response for a long time, until they had received authorization from the central offices. Meanwhile, though all respondents participated voluntarily, I noticed that small and medium size companies were very willing to participate immediately, whereas large companies were dubious in the beginning and asked many questions before giving their consent. I also noticed that younger respondents were quite a lot more responsive when participating than older ones. This is because, as they admitted, they had been involved in some kind of research during their University/College studies and they were familiar with the process.

However, this factor did not affect the data, as all respondents participated voluntarily. Those who declined were not asked again, and all participants only had to answer closed questions, by simply ticking their opinion on a Likert scale. The delivery of the questionnaires, apart from being time consuming, was also to some extent tiring. This was because, in many cases, I had to return to the companies in order to collect the questionnaires, and the respondents were not available to answer them at the time of the delivery. Last, it is worth mentioning that the participant business representatives complained that no one had ever showed any interest in questioning them about their needs or problems before.

Another difficulty I had to confront was conducting the interviews. One problem was some teachers' low profile and shyness, leading to their difficulty to articulate their answers well. I

confronted the issue by encouraging them to expand on their answers, being as polite as possible, trying to create a pleasant atmosphere during the interview, with a relaxed and calm tone of voice for teachers to feel more comfortable. For clarification purposes, I tried to repeat some of their responses instead of re-asking. I did this to avoid making them feel embarrassed or uncomfortable in case they thought they were not coherent enough. I also accepted their wish to speak to me in Greek rather than in English.

Another problem was the place of the interviews. For example, in the case of one of the respondents, though it was her decision for the interview to take place in the school library, she then felt rather uneasy when some students came in. Although I suggested we could interrupt our discussion, she insisted on continuing with the interview in an empty classroom. Moreover, to eliminate possible cases in which teachers might feel they had to give acceptable or desirable answers so as not to disappoint me, thus, potentially making the research less objective, I addressed teachers of another region and not the one I worked with. The absence of an already established relationship ensured objectivity.

I also had to confront some problems in the process of the last phase of the research. Firstly, I had little time available for the pilot lessons, which I taught myself, and so I had to go through three very exhausting days to cover the pilot material for appropriacy of instructions/wording and length of activities. Secondly, the actual study was postponed for a week, as, due to an unscheduled school trip, lessons were not conducted and therefore I had to put off the teaching of the last two lessons for the subsequent week. Lastly, I was concerned about maintaining objectivity while interviewing the two teachers that were observers in the teaching of the newly designed material. However, I felt I managed to maintain it due to two reasons: I only met them for the purposes of the research; two, their only duty was to observe and keep notes rather than cooperate with me in the lesson.

4.15. Summary

In this chapter I described the methodological approach of the research. I discussed issues that relate to the rationale of the structure and the process of the study linked to the research questions. Additionally, I discussed the epistemology, the methodology and research tools used for the purposes of the research. Finally, I discussed validity and reliability issues, ethical concerns and problems encountered. The process of the research is analytically presented in the chapters that follow and the findings are discussed in relation to the research questions.

Chapter 5: English language needs in the Greek workplace

5.1. Introduction

This chapter reports on research regarding the English language skills needed in businesses. More specifically, its purpose was to investigate the English language skills needed in the current employment market in Thessaly Greece. It aimed to find answers to the first research question (What are the English language skills currently needed for Business offices employees in the Greek employment market?). The findings on English language needs in the workplace were used to assess the content of the “Economics and Administration” ESP Vocational textbook, and its compatibility or not with the English language labour market needs currently, in the research location.

5.2. Rationale

The purpose of this part of the study was to provide me with answers for the first research question. It aimed to reveal which English language skills are needed for business office employees in the Greek market today. The data contributed to the comparison of the current English language skills needed in the market with the kind of skills offered in the target textbook. To discover the English language skills needs in the market, I designed a survey for businesses in the research area, which is the region of Thessaly in Greece. I chose the businesses as the source of data input for two reasons. One, the research questions were about business English, which is the language used widely in the market nowadays. Therefore, businesses were the appropriate source of information to offer me the answers I was looking for. Two, there was no other source of information, as the “Chamber of Commerce” in Greece does not provide citizens with such information, but only informs interested parties about the activities of the businesses in the location, the number of employees, and so on; according to N. 3419 of 2005 Greek law, the chamber of Commerce offers advisory recommendations and information for every financial or other issue relevant to businesses, aiming at the economic development of each region and serving the general interest of the national economy.

Meanwhile, as my aim was to investigate the English language skills in businesses *today*, I had to contact the businesses that operate in the region *currently*. Therefore, the data had to be *primary*, up to date and original, collected by me and not secondary, or collected previously by other researchers. However, even if I did want to use secondary data as a source of information, it would not be possible, as there is no study with such data available, either in the research location or anywhere in the Greek territory, at least to my knowledge. Thus, I had to design my own research and rely only on this data, in order to fulfill the purposes of this study.

5.3. Instrumentation

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire. A questionnaire was chosen instead of interviews or other research tools, due to the large sample of population I intended to involve. Questionnaires are believed to be the most preferable instruments to conduct a large sample survey and measure quantified facts (O' Leary, 2004:4). I also chose to use a questionnaire because it is practical as a method, costs less and its analysis is objective. Before designing the questionnaire, I searched in various archives for an already existing one (the library of the Open University in the U.K, Ebscohost, Springer, The Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece), that would be relevant to what I wanted to measure, but I was unable to find something that would match the purposes of my research subject. So I had to design a new one.

Before designing the instrument, based on my literature review, I conducted a pre-questionnaire phase, which included exploratory visits to various companies (12 in all) in the research area. The purpose of the visits was to help me have a picture of the research context (e.g., how businesses work, their activities, their size, the use of English and so on) and thus, create the appropriate tool aiming at identifying the research data needed for the purposes of this study. The selection of the businesses in this preparatory phase was random, and based on companies' contact information, which is registered in the local telephone directory. After phoning the companies and explaining the purpose of the visit, appointments were booked with the business manager in the case of a small business or the human resource officer in bigger companies. The meetings with the

participants began with a clear explanation of my presence there, and were realized in a friendly and positive atmosphere, though some of them were distant in the beginning. During our discussions I kept notes regarding the necessity of English in the business or the kind of activities. Data such as the size of the company or the number of employees, with duties similar to the specialism of the “Economics and Administration” Vocational sector were also recorded.

These discussions provided me with very important information, which I exploited in order to design the first questionnaire draft. They also revealed a significant difference between the businesses regarding their type of activities, their size, or the number of posts related to the target Vocational sector specialisms. Despite these differences and the great variety of activities, their views towards the English language skills were very similar. Thus, I preferred to categorize the questions of the first section of the questionnaire (company data) into three domains (*a. activities b. size c. number of employees with duties relevant to Vocational specialisms*) with various categories each, which constituted the independent variables of the research:

Variable 1: Type of activities, in four different categories: (*a. industrial/craft, b. tourism and food services, c. trade, d. customer service*)

Variable 2: Size of the company, in three different categories: (*a. small scale, b. medium scale, c. large scale*) based on the Commission: Recommendation 2003/361 E.U, regarding the number of employees and turnover, which are the most common ways of classification as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 : Classification of businesses in terms of size

Company size	Number of employees	Turnover
Small	Less than 50 workers	Turnover \leq €10,000,000
Medium	Between 50 and 250 workers	Turnover \leq €50,000,000
Large	Over 250 workers	Turnover $>$ €50,000,000

As seen in Table 2, the classification of the companies in terms of size is usually based on the number of employees and/or turnover (Commission: Recommendation 2003/361 E.U). However,

throughout the pre-questionnaire discussions with the participants, it was very clear that they considered data, such as the turnover, to be confidential and so they did not feel comfortable in discussing them. Therefore, when designing the questionnaire, I decided not to include such facts and limited the categorization of the companies in terms of size and the number of employees.

Variable 3: This is about the number of employees in a business with duties relevant to the “Economics and Administration” sector: (1-5, 6-10, 11-15, >15 people).

5.4. Piloting the research instrument

In order to enhance the validity of the research instrument I conducted a pilot phase. First, I consulted the phone directory of the research location again, and made a list of 15 randomly selected businesses. Although my aim was to address 10 businesses, I selected 15 in case some of them refused to participate. After phoning, talking to the secretary and explaining the purpose of the study, I was either asked to call back in order for the manager/HR officer to be informed or hold the line, until I was given the approval to book an appointment. The first seven companies consented to their participation immediately. However, the eighth one declined, so I proceeded with the other companies in my list, until I had completed the desirable number (10).

The next thing was to deliver the questionnaires myself instead of e-mailing them for instance, as they were not many and it was not difficult to do. Four of the companies I visited asked me to collect the questionnaire in a few days, while the other six companies answered it at the moment of my visit. The participants revealed to me they did not have any difficulty in answering the questionnaire, which was in both Greek and English, as the questions were very simple and clear. They also said it was very easy and quick to answer the questionnaire, as it was not too long. Three participants made remarks about the wording of section C: a) in question C1, in the pilot questionnaire, there was the expression «*Ινστιτούτα Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης*» (Vocational Training Institutes) – and they were not sure what exactly it meant (most people know it as IEK) and so I replaced it with IEK b) in question C2 of the pilot questionnaire, there was the word «*ικανότητες*», which mostly means capabilities, and so after being questioned about its exact

meaning I changed it to «δεξιότητες» (meaning skills), which was clear to them). Keeping in mind all comments I re-wrote and redesigned the questionnaire including the necessary corrections I had been suggested to make by the participants. When corrections were made and the layout was finalized (font, type of letters, space between lines), I felt that the final draft was ready to help me draw the answers I needed, and therefore to be administered for the actual study.

5.5. Questionnaire structure

The questionnaire (Appendix II) began with a small introductory text, which informed the respondents of the purpose of the study, included my contact information to be at their disposal any time and reassured them of their anonymity. All the questionnaire content appeared both in Greek and English. I did this for comprehension purposes (for anyone that would like to read and understand it or even make use of it). The questionnaire was designed to have 11 questions grouped into three basic sections:

Section A:

The first section is aimed at *the company information data* and contains three questions, which are the independent variables. Apart from factual collection, I intended to investigate if and/or how these independent variables affect the dependent variables (*section two*, English language skills). In other words, how the company activities, their size and the number of employees working in Administration and economics- Warehouse and system supplies - Marketing and advertising and customer service positions affect the English language skills that businesses demand in the research site.

Section B:

The second section of the questionnaire explored *the English language skills needed in Businesses* and comprises five questions. The first four are the dependent variables of the research; they are closed questions and measure the use of the English language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. For clarification purposes, I added in parenthesis sub skills,

derived from the pre-questionnaire survey I conducted with the businesses, which helped me form an idea of the kind of English they use. These were the sub skills needed by all employees that work in tasks similar to the “Economics and Administration” sector, except by the people who work in a business as drivers, cleaners, night guards or machinery operators, which are not the focus groups of this research. The questions of this section are designed to draw answers based on a five point Likert scale with responses such as: 1. (*not at all*), 2. (*a little*), 3. (*to some extent*), 4. (*quite a lot*), 5. (*very much*). A Likert scale is a fixed choice response format to measure agreement, occurrences, importance, quality, content or overall impression (Dillard, 2013) and is very popular in research surveys. The fifth and the last question of this section was open-ended.

Section C:

This section was designed to provide answers for *Vocational school graduate employees’ employment status and skills competence* and includes three questions. I designed this section because I wanted to see whether businesses employ Vocational school/college graduates, whether they have the necessary English language skills and if not, in which skills they should be more competent.

5.6. The study procedure

My first concern was the need for “representativeness” in my sample. Thus, my first step was to look at the Thessaly telephone directory and make a random long list of companies in the research area (158 in the beginning and another 40 later on), aiming at first to address 112 companies in order to collect 112 questionnaires. I did this for certain reasons: First, I wanted to have alternatives in case some companies refused to participate. Second, although my initial plan involved the collection of 40 to 60 questionnaires from the enterprises in the research location, I decided later that it would be best to collect a larger number, in order to have statistically significant and generalizable results. So, at first, I decided that this number should be 112 questionnaires, with the aim of administering at least 28 questionnaires to each one of the four company groups, classified in terms of their activities (see Table 3).

Table 3: The administration of the questionnaires per business

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	SIZE OF BUSINESS		
	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE
A. Industrial/craft businesses	LIST 1: 16 companies/questionnaires	LIST 2: 8 companies/questionnaires	LIST 3: 4 companies/questionnaires
B. Trading businesses	LIST 4: 16 companies/questionnaires	LIST 5: 8 companies/questionnaires	LIST 6: 4 companies/questionnaires
C. Tourism and catering businesses	LIST 7: 16 companies/questionnaires	LIST 8: 8 companies/questionnaires	LIST 9: 4 companies/questionnaires
D. Customer service businesses	LIST 10: 16 companies/questionnaires	LIST 11: 8 companies/questionnaires	LIST 12: 4 companies/questionnaires
TOTAL:	64 companies	32 companies	16 companies
	Total number of questionnaires: 112		

More specifically, based on the Greek Chamber of Commerce (N. 4399-2016) there are approximately 4,000 remaining active businesses in the research location as many more have closed due to the latest economic crisis in Greece. Most businesses are small (65%) or small to medium size (25%) and fewer larger ones (10%) (Ioannidou and Stavrou, 2013:9). Based on this analogy as well as on the EU classification (Table 2) I decided to administer the above number of questionnaires (Table 3) so as to be equivalent.

The next steps involved calling the companies from the initial list, informing them about the research, asking them for information about their activities, size, etc., and booking an appointment until I had completed the list (Table 3). At first, I mailed 25 questionnaires but because after a few days I had only five of them and due to time limitations I delivered them myself but not to the 20 companies who had not replied to me for ethical reasons. Following the same procedure I extended my list until I had 112 companies and their consent, excluding four companies who had declined participation. Informal discussions followed with some of the participants who had voluntarily agreed to discuss with me further on the questionnaire issues in order to shed more light into their answers. However, because some of the companies were delaying to call me in order to receive the questionnaires, I delivered another seven questionnaires to each one of the

four categories of small companies, three to each one of the medium size companies and two to large industrial/craft businesses. Nevertheless, as time was limited I concluded with 136 questionnaires. The following graphs present the final participant companies per region of Thessaly as well as per type of activity, size and number of employees with duties such as Administration and Economics – Warehouse and System supplies – Marketing and Advertising – Customer Service (Figures 1, 2, 3).

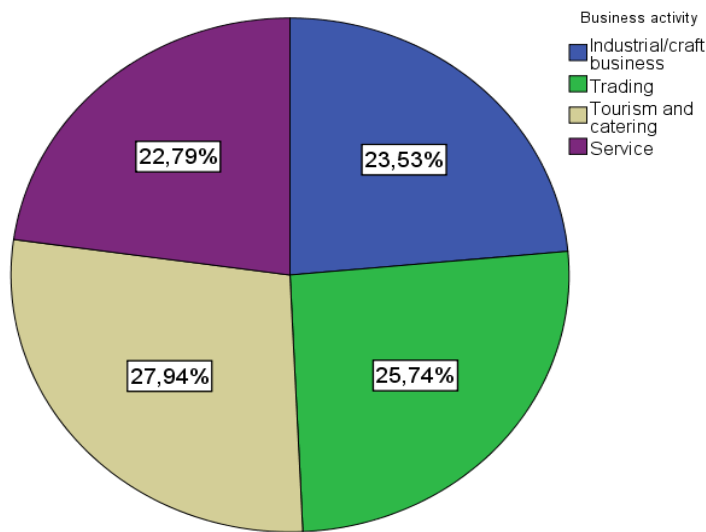


Figure 1: Participants per business activity

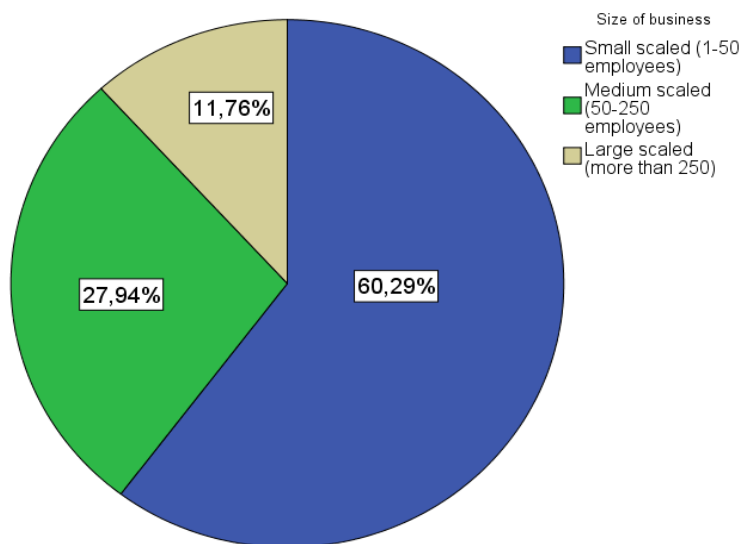


Figure 2: Participants per size of business

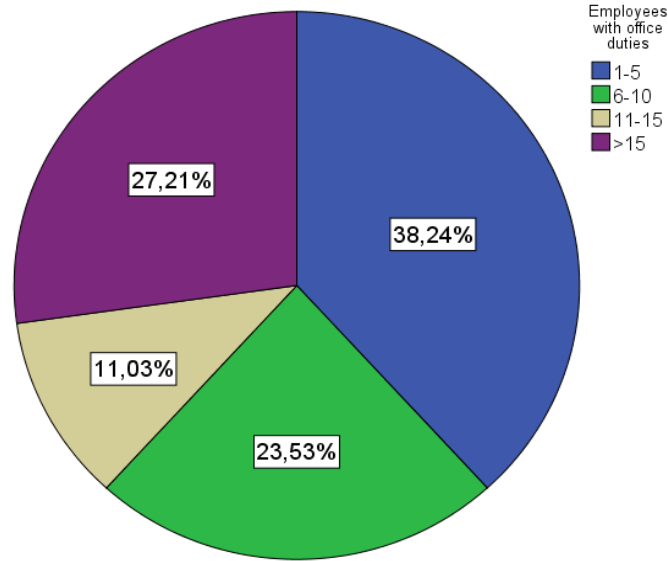


Figure 3: Participants per number of employees with the target duties

As seen in figure 1, care was taken that the number of the participants was to some extent equivalent, as regards their type of activity (23.5% Industrial / craft business, 25.7% Trading, 27.9% Tourism and catering and 22.8% Service). It was also ensured that the number of businesses per size (Figure 2) corresponded to the existing percentage of firms and not the same (60.3% Small scale (1-50 employees), 27.9% Medium scale (50-250 employees) and 11.8% Large scale (more than 250)). In addition, most businesses are located in the prefecture of Larissa, which is larger in terms of size/location and population than the other prefectures of Thessaly (66.9 % firms from Larissa, 11.8 % from Magnesia, 6.6 % from Karditsa and 14.7 % from Trikala). Lastly, the sample size exceeded the number of 30 participants and was therefore considered statistically significant (Roussos & Tsaousis, 2011).

5.7. Data analysis

This section explains the data analysis. It presents the research data analysis strategy and the statistical analysis method. It continues with checking the conditions for the implementation of parametric or non-parametric testing and concludes with the analysis of the questionnaire data for the purposes of the first research question and a discussion on the findings.

5.7.1. Research data analysis process

This research phase involved the following steps:

1. Identifying the independent variables (cause) and dependent variables (outcome). In my research I consider as independent variables the following: A1. Type of business activity, A2. Size of business, A3. Employees with specific tasks. C2. Level of Vocational graduate employees' English language skills. Similarly, I consider dependent variables the following: B1 – C3A Reading skills, B2. – C3B Writing skills, B3 – C3C Listening skills, B4 – C3D Speaking skills.

The dependent variables were measured with a five-point Likert scale, with answers as follows: 1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = to some extent, 4 = quite a lot, 5 = very much.

2. Determining at least two levels in the independent variable – or statements (or conditions) of the research. Thus, the levels of the independent variables were determined respectively, as mentioned above, and shown collectively in Table 4:

Table 4: Levels of independent variables

Independent variables		
A1 Type of business activity	A2. Size of business	A3. Employees with specific duties
A1.1. <i>Industrial/craft business</i>	A2.1. <i>Small scale (1-50 employees)</i>	A3.1: <i>1-5 employees</i>
A1.2. <i>Trading</i>	A2.2. <i>Medium scale (50-250 employees)</i>	A3.2: <i>6-10 employees</i>
A1.3. <i>Tourism and catering</i>	A2.3. <i>Large scale (more than 250)</i>	A3.3: <i>10-15 employees</i>
A1.4. <i>Service</i>		A3.4: <i>>15 employees</i>

3. Forming the business groups, so as to correspond to each independent variable, as shown in Table 4. As none of the participant companies were excluded from the research process, the randomness of the sample was ensured.

4. Ensuring that I receive research data at the same time period and randomly, regardless of activity, size and location of the companies, so as to ensure the credibility of the research.

5. Creating a reliable and valid instrument with which to measure the dependent variables. It should be noted that the questionnaire, as a research tool, included questions designed in such a way as to provide me with the requested information, in a simple way. Another important element in the questionnaire design was that questions and instructions for their response were designed so as not to leave room for misinterpretation (Cohen and Manion, 2000).

6. Comparing the measurements of the dependent variables between the different groups with the appropriate statistical method; this is described in the paragraphs that follow.

5.7.2. Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis of the questionnaire served the purposes of the research, which was to explore the English language skills needed by businesses currently, as analyzed in the previous sections. The statistical analysis was done using the computer statistical package SPSS, in order to check the statistical hypotheses. It should be clarified that for the facilitation of data clarification and better space management all original SPSS tables appear in Appendix XXI and in the paragraphs that follow only the most important data have been included in tables following their explanation and their analysis. It should also be added that the first part of the tables in Appendix XXI, as displayed in SPSS Viewer and entitled [Ranks], shows the number of firms (N) surveyed and the average rank [Mean Rank] of the levels of the independent variable for each dependent variable (business activity with four levels, business size with three levels and number of employees with specific tasks with four levels). The second part of the tables shows the statistical value of the Kruskal-Wallis criterion, which, in SPSS, corresponds to an χ^2 value and the significance level for that value.

5.7.2.1. Parametric or non-parametric conditions testing

According to Roussos and Tsaousis, (2011) random sampling is ensured by the conditions of the research, involving all businesses. The checking of the conditions for the use of parametric or non-parametric testing requires controlling the normality of groups and equality of variations.

The test of normality can be done with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) (or Shapiro Wilk) criterion (Tables 5 and 6 below), (Appendix XXI, Tables 1,2) which checks the null hypothesis H_0 according to which the distribution data does not differ from the normal one (Table 5).

The significance measure is set at 0.05. This is an option a researcher is required to make and is not determined by statistical rules. It is usually set at $\alpha = 0.05$. This means that the possibility our final results to have derived from random factors is only 5%. According to Roussos and Tsaousis, (2011) this is the highest allowable limit for behavioral sciences.

According to the test results K-S (Table 5 below and those in Appendix XXI (Table 1)), there is no normal distribution for any of the skills in English as the p values are lower than the significance value which was set at 0.05. Based on this, it can be said that the significance measure in all cases is lower than 0.05 (< 0.05) (Table 5 below: results), the condition of normality of the groups is not met, the null hypothesis is rejected and therefore the distributions in all groups are not normal.

Table 5: The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion for the variables of the research
for all companies

SKILLS	RESULT
Reading:	D (136)= 0.237, $p < 0.001$ (no normal distribution)
Writing:	D (136)= 0.206, $p < 0.001$ (no normal distribution)
Speaking:	D (136)= 0.303, $p < 0.001$ (no normal distribution)
Listening:	D (136)= 0.339, $p < 0.001$ (no normal distribution)

Similarly, the normality condition for the sub-categories of the companies, regarding the dependent variables (Table 6 below and Appendix XXI, Table 2) is not met either, as, based on the relevant data the significance measure in all cases is < 0.05 . Therefore, the conditions for the use of non-parametric tests of the data are met.

Table 6:The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion for the variables of the research
for the sub-categories of the companies

SKILLS	RESULT
Reading skills (Industrial/craft business) (Trading) (Tourism and catering) (Service)	0.269, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.208, $p=0.001 < 0.05$ 0.292, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.255, $p=0.000 < 0.05$
Speaking skills (Industrial/craft business) (Trading) (Tourism and catering) (Service)	0.311, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.194, $p=0.002 < 0.05$ 0.419, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.274, $p=0.000 < 0.05$
Writing skills (Industrial/craft business) (Trading) (Tourism and catering) (Service)	0.258, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.182, $p=0.005 < 0.05$ 0.256, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.229, $p=0.000 < 0.05$
Listening skills (Industrial/craft business) (Trading) (Tourism and catering) (Service)	0.294, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.209, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.461, $p=0.000 < 0.05$ 0.383, $p=0.000 < 0.05$

Based on the above results, the appropriate non-parametric test for this research, in which it is possible to compare the differences among more than two groups and in which there is a research design of independent samples, is considered the Kruskal-Wallis criterion, and this was used.

5.7.3. Analysis of the English language skills needs in the labour market

As already mentioned the appropriate non-parametric statistical criterion in the case of this research is the criterion Kruskal - Wallis. The next step is to formulate the hypotheses.

Hypotheses formulation

Null hypotheses (Ho): The distributions of the values of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in the populations of the firms with different business activities, business size and number of employees with tasks similar to the target sector are exactly the same.

Alternative hypotheses (H1): The distributions of the values of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in the populations of the firms with different business activities, business size and number of employees with tasks similar to the target sector differ only in their averages.

It should be explained at this point that when the p value is lower than the 0.05 set by the researcher this means that the null hypothesis is rejected (the alternative therefore is accepted) and therefore it can be said that the skill/s is/are influenced by the activity/size/number of employees. Similarly, when the p value is higher or equal to the set value 0.05 it means that the null hypothesis is accepted (the alternative therefore is rejected) implying that the skill/s is/are not influenced by the activity/size/number of employees in a firm.

5.7.3.1. The effect of the independent variable “business activity” on the dependent variables of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

According to the results of Table 7 below (and Appendix XXI (Table 3)) the type of business activity in the employment market influences the use of speaking and listening skills which seem to be more needed than writing and reading for the purposes of business transactions. This can be seen in that p-values of both skills are lower than the critical value set at 0.05, except this for reading which is equal to 0.05 (Table 7 below; Appendix XXI, Table 3). This means that the null hypothesis (section 5.7.2.2.) is rejected, and so the use of both speaking and listening skills are influenced by the type of the activity of a business. On the contrary, neither reading nor writing skills are affected by the activity of a business. This is so because according to the results shown on Table 7 (and those in Appendix XXI (Table 3)), the p values are equal to 0.5 for reading and higher than 0.05 for writing. These results demonstrate that the null hypothesis is accepted (section 5.7.2.2.) (even though marginally for reading skills because it is equal to 0.05) and therefore, neither of the two skills of reading and writing is influenced by the activity of a business.

Table 7: The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for business activity

SKILLS	RESULT
Reading:	D (136) = 7.82, p = 0.05= 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted= not affected by the activity)
Writing:	D (136) = 5.59, p = 0.133> 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted = not affected by the activity)
Speaking:	D (136) =14.90, p = 0.002 <0.05 (null hypothesis rejected = affected by the activity)
Listening:	D (136) =17.64, p = 0.001 <0.05 (null hypothesis rejected = affected by the activity)

Further to these results, from the comparison of the mean ranks (Appendix XXI, Table 3) it can be concluded that speaking skills are most needed in companies with Tourism and catering activities, as this group displays the highest MR (84.18), while the lowest MR (51.76) appears in trading businesses. Similarly, the skill of listening is most needed in companies with Tourism and catering activities, as this group displays the highest MR (84.20), as well as in companies with service activities (MR value = 73.77), while the lowest MR (50.83) appears in trading firms, regarding the above skill.

Summing up, the above results have revealed that the type of business activity influences the use of speaking and listening skills which are most wanted in Tourism and catering services. Nevertheless, the other two skills of reading and writing are not affected by the type of activities of the firms.

5.7.3.2. The effect of the independent variable business size on the dependent variables of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Based on the results of Table 8 below (and the results shown in Appendix XXI (Table 4)), the size of a business does not affect the use of any of the English language skills. This can be seen in that p-values of all skills (Table 8; Appendix XXI, Table 4) are higher than the significance value

set at 0.05. These results lead to the acceptance of the null hypothesis (section 5.7.2.2.) according to which none of the skills is affected by the size of a business.

Table 8: The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for business size

SKILLS	RESULT
Reading:	D (136) = 1.74, p = 0.420 > 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted= not affected by the size of the business)
Writing:	D (136) = 0.604, p = 0.739 > 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted = not affected by the size of the business)
Speaking:	D (136) = 4.30, p = 0.117 > 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted= not affected by the size of the business)
Listening:	D (136) = 3.40, p = 0,182 >0.05 (null hypothesis accepted= not affected by the size of the business)

To sum up, according to the research results, the size of the firms does not affect the need for reading, writing, speaking or listening skills and therefore all four skills are needed in the workplace regardless of the size of the companies.

5.7.3.3. The effect of the independent variable number of employees on the dependent variables of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

According to the results shown at Table 9 below (and in Appendix XXI (Table 5)), it can be seen that whereas the skills of reading, writing, and listening in English are not influenced by the number of employees working in a business, the skill of speaking is affected by the number of people who work in a firm. This is depicted in Table 9 below where it can be seen that for reading, writing and listening the p values are higher than the significance value set at 0.05, whereas for speaking the p value is lower than 0.05. These results imply that for reading, writing and listening we accept the null hypothesis (section 5.7.2.2.), therefore, these skills are not affected by the number of employees while for speaking it means rejecting the null hypothesis (section 5.7.2.2.), therefore speaking is affected by the number of people working in a business.

Table 9: The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for number of employees

SKILLS	RESULT
Reading:	D (136) = 2.92, p = 0.514 > 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted= not affected by the number of employees)
Writing:	D (136) = 0.63, p = 0.889 > 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted = not affected by the number of employees)
Listening:	D (136) = 3.32, p = 0.344 > 0.05 (null hypothesis accepted= not affected by the number of employees)
Speaking:	D (136) = 9.54, p = 0.023 < 0.05 (null hypothesis rejected= affected by number of employees)

In addition to the above from the comparison of the mean ranks (Appendix XXI, Table 5), it can be concluded that speaking skills are most needed in businesses with > 15 target employees, as this group displays the highest MR (80.35) as well as in businesses that have 11-15 employees with the target duties (MR = 79.00), while the lowest rate MR (56.09) appears in enterprises with 6-10 target employees working on the above skill.

Overall, according to the above findings, only the skill of speaking is influenced by the number of employees, whose specialisms are those offered at the “Economics and Administration” course of studies, whereas reading, writing and listening are not affected by this feature. Similarly, businesses with more than 15 employees seem to need speaking skills to a greater extent than smaller companies.

5.7.3.4. Additional requirements for the use of English in business

This parameter was investigated with an open-ended question. Based on the results (Table 10; Appendix XXI, Table 6), a percentage of 15.4% of the enterprises answered this question whereas 84.6% of the participants did not answer it. The 15.4% of businesses who answered the question reported the need for Business English terminology, whereas the majority of the 84.6% did not demand anything further to the need for English language skills competence in general (Table 10).

Table 10: Additional requirements on the use of English in business

Additional requirements	
15.4% (Need for business terminology)	84.6% (No further linguistic demands)

5.7.3.5. Status of the Vocational education graduates employment

Additionally, the percentage of Vocational school graduates employed by firms was investigated. This was done with a closed question and based on the results (Table 11; Appendix XXI, Table 7) 58.1% of the surveyed participants employ Vocational graduates whereas 41.9% of the surveyed employers do not hire VE graduates in their businesses.

Table 11: Vocational school graduates employed by businesses

Vocational school graduates working in firms	
YES: 58.1%	NO: 41.9%

5.7.3.6. English language skills of the Vocational education graduates in the workplace.

As a next step, I investigated whether the employers of these VE graduated workers are satisfied with their employees' level of English language skills. The statistical analysis showed that only 15.2% of the employers were satisfied, while 84.8% of them indicated that these employees needed to improve their skills in English (Table 12; Appendix XXI, Table 8).

Table 12: Employers' perceptions about Vocational graduate employees' skills effectiveness

Vocational school graduates' skills competence	
YES: 15.2%	NO: 84.8%

5.7.3.7. The English language skills Vocational graduate employees need to improve

Based on the results of Table 13 below and those in Appendix XXI (Tables 9, 10, 11) for all skills the p-values are higher than the critical value 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis is accepted according to which none of the skills is affected either by the activity and the size or the number of employees in a firm. Therefore, all VE employees' four skills need improvement, regardless of activity, size or number of employees in businesses. This implies that their English language level is low and therefore there is a need to upgrade it.

Table 13: Need for improvement of the target employees' skills in relation to business activity, size and number of employees

SKILLS	RESULTS IN RELATION TO THE BUSINESS ACTIVITY For all skills the null hypothesis is accepted= skills not affected by activity of business= all skills need improvement
Reading:	D (136) = 1.52, p = 0.678 > 0.05
Writing:	D (136) = 3.39, p = 0.335 > 0.05
Speaking:	D (136) = 2.57, p = 0.463 > 0.05
Listening:	D (136) = 6.98, p = 0.072 > 0.05
SKILLS	RESULTS IN RELATION TO THE BUSINESS SIZE For all skills the null hypothesis is accepted= skills not affected by size of business = all skills need improvement
Reading:	D (136) = 0.385 p = 0.825 > 0.05
Writing:	D (136) = 0.43, p = 0.807 > 0.05
Speaking:	D (136) = 2.37, p = 0.306 > 0.05
Listening:	D (136) = 1.64, p = 0.439 > 0.05
SKILLS	RESULTS IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES For all skills the null hypothesis is accepted= skills not affected by number of employees = all skills need improvement

Reading:	D (136) = 2.42, p = 0.490 > 0.05
Writing:	D (136) = 2.44, p = 0.486 > 0.05
Speaking:	D (136) = 1.19, p = 0.754 > 0.05
Listening:	D (136) = 1.83, p = 0.608 > 0.05

5.8. Discussion

In this chapter, I discussed the pilot study in this research. I presented the instrumentation, the study process, the data analysis of the questionnaires, and the findings for the purposes of research question one (Chapter 1). The findings have demonstrated a gap between what businesses expect from the employees as regards the English language skills usage and the actual skills competence VE graduate workers display. The findings concur with those of Terrada (2012) who report the lack of transition from VE to working life due to the lack of skills. Additionally they comply with those of NAMCOL (2011) who claim that the VE system is “running in isolation from industry” leading the companies not to think highly of VE thus causing a rise in unemployment for VE graduates. In the Greek context, these findings comply with what Kanelopoulos et al., (2003) claim regarding VE graduates displaying the highest unemployment rates in Greece. The findings also concur with those presented by the P.I. (2008) which report that at least 44.5% of VE graduates work in positions irrelevant to the specialisms of “Economics and Administration” sector and almost 28% of them are unemployed due to low skills competence.

Nevertheless, despite the findings in this research demonstrating that the majority of the businesses (84.2%) are not satisfied with their VE graduate employees’ level in English, there seems to be a balance in the businesses recruitment decisions. This is because 58.1% of the firms hire VE graduates whereas 41.9% do not wish to employ them. The informal discussions with the business owners revealed some of the reasons for this; many of those who employ VE graduates decide it because the majority of skilled workers (mainly from tertiary level) have been migrating to other countries due to the latest economic crisis in Greece and therefore there is a shortage of

skilled workforce. Therefore, they are “forced” to hire VE graduates from secondary level; those that do not hire VE learners admitted that low skilled VE graduate workers need further in service training to respond to their duties. However, they cannot afford this anymore, as opposed to previous years, due to high tax expenses and severe financial difficulties.

Further to these, they claimed that it is not their businesses’ obligation to train VE learners but the state’s duty to educate them effectively and prepare them for the workplace needs. These suggestions made by businesses concur with those of IWNC (2013) who speak about appropriate measures that should be taken by the government in order to align VE to business needs. My findings concur with the suggestions of Cedefop (2013) about the duty of the countries to invest in quality VE training as this is of vital importance in order for the workforce to acquire “job-related competences” (ibid:9).

As regards the type of English language skills needed the findings suggest that speaking and listening seem to be the most important ones for businesses. These findings concur with the findings of Kaur and Clarke (2009) and Bouzidi, (2009) regarding the need for speaking and listening skills by businesses. According to the results the need for speaking and listening skills is mainly affected by the activity of the business and the number of employees with the tasks of *administration and economics, warehouse and system supplies, customer service and marketing and advertising.*, whereas, reading and writing skills are not affected by the type of business activity. Specifically, speaking is most wanted by Tourism and catering businesses, while listening is more significant for Tourism and catering as well as for customer service companies. These findings concur with the findings of Bobanovic and Grzinic (2011) about the importance of speaking skills in the business tourism sector.

Interestingly, the size of the company or the number of employees with tasks similar to the target Vocational school specialism do not seem to affect the need for any of the four English language skills in businesses. Nevertheless, it affects the need for speaking skills. This is mostly evident for companies that employ more than 15 people working in posts relevant to the target

specialism duties. The findings concur with those of The United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce and Harrison Maldonado Associates, Inc. (HMA) (2004) based on which big companies need speaking skills more than small companies.

Apart from the aforementioned skills, it can be seen that business terminology is needed by at least 15.4% of the businesses in the research location. However, what is really interesting is the fact that out of 58.1% respondents, who employ Vocational secondary graduates, only 15.2% of them are satisfied with these employees, while 84.8% of them feel that their employees need improvement in their English language skills. The findings support Arkoudis et al., (2009) and Kaur and Clarke (2009) who talk about employers' demand for their personnel to improve their skills as these are "below their expectations" (Choo, 2012). Nevertheless, based on the findings, regardless of this need, there is no differentiation among the skills wanted, nor is this need influenced by factors such as activity type, activity size or number of employees with the target specialism duties, working in a firm. In fact, the respondents believe that their employees need to improve all four skills in English: reading, writing, speaking and listening. The findings concur with those of Luankanokrat (2011) and Aldohon (2014) indicating that employees need to improve all four skills in English.

Even though the findings of this research concur with many of the findings displayed in the literature review, they differ in that they relate to Vocational education of secondary level and not to tertiary which has been the focus of the reviewed studies so far as in a variety of studies like those of Bouzidi (2009), Agbola and Kenneth (2010), Lindorff (2011) and others. Furthermore, the findings of this research differ in that they were based on primary data and focused on the use of ESP for business purposes and their link to the workplace as opposed to the literature review studies like those of Kaur and Clarke (2009) or The Industry Workforce Needs Council (2013) which relied on the use of secondary data. I am confident the findings of this study are significant as they relate to a field which is under investigated and therefore addresses a gap in the literature. In order to address this gap, I exploited the findings of this pilot study to continue exploring the

issues of this research in the main study evaluating the ESP “Economics and Administration” textbook and suggesting possible supplementary material based on these findings.

5.9. Summary

The findings of this research imply the need for communicative skills on behalf of the employees in the Greek employment market. In the context of this research, the skills are mainly ESP due to the kind of interactions, specific genres and style in business settings learners need to deal with and not just everyday situations or small talk. The aforementioned results were compared to those of the next research questions (book evaluation) and offered me insights into the design of new supplementary communicative material as a way to address the gap found.

Chapter 6: Evaluation of the “Economics and Administration” Vocational business textbook

6.1.Introduction

The main aim of this research is to investigate the link between business English language skills needs in the employment market and English language skills offered through Vocational textbooks at present in Greece. The findings relating to the pilot study and the first research question (Chapter 5), as designed and conducted with employers, revealed that speaking and listening skills are considered to be the most significant English language skills for business purposes. Taken from there, and in order to shed light on the research issues, this chapter explores possible answers for the second research question (Chapter 1). To address it, I decided to evaluate the “Economics and Administration” textbook content and its English language skills provision by adopting an evaluation model as reviewed in Chapter 3. To validate the findings of the target textbook evaluation, I interviewed the Vocational secondary school English language teachers that teach this book in order to provide me with their views about its content.

6.2.Evaluation of the target textbook

6.2.1.Rationale

The business survey revealed that businesses in the research area demand a good knowledge of speaking and listening skills and consider them important for their transactions. However, as ESP materials, too often, do not comply with expected ESP demands (Harwood, 2005), there is a need to investigate their effectiveness for learners’ future professional linguistic competence and skills efficiency. On account of this, this phase of the research involved an in-depth evaluation of the target textbook, and more specifically, two units. This is an indicative number of units, as McDonough and Shaw (2003) purport that two units are more than enough for an in-depth evaluation analysis, which is done on a specific representative sample of units of the book. In addition, as the target textbook itself is quite extensive, consisting of six units presented in 404 pages, it would be beyond the scope of this project to analyze them all.

The two units were selected randomly but the fact that their topics refer to communication influenced my decision (Unit 2 is titled *communication and office practice* and Unit 5 *advertising and public relations*) (Unit 2 is shown indicatively in Appendix IV). This was because I was particularly interested in investigating the extent to which speaking and listening tasks in such topics promote and enhance learners' communication skills in the book, given that these skills are considered the most important ones for business interactions, as highlighted by the business survey results. The evaluation was both internal and external (McDonough and Shaw, 2003; Mukundan et al., 2011; AbdelWahab, 2013), in order to bring to the surface issues such as presentation, layout, level, linguistic input, usability, link to the purpose but mainly skills provision. It basically aimed to reveal the skills the textbook focuses on and consequently detect the extent to which the linguistic input of the book corresponds to the businesses' expected English language skills needs at present (research questions two and three – Chapter 1).

However, for a deeper understanding of the research issues, and for triangulation purposes, the textbook evaluation data was supported by teachers' evaluation interviews data. Thus, supplementary to this study, teachers who teach the target book were approached for an interview and were asked to comment on its appearance, intended audience, linguistic level, material organization (units/lessons), grading and sequencing of the material, relationship between input and purpose, appropriacy, and skills provision (see section 6.3. "*teachers' views on the target textbook*").

The findings of the textbook analysis (the book content evaluation conducted by me and the teachers' views about it) gave me an insight into the second and third research questions (Chapter I), regarding the skills the book focuses on and the extent to which there is a gap between the English language skills required by employers currently and the English language skills offered in the target book. The findings of the aforementioned analyses and those of the survey with the businesses, were used in the last phase of the research. This involved suggestions on supplementary material which was designed and taught to learners and which emphasized tasks

that aimed to enhance learners' communicative and listening skills. This communicative orientation of the suggested material was based on the business survey results, according to which the business community in Greece placed emphasis on communication as part of the employment qualifications and a prerequisite for business transactions.

6.2.2. Evaluation model used – rationale

For the purposes of this study I employed McDonough and Shaw's (2003) in-depth evaluation model because it allowed me to look into all aspects of the book, regardless of the fact that my emphasis was on skills. These refer to the general learning/teaching content like level, size, layout, visual and audio material, cultural aspects, grammar, lexis as well as skills provision (Table 14). Both internal and external aspects are considered very important and if well designed they not only lead to achievement of the desired linguistic target but also to learners' motivation and active participation in learning (Alamri, 2008). I also employed the criteria developed by Mukundan et al. (2011) and AbdelWahab (2013) for ESP textbook evaluation. These criteria emphasize internal and external features of the materials as well as all four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) like those in McDonough and Shaw's model. Therefore, I will also refer to these models as they relate to the criteria I have employed for the purposes of my study (internal/external evaluation of the target book and skills provision).

Table 14: Evaluation criteria

CATEGORIES	CRITERIA
General learning/teaching content	Intended audience, proficiency level, context the book is used in, supplementary material, appropriate size, printing quality, presentation/organization of units/lessons, audio/visual material, methodological variety, presentation of skills, grading and sequencing of tasks, suitable content for learners' needs, compatibility to the learners' interests, to their background knowledge and to their level, variety of learning styles provision, self-study promotion, motivational tasks, authenticity, task grading from simple to complex, feasibility of tasks, cultural aspects, natural/real language in dialogues, up-to-date content, topic variation.
SKILLS (reading, writing, speaking, listening)	Appropriacy of tasks, communication development, length of texts, student engagement, contextualized tasks, explicit grammar functions, learner friendliness, student encouragement, clarity of instructions, adequacy of tasks, interesting tasks, provision of pair/group work.

6.2.3. Description of the target textbook

The textbook of the “Economics and Administration” course consists of 6 units presented in 404 pages and covers topics such as: *getting a job, communications and office practice, commercial correspondence and exports, computers at work, advertising and public relations, marketing managing and purchasing*. Each unit consists of subsections/lessons (68 in total), which are structured in a linear way and include a text, comprehension questions, exercises and a list of lexis. The book I will examine is the second and last edition so far (1996). It is a state textbook and learners do not have to pay for it. In line with McDonough and Shaw (2003), Mukundan et al. (2011) and AbdelWahab (2013), I have chosen to evaluate two units (Unit 2, titled “*communication and office practice*” and Unit 5 titled *advertising and public relations*, (see Appendix IV where Unit 2 is shown as an example).

6.2.4. The textbook evaluation

The textbook was evaluated by the researcher (me), following the criteria of McDonough & Shaw (2003), Mukundan et al. (2011) and AbdelWahab (2013). Upon selection of the two units, which included topics of communication, their content was closely read and all aspects of the aforementioned criteria (Table 14 above) were taken into consideration (i.e. intended audience, proficiency level, visual/audio material, skills, etc.). All linguistic features, that were linked to the criteria I had set, were identified, recorded and analyzed so as to provide me with information I needed to obtain. The tables that follow present the results of the evaluation (Tables 15-18 below):

Table 15: General criteria and comments

<u>General criteria/comments</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intended audience: Vocational Senior High School learners in the third grade. 2. Proficiency level: B2 to C1 according to the Common European Framework for Languages. 3. Context in which the materials are to be used: Vocational School. 4. Supplementary material (teacher's book, workbook, companion, grammar book, other): none. 5. Appropriate size: Very big; 404 pages to be taught in two hours per week over a period of seven months (P.I. school timetable, 2006). 6. Printing quality: Not good. Old and faded paper. 7. How the language is presented and organized into teachable units/lessons? There are 6 units. Every unit consists of 10 to 12 lessons with the first unit consisting of 18 lessons. 8. What visual/audio material does the book contain? There are no authentic and real images. There are some drawings and cartoons. There are a few listening exercises but there is no audio material (cds or cassettes) or written transcripts provided to practise them. 9. It can embrace various methodologies. No. The book is grammar-functional with a linear approach (reading comprehension-questions-grammar tasks). There is no connection to ICTs either.

Table 16: General learning-teaching content

<u>General learning-teaching content</u>	
1. Presentation of skills.	Reading is presented through texts. Writing is practiced through comprehension questions, grammar exercises and some tasks for letter writing. Listening and speaking situations are scarce.
2. Grading and sequencing of tasks.	The book does not proceed from simpler to more difficult tasks. All tasks are at the same level.
3. Suitable content for learners' needs:	Not very much as speaking and listening tasks are almost absent.
4. Compatible to the interests of the learners:	No. The tasks and topics are neither authentic nor contemporary as opposed to interesting material in the market and on the internet.
5. Compatible to the background knowledge and level of students:	For learners of lower level it is difficult to understand the content of this book.
6. Suitable for different learning styles:	No. There are no tasks for visual learners, few for auditory, no tasks for kinesthetic learners.
7. Does it promote self-study?	No. There are no tasks which suggest self-study or learn how to learn.
8. Is the material motivational?	There is no authenticity. There is no interaction. So it does not seem motivating.
9. Tasks are interesting.	I think not, as texts are difficult and there is no connection to real life situations.
10. Texts are authentic.	There is no authenticity of texts anywhere in the book.
11. Tasks move from simple to complex.	No. Almost all tasks except some dialogues are of the same level and difficulty.
12. Task objectives are achievable.	For learners of lower level (A1 or A2) the grammar tasks (B2 to C1 based on the CEFR) are very demanding.
13. Cultural sensitivities have been considered.	There is no reference to cultural diversity.
14. The language in the textbook is natural and real.	No. The language is not authentic but written for the purposes of the book.
15. The situations created in the dialogues sound natural and real.	No. The dialogues do not present any real situations
16. The material is up-to-date.	No. The material has not changed since its second edition in 1996.
17. It covers a variety of topics from different fields.	There is a big variety of business settings but nothing of contemporary contexts.

Table 17: Skills

<u>Skills</u>	
A. Listening	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The book has appropriate listening tasks with well-defined goals. No. Listening tasks contain only comprehension questions. 2. Instructions are clear. Yes. 3. Tasks are efficiently graded according to complexity. No. 4. Tasks are authentic or close to real language situations. There is no authenticity of task or real life listening tasks. 	
B. Speaking	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication. Out of two units and 23 lessons I have examined there are only two questions-speaking tasks. There is no other situation to generate communication regarding business contemporary settings. 2. Activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work. There are no pair or group work tasks. 3. Activities motivate students to talk. There are no activities to motivate learners to talk. 4. Students have the chance to learn and practice what and how to communicate. No. The only tasks which could generate some sort of discussion are the comprehension questions. 5. The tasks are appropriate for the development of specific communication and cognitive skills. No. 6. Task outcomes engage students in realistic communication. No 7. Do interaction patterns (individual, pair work, group work) proposed match the purpose of the task? There are no such patterns. 8. Do the tasks encourage the use of language as a resource for the expression of meaning? No. The language is used for form, syntax and grammar. 	
C. Reading	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Texts are graded. No. There are a few simple dialogues among difficult texts but scattered throughout the units. 2. Length of texts is appropriate. Yes. 3. Texts are interesting. No. There is no text authenticity and vocabulary is difficult. 	
D. Writing	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tasks have achievable goals and take into consideration learner capabilities. Some of them do but many of them are very demanding especially for low level learners. 2. Models are provided for different genres. No. There are no models available. 3. Tasks are interesting. Though there are a big variety of tasks, these focus only on grammar and lexis. Therefore they are not interesting. 	

Table 18: More linguistic features

<u>More linguistic features</u>
A. <u>Vocabulary</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The load (number of new words in each lesson) is appropriate to the level. No. Vocabulary is extensive and difficult. 2. There is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across chapters and the whole book. No. 3. Words are efficiently repeated and recycled across the book. Yes, in some of the lessons. 4. Words are contextualized. Most of them appear in the texts but also at the end of each lesson in the form of a decontextualized list.
B. <u>Grammar</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The spread of grammar is achievable. No. There is no theoretical background for grammar available. There are only exercises. 2. The grammar is contextualized. Not at all. 3. Examples are interesting. There are no examples. 4. Grammar is introduced explicitly and reworked incidentally throughout the book. No.
C. <u>Pronunciation</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is contextualized. There is nothing to help learners with pronunciation. 2. It is learner-friendly with no complex charts, easy to learn. No. The words and phrases are very demanding.
D. <u>Exercises</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They are learner friendly and have clear instructions. No. They are difficult but have clear instructions. 2. They are adequate. Yes. They are more than enough. They are excessive. 3. They help students who are under/over-achievers. Not at all. They pre-suppose learners' good linguistic background. 4. Do the learning materials encourage the development of language learning and self-evaluation strategies? No. There are no such tasks.

The following snapshots from the book display an example of the book content:

Specialists on call

The telephone has not been exploited as a selling tool by the marketing fraternity, to the same extent as direct mail, in part at least, because it is more difficult to control. It also requires more skill than many expect. When used sensitively, the phone can be a potent sales tool. It can cut the cost of the existing customer and potential customer alike, and save valuable time by cancelling journeys that will not result in new business.

A point to emphasise is that a particular advantage of telephone marketing over other forms of direct promotion is that it is easily monitored, and can, therefore, be readily refined on the basis of feedback during the course of a campaign.

It is important to recognise, however, that telephone marketing must not be seen as an alternative to direct mail. "A call can be followed up with more details in a letter".

The phone can be used as a means to help you to achieve broader marketing objectives than just shifting products. It can be used if and when you want to keep in touch with customers, to ensure they were happy with the service being offered, to iron out problems quickly, and to ensure that satisfied customers have stayed with the company.

Telephone marketing is a bold step to take because you're often taking people from a passive role to a more aggressive stance. And that takes time to work.

A. Questions

1. Why hasn't the telephone been exploited as a selling tool by the marketing fraternity?
2. What does it require?
3. How can it be useful?
4. In what way can it save time?
5. Which is the particular advantage of telephone marketing over other forms of direct promotion?
6. Can a telephone call substitute a letter?
7. What can businessmen use the telephone for?
8. What is "telephone marketing" thought to be?

B. Exercises

1. Write the correct form of the adjectives.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
a.	more difficult	.....
b. new	.....	.....
c. important	.....	.....
d.	broader	.....
e. many	.....	.....

2. Rewrite the sentences (using the new beginnings) without changing their meaning.

- a. It requires more skill than many expect.
More skill
- b. We easily monitor the telephone.
The telephone.....
- c. We must not see telephone marketing as an alternative to direct mail.
Telephone marketing.....
- d. People can use the phone to iron out problems.
The phone.....

3. Complete each sentence with a word formed from the word in capitals.

- a. The phone can save ----- time. VALUE
- b. Everybody admired the painting and said that the artist was very ----- . SKILL
- c. The ----- of the government were really admirable. ACHIEVE.
- d. The phone can be used to achieve broader marketing ----- . OBJECT
- e. The phone can be used if you want to keep in touch with ----- . CUSTOM

4. Fill in the blanks with the right preposition and write the correct form of the verbs in the brackets.

- a. The telephone ----- (not exploit) fully as a selling tool ----- the market fraternity yet.
- b. When ----- (use) sensitively, the phone can ----- (be) a helpful device.
- c. The phone can save valuable time ----- (cancel) journeys that ----- (not result) ----- new business.

When the textbook evaluation was completed, and in order to validate the results, I continued to explore possible answers for the second research question using triangulation, and thus asked the teachers' opinion on the textbook. The steps of this process and the results are presented in the following section and subsections.

6.3. Teachers' views on the target textbook

6.3.1. Rationale

The business survey and the book evaluation results revealed a gap between the English language skills needed by businesses in the research area and the skills the Vocational textbook of the “Economics and Administration” sector has to offer. In an effort to validate the findings of the target textbook evaluation, an interview was conducted with English language teachers of VSS in the research area. This part of the study aimed at drawing teachers' views on the particular textbook, as taught by them in their schools and shed more light on research questions two and three (Chapter I). It also aimed to compare the findings with those of the book evaluation and the business survey, thus providing answers for research questions two and three (Chapter I).

6.3.2. Research method and research tool

Before conducting this study I had to consider several issues. I first had to make sure that the methodology was appropriate. I decided to use a qualitative method, as the aim was to conduct a detailed analysis of teachers' views and ideas about the textbook content and therefore I conducted in-depth interviews with eight English language Vocational School teachers.

6.3.3. Participants' profile

The participants in this phase of the research were eight teachers from Vocational schools in the research location. They had all taught the target textbook and ESP courses in general. Their analytical profile had been presented above in section 4.10.

6.3.4. Interview questions

For the purposes of this phase of the research the interview questions (Appendix VI) were designed based on the data I needed to reveal and on the check list, which I had already used in the evaluation of the textbook which contained issues very similar to the ones I wanted to ask the teachers as regards the content of the book. These had to do with texts, grammar, skills and so on, aiming to draw as detailed information on the book as possible, with answers that addressed the

research questions two and three (Chapter I). The questions were open-ended, giving the respondents opportunities to talk in any way they wished, without specific limitations (i.e. time).

The order of addressing the questions was not compulsory but depended on their participation, as some of the respondents expanded on their answers, covering some of my questions before asking them myself (mainly about the use of grammar and lexis). As they explained they were displeased with the amount of them and they wanted to be sure to express their dissatisfaction and remember to mention it to me. Additionally, there were some questions (i.e. 13h, 13j) which were not asked, as there was no real need to do so. For example, I already knew there was no cassette (I had this information when I evaluated the content of the book). Therefore, I was aware that listening was not practiced through the book itself (unless perhaps teachers wished to bring materials of their own). Therefore, instead of asking too many questions regarding the use of listening in the book, I mainly asked whether they practiced listening based on personal initiatives.

During the interviewing process I felt quite concerned about the possible effect my position as a school advisor might have on the teachers and their answers, even though their participation was voluntary. It should be noted that I did not know them before the interviews and they worked in a region which was not within my school advisor responsibility. However, because I wanted to be as objective as possible, I was very careful not to appear superior to them in any way and asked them questions indirectly, encouraging them to speak as they wished but focusing on the research issues. Whenever it was necessary I tried to explain, clarify, or retell the answers to the questions to be clear and understandable. The reason was that I did not wish to make them feel uncomfortable with my questions, making them perhaps think that I considered their answers incoherent. Therefore, I preferred to repeat what I was not clear about as a way to verify the answers instead of re-asking about them. Before conducting the interviews I gave the questions to two colleagues (school advisors) for spelling and syntax mistakes and/or vague points. A few

syntax inaccuracies were pointed out which I corrected. In order to enhance the validity of the interview questions, I piloted them with two teachers who responded positively.

6.3.5. Research steps

I decided to conduct the research in another region other than the one I worked in for ethical reasons (see section 4.13 “*ethical issues*”). The research started by locating all the teachers who taught English in the “Economics and Administration” course. I found out that there were ten teachers. One had a maternity leave, so there were nine teachers to address at the research area. I then went to their schools in order to ask them if they wished to participate in the research. This took me a while as I had to find them in their free hours and arrange a separate meeting with each one of them at the time most convenient for them, explaining the purpose of the research and the interview carefully. Eight teachers responded positively and one declined participation.

Two teachers were asked to participate for piloting the instrument. I explained to them that the purpose was to test the questions as regards their appropriateness for the data collection, and if needed, redesign them, add something, alter or improve them. During the interviews I realized I had to ask more supplementary questions than the initially designed, in order to keep the conversation going and allow teachers to provide me with the necessary information and possible answers for the research questions.

After having added the final clarifying questions (Appendix VI), the time and place of the interviews were selected by the participants so that they would feel comfortable. Seven interviews were conducted in the teachers’ schools, (classrooms/library) and one was held in a nearby coffee shop, after the teacher’s wish as she did not feel at ease being in her school. The duration of the interviews ranged between 15 to 50 minutes, depending on the respondents’ profile and communicative ability as some were not as articulate as others. The interviews were recorded and the transcription started almost in parallel with the interviews.

6.3.6. Data analysis process

For the data analysis, I started a transcription of the interviews and their “forward translation” from Greek to English. For my translation to be credible I proceeded with the “back-translation”, that is translation from English to Greek by a Greek colleague school advisor of English who did not know the original Greek text. The term “back translation” refers to the translation of a text back into the original language and it is suggested as a method to assess translation work (Harkness and Schoua-Glusberg, 1998). There were few differences, mainly in the use of tenses and prepositions that appeared between her Greek translation and the original interviews. When the two Greek texts concurred, the few differences found were addressed again in the English translation first by me and then by the same school advisor in order to coincide and conclude the translation.

When the translation in English was finalized I proceeded with the repeated listening of the texts and their content and I noted down the points with the greatest research interest (Iosifides, 2003:63), (Appendix, VII). Mason (2003) emphasizes it is essential to ask oneself which data are of research interest and then think of what kind of classification categories should be created, how this will be done and how data will be categorized (Mason, 2003: 235-302). According to Athanasiou (2000:245) the units or the categories of analysis and the coding of information can be words, phrases, people, values or entities.

Then, I determined the units, “key words which convey basic concepts and messages” (Athanasiou, 2000: 246): *communication/communicative, structural, contemporary, old, a lot, little, interesting/pleasant, boring, authentic, varying, participation, easy, difficult, relevant, lacks, additions, changes*. These were included in the interviewees’ answers and were determined in relation to the objectives of this research and the purpose of research questions two and three, (Chapter I). I then placed the key words under the categories I formed (Iosifides, 2003: 63): *methodology, teaching material, linguistic level, vocabulary, grammar, texts, skills, visual material, and needs*. During the categorization of the data I found that certain key words could be

used under most categories. Such words were: interesting, boring, difficult, communicative, and contemporary and could go under all the categories: grammar, texts, vocabulary, skills, and visual material. These words were considered within as many categories as they addressed. For example the key word interesting could apply both to texts or visual material or the key word authentic could apply to texts or visual material or listening and so on.

Teaching material

According to the teachers the teaching material of the “Economics and Administration” course consists only of the target textbook, though some mentioned the existence of teachers’ notes which however are only a key to the exercises. They all agreed that there is neither a cassette/cd to accompany the book, nor is there any other supplementary material (grammar book/companion/workbook):

“... Yes, [the teacher’s book] and the student’s book. Nothing else” (Malia), “neither did we have a cassette” (Sonia) (Appendices, V and VI).

Methodology of the book

Based on the teachers’ answers the textbook is conceptual and structural, (that is emphasizes grammar and lexis) as regards its methodology. They claim that it does not provide learners with authentic situations for their future working business English language needs. They based this on the absence of speaking prompts and lack of cassettes due to which they cannot practice the scarce listening tasks. To this end, the teachers asserted that it does not emphasize communication (Appendices, V and VI):

“No, it focuses on grammar and vocabulary. But it is not communicative” (Katreen)

Linguistic level of the book

The interviewed teachers claimed that the level of the book is above B2 to C1, based on the Common European Framework of References for Languages and higher than that of their learners’, which ranges between A1 to B1 with some exceptions, admitting though that for those

higher level learners to perform better they had to oversimplify and analyze its content word by word and sentence by sentence. The majority of the teachers asserted that the book does not link to the future needs of the learners, due to the gap between its content and learners' level on the one hand and the lack of relevant skills, such as listening and speaking on the other, focusing mainly on excessive lexical knowledge. Thus the book fails to apply the skills for communicative purposes (Appendices, V and VI). The views are summarized in the quotes below:

"The level of the book is quite advanced and the students have a lower linguistic level"

(Nikol)

"No, they are not authentic... especially for learners who are supposed to be working in offices, how are they to understand, how are they to communicate? It will be impossible." (Malia)

Vocabulary

The majority of the teachers thought that the vocabulary is rather excessive and difficult though, according to one of them, it is satisfying. Additionally, even though they believed it is relevant to the course needs, it does not cover contemporary topics or objects and think it should change. Mostly however, they claimed that it is not used for communicative and real life situations but rather for the expansion of knowledge of decontextualized lexis (Appendices, V and VI):

"It is quite extensive but very difficult for the real level of the learners" (Takis), *"... it needs to be contemporary. It needs refreshing, to adapt to more modern terms"*, (Nikol)

Texts

According to the teachers, the texts used in the book are not contemporary or authentic and refer to topics or objects that are not used any more. Some of them mentioned that though the titles imply contemporary topics, their content is completely the opposite. They considered them as difficult and therefore boring, except those that are in the form of dialogues. For this reason, they reported that they usually bring texts of their own, so as to motivate the learners. A teacher considered the texts being good, adding, however, that she had to analyze and translate every

sentence and every word very thoroughly for learners to understand. The majority also thought that the purpose of the texts is to provide vocabulary rather than motivate the learners and arouse their interest for communication (Appendices, V and VI):

“No, they are not authentic”, (Takis)

“They are difficult for the learners. The topics are not contemporary”, (Takis)

Grammar

As teachers claimed, the grammar part is plenty but it does not cover all learners' level as it is higher than theirs and therefore difficult and consequently boring, due to its structural form and because it does not apply the language in communicative situations. They admitted they would like theoretical background and opportunities for repetition of grammar either as a supplementary part in the Appendices or a separate book. Regarding the variety of the exercises, the teachers' opinions were divided. Some teachers were in favor admitting that in the end the big amount of words do not prove to be that useful as only a small number of them are practiced due to the mixed ability level of the classes. A teacher stated (Appendices, V and VI):

“The grammar in the book is enough and it is in an advanced level.” (Teta)

Skills

According to the teachers, the book does not equally emphasize all four skills but mainly reading and writing. As regards writing skills, the teachers stated that these were considered adequate for the course needs but difficult and were mainly practiced through grammar or vocabulary tasks, even though there is also letter writing. Reading skills are practiced through comprehension questions, which are considered structural, but texts are long and difficult except those in a dialogue form. Listening skills on the other hand were not practiced, as despite the few tasks that appeared in the book, schools had neither been provided with a relevant cassette/cd, nor did they ever come across the transcripts. Speaking skills were also non-existent as the book does not offer speaking prompts or communicative situations, leaving this responsibility to teachers'

initiative and causing boredom and lack of students' motivation and participation (Appendices, V and VI). All this is reflected in the quotes below:

"There are writing tasks... and listening tasks but no cassettes" (Marilena)

"No, there are no oral tasks." (Teta)

Visual material

The interviewed teachers considered the visual material old-fashioned, the paper of old quality, the sketches or photos resembling cartoons rather than pictures of contemporary situations and objects of working environments. For these reasons, the teachers reported that they usually brought visual material of their own to motivate learners (Appendices, V and VI). The quality of visuals is summed up in the quote below:

"... dull colors, sketches that look like cartoons... it reminds you of something old" (Malia)

Needs

According to the teachers, the textbook needs to be supplemented with listening tasks, accompanied by CD and speaking activities with role-plays. It also needs split dialogues, authentic communicative situations and authentic texts, attractive and contemporary visual material, theoretical grammatical background and content linked to new technologies (Appendices, V and VI). These suggestions are emphasized in the quote below:

"Listening needs to be added ... to be more communicative, interesting and real ... new technologies should be added ... realistic layout ..., should be friendlier, more attractivewith authentic content ... and tasks for all four skills" (Marilena)

6.4.Discussion

In this chapter I presented the process I followed in the first part of the main study of this research in order to investigate the second and the third research questions. For this purpose, I evaluated the "Economics and Administration" Vocational English language textbook following

McDonough and Shaw's (2003), Mukundan et al.'s (2011) and AbdelWahab's (2013) criteria. The results have revealed a structural and grammar functional non-communicative textbook which does not fully take into account the features of ESP material for the business purposes of the "Economics and Administration" sector as pointed by the EPAL curriculum (2006). This is so because, unlike the focus of ESP materials on the genres and context of the language, as argued by Kitkauskiene (2006), the target textbook emphasizes grammar and structure. Therefore, it depicts a textbook which mainly addresses EGP rather than ESP needs, as opposed to the EVP or EOP purposes that Johns (1991) talks about for the specific aims of the specialisms for which it was designed according to the EPA.L. curriculum (2006). Specifically, the linguistic content of the textbook mainly addresses the needs of those students who continue their studies in a technical college (grammar, structure, general English for academic purposes), and these are 27% of the sector population (P.I., 2008) rather than the needs of those who seek employment immediately upon graduation (skills, specific types of genres, ESP for working purposes) and who are the majority of the sector graduates (66% according to the P.I., 2008).

The findings in this research have provided possible answers for research questions two and three (Chapter 1): a. the skills the "Economics and Administration" textbook focuses on, b) the link between its content and the current workplace needs as regards the use of English.

Concerning the second research question the findings have revealed the following about the target textbook:

A. General features:

The textbook is lengthy with extensive and difficult vocabulary and very demanding grammar input, which however does not usually correspond to learners' knowledge at this level according to the teachers. It is printed on old and faded paper making it unattractive for learners and not motivational enough so as to lead to learners' active participation with the purpose of generating language. It lacks variety of tasks, to prepare learners for all four skills, different learning styles and ICT based tasks for office practice which is a prerequisite in business

environments today (P.I., 2006). Additionally, its extensive content does not make it learner-friendly and therefore it is not easy to learn. The findings comply with those of Nguyen (2015) and Maleki et al. (2014) about a gap between learners' level and textbook's, those of Philip et al. (2012) and Kayoglu (2011) about books being unattractive and demotivational and the findings of Zhihong et al. (2010) regarding the importance of integrated ICT tasks in textbooks.

B. Skills:

The textbook mainly focuses on reading and writing skills, and thus does not fully prepare the learners for the workplace communication English language needs, as shown by the businesses survey. It does not present any communicative features as it is a grammar centered and vocabulary based book with an excessive amount of decontextualized lexis, thus offering minimum opportunities for oral practice of the language. The reading comprehension texts are not authentic and lack contemporary content of modern working topics and environments. Furthermore, listening is not practiced due to lack of audio material (i.e. CDs, cassettes) while speaking activities are almost non-existent.

The aforementioned findings do not comply with what the literature findings have shown, according to which, ESP materials should emphasize activities directly associated with the purpose of learning, linked with real life communicative situations (Netiksiene, 2006). Moreover, they do not comply with research according to which ESP materials should focus on ESP learners' skills training, based on needs analysis (Gilmore, 2007; Xiaorong and Lili, 2009). Additionally, the findings contradict research which claims that ESP materials should employ authenticity of text/task and should include audio/visual material (Meng Choo, 2005; Bojovic, 2006), ICT prompts (Duran and Cruz, 2013), group work activities (Ates, 2012) or promote communication and interaction among learners (Boarcas, 2009).

The above findings concur with those found in Netiksiene (2006); Harwood (2005); Danaye Tous and Haghighi, (2014); Davari et al., (2013) and Kazem and Fatemeh, (2014) regarding textbooks which did not conform to ESP features and did not meet the standards for the specific

ESP teaching purposes they were designed for. Particularly the studies reported findings about textbooks with drawbacks such as lack of updated content, ineffective exercises, lack of interesting illustrations, organization and design, or lack of appropriate skills and strategies practice. Nevertheless, none of them addressed VE of secondary level as they were all textbooks of tertiary level. Additionally, even though some of the above studies suggested material interventions, none of them trialed it to see its effectiveness. This is a gap in knowledge that the second part of the main study in this research addressed by designing supplementary material.

Regarding the third research question the findings point to the following:

The results in this part of the main study do not comply with the business survey findings of the pilot study according to which speaking and listening skills are of high importance for business transactions. The findings are in accordance with what Morreale et al., (2000) and Basturkmen, (2013) claim about efficient communication in Business English considered as high priority among other skills. Thus, it can be said that the study has revealed a gap between the skills provided in the VE target textbook and the current employment market needs, as regards the English language. These results comply with studies in the literature like those of Angouri (2009), Kaur and Clarke (2009) and Bouzidi (2009) who reported a gap between ESP materials and workplace needs. However, even though these studies or others like those of Meng Choo (2005), Jiajing (2007), Angouri (2010), Baleghizadeh and Rahini (2011) discuss suggestions for supplementary material to address the gap found, none of them trialed it to see its effectiveness. What is more, none of the studies addressed the secondary level of Vocational education but they all dealt with the tertiary level. These are gaps in knowledge that the second part of the main study in this research addressed.

In accordance with Basturkmen's (2010) and Danaye Tous and Hghighi's (2014) assertions the evaluation of the material in this study was significant because it allowed me to have a picture of the appropriateness of the "Economics and Administration" textbook in comparison to the actual needs of the students' specialism as shown in the business survey. It was found that the

content of the book does not comply with the current needs of the specialism and those of the workplace and suggest a gap between them. The findings will be further exploited in order to continue to explore the research issues in an effort to fill the aforementioned gaps in the literature (lack of designing ESP material for VE secondary level, lack of knowledge of its efficiency). The findings will be taken into account in order to design supplementary material which will correspond to the target sector learners' vocational English language needs (as shown by businesses in the pilot study) and teach it to learners to investigate its efficiency. The results will hopefully point a number of useful implications for researchers, practioners and policy makers as regards the importance of the link between VE educational material aims and workplace needs.

6.5. Summary

This chapter evaluated the textbook of the "Economics and Administration" sector and validated the evaluation results conducting interviews with teachers who teach it. Based on the findings, the content of the textbook is not strongly linked to the workplace needs as shown by businesses. This is because it lacks the communicative features that businesses currently need for their transactions. Therefore, it has demonstrated a gap between the skills need of the workplace and those learners are trained for. The findings allowed me to continue exploring answers for the fourth research question: the extent to which the newly designed material supplementary to the target book can enhance learners' communicative skills competence in Business English. The following chapter presents a detailed analysis of this process.

Chapter 7: Designing, teaching and evaluating new supplementary communicative ESP materials

7.1. Introduction

The findings of this research so far have revealed a gap between the English language skills students are trained for through their Vocational textbook and those that the workplace needs currently. To fill the gap I designed supplementary materials aiming at communicative features, as shown in the businesses survey. This chapter presents the rationale for this decision, the material design process, the participants' profile, the research methods, the tools adopted and the results addressing the fourth research question.

7.2. Rationale

To address the gap found between the textbook content and workplace skills needs in English I designed sample new material. I decided to test this material in order to see the impact it has on the VSS learners' communicative skills competence in Business English. The activities were designed based on the findings of this research which revealed three major issues: firstly, communication in English is mostly needed by Business employees in the research location at the moment; secondly, the majority of Vocational business course graduate employees present a low level of communicative skills competence; and thirdly, communicative skills are almost absent from the content of the presently taught English language book of the "Economics and Administration" Vocational secondary school business course.

7.3. Research method and tools

For credibility purposes, I used mixed research, with both qualitative (interviews/focus group) and quantitative (pre-post tests/questionnaire) research tools for two reasons. One, I wanted to investigate the effectiveness of the material I designed and therefore, I administered a pre test (to detect learners' linguistic level before the intervention) and a post-test in order to measure the extent to which the new knowledge had been gained after teaching (Zhang et al., 2006); secondly,

I wanted to know their opinion about the material I designed. For this, and for triangulation purposes, I first gave learners a questionnaire to answer and then I conducted a focus group with them as I wanted to have more profound answers (Kitzinger, 1994). Lastly, in order to gain extended information and in-depth views (Acaps, 2012) regarding the material, I also interviewed the teachers of the experimental group who observed me teaching the new material.

7.4. Participants' profile

The participants in this study were 43 third year Vocational secondary school learners with 22 of them being in the experimental and 21 in the control class. Additionally, participants were also eight students from the experimental group who participated in a focus group discussion in order to draw their views about the newly designed material. Similarly, participants were their three teachers who observed. However, only the two teachers of the experimental group participated in interviews conducted for the purposes of the fourth research question. Their profiles have already been described in section 4.9 above.

7.5. Research process

For this part of the study I did not need to take any official permission due to my duties as a school advisor of English. I did take permission, however, from the school principals and the teachers for ethical reasons. I also informed the students and discussed with them the purpose of the research. Upon the design of the material, the lessons were piloted by me for appropriateness and understanding of instructions and duration of the activities to another two randomly selected groups of learners of the same level and course as those of the research participants but from a different school.

I decided to teach pilot and actual experimental and control group lessons myself for a number of reasons. Firstly, teaching falls within my duties as a school advisor for English. Secondly, it is very important that teaching interventions can be realized by the same teacher-researcher and to learners that had not been taught by him/her before (Roussos and Tsaousis, 2011). In this way, two factors are significantly reduced: a) the different level of communicability

of every teacher towards his/her learners for any school subject and which depends on different particularities of their personalities and the communication that have developed with the students and b) teachers being influenced by having taught a group that takes part in a research prior to the research itself, and might have developed a certain relationship with the learners. The reduction of these factors leads to the elimination of the focus on teaching style, and enhances the emphasis on the effectiveness of the teaching aims which are the learning process and learners' outcomes, thus, contributing to the credibility of the research process. The credibility of the research, however, is also enhanced with the use of the SPSS statistical package for the analysis of the data (Cohen and Manion, 2000). Thirdly, even though regular teachers could have been asked to teach here, this study is part of my investigation which is action research. Therefore, at this point, I wanted to investigate the research issues as a researcher and not as a practitioner.

The pilot lessons were taught over a period of three days and in two hours per group per day. Each group was taught six different lessons. When feedback was taken from teachers' interviews comments (Appendix IX) and discussions with learners, regarding wording, instructions and length of activities, amendments were made (Appendix X) and lessons with the actual research participants began. Before the teaching of the suggested material students of both the control and the experimental groups took a pre-test to detect their skills competence level after they had been explained the purpose of the study.

Both groups were taught the same unit from the same syllabus. The differentiation was only in the activities taught to the experimental group, which were designed based on the survey results. In the beginning, students of both control and experimental groups took the post-test (the same test they had been given as a pre-test but they did not know the answers) to detect any changes in their skills competence. Students of the experimental group were also given a questionnaire to investigate their opinion regarding the taught material. Two days later, a group of eight students from the experimental group participated in a focus group discussion, in order to investigate their in-depth thoughts towards the material. Lastly, the teachers of this group, who had observed my

teaching, based on a specific protocol (Appendix XIII) were also interviewed regarding their opinion on the material.

7.6. Rationale for the new activities

I designed the sample unit (comprising 12 lessons) (Appendix XI) to substitute Unit 2 (comprising 11 lessons) of the target book (Appendix IV). The sample material serves as an example unit of a syllabus I am suggesting to cater for all skills but mainly communicative skills, based on the findings of the pilot study I conducted with the businesses. It is a topical, situational and task based syllabus suggestion because its themes entail social activities (greeting visitors, answering the phone), language that occurs in real life situations (greeting visitors, benefits of a product and instructions, applying for a job, communicating with an HR officer, answering the phone, taking messages, transferring messages, holding the line, extracting information from a source, booking a hotel room) and purposeful tasks (taking decisions, organizing thoughts and actions). The language functions and thematic areas of the sample material are based on those of Unit 2 of the target book (Appendix IV) and on the corresponding curriculum guidelines regarding the linguistic output learners need to acquire at this level (Appendix XII), as failing to comply with the state curriculum guidelines is prohibited. Thus, the language functions and topics are almost the same or slightly differentiated but the corresponding activities were transformed into more communicative ones. The control group was taught the material of Unit 2 of the target book, whereas the experimental group was taught the sample material with similar language functions, but with a different topic and skills orientation, that is communicative rather than grammar-structural.

While designing the material I made an effort to include communicative tasks (role playing/pair work/group work) and to cater for visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners (power points/videos/simulations/presentations/role-plays). This was decided based on the findings of the textbook evaluation, according to which, the book lacked communication, listening material and/or tasks to promote interaction among learners. It was also based on ESP materials design

features based on the the literature review (Section 3.9).The activities aimed to arouse learners' motivation and curiosity with pre-reading/listening/writing tasks (with images and power point presentations) and targeted on the use of the language (role playing/pair work/group work/brainstorming), which, based on the findings of the textbook evaluation, were absent from the book. I also decided to use simulation games, authentic material and resources (SiLang software, videos, realia [announcement boards/telephone sets/suitcases]) and graded the exercises from supported to unsupported ones. The first dialogue/role plays instructions were also given in Greek and were quite analytical, whereas the last ones were only in English and students were prompted to improvise.

The activities were designed to be relevant to learners' future working needs (working in an office, answering the phone, greeting visitors, and so on) and thus involve learners in interactive communicative tasks, that are needed in the businesses as shown by survey findings. Finally, the tasks were intended to be instructional, exploratory and eliciting (teach new vocabulary, explore real language or elicit information – [book a hotel room/understand the advantages of various search engines etc.]).

7.7. Rationale for the students' pre/post-test choice

The pre and post-test I used to detect the learners' level is the “Business Vantage Cambridge English” test, which is an independent user B2 (Based on the Common European Framework of References for Languages) level exam. The test is designed to assess learners' practical skills in English speaking environments and real-life business situations. It is a balanced thorough test of all four skills, internationally recognized by many organizations and institutions (Cambridge English global recognition, 2015). I chose B2 level because it is the expected level learners should have at this stage in school and I used the sample test (Appendix XIII), as it is free to access by anyone interested to use or see it (Cambridge University Exams, 2015). Additionally, I chose the particular test because its content depicts the material both groups of learners (control and experimental) were taught and therefore could be assessed about. All test specifications are

included in the candidate's guide (Cambridge English Language Assessment 2015), (Appendix XIV). The test was the same for both the pre and post-test phases, given that the learners were not revealed the answers to the questions after the pre-test and nothing was discussed about it.

7.8. Students' questionnaire structure

The questionnaire I used to elicit learners' views on the material was adapted from a student course Evaluation Questionnaire of Quality Enhancement form (University of Engineering and Technology Deshavar). The adaptation was done in order for the statements to be relevant to what I had taught, and therefore I wanted learners to express their opinion about. Moreover, it was given to extract all the experimental group learners' opinion, given that only eight students, who had been given their parents' consent, could participate in a focus group discussion. The questionnaire comprised five areas and 17 questions (Appendix XV) regarding learners' opinion on the suggested material. Answers were given on a Five point Likert scale (*Strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree*), corresponding to 5 {the highest}, 4, 3, 2 and 1 {the lowest} points respectively. The questionnaire was first piloted with pilot groups for clarity of instructions and content, and, according to the students, it was clear and comprehensive.

7.9. Students' focus group discussion

In the focus group I had eight students participating. The reason is that only those students' parents consented to the recording of our conversation. Therefore, I could not have the rest of the class participating but just these students. For my focus group I ensured that I avoided "guiding" questions and designed open ended ones that would allow the conversation to flow naturally (Appendix XVI). I also piloted them with pilot students for appropriacy and understanding of content in relation to the lessons taught and the aim which was to detect learners' deepest thoughts of the material. Having gained the eight students' and parents' consent, I proceeded with the discussion, which was recorded and lasted around 20 minutes. The discussion was in Greek after the students' wish which I accepted for ethical reasons. It was conducted in the school library, for learners to feel comfortable and relaxed. It is worth mentioning that regardless of the fact that

most parents had not consented to the recording, all learners expressed their wish to participate in the discussion and they were quite disappointed for not being able to do so.

When the focus group discussion was over I proceeded with its forward translation in English first and then a backward translation with a colleague school advisor from a nearby region. There were a few errors regarding articles, verbs and prepositions (translated in the wrong way from Greek to English) which I amended and I had the final version of the English translation. I then continued with the content analysis following the same procedure I had done with the interviews which I had conducted with the teachers about the content of the “Economics and Administration” book.

7.10. Teachers’ interviews

The two teachers who were regular teachers of the experimental group were asked to be present throughout my teaching sessions and observe the lessons I taught. I even encouraged them to take notes if they wished on a specific evaluation checklist as I thought it would be useful to interview them in the end of the teaching interventions. The teachers consented to these suggestions (observation/note taking/interviews) and throughout the whole time they sat quietly at the back of the class observing the lesson and taking notes which they used while being interviewed. The students did not have eye contact with them, as the seating arrangements come in a linear approach with one row behind the other. The evaluation checklist was designed based on the criteria McDonough and Shaw’s criteria (2003) which were used for the evaluation of the target textbook (see section 6.2.2., Table 16) and in the questionnaire conducted with the students on their opinion of the new material (Appendix XV).

When the lessons were over and after having been given their consent, I proceeded with semi-structured interviews. Before the beginning of the interviews the teachers were explained that they could withdraw anytime they would like. They expressed their wish to be interviewed in Greek as they felt rather embarrassed to speak English and I accepted for ethical reasons. The

interviews (Appendices XVII, XIX) lasted around 40 minutes and the whole process took place in the school library to avoid noise or other distracting factors, following the teachers' wish.

7.11. Students' pre and post-tests results

In order to receive the desirable data for the purposes of the fourth research question, I proceeded with the pre and post-tests analysis. In order to check the statistical hypotheses the statistical package SPSS was used. In the present study I defined the significance level at 5%. The significance level which is set at a $\alpha=0.05$ is the highest allowable limit for behaviour sciences (Roussos and Tsaousis, 2011).

7.11.1. Checking the conditions for the implementation of parametric or non parametric testing

Random sampling is ensured by the research conditions with the participation of all students of the subject area. The test of the conditions for the use of a parametric or non-parametric testing requires controlling the normality of groups and homogeneity of variance.

Checking the normality of groups

The checking of normality is implemented with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) criterion (Table 19). This criterion checks the null hypothesis H_0 . Based on the K-S test results in table 21 below the significance value is $>0,05$ which means that the null hypothesis is not rejected, therefore the condition of normality of groups in most cases is fulfilled and the distributions are considered normal.

Table 19: The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion for the variables of the research in the pre and post-test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
R_PRE_CG_100	0,898	0,395
R_PRE_EG_100	0,730	0,662
R_POST_CG_100	0,433	0,992
R_POST_EG_100	0,748	0,630
W_PRE_CG_100	1,121	0,162
W_PRE_EG_100	1,076	0,197
W_POST_CG_100	1,426	0,034
W_POST_EG_100	1,505	0,022
L_PRE_CG_100	0,543	0,929
L_PRE_EG_100	0,674	0,754
L_POST_CG_100	0,687	0,734
L_POST_EG_100	0,715	0,635
S_PRE_CG_100	1,310	0,065
S_PRE_EG_100	1,706	0,006
S_POST_CG_100	1,764	0,004
S_POST_EG_100	1,532	0,018

Checking the homogeneity of variance in pre-testing

This condition only refers to cases in which we have experimental design of independent samples (especially in the case in which in each condition a different number of people is involved). This condition will be checked with the Levene criterion. It is considered therefore, that the conditions for the use of parametric checking of data are fulfilled.

It should again be stressed that the control group (CG) consisted of 21 third year Vocational High School learners who followed the existent syllabus and a particular unit of lessons (Unit 2), whereas the experimental group (EG) comprised 22 learners of the same grade and type of school and they were taught the newly designed material.

The checking can be done with the parametric t criterion for independent samples, because the conditions for its use are fulfilled. Firstly, the hypotheses must be formulated:

Formulation of hypotheses:

Null hypothesis H_0 : The CG students' performance in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* does not differ from that of the EG before the teaching intervention.

Alternative hypothesis H_1 : The CG students' performance in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* differs from that of the EG before the teaching intervention.

The results of the Levene criterion application are shown on Table 20 below and in Appendix XXII, (Table 1). Levene criterion checks the extent to which the variances of the two groups being compared are equal. Based on Table 22 below and on the Table in (Appendix XXII), for all possible combinations of groups we have $\text{Sig.} > 0,05$, which correspond to a non-statistically significant result and leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis made above. Therefore we assume that the performance of the Control Group (CG) in all skills does not differ from the performance of the Experimental Group (EG) before the teaching intervention as shown in Table 20 below, thus the condition of homogeneity of variance is fulfilled:

Table 20: Results of t test for the independent groups for CG and EG in pre-testing

Levene's test	t	Sig
Reading skills Pre-test	(41) = 0.456	p = 0.651
Writing skills Pre-test	(41) = -0.264	p = 0.793
Listening skills Pre-test	(41) = -0.005	p = 0.996
Speaking skills Pre-test	(41) = 0.209	p = 0.836

The same conclusion can be seen on the following figure (Fig. 4) with confidence intervals of 95% of the average performance for each group:

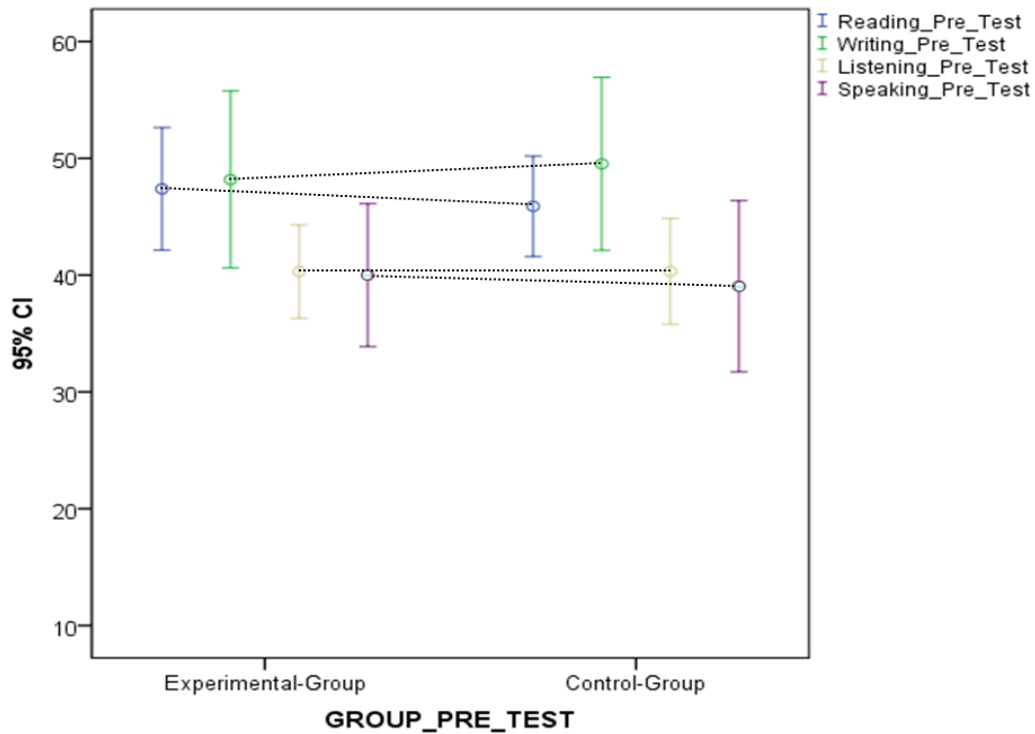


Figure 4: Error figure for the participating groups at pre-test

From the above figure it can be seen that there is no statistically significant difference between groups at pre-test as the overlaps are not bigger than half the average margin of error.

Overall, the above results have demonstrated that both groups were equivalent as regards their performance in the four skills in English before the teaching of the newly designed material.

7.11.2. Checking the level of improvement on the subject taught for each group separately

The next step is to check the level of improvement on the English language skills for each group separately, that is the performance of the CG on their pre-test vs their post-test and the performance of the EG on their pre-test vs their post-test. Again the parametric t criterion will be used here. The hypotheses are:

Null hypothesis H_0 : The pre-test performance of each group (CG and EG) in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* does not differ from that of their post-test after the teaching intervention.

Alternative hypothesis H_1 : The pre-test performance of each group (CG and EG) in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* differs from that of their post-test after the teaching intervention.

Based on t criterion, the data of Table 21 below and those in Appendix XXII (Table 2), the result is: a) for all possible comparisons in pre and post-test of the EG the result is statistically significant ($p < 0.005$) and leads to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis according to which the EG learners' performance in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* improved significantly after the teaching intervention; b) as seen in the pre and post-test of the CG there is a significant improvement in Reading and Writing at the post test ($p < 0.005$) but not in Listening and Speaking ($p > 0.005$), (Table 21).

Table 21: Results of all possible combinations between groups at two-sided t test of dependent samples

	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1 Reading Pre- test CG Reading Post-test CG	-2.377	0.028 ($p < 0.005$)
Pair 2 Reading Pre- test EG Reading Post-test EG	-3.993	0.001 ($p < 0.005$)
Pair 1 Writing Pre- test CG Writing Post-test CG	3.286	0.004 ($p < 0.005$)
Pair 2 Writing Pre- test EG Writing Post-test EG	-2.217	0.038 ($p < 0.005$)
Pair 1 Listening Pre- test CG Listening Post-test CG	-1.985	0.061 ($p > 0.005$)
Pair 2 Listening Pre- test EG Listening Post-test EG	-7.459	0.000 ($p < 0.005$)
Pair 1 Speaking Pre- test CG Speaking Post-test CG	-1.451	0.162 ($p > 0.005$)
Pair 2 Speaking Pre- test EG Speaking Post-test EG	-4.461	0.000 ($p < 0.005$)

The same conclusion may be seen on the following figure (Fig 5) with confidence intervals of 95% of the average performance for each group.

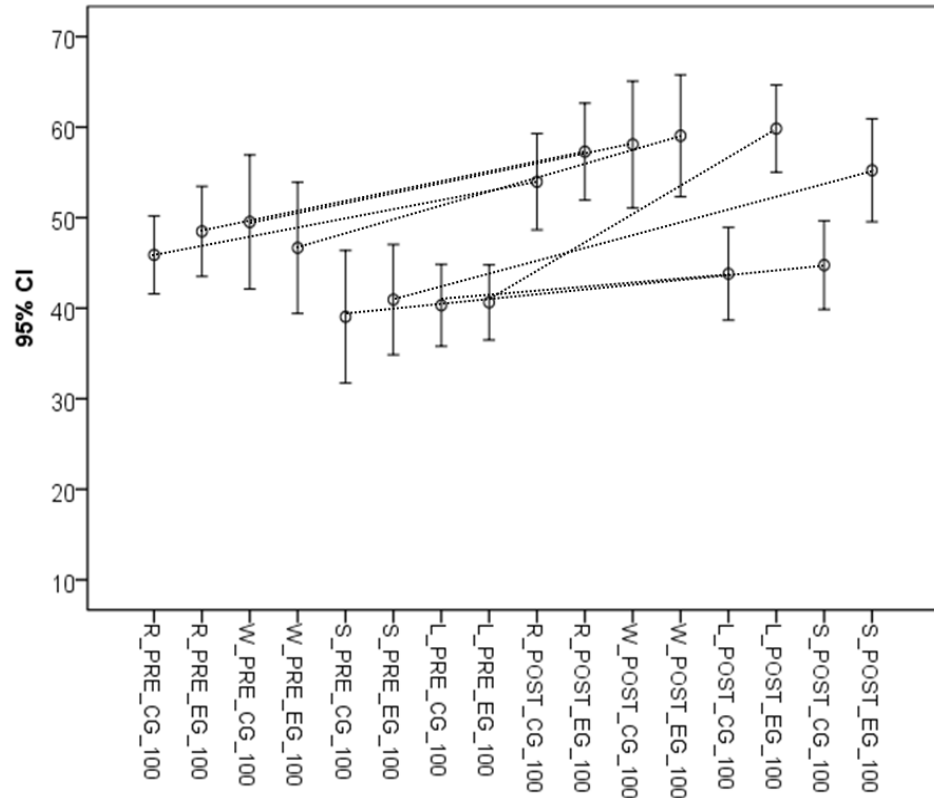


Figure 5: The participant groups at pre and post tests

From the above figure it can be seen that there is a statistically significant difference between groups at pre-test and post-test for all group comparisons, there are no corresponding overlaps except from the control group at Listening and Speaking.

The above results have demonstrated that after the teaching, the EG has shown improvement in all four skills in comparison to the CG that seems to have improved in the skills of reading and writing but not in speaking and listening.

7.11.3. Checking each participant group’s cognitive level at the subject taught after the teaching intervention - comparison between groups (CG vs EG at post-testing) in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking performance

The formulated hypotheses are the following:

Null hypothesis H_0 : The CG students’ performance in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* does not differ from that of the EG after the teaching intervention.

Alternative hypothesis H_1 : The CG students' performance in *Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking* differs from that of the EG after the teaching intervention.

According to the results of the Levene criterion application shown on Table 22 below and in Appendix XXII, (Table 3) we have the following: a) for the two groups (CG and EG) we have $\text{Sig.} > 0.05$, for reading and writing skills which correspond to a non-statistically significant result which leads to the acceptance of the null hypothesis made above. Therefore we assume that the performance of the Control Group (CG) in reading and writing does not differ from the performance of the Experimental Group (EG) after the teaching intervention; b) for the two groups (CG and EG) we have $\text{Sig.} < 0.05$, for listening and speaking skills which correspond to a statistically significant result which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis made above. Therefore, we assume that the performance of the Control Group (CG) in reading and writing differ from the performance of the Experimental Group (EG) after the teaching intervention as shown in Table 22 below. Particularly, the performance of the EG group has improved in comparison to the performance of the CG group in the skills of listening and speaking. These results can be seen in Table 22 below:

Table 22: Results of t criterion for independent groups for CG and EG at post testing

Levene's test	t	Sig
Reading skills Post-test	0.943	p = 0.351
Writing skills Post-test	0.019	p = 0.985
Listening skills Post-test	4.690	p = 0.000
Speaking skills Post-test	3.035	p = 0.004

The same conclusion can be seen in the following figure with confidence intervals 95% of the average performance for each group (Figure 6):

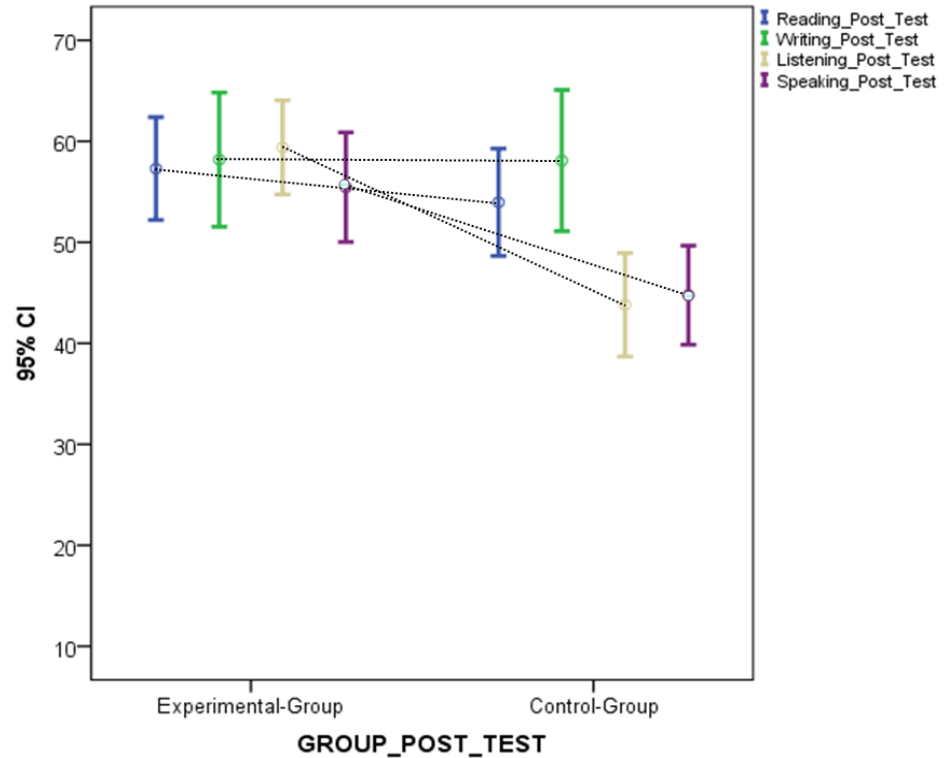


Figure 6: Error figure for the participating teams in post test

From the above figure it can be seen that there is a statistically significant difference between groups at post-test as there are no corresponding overlaps except for Listening and Speaking.

Overall, and according to the results, the EG performance in the skills of speaking and listening has been found to have improved to a bigger extent than that of the CG in these two skills after the teaching interventions with the newly designed material.

7.12. Students' questionnaires results

Learners' questionnaire investigated their opinion on five different areas with seventeen questions (Appendix XV). The answers have been graded with 5 for the highest and 1 for the lowest on a range from 1 to 5. Based on the data on Table 23 below and on Table 4 (Appendix XXII) it can be seen that the answers of the learners range between agree to strongly agree for the effectiveness of the areas investigated with the material content and organization reaching the highest preference and assessment the lowest.

Table 23: The results of the students' questionnaires

	Mean statistic	Std Deviation statistic
Material Content and Organization	3.92	±0.38
Learning Environment and Teaching Methods	4.72	±0.29
Student Improvement	4.56	±0.32
Quality of Delivery	4.18	±0.30
Assessment	3.68	±0.89

7.13. Students' focus group discussion results

The focus group discussion was conducted in the end of the teaching interventions. The aim was to have more profound answers than those of the questionnaire ones regarding the impact the material had on the students. The students were free to talk and express themselves in any way they liked. Nevertheless, I had to consider the possible halo but, in terms of this, I did not feel concerned as I was not their regular teacher and I had not developed a certain intimacy with them which might lead to certain feelings or image towards me and tell me something I “expected”. Moreover, young people today tend to be more extrovert and decisive as opposed to the “obedient” students in the past, and express their real thoughts without reservations. Therefore, I believed their answers were unbiased and sincere.

Finally, there was no reason for them to lie as they had been explained and reassured by me, their teachers and the school principal that these lessons were not linked to their regular assessment and their performance would not affect their grades in their school report at all but this would be based only on their regular tests. Additionally, I was aware that the students did not influence each other's views as I had already seen them working in class, and I had formed an idea about them and their participation in class which concurred with their responses (positive or negative).

The students' responses (Appendix XVIII) are presented below classified in key aspects of the material:

Skills:

According to the students, speaking skills were emphasized and this encouraged them to cooperate and communicate with their classmates. As they admitted they considered speaking English a very important skill as they will need it in their future working and personal life. They also believed that speaking English in the classroom can improve their social skills and bring them closer to one another. Especially they explained that the role-plays enhanced this skill to such an extent that even the naughty or unwilling students liked the activities and participated in them. For this reason, they stressed the use of role-plays as an effective method of producing language even though one of the students admitted that she preferred the combination of the traditional input of the book and the innovation of role-plays. Additionally, they explained that though skills such as writing are thought to be a useful task in general, they believed it is the speaking skill that should be emphasized in the English class (Transcript in Appendix XVIII). All this is reflected in the quotes below:

“... we cooperated, we interacted with one another... it also helped us a lot to improve our speaking skills” (Nina)

“There was not anything really difficult, and though I consider writing useful... we should be encouraged more to talk than to write” (Paul)

Motivation – interest – authenticity of task/text

The students believed that the material was interesting because it gave them the opportunity to practice real life situations. They explained that this feature led them into being more authentic in their performance of the speaking tasks (they meant genuine and I suppose they mostly meant the opportunity to improvise during the role playing), an issue they found interesting and pleasant while working together with their partners. Learners expressed their wish to be taught through alternative tasks as opposed to the ones in the book which they considered boring and poor in variety. The students also confided in me their wish for their book to include contemporary topics relevant to what they are studying in order to motivate them into using the English language and

thus learn more about it. Further to the above, the students commented positively on the use of realia (real objects, such as suitcases, signs, umbrellas, clocks, telephone sets, which they used while performing the role-plays). Some student comments reflecting these views are below:

“I thought it was interesting and motivating” (Georgia)

“We had a great time in class and also when we used various objects that were useful in the role-playing” (Maria)

Linguistic level:

The activities were found to be easy to use especially because the students could practice all four skills per topic and this facilitated the comprehension of the new material. They also suggested that the material should not be above their level but appropriate for them and their needs to avoid difficulties in dealing with it:

“No, they were not difficult, they were useful” (Pepi)

“... they were easy ...we could understand their content and they were useful” (Maria)

Audio-Visual material

The students found the introduction of videos in the lesson helpful for them to comprehend the tasks and motivated them to participate in the teaching and learning process. They also believed that the power point presentations and visual material in general made the lesson vivid and pleasant and enhanced their participation as noted in these quotes:

“I liked the activities because I could use English... in everyday life situations, they were quite easy but also useful and the videos particularly” (Paul)

“... vivid [power points]... there was more immediacy in the lesson and so all the students wanted to participate more” (Aleka)

Relevance to the course needs

According to the students the tasks were relevant to the needs of the course they attended and thus, to their future profession as noted in the quote below:

“It was material ... relevant to our needs and profession” (Nina)

7.14. Teachers’ interviews results

This section summarizes the findings drawn from the teachers’ interviews (Appendix XIX). These are as follows:

Skills

The teachers claimed that the interactive features of the activities, through the use of the language, questions and role-plays facilitated learners’ speaking skills development. Whereas previously writing was considered a difficult task to do, it was now considered as another skill to facilitate production of speech. Students’ concern was not on grammar mistakes now but on the flow of the conversation just like it is done in real life in order to convey the message across to the interlocutor, which is important for business purposes courses for successful business transactions and future interactions, as shown by the business survey.

The tasks seem to have enhanced student cooperation to a great extent. In fact the teachers were surprised to see that even shy or weak learners had no reservations to “stand up” in class and act. And this motivation of their students was really what impressed them the most. The teachers found the group and pair work helpful for learners. They stated that the situational based syllabus and the simulation tasks were very effective and helped learners acquire the language they were introduced. For this reason they believed the activities fulfilled the purpose they were designed for and supported their argument noting how impressed they were when they saw some of the “reserved” and timid learners participating in the interactive tasks. And even though they did not expect their students to respond so positively they were amazed at their performance and willingness to act the dialogues in front of the whole class. As they explained this surprised them greatly as “acting in class” is mainly believed to address young learners of primary education

rather than teens of this age. Nevertheless, it was obvious that the learners enjoyed the “theatrical” performance of the role-plays. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the teachers stressed the participation also of those who had a low self esteem and “didn’t believe in themselves” (Appendix XIX). Their views are given in the extracts below:

“Reading focused on students’ understanding in order to use the language, the questions, the dialogues... It helped them very much to begin speaking... it motivated them... even those that were shy they got up in the end... really impressive!” (Jane)

“The students “opened up” gradually and talked... the pair works worked very well” (Villy)

Motivation – interest – authenticity of task/text-contemporary features

Teachers found the material very interesting and stressed the different focus of the lesson (they meant communication) which was the actual use of the language. According to the teachers, innovations such as the use of realia made the lesson appealing to the learners enhancing their speaking skills. They considered ICT-based tasks necessary in the teaching process and claimed that power point presentations made the lessons more realistic, more communicative and facilitated the comprehension of the new language. To this end, they believed that authentic material was important, and emphasized authentic tasks design by teachers in case these are absent from the students’ material. They claimed that the absence of authenticity in the book was a disadvantage for its purpose (to prepare learners for their English language business needs) but they had to admit that they were obliged to use it, as it was imposed on them by the state for the particular course. Additionally, they stressed the inadequacy of the book to prepare learners for real life situations because these are not presented in its content and there is nothing contemporary about it (Appendix XIX). Their words are shown in the following extracts:

“I believe that it was very interesting material. The tasks were more communicative and focused on the way to use the language” (Jane)

“They liked it very much. They find the use of realia innovative and fun.. a visual motive for learners to use the language” (Villy)

Linguistic level

The teachers argued that the level of the language was appropriate and so learners did not find any difficulties doing the tasks. According to the general impression of the teachers the material was easy enough, communicative and interesting. They supported their argument based on the positive comments of the students made when the lessons were over. According to these comments the material was innovative, non-linear or grammar focused, giving them the opportunity to become creative and concentrate on communication practice. The students even expressed their wish to return next year in order to continue the English lessons based on such tasks, despite the fact they were about to graduate. Finally the teachers emphasized the improvement of communicative competence in English by learners, such that even though they were holders of English language certificates (B2 – CEFR), they were not fluent enough or were reluctant to speak, given that certificates preparation focuses mainly on the test format rather than on the use of the language (Appendix XIX). Their words are shown below:

“The material was very communicative ... interesting ... they didn’t feel the grammar “hanging over their heads” and could focus on communication” (Jane)

Audio-Visual material

The teachers claimed that the material motivated learners to participate by offering them audio-visual material (videos, listening extracts), eliminating their concern of “how to do something”. As they explained the audio visual material gave them ideas to produce the language in a genuine way (as in real life), thus expressing themselves freely and even improvising their dialogues as noted by a teacher:

“...they could hear a text on a video, they could watch the movements of a body.. so this could give them ideas as to how to use the language and produce speech... and writing ... and speaking was easier for them later” (Jane)

Relevance to the course needs

They considered the material relevant to the students’ needs and easy for them to use. Therefore they believed it was appropriate for the students’ particular ESP needs:

“It was totally relevant to what the students should be taught as learners of the course “Economics and Administration” (Jane)

7.15. Discussion

This chapter presented the second part of the main study which aimed to investigate the fourth research question (Chapter 1) for the purposes of which supplementary material was designed to address the lack of communicative skills. The material was designed taking into account certain characteristics regarding ESP materials design, as these are suggested in the literature review studies of Dudley Evans and St John (2001), Fiorito (2005), Vahabi and Sadeh (2011), Ates, (2012) and on the business survey findings. The material was also tested with VE students to assess its impact on their communicative skills.

According to the findings the newly designed material enhanced the students’ communicative skills. My argument is supported with findings from data drawn from a variety of data collection tools: a. data taken from CG and EG pre/post-tests revealed that the EG group’s post-test performance demonstrated an improvement in listening and speaking skills compared to those of the CG group; b. according to the EG questionnaires results students agreed that the material was effective; c. the findings of the EG students’ focus group discussion revealed that students found the material interesting and useful for their future working needs; d. according to the EG teacher interviews the material was found motivating and relevant to learners’ needs.

These findings concur with those in the literature based on which ESP materials design is suggested to be challenging, creative and taking into consideration learning needs. Particularly they comply with research conducted by Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) which claims that materials design should take into consideration aspects such as authenticity and with the study of Vičič (2011) who claims that materials design should enhance communication. The findings of this study also concur with research by Fiorito (2005) who argues that ESP materials should link to learners' future working needs and the study of Bojovic (2006) who points out the need for ESP material to include contemporary input, especially when this addresses students who study Business English (Meng Choo, 2005).

Additionally, the findings comply with those of Hadzigiannoglou-Xenodohidis (2002) according to which the material designed for computing learners based on needs analysis was found interesting by learners and with the findings of Al Muzzamil Fareen and Namakkal, (2010) based on which material designed for engineering students was found to be motivating. However, none of the above studies addressed the VE of secondary level as this research has done. What is more, even though other studies discuss findings drawn from the design of materials to address discrepancies encountered (Mohd and Siti, 2008; Masoumpanah and Tahririan, 2013) they failed to trial their material with learners to see its effectiveness.

7.16. Summary

This chapter reported on the findings that answer the fourth research question of the research in this thesis. According to the results the new material seemed to be motivating, interesting, communicative and relevant to the learners' ESP needs and therefore linked to the current needs of the workplace. In the chapter that follows there will be a discussion of the key points in relation to all research questions based on the research findings. The findings in this research imply a number of suggestions for practitioners, researchers and policy makers which are discussed in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 8: Conclusion and implications

8.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters, I presented and described the aim, the rationale, the process and the findings of the research I conducted for the purposes of this thesis. The research was conducted around two basic axons: the employment market and VE education the aim of which is to prepare learners and future candidate employees to enter the workplace immediately upon graduation. Particularly, the research was about the Greek VSE and business context. It aimed to investigate the need of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the Greek employment market and its link to the English language skills taught in VSS and business courses.

In this chapter, there will be a discussion about the findings of the research and their implications. The findings will be presented in relation to each of the four research questions, thus providing possible answers for them and shedding light into the core of the research: the link between the businesses and Vocational education in Greece as regards the use of English:

1. What are the English language skills currently needed for Business offices employees in the Greek employment market?
2. Which English language skills does the textbook of the “Economics and Administration” Vocational School sector focus on and to what extent does it prepare learners accordingly, so as to help them keep abreast of the latest workplace English language skills and demands?
3. Is there a gap between the business English language skills offered in the “Economics and Administration” English language textbook sector and the contemporary English language skills needed for businesses today?
4. To what extent can the new ESP material enhance learners’ communicative skills competence in Business English?

The sections that follow discuss the findings in relation to each research question.

8.2. English language needs in Greek businesses

The first research question is about the English language skills currently needed for Business offices employees in the Greek employment market. To address this question, a survey was conducted with businesses in the research context in Thessaly, Greece, asking them to respond to relevant questionnaires (Appendix II).

The findings revealed that English is considered equally important for all businesses regardless of their type of activity (see Chapter 5). Nevertheless, speaking and listening skills hold a more significant role for business transactions and are mostly needed in companies with Tourism and catering activities. For countries like Greece, whose main income lies on tourism, these findings imply that English language communication as a lingua franca is considered a significant qualification (Danchev & Paratsiokas, 2012) and therefore, listening and speaking are the main skills to achieve it. Whatever the motive however, the competitive pressure of the world market and the globalization of tasks and resources make communication an inevitable tool for business transactions (Neely 2012).

Additionally, speaking skills are particularly needed in businesses with many employees and less with smaller firms. In an effort to shed more light into this result (the reason/s small firms place less emphasis on speaking skills), the majority of the participants from small firms were asked about this. Those that responded to my question (23 out of 86) revealed two main reasons: one, that this is perhaps the result of insufficient knowledge to establish business practices that could improve transactions. For example, they avoid business spoken interactions in English out of fear of misunderstandings and rely mainly on written communication which is considered easier to correct or cheaper to use (i.e. mails); two, for reasons of localism. This means they are not in favor of doing business with foreign companies or hiring non-Greek personnel and therefore they do not need to use spoken English. Thus, they mainly use the written form of English when they wish to order equipment from abroad or read instructions about its use.

Furthermore, 58.1% of the participant businesses admitted they employed Vocational school graduates but only 15.2% were satisfied with their employees' English language level and skills with 84.8% of them being dissatisfied, wishing their employees to improve all four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in English. These findings concur with the findings of a survey conducted by McKinsey (2012-2013), cited in CEPIS (2015), explaining that among other skills and qualifications, the use of English presents the highest score of variation between what the employers need and the employees are qualified for, thus, leaving a large gap between them. They also coincide with findings which emphasize the devalued vocational qualifications by employers and labour market even though the major part of these qualifications form part of what 16 to 18 year old people have to offer (Wolf, 2011:71).

The follow up discussions between the respondents and me revealed that even though the majority of them considered communication in English a very significant qualification (Hellekjaer & Fairway, 2015), their employees' communicative performance is not analogous and blame school education for this phenomenon. The employees' lack of communicative ability forces many of them to organize in-service seminars in order to train them accordingly for the purposes of their company's effective business transactions despite the fact that they are quite costly and time consuming. They admitted, however, that, especially now that the economic crisis in Greece is driving them to a financial standoff, they will gradually have to stop implementing them and insisted that educational authorities should undertake their responsibility towards learners' appropriate English language skills training.

The findings regarding the high demand of businesses for communicative skills acquisition on behalf of the employees concur with the findings of other researchers from other countries (Bouzidi, 2009; Kaur & Clarke, 2009). However, those studies referred to Vocational Tertiary level and not to Secondary Vocational Education linked to Business English. What is more, none of the studies investigated the link between the English language skills the workplace needs and the English offered in VSS nor did they address all VE stakeholders (employment market,

teachers, and learners) or VE educational material. This research tried to fill this gap by investigating the secondary level of Vocational education looking into the skill of English linked to the workplace needs currently.

8.3. English language skills in the “Economics and Administration” Vocational business textbook

The second research question was formed to investigate the English language skills and content included in the “Economics and Administration” textbook and its ability to prepare learners for the skills they are trained. To address the research question, the particular textbook, which is taught in the VSE business course, was first evaluated by me and secondly by eight teachers who were interviewed. The evaluation drew on McDounough and Shaw’s (2003), Mukundan et al.’s (2011) and Abdelahab’s (2013) criteria.

The textbook evaluation has shown that its linguistic level (grammar/vocabulary) is quite demanding for learners whose actual level (A1-B1) is usually below the level of the book (CEFR Level B2 to C1), making it difficult for them to use English for communication. This difficulty of language input is depicted on a load of grammar tasks and decontextualized vocabulary that learners are asked to memorize or implement compared to their capabilities. Therefore, their participation in the lesson is mainly based on the mechanical filling of the grammar or vocabulary tasks rather than practicing the use of the language.

The textbook is the only material that the learners are given whilst the teachers are provided with the teacher’s version but with no other supplementary audio or visual material, companion or grammar book. As teachers purported, this lack of supplementary material leads to necessarily spending more and valuable time to explain the grammar tasks, than allocating it to learners’ communicative skills preparation. The book is not motivational due to the linearity and difficulty of content and lack of task variety. Its demotivating features are also due to the low quality layout and design and lack of contemporary audio, visual and authentic material (i.e. contemporary working and office environments). Therefore, the book is not appealing enough to the learners, so

as to draw their attention and enhance their participation in the lesson and fails to prepare them for the current business duties it aims to train them for.

This gap between the “past” and the “present” business reality is exacerbated by the absence of text and task authenticity in the book. The texts lack up-to-date topics, whereas the tasks that follow serve as a medium to grammar or lexis acquisition rather than as a vehicle of communication. To this end, the texts fail to introduce learners to the world of current business offices reality, their duties and obligations in order to train them for skills they need to acquire in a working environment today.

As regards the skills provision, reading and writing skills outbalance speaking and listening with the latter being almost non-existent in the book (Appendix IV). Reading is practiced through long and difficult texts for low level learners and lack the feature of communication gap with answers being too obvious to find. Thus, the learner-reader has no real purpose or aim to read for. Dialogues however constitute an exception and are easier than the rest of the texts. Writing is exercised mainly through filling in exercises or answering questions. The book provides some letters of complaint or request and C.Vs as models for letter writing which are not really a contemporary medium of written communication. Again, writing does not present authenticity of purpose and it is not linked to real business situations. Learners are simply given the instructions with no further comments or guided steps, explanation or theoretical background to facilitate task implementation. What is more, there are no opportunities for creative writing based on the integration of learners’ background knowledge in the tasks. Instead, the majority of the tasks that ask learners to write something are within the framework of the grammar exercises (Appendix IV).

On the other hand, and as opposed to the need for listening and speaking skills that the businesses survey has revealed, the book does not seem to provide adequate listening material or speaking tasks for learners to practice. In particular, there is no audio material to accompany the very few listening tasks included in the book. Additionally, there are no transcripts for teachers to

use, either. Therefore, listening is not exercised through the book. Similarly, speaking practice is almost non-existent and can only be practiced through the answering of the comprehension questions, if the teacher chooses to use them for speaking practice. However, in such a case, there would be absence of authenticity of task that could resemble real life interactions.

To sum up, the textbook of the “Economics and Administration” sector does not fully prepare learners for the skills they are trained for as it lacks authenticity, contemporary office content input and does not promote communication. The above findings are opposed to what the survey results have revealed about the importance of communicative skills in the workplace. Additionally they contradict to what the literature argues about the ESP material being challenging, creative, communicative, authentic, motivational, interactive and contemporary (Vičič, 2011; Basturkmen, 2010; Bojovic, 2006; Ates, 2012). Similarly, they are not consistent with the literature suggestions about the communicative features the ESP material should employ (Netiksiene, 2006; Gilmore, 2007; Xiaorong and Lili, 2009).

8.4. The link between the businesses skills needs and those included in the Vocational textbook

The third research question was about the extent to which there is a gap between the business English language skills the “Economics and Administration” sector offers to Vocational secondary school learners and the English language skills needed for businesses today. To address it, I examined the findings of the research questions one and two.

The findings of the first research question revealed that the businesses in the research area are not very satisfied with the Vocational graduate employees’ English language skills. They also brought to light the need for communicative competence on behalf of the employees with listening and speaking being considered as most important for their transactions. These findings do not match with the findings of the “Economics and Administration” textbook evaluation. Based on the evaluation results, the book is not contemporary. Additionally, it was found to focus on structure and not on communication. Therefore, it does not address the contemporary English language

needs in the employment market and therefore, it does not fully prepare learners for the current needs in the use of English at the workplace, which according to the businesses is communicative competence.

The aforementioned results have demonstrated a gap between the communicative need for English the businesses demand today and the English language skills learners are trained for and particularly through the “Economics and Administration” VSE business sector. Thus, the answer to the third research question is that there is a gap between the skills learners are trained for and the skills that the businesses need. The findings concur with those in the literature regarding the existence of a gap between ESP skills provision and workplace needs (Angouri, 2010; Wisniewska, 2012; Jiajing, 2007; Bouzidi 2009).

8.5. The impact of the new material to learners’ communicative competence in Business English

The fourth research question aimed to bridge the gap between the workplace English language needs and VE English language skills provision. To address the issue I decided to design supplementary materials to the target textbook and taught it to a group of learners conducting a comparative study with a control and an experimental group. Pre-post tests, students’ questionnaires, a student focus group discussion and teachers’ interviews were used as data collection tools.

Learners’ pre-test findings revealed that before the teaching of the lessons both groups’ English language skills were equivalent with no statistically significant difference. Nevertheless, the post-test revealed that even though both groups’ performance in reading and writing did not differ after the teaching, the experimental group displayed improvement on the skills of speaking and listening in comparison to the control group. Further to these results, the findings of the students’ questionnaires indicated that learners agreed or strongly agreed that the material was interesting and effective with its content and organization reaching the highest preference and assessment the lowest.

As regards the focus group discussion, the findings demonstrated learners' positive attitude towards the material. Specifically, it was found to be relevant to their specialism needs, motivating and interesting even for those with low interest or weak performance. Some of the most positive points of the material were considered its ability to facilitate their understanding and the link of the tasks to real life business situations. The use of the software and combination of sound and image were also found to help them to assimilate the content easier and thus, produce language themselves.

As students reported, the material was appropriate for their level, and the authenticity of texts was a motivating factor towards their engagement in the lesson. Additionally, the amusing elements of the oral tasks enhanced their self-esteem regarding the use of English and had a positive effect on their learning. Based on their answers speaking prompts were overemphasized in the material as compared to other tasks, which they liked and agreed that role-playing was their favorite kind of speaking activities. Furthermore, they revealed that the use of the software, the videos and power-point throughout the pre/while or post presentations of the new material enhanced their comprehension, their participation, and made the lessons more vivid.

The findings of this study were also supported by the experimental group actual teachers' views that observed me teaching the new material. Based on their answers the material was found to be interesting and appropriate for the needs of the course and learners' linguistic level. According to their answers the communicative and situational elements of the tasks were factors that enhanced the production of speech that led students to an effective consolidation of the new terms and language input. Additionally, the audio-visual material (i.e. power- point presentations, simulation software, videos) was found to have facilitated learners' communication skills. Finally, the activities were considered relevant to contemporary business transactions and motivating to such an extent that even the weak or shy learners felt comfortable enough to act out the dialogues, regardless of their mistakes, thus gradually gaining their self-confidence.

The findings of this study demonstrated that both teachers and learners were very positive about the new designed ESP material. The findings concur with the literature findings about ESP material design which should enhance communication, taking into consideration learning needs, having a clear purpose and matching to the objectives of the course (Vičič, 2011). They also comply with research findings about ESP material design that needs to employ authenticity, presenting real language with authentic texts/situations (Basturkmen, 2010), authentic audiovisual material (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001), authentic tasks linked to future working conditions (Fiorito, 2005), contemporary content promoting students' engagement (Meng Choo, 2005). Summing up, the new material appeared to have enhanced to some point learners' communication skills, needed by businesses, as shown in the businesses survey, thus, answering the fourth research question in this thesis.

8.6. Summary of the key findings

In summing up, it may be said that the findings of the study conducted for the purposes of this thesis have demonstrated the absence of a link between Vocational business English to the current needs of the workplace. The *key findings* can be summarized as follows:

1. The employment market has specific needs today which are influenced by the local community demand and economy. The research has revealed the need for communicative English language skills in the businesses of the research location.

2. The businesses are willing to employ VE graduates. However, they are discontent due to the low skills competency that VE learners display which they attribute to schools' inadequacy to prepare learners efficiently. Additionally, the high cost of their re-training, makes VE candidate employees an unattractive source of workforce.

3. The VE English language material is quite outdated; it is not flexible enough and cannot lead to learners' appropriate training for the present workplace needs.

4. Teachers and learners agree that the “Economics and Administration” English language VE material does not prepare them accordingly for the current employment market demands.

5. The participant teachers affirm their willingness to contribute new ideas but there are some restrictive factors to this: the limitations of the curriculum and syllabus content; the isolated number of teachers who strive to find solutions; the inconsistency of their practices in the absence of relevant official guidelines linked to the actual current needs of the workplace, addressed to all teachers.

6. The material, which was designed to supplement the target textbook in an effort to address the gap between VSE business English and the world of employment, had very positive remarks by teachers and learners. Additionally, it was found to be effective, linked to the specialism needs, enhancing learners’ participation in the lesson and their communication skills.

The findings imply a number of issues that could be taken into consideration by educational researchers, practitioners and policy makers. These are presented in the following sections together with the limitations of this research and future studies.

8.7. Implications for educational researchers

The implications for educational researchers behind the results of this research relate to Vocational education and business contexts. First, they relate to Vocational education and the discrepancies it displays in relation to its link with the employment market despite the significance countries worldwide place on it (UNESCO, 2012). To address these discrepancies and suggest possible solutions, as shown by this study, there is a need for further research in this field. The findings of the present research have shown that part of these discrepancies are due to learners’ inappropriate preparation for the workplace and lack of proper material that addresses current business needs. Research however has shown that there is not much interest in ESP materials evaluation taught in Vocational education of secondary level as opposed to this of the tertiary level (Angouri, 2010; Baleghizadeh and Rahimi, 2011). Especially in Greece research in VSE is non-existent. Therefore, researchers, particularly in Greece, should focus their interest on this

level to a greater extent in order to reveal possible deficiencies, provide possible suggestions and improve the quality of the link between learning and working.

Second, the implications relate to business contexts. The findings of this research were based on primary data which were elaborated for the purposes of the research. However, if this study were conducted 15 or 20 years ago the findings of this research might have been different. This implies that when research is realized it is advisable to use primary data as opposed to secondary ones. This is so because the workplace needs are changing due to the rapid economic, social, and technological development. To this end, when conducting research about the workplace, primary data, as employed in this study, are more credible than secondary because they provide the researcher with up-to-date information for the subject of investigation. Nevertheless, this is not always the case as the literature review has shown that many researchers rely on secondary data for their research. Therefore, unless it is difficult to gather primary data, there should be a further attempt for researchers to obtain the current picture of the subject of investigation as opposed to one through secondary data, not applicable to the present needs. The use of primary data applies also to research for educational purposes (i.e. in Vocational educational material) and to all other fields of research. Concluding, compared to previous studies, that have addressed the aforementioned issues, this research has contributed to knowledge evaluating and designing Vocational education material of secondary level based on primary data which provided the research with valuable current information.

8.8. Implications for practitioners

The results of this study has clear implications for practitioners in vocational education. This particularly applies to vocational ESP teachers. This study has shown that the new material, designed to supplement part of the “Economics and Administration” textbook, was found to be interesting and motivating for learners to such an extent that they expressed their wish to re-attend the course the following year. Regardless of the fact that this enthusiasm might have been a youthful impulse, the implications behind this result is the need for materials improvement

(Lingzhu & Yuanyuan, 2010; Prancevičiūtė & Zajankauskaitė, 2012). Thus, when the materials present inadequacies and when policy makers delay to focus on their amendment, teachers are the immediate “saviors” to fill the gap between what the books offer and what the students and the employment world need.

As shown by the survey results, the role of the school teachers and their practices (material, methodologies) are considered crucial and therefore, they should cooperate in educational decisions (Li, 2014). Especially for Vocational education these decisions should be based on the needs analysis of all parties involved (teachers, students, workplace) (Masoumpanah & Tahririan, 2013; Saragih, 2014). These points raise some issues that need consideration: practitioners are responsible for students’ education, they spend a great amount of teaching hours with their students, and they know better than anyone else what students need, what to learn and which skills to emphasize. This means that their needs should be analyzed and their opinion should be taken into account in materials design. Teachers have an immediate access and frequent interaction with their learners, and thus, they are closer to the students than anybody in school to provide them with the necessary tools to be effective as future employees and consequently help them contribute to the economic and social status of their professional immediate and broader environment.

However, this can only be achieved when and if practitioners are well equipped with the necessary educational tools and methodologies and/or are given the opportunity to intervene and contribute with their own practical experiences into materials design. It can also be achieved when they are offered a flexible syllabus to integrate their ideas or are guided by a curriculum which will cater for theirs and their learners’ needs linked to the needs of the contemporary workplace. This way, isolated efforts will be minimized and teachers will be able to achieve their educational purposes in a more organized and effective way.

On the other hand, when it comes to text book writers by profession, their contribution to materials preparation should be based on needs analysis and current data as shown in this study. Additionally, they should be very well informed about the course or the sector that the book is

targeted for and/or have a long teaching experience in this field and the educational level. Class observations, note-taking, questionnaires, interviews with the correspondent stakeholders (policy makers/teachers/students) should also be employed so as to provide them with appropriate information. Especially for ESP text book writing, it is crucial for them to have up-to-date information as regards the needs of the workplace and include them in the textbook content. Therefore, text book writers should become researchers themselves in order for their work to be as accurate and relevant as possible.

8.9. Implications for policy makers

The implications of this study for education and policy makers are many. In order to link VE with the workplace, as demonstrated by this study there is a need for a number of interventions by policy makers: workplace needs analysis, curricula and syllabi flexibility, materials improvement, and all VE stakeholders' participation and cooperation (workplace, teachers, learners). In this effort the assistance of the local community and related bodies (i.e. chamber of commerce) are considered significant.

Firstly, the workplace needs should be analyzed by policy makers as frequently as possible and periodically in order to update the demands and integrate them in the syllabi design. In relation to this, this research investigated the needs of the workplace, and was implemented by the researcher (me), who is a school advisor for the English language and part of the Greek state policy makers. Secondly, where needs analyses are difficult to implement frequently enough, curricula or syllabi should offer flexibility of changes or additions in their content (Finney, 2002:77) on a frequent basis. Flexibility is a feature that can be attributed to either the curricula or the syllabi or both. When it applies to syllabi, materials should allow variations, alterations, supplementation or additions in order for learners to be exposed to the "authentic use" of the language which engages them "cognitively and affectively" (Tomlinson, 2008:4). This is the kind of flexibility that could be assigned to teachers. The teachers in this research discussed this as a need, emphasizing the importance of the quality of material (rather than the quantity) and

curriculum/syllabus flexibility. They suggested that flexibility, to renew/redefine the teaching goals, ought to be of primary concern for educational authorities. Therefore, when materials are inadequate or not up-to-date, teachers should be given the flexibility of choice of material or modification of content without being penalized for deviating from the curriculum or syllabus content as is the case in the Greek context.

When flexibility applies to governmental parties' decisions (i.e. politics, educationists and/or researchers), curricula should include flexible content to allow frequent changes based on updated needs analyses (Johnson et al., 2007). Especially for ESP curricula, which ought to be directly linked to the workplace, educational decisions should take into consideration the flexibility of their curricula structure and content so as to link to the employment market whenever there is need to do so. Thus, learners then are able to link their knowledge and skills to the contemporary real life working needs, as this research has shown.

Thirdly, it is the need for materials improvement (Maryam, 2014) and their link to reality, the students' and the workplace needs (Faraj, 2013). This study has shown that the content of the books is not frequently enough updated and therefore it displays a gap between what they offer and the expected ESP demands as noted by Harwood (2005). This gap has been clearly shown in the content of the "Economics and Administration" textbook in relation to the needs of the workplace currently. To fill this gap, materials should link to the employment market needs and for this to be realized, the issue of needs analysis is crucial as evidenced by previous studies such as Jianjig (2007) and Zhang (2013) and the present study

Additionally, as the findings of this study have demonstrated, the target textbook is extensive and demanding for the amount of time allocated to teachers to go through it in a school year. This implies a number of things for policy makers. First, quality and not quantity is what matters. Second, teachers are really stressed having to cope with such vast material and this affects their teaching and psychological situation. Third, due to the extensive content of the book, teachers are frustrated because they strive to select the parts they consider necessary for the learners but they

are not sure if they are right. What is more, this is done out of personal initiative and every teacher selects something different. Therefore, learners are prepared a lot differently throughout the Vocational schools in Greece. Fourth, this research has shown that such extensive books are boring to learners. This implies a lack of motivating materials and participation in the lesson. Therefore, policy makers should make an effort to correspond the right amount of material to the educational group it is intended for.

Fourthly, policy makers should not forget the most affected stakeholder in VE: learners. According to the EPA.L. curriculum aims (2006), these learners need to be trained effectively for an immediate access to the employment market. They constitute the majority of the workforce and for this they are a significant group for the workplace. Therefore, their appropriate preparation seems crucial for their integration in the business community. However, as shown by this study, low skilled VE learners are not favored by the workplace as their training is quite costly and time consuming. This implies two things: one, higher unemployment for this group of people; two, businesses turn to the “second or third phase candidate employees groups” (of tertiary level) for a job that could be accomplished by VE graduates, which is for this reason underpaid in comparison to their higher qualifications.

In addition to the above, VE learners are considered as having low abilities or skills and are undervalued by both the community and educational authorities. However, neither their background knowledge nor their real needs are considered by any of the educational parties. On the contrary, VE learners, like all learners in this age, are ICT experts to a much greater extent than adults may be and often display remarkable technical skills. All these need to be considered by policy makers and integrate their needs and skills in syllabi and materials design, because, if they include these skills in the “language of their own code” (i.e. ICT integrated tasks), they can turn them from passive participants to active learners capable of doing miracles and surprise us pleasantly. This research has shown that the integration of ICT tasks, software and applications

with topics of their interest, linked to their sector needs, has enhanced the learners' interest and motivation and had positive learning results.

Lastly, the findings of this study have shown that small businesses appear to be misinformed or lack appropriate training concerning contemporary business practices or transactions. As it has been shown this is depicted in the unwillingness for small companies to place more emphasis on speaking skills. They justified this choice by explaining the reservations they had to expand on their business further to their local territory in the fear of being communicatively unsuccessful. This is a situation that should be addressed by authorities with proper training. Small firms should be encouraged to "open a window to the world" but this is something they need to know how to do and for this to be realized governments and policy makers should undertake the responsibility for creating such an environment. Another issue that needs consideration is the mistrust that appears to exist on behalf of the workplace towards the educational authorities. As businesses argued, they blame the educational authorities for their employees' low qualifications and believe it is the schools' responsibility to solve this problem. This implies a gap between the businesses and their relationship with the public sector which in turn implies a vast field for research to find answers as to why this is so.

8.10. Recommendations to the Ministry of Education to different stakeholders

On the basis of the findings revealed by this study, a number of recommendations are made to the Greek Ministry of education in relation to relevant key stakeholders below. The decision to mainly address the Ministry of Education was based on the fact that the Ministry of Education is responsible for taking important decisions that address education and a variety of stakeholders like teachers or learners and any recommendations made to those parties would reach them through the Ministry of Education. Additionally, as a school advisor for the English language in Greek schools my responsibility is to inform the government who is the first recipient of any suggestions or ideas which are then forwarded to interested parties (i.e. teachers, learners). Additionally, the Ministry of education is responsible for assigning the production of public

textbooks to materials designers and publishers and therefore, it is the first stakeholder as a policy maker who needs to know of any proposed changes or suggestions. What is more, the Ministry of Education is officially in close contact and cooperation with other Ministries (i.e. of commerce), therefore, it is more appropriate to inform the Ministry on any data that concern other fields (i.e. businesses) and their relation to VSE. Finally, the Greek Ministry of Education is the official educational body to allow further research to people that need to take official permission to conduct research. Furthermore, it is the only authority that can officially allow research together with other Ministries (i.e. of commerce) that focuses on VSE and its position in society and the economy.

Ministry of Education in Greece in relation to their VE policy

- VSE and its problems (e.g., lack of updated materials, gap between its goals and contemporary workplace needs) should be considered and VSE needs should be analyzed in relation to the workplace needs.
- Needs analysis of the workplace that employs VSE graduates should be conducted frequently or regularly.

Ministry of Education in Greece in relation to VE materials designers

- VSE ESP materials should be designed to suit the changing needs of the workplace.
- VSE ESP materials should focus on quality (appropriate content for each specialism) that serves the needs of the learners and the workplace intended for.
- The language content of VSE ESP material should not be excessive but as much as needed so as to comply with the actual teaching hours available for teaching and learners' real language and skills competence at that level.
- VSE materials designers should be provided with the information that they need to take into account (i.e. aims of the courses and specialisms) when producing textbooks for the government.

- It is necessary that VSE materials designers consider all stakeholders' opinion (teachers, students, workplace) in their materials design and the educational bodies should provide them with this information by conducting relevant research.

Ministry of Education in Greece in relation to teachers and learners

- Learners' technical and ICT skills should be considered in materials design as a way to motivate them and enhance their interest and participation in the lesson.
- Teachers' needs should be analyzed and their opinion and ideas should be considered in materials design due to their profound knowledge of ESP and long working experience in VE schools of the secondary level.
- VSE ESP teachers should be trained frequently on new skills regarding the workplace demands for a particular specialism in order for teachers to keep up with the latest technological developments and prepare their learners accordingly.
- When curricula cannot often be modified or altered by the government there should be flexibility of allowing the VSE teachers to use supplementary materials to address learners' changing needs in their future workplace.

Ministry of Education in Greece in relation to employers

- The Ministry of Education should work closely with the Ministry of Commerce to encourage cooperation between the workplace and VSE to address lacks or problems and together work for solutions and build trust on behalf of the employment market towards VSE and VSE graduates.
- The Ministry of Education could encourage the creation of a common online platform for schools and businesses on a local basis for the exchange of ideas, latest developments and continuous information that provide schools with workplace needs and will allow schools to up-date their practices in order to link with the employment market needs.

Ministry of Education in Greece in relation to educational researchers

- Educational bodies should encourage educational researchers to investigate issues in VSE because currently there is a lack of current and primary data regarding research in this field in Greece.
- The Ministry of Education should cooperate with the Ministry of Commerce to allow and facilitate investigation in the employment market in relation to the needs and issues of VSE.

To sum up, reforming secondary VE implies changing the educational policies and decisions in such a way so as to create VE which can provide a better future for the young generation of today and candidate workforce in Greece and in the world. Schools cannot fulfill their significant role of educating and training students effectively unless they comply with the existing needs of the society and the workplace and continue to update their curricula, materials and practices. This research has shown that this could be done when stakeholders' needs (policy makers, materials designers, teachers, learners and businesses) are considered in materials design. Especially for VE, a close link with the labour market is absolutely essential as firms undergo a continuous competition and therefore they need a high level of skills on behalf of their employees in order to maintain successful transactions and boost their economy and consequently the state economy. This can be achieved if VE is designed and regularly updated by drawing on the changing labour market needs, thus, bridging the gap between theory and practice and between VSE students and their target job demands.

8.11. Limitations of the research

The limitations of a study can impact its results. Issues such as the sample size, the lack of available and reliable data, lack of literature studies on the topic, data collection methods and self-reported data constitute possible methodological limitations (Aguinis and Jeffrey, 2014). What is more, access, longitudinal effects, cultural and other type of bias, or language fluency are also possible limitations (Ioannidis, 2007).

In this study I made an effort to ensure the sample size of the business survey addressing 136 participants, a number which I thought adequate enough to provide me with the possible answers I was looking for. Nevertheless, though this is not a limitation to the study, I would have liked to have more participants and particularly from other regions and parts of Greece, thus expanding the research to a greater extent. Time was very limited, however, and this was impossible to be done at the time of the research. The interviews and focus group discussions were realized with eight participants per group, which allowed me to have a clearer picture of the material. Even though qualitative research sample size is not necessary to be large, as the focus is on the in-depth analysis of the issues rather than on numbers, I would have preferred to have a bigger number of participants. Nevertheless, this was also impossible as there were no other teachers that taught the particular book in the research site. Additionally I made an effort to expand on the literature review to provide me with the understanding of the research problem I investigated. Nevertheless, there was limited research found regarding Vocational education of secondary level both in Greece and elsewhere. This is a limitation of this research because were my study based on more data in the Greek context it could perhaps have given me other perspectives which I was unaware of during this research.

Furthermore, I ensured that I used triangulation for data collection involving most VE stakeholders (businesses, teachers, and learners). Nonetheless, Vocational graduate students' or Vocational graduate employees' opinion was not considered which constitutes another limitation of my research. This is because it would have been interesting to compare their opinion to the opinion of the employers. Nevertheless, due to time constraint I was unable to do it but it is something I intend to look into in a future study. Additionally, there was an effort to keep notes throughout the conversations with the businesses, and I recorded all the interviews with the teachers and the focus group discussion with the students but I did not record or video tape the teaching interventions about the new material. This is another limitation of this research. Had I had the opportunity to reflect on the lessons through image or sound, I might have spotted useful details about the new material and its impact on learners. Nevertheless, I was unable to video tape

or record the teaching interventions due to Greek laws that prohibit this in schools unless parents' consent is given. Instead, in order to amend this limitation I administered pre and post-tests to learners and questionnaires about the material in order to have a deeper insight into the impact it had on learners. Additionally, I conducted a focus group discussion with the same learners and interviews with the teachers who observed the lessons regarding their opinion about the new material.

8.12. Future studies

The aforementioned limitations suggest further research. This has to do with the following: My literature review in the Greek context of Vocational education of secondary level was limited. This suggests further research on VSE and its current situation in Greece. Additionally, the study lacked Vocational graduate students' or Vocational graduate employees' contribution to the research. This suggests an expansion of the research with these parties included. Last, I was unable to record/video tape the teaching interventions. This is a suggestion for further research which could focus on how to re-examine the relevant educational laws and make suggestions based on which the specific laws could be more flexible for the sake of educational improvement.

Meanwhile, the process of this research and the findings generated a number of other questions which could form part of future research studies and I would like to share them. These relate to education and its link to the workplace.

Firstly, the research has revealed that the target book places a great emphasis on the structure of the language rather than its communicative use. Could this perhaps apply to other similar textbooks of the VSE in the Greek context or elsewhere?

Secondly, the findings of the research were based on the teachers' and learners' contribution. To what extent Vocational teachers' and learners' opinion is regarded in ESP or materials design in other countries in a similar context?

Thirdly, based on the results of the business survey, speaking skills are mostly needed by big businesses. Why is this so? What are the reasons of this and what does this imply for the workplace both in Greece and elsewhere?

Fourth, the businesses in this research have revealed that they are not content with the VSE graduate employees' skills in English. Is this also the case in similar contexts in other parts of the world and why? And also could that be related to other professional contexts like the public sector for instance?

The above questions remain to be investigated.

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APPENDIX I: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

5. What are the English language skills currently needed for Business offices employees in the Greek employment market?
6. Which English language skills does the “Economy and Administration” Vocational School course book focus on and to what extent does it prepare learners accordingly, so as to help them keep abreast of the latest workplace English language skills and demands?
7. Is there a gap between the business English language skills offered in the “Economics and Administration” English language textbook sector and the contemporary English language skills needed for businesses today?
8. To what extent can the new material enhance learners’ communicative skills competence in Business English?

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO BUSINESSES

ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ ΑΝΑΛΥΣΗΣ ΑΝΑΓΚΩΝ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΑΓΓΛΙΚΗ ΓΛΩΣΣΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΓΟΡΑ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ

(ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS NEEDS ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE LABOUR MARKET)

Αξιότιμη κυρία/αξιότιμε κύριε,

Στα πλαίσια της διδακτορικής μου διατριβής διεξάγω σχετική έρευνα με θέμα τις ανάγκες της χρήσης της Αγγλικής γλώσσας στην αγορά εργασίας σήμερα. Θα ήθελα να σας παρακαλέσω να αφιερώνετε λίγα λεπτά από τον πολύτιμο χρόνο σας για την απάντηση του συγκεκριμένου ανώνυμου ερωτηματολογίου, τα δεδομένα του οποίου θα χρησιμοποιηθούν μόνο για τις ανάγκες της έρευνάς μου, με σκοπό την βελτίωση της παρεχόμενης εκπαίδευσης στην Αγγλική γλώσσα.

Σας ευχαριστώ θερμότατα εκ των προτέρων.

Μαριάνθη Μπατσίλα

Σχολική Σύμβουλος Αγγλικής Γλώσσας

Τηλ. Επικοινωνίας: 6974314755

Dear sir/madam,

As part of my doctoral thesis I am conducting a survey on the needs of the use of English in today's labour market. I would kindly like to ask you to devote a few minutes of your valuable time to answer the specific anonymous questionnaire, whose data will be used only for the purposes of my research, aiming to improve the education provided in public schools for the English language today.

Thank you in advance

Marianthi Batsila

School Advisor for the English language

Contact: 6974314755

Παρακαλείστε να απαντήσετε τις ακόλουθες ερωτήσεις (You are kindly requested to answer the following questions).

A. ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΗΣ (COMPANY INFORMATION)

Επωνυμία (Company name):

Στοιχεία επικοινωνίας (Contact):

mail:

Tel:

Fax:

A1. Κατηγορία δραστηριοποίησης της επιχείρησης (Type of business activity)

- 1. Βιομηχανική/βιοτεχνική μονάδα
(*Industrial/craft business*)
- 2. Εμπορικών συναλλαγών
(*Trading*)
- 3. Τουρισμού και εστίασης
(*Tourism and catering*)
- 4. Παροχής υπηρεσιών
(*Service*)

A2. Κατηγορία ως προς το μέγεθος της επιχείρησης (Size of business)

- 1. Μικρή (1-50 εργαζόμενοι)
(*Small scale (1-50 employees)*)
- 2. Μεσαία (50-250 εργαζόμενοι)
(*Medium scale (50-250 employees)*)
- 3. Μεγάλη (250 και πάνω)
(*Large scale (more than 250)*)

A3. Αριθμός απασχολούμενων υπαλλήλων στην επιχείρηση με καθήκοντα:

Διοικητικά / λογιστικά – Διαχείρισης Αποθήκης - παροχής συστημάτων - εξυπηρέτησης πελατών -μάρκετινγκ και διαφήμισης (Number of employees undertaking the tasks of: *Administration and economics- Warehouse and system supplies - Customer service - Marketing and advertising*)

- α. 1-5 β. 6-10 γ. 11-15 δ. >15

**B. ΔΕΞΙΟΤΗΤΕΣ ΧΡΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΓΛΙΚΗΣ ΓΛΩΣΣΑΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΙΣ ΣΥΝΑΛΛΑΓΕΣ
ΣΤΗΝ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΗ (ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS NEEDED IN BUSINESSES)**

B1. Σημειώστε κατά πόσον η **δεξιότητα της κατανόησης γραπτού λόγου στην Αγγλική γλώσσα** (Ανάγνωση επιστολών, mails, faxes, memos, εγχειριδίων, οδηγιών, εντύπων, αναφορών, έντυπου τύπου, ηλεκτρονικών κειμένων από το διαδίκτυο) **είναι απαραίτητη για τις συναλλαγές και τις δραστηριότητες της επιχείρησής σας:**

(1: καθόλου, 2: λίγο, 3: αρκετά, 4: πολύ, 5: πάρα πολύ)

(In your opinion, the skill of reading in English (Reading letters, mails, faxes, memos, manuals, instructions, forms, reports, printed press, electronic texts from the internet), is needed for your business activities as (1: not at all, 2: a little, 3: to some extent, 4: quite a lot, 5: very much)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

B2. Σημειώστε κατά πόσον η **δεξιότητα της παραγωγής γραπτού λόγου στην Αγγλική γλώσσα** (Σύνταξη επιστολών, mails, faxes, memos, τιμολογίων, συμβολαίων, συμπλήρωση εντύπων, μετάφραση κειμένων/οδηγιών, μεταφορά πληροφοριών σε πίνακα) **είναι απαραίτητη για τις συναλλαγές και τις δραστηριότητες της επιχείρησής σας:**

(1: καθόλου, 2: λίγο, 3: αρκετά, 4: πολύ, 5: πάρα πολύ)

(In your opinion, the skill of writing in English (Writing letters, mails, faxes, memos, invoices, contracts, filling out forms, translating documents/instructions, transferring information in a table), is needed for your business activities as (1: not at all, 2: a little, 3: to some extent, 4: quite a lot, 5: very much)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

B3. Σημειώστε κατά πόσον η **δεξιότητα της παραγωγής προφορικού λόγου στην Αγγλική γλώσσα** (Τηλεφωνική επικοινωνία, δια ζώσης επικοινωνία, ηλεκτρονική επικοινωνία με μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης, τηλεδιασκέψεις, διαπραγματεύσεις, προώθηση προϊόντων, ταξιδιωτικές ρυθμίσεις, παρουσιάσεις σε συνέδρια, συνεντεύξεις, παροχή οδηγιών, επαγγελματικά ραντεβού, επισκέψεις σε εταιρείες, κοινωνικές συναναστροφές) **είναι απαραίτητη για τις συναλλαγές και τις δραστηριότητες της επιχείρησής σας:**

(1: καθόλου, 2: λίγο, 3: αρκετά, 4: πολύ, 5: πάρα πολύ)

(In your opinion, the skill of speaking in English (Telephone contact, face to face communication, electronic communication with social media, teleconferencing, negotiating, marketing, travel arrangements, conference presentations, interviews, guidance, business meetings, company visits, socializing), is needed for your business activities as (1: not at all, 2: a little, 3: to some extent, 4: quite a lot, 5: very much)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

B4. Σημειώστε κατά πόσον η **δεξιότητα της κατανόησης προφορικού λόγου στην Αγγλική γλώσσα** (Κατανόηση ομιλιών, διαλόγων, μονολόγων, οδηγιών, περιγραφών, κατανόηση για την μεταφορά ή καταγραφή πληροφοριών) **είναι απαραίτητη για τις συναλλαγές και τις δραστηριότητες της επιχείρησής σας:**

(1: καθόλου, 2: λίγο, 3: αρκετά, 4: πολύ, 5: πάρα πολύ)

(In your opinion, the skill of listening in English (understanding conversations, dialogues, monologues, directions, instructions, understanding in order to transfer or record information), is needed for your business activities as (1: not at all, 2: a little, 3: to some extent, 4: quite a lot, 5: very much)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

B5. Παρακαλώ, προσθέστε άλλο που θεωρείτε σημαντικό ως προς την αναγκαιότητα χρήσης της αγγλικής γλώσσας στην επιχείρησή σας (*Please, add any other skill in English which is important for your business activities*):

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

C1. Έχετε υπαλλήλους αποφοίτους ΕΠΑ.Λ-ΙΕΚ στην επιχείρησή σας;

(Are there technical school-College graduates among your employees?)

ΝΑΙ (YES) ΟΧΙ (NO)

C2. Αν στην παραπάνω ερώτηση απαντήσατε ΝΑΙ, θεωρείτε ότι έχουν όλες τις απαραίτητες δεξιότητες στην Αγγλική γλώσσα που χρειάζεται η επιχείρησή σας; *(If your answer was YES, do you believe these employees have all the necessary skills needed for the business transactions?)*

ΝΑΙ (YES) ΟΧΙ (NO)

C3. Εάν στην παραπάνω ερώτηση απαντήσατε ΟΧΙ, παρακαλώ σημειώστε με βάση την παρακάτω κλίμακα τον βαθμό στον οποίο θεωρείτε ότι θα έπρεπε να έχουν/βελτιώσουν τις ακόλουθες δεξιότητες για τις ανάγκες χρήσης της Αγγλικής γλώσσας στην επιχείρησή σας *(If your answer was NO, please note the extent to which they should be more competent in the following English language skills that are important for the business transactions as):*

C3Α. Ανάγνωση (Reading)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

C3Β. Γραφή (Writing)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

C3Γ. Ακουστική ικανότητα (Listening)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

C3Δ. Προφορική ικανότητα (Speaking)

1. (καθόλου) 2. (λίγο) 3. (αρκετά) 4. (πολύ) 5. (πάρα πολύ)

1. (not at all) 2. (a little) 3. (to some extent) 4. (quite a lot) 5. (very much)

Σας ευχαριστώ θερμά για την συμμετοχή σας !

Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX III: KEY POINTS OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORS' DUTIES IN GREEK

Αρ. Φ. 353.1/324/105657/Δ1/02 Υπουργική Απόφαση (ΦΕΚ 1340/16-10-02)

Άρθρα 7, 8 και 9

Ο Σχολικός Σύμβουλος, ενθαρρύνει την εφαρμογή νέων αποτελεσματικότερων μεθόδων διδασκαλίας, καθώς και τη χρήση σύγχρονων μέσων της εκπαιδευτικής τεχνολογίας.

Ενθαρρύνει κάθε προσπάθεια για επιστημονική έρευνα στο χώρο της Εκπ/σης

Υποστηρίζει την εφαρμογή των εκπ/κών καινοτομιών οι οποίες εισάγονται στην Εκπ/ση.

Εφαρμόζουν νέες μεθόδους.

Οργανώνουν οι ίδιοι ή αναθέτουν διδασκαλίες σε εκπ/κούς, τις οποίες παρακολουθούν υποχρεωτικά οι εκπ/κοί του αντίστοιχου γνωστικού αντικειμένου των σχολείων με σκοπό την ανταλλαγή εμπειριών

KEY POINTS OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORS' DUTIES IN ENGLISH

Governmental gazette, No 353.1/324/105657/D1/02, Governmental Decision (Gazette 1340/16-10-02)

Articles 7, 8 and 9

School Advisors encourage the introduction of new and more efficient teaching methods and modern means of educational technology.

They encourage all efforts for scientific research in the field of Education.

They support the implementation of educational innovations introduced in Education.

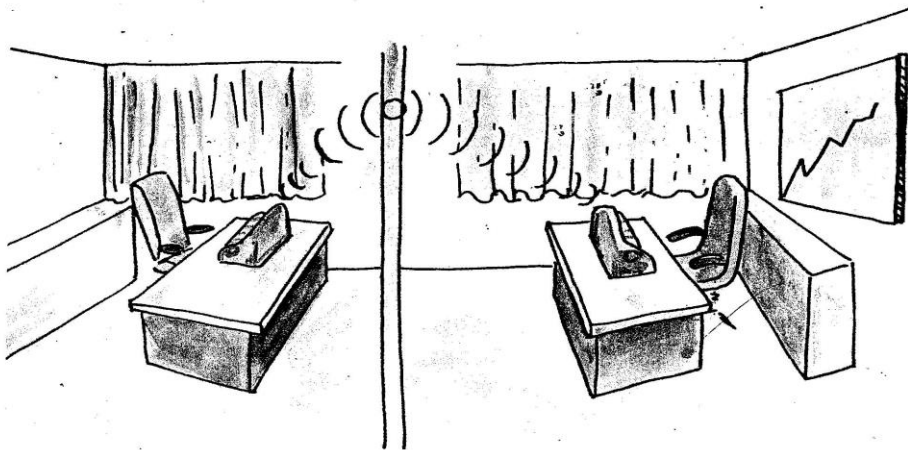
They implement new methods.

They organize teaching of lessons themselves, or assign it to the teachers of the school, who must be present and attend the procedure, aiming at the exchange of opinion and experiences.

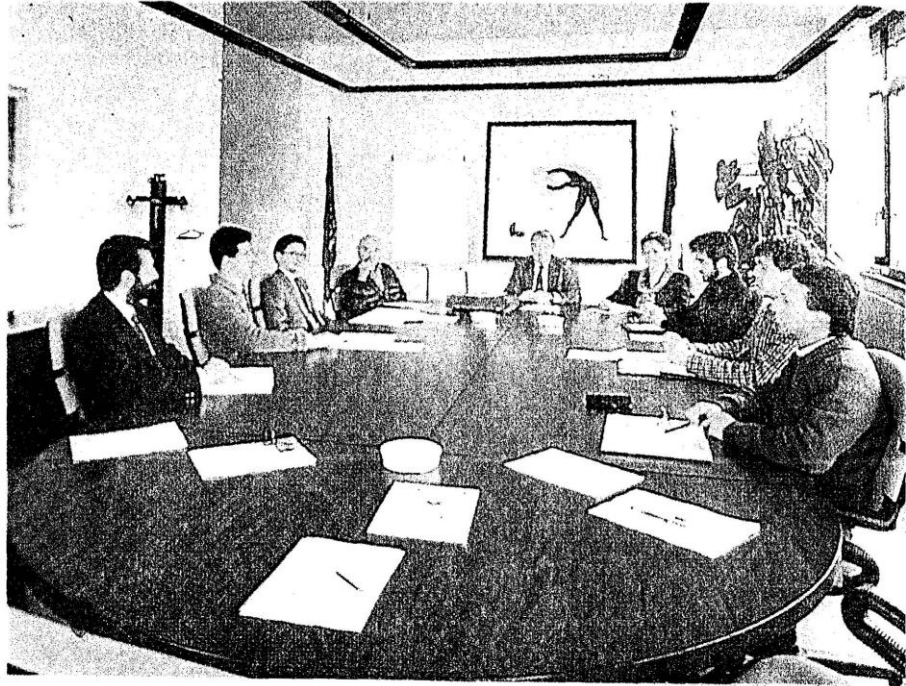
**APPENDIX IV: UNIT TWO OF “ECONOMICS AND
ADMINISTRATION” COURSE BOOK**

Unit 2

communications and office practice



Communicating with people



Holding a meeting

A. Study the following and act properly in each case.

1. You work in the same company with George and you want to talk to him but his office is on the 10th floor while yours is on the 6th.
 - A. You call him on the telephone.
 - B. You ring him on the extension.
2. You want to discuss something with Tom who works in another firm.
 - A. You arrange an appointment.
 - B. You send him a postcard.
3. You urgently have to get in touch with a company abroad.
 - A. You write a letter.
 - B. You send a telex or a fax.

4. You want to talk to Mrs. Smith who has just applied for the secretarial position in your company.
 - A. You fix a date with her.
 - B. You interview her.
5. You want several people to read a circular.
 - A. You record it on a tape.
 - B. You have it distributed around.
6. You want to make an office party known to everyone.
 - A. You pin a notice on the notice board.
 - B. You write a memo.
7. Your secretary, Linda, is out and you want to let her know you've gone out for lunch.
 - A. You write a note.
 - B. You tell the Sales Manager.
8. You want to discuss a serious matter with some colleagues.
 - A. You have a party.
 - B. You hold a meeting.
9. You want to call your secretary into your office.
 - A. You shout.
 - B. You use the intercom.
10. You want to make known or remind someone of something in the firm.
 - A. You write a memo.
 - B. You write an application.

Exercises

1. Complete the following sentences:

- a. The people you work with are your....
- b. Before getting a new job, you are usually asked to...
- c. At a company's meeting people discuss.....
- d. If you are interested in a job, you....
- e. If you have a problem in the company where you work, you arrange...
- f. If a circular has been distributed among the clerks of a company, each one of them is expected to....

2. Correct the spelling of the given words, where it is necessary.

- a. telefone -----
- b. extention -----
- c. appointment -----
- d. tauch -----
- e. posision -----
- f. secreterial -----
- g. circular -----
- h. taip -----
- i. collegues -----
- j. meating -----
- k. entercom -----
- l. remaind -----

3. Fill in the blanks with a preposition.

- a. They work ----- the same building.
- b. His office is ----- the tenth floor.
- c. He is speaking ----- the telephone.
- d. Try to get ----- touch ----- him.
- e. He applied ----- the job.
- f. He recorded the chairman's speech ----- the tape.
- g. He made his decision known ----- everyone.
- h. He's gone out ----- lunch.
- i. Discuss your problem ----- your manager.
- j. Don't forget to remind him ----- his appointment.

4. Use the following phrases in sentences of your own, so that their meaning is clear: get in touch with, fix an appointment, distribute around, make known to, let someone know, hold a meeting.

5. Who uses the following devices in a company?

- a. telephone -----
- b. typewriter -----
- c. telex or fax -----
- d. intercom -----
- e. dictating machine -----

Vocabulary

communicate, επικοινωνώ

act, ενεργώ

properly, κατάλληλα

case, περίπτωση

call, τηλεφωνώ, καλώ

ring, καλώ τηλεφωνικώς, τηλεφωνώ

extension, εσωτερική γραμμή τηλεφώνου, επέκταση

discuss, συζητώ

firm, εταιρεία, φέρμα

arrange, κανονίζω, διευθετώ

appointment, επαγγελματικό ραντεβού

urgently, επείγοντως

get in touch with, έρχομαι σε επαφή με, επικοινωνώ

company, εταιρεία

abroad, στο εξωτερικό

telex, τέλεξ

fax, τηλεφωτοτυπία, τηλεομοιοτυπία

apply for, κάνω αίτηση για

secretarial position, θέση γραμματέα

fix a date, κλείνω ραντεβού (προσωπικό)

interview, παίρνω συνέντευξη

circular, εγκύκλιος

record, καταγράφω

tape, ταινία (μαγνητοφώνου)

distribute, διαμοιράζω

make known, γνωστοποιώ

pin, καρφιστώνω

notice, ανακοίνωση, ειδοποίηση

notice board, πίνακας ανακοινώσεων

memo (memorandum), υπενθυμητικό σημείωμα, υπόμνημα

secretary, γραμματέας

let one know, γνωστοποιώ σε κάποιον

note, σημείωμα

Sales Manager, Διευθυντής Πωλήσεων

serious, σοβαρός

matter, ζήτημα, θέμα

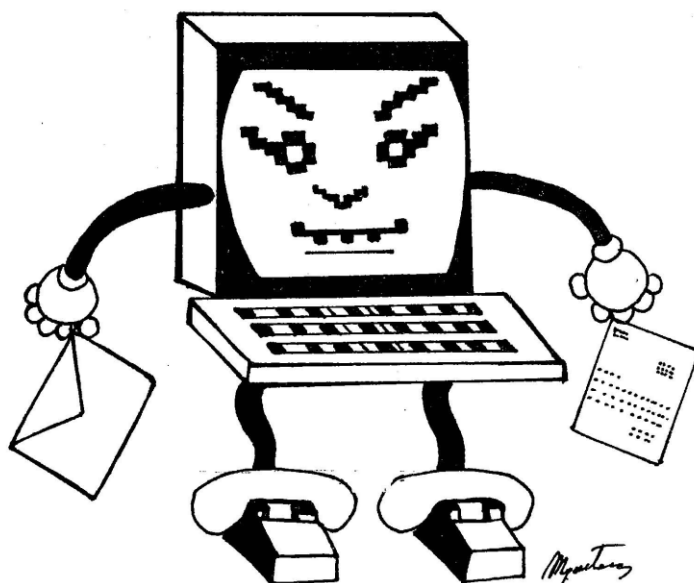
colleague, συνάδελφος

hold a meeting, συγκαλώ / ορίζω / "κάνω" συνεδρίαση

intercom (intercommunication), εσωτερικό τηλεφωνικό σύστημα επικοινωνίας μεταξύ τμημάτων στο ίδιο κτίριο, ενδοεπικοινωνία

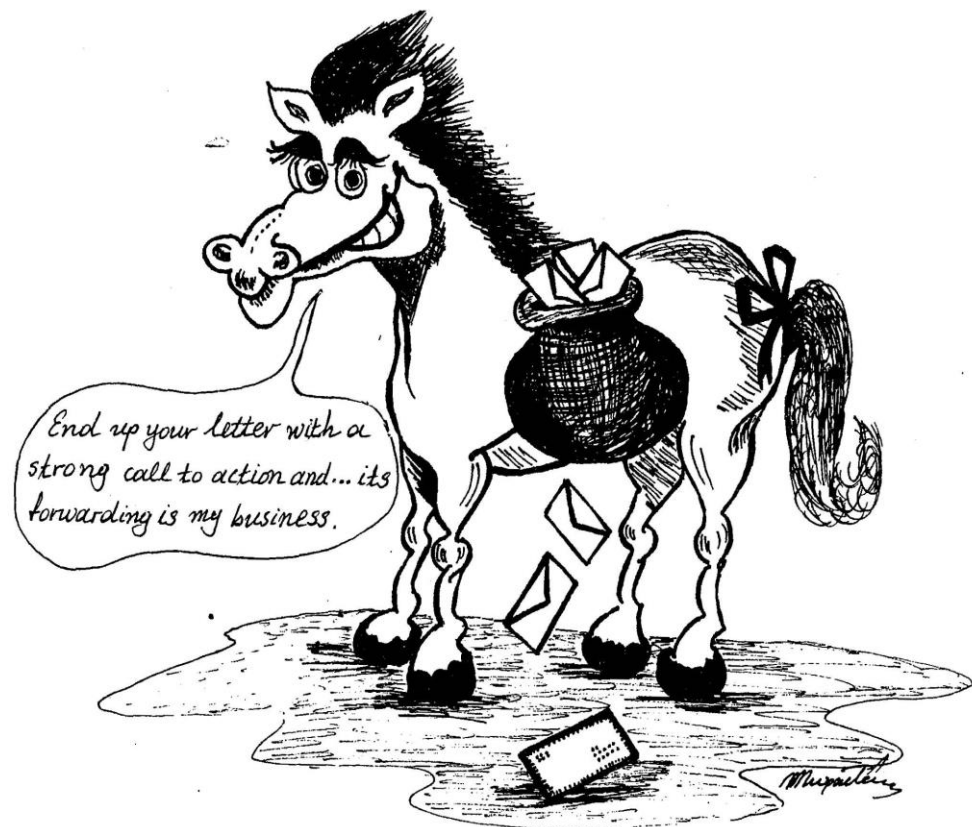
remind, υπενθυμίζω

application, αίτηση



The mail minefield

In business, most professional people have a remarkably simple way of checking a direct mail letter. They read only the first few paragraphs. And if those first few paragraphs do nothing except that they state the offer again and again, they are happy. The technical details of the product are left to others to check for accuracy.



Avoiding pitfalls while writing sales letters

It is possible to avoid most of the worst pitfalls, if the writer has experience in the field.

Length is the prime indicator of professionalism. If it is long (about two or three pages), it is on the right lines. If it is short, it is time to start worrying. This does not mean that a bad long letter is better than a good short letter.

The two crucial parts of the letter are the beginning and the end. Usually, about three-quarters of the way down page one, the real start will be found.

There is no need to worry about being polite. The reader does not have the time, so the letter should come straight out with what is being offered and it should be crisp and persuasive. The entire deal or offer must be contained in the first few paragraphs. This will catch the reader, and make him continue reading.

The next move in checking the letter is to skip the middle entirely, and go to the last page. This is what most readers do.

Two things should be found. The first is a post-script. A PS is often the part of the letter that gets read first, and it should always repeat the deal or the offer. Next, the last few paragraphs of the letter should be examined. A good sales letter always ends in a strong call to action. Indeed, some brilliant letters even start off with it.

A. Questions

1. How do most professional people check a direct mail letter?
2. How is it possible to avoid most of the worst pitfalls?
3. Which is the prime indicator of professionalism?
4. When is a sales letter considered to be on the right lines?
5. Is a bad long letter always better than a good short one?
6. Which are the two crucial parts of the letter?
7. How should a letter be laid out?
8. What should be repeated in the PS?

B. Exercises

1. Complete the sentences.

- a. It is possible to avoid most of the worst pitfalls, if
- b. The letter is on the right lines, if
- c. If the letter, it is time to start worrying.
- d. If a sales letter is good, it always
- e. If a letter is crisp and persuasive

2. Use the gerund or infinitive of the verbs in brackets to fill in the blanks.

- a. He hasn't come yet. It is time to start ----- (*worry*).

- b. There is no need ----- so early (*come*).
- c. A well-written letter will make the reader continue ----- (*read*).
- d. The next move in ----- the letter is to skip the middle entirely, and go to the last page (*check*).
- e. John thanked me for ----- him (*help*).
- f. This exercise is very difficult ----- (*understand*).

3. Choose the correct word.

- 1. He spoke so quickly that I didn't ----- what he said.
a) listen, b) take, c) accept, d) catch
- 2. They do nothing ----- sleep all day.
a) as well as, b) besides, c) but, d) too
- 3. As he was ill, he had to avoid ----- .
a) sleeping, b) relaxing, c) working, d) resting
- 4. Can't you ----- your boss to increase your salary?
a) reason, b) succeed, c) persuade, d) make

4. Match the following so as to make eight pairs of synonyms.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| a. remarkably | 1. mistake that can easily be made |
| b. state | 2. causing admiration; very clever |
| c. accuracy | 3. of decisive importance |
| d. pitfall | 4. whole |
| e. crucial | 5. considerably |
| f. crisp | 6. quick and confident |
| g. entire | 7. say or express (an opinion etc.) formally |
| h. brilliant | 8. exactness or correctness |

5. Based on the text, say whether the following statements are True or False.

- a. In business, most professional people have a complicated way of checking a direct mail letter.
- b. The length of the sales letters is the prime indicator of professionalism.
- c. A bad long letter is always better than a good short one.
- d. The beginning and the end of a letter are of primary importance.
- e. The letter should come straight out with what is being offered and be persuasive.
- f. The deal or offer must be mentioned in the last two paragraphs.
- g. A post-script gets read last.
- h. A post-script should repeat the deal or the offer.



Listen and complete

Listen to the dialogue and fill in the missing words.

- a. Tom is going to the Post Office to mail some ----- and a ----- for the company.
- b. He wants them to go by -----.
- c. The letter to the USA is ----- and the one to Thessaloniki must be sent -----.
- d. Tom needs three ----- for Europe and one ----- for the USA.
- e. He will get a ----- for the registered letter.
- f. He has to put the parcel on the ----- to see how much it weighs.
- g. He doesn't want it -----.
- h. Tom told the post office clerk to make the parcel payable -----.
- i. Tom wants to know how long it will take the parcel to arrive at its -----.
- j. He also wants to send a ----- for 3,000 drs.

Vocabulary

mail, επιστολή, ταχυδρομείο

minefield, ναρκοπέδιο

professional people, επαγγελματίες

remarkably, αξιοσημείωτα

check, ελέγχω, τσεκάρω

direct mail letter, διαφημιστική ενημερωτική επιστολή

paragraph, παράγραφος

state, δηλώνω, δείχνω

offer, προσφορά, προσφέρω

technical, τεχνικός

detail, λεπτομέρεια

product, προϊόν

accuracy, ακρίβεια, ορθότητα

avoid, αποφεύγω

pitfall, σφάλμα, παγίδα

sales letter, διαφημιστική επιστολή με σκοπό να πεισθούν οι πελάτες για την επιτυχία κάποιου (νέου) προϊόντος στην αγορά

experience, εμπειρία, πείρα

field, θέμα, πεδίο, τομέας

length, μήκος, μέγεθος

prime, κύριος, πρωτεύων

indicator, αποδεικτικό στοιχείο, ένδειξη

professionalism, επαγγελματισμός

on the right lines, στα σωστά πλαίσια, στο σωστό μέγεθος

crucial, κρίσιμος, αποφασιστικός

polite, ευγενικός

come straight out with, δηλώνω/μαρτυρώ αμέσως

crisp, αποφασιστικός

persuasive, πειστικός

the entire deal, η όλη διαπραγμάτευση, το κύριο θέμα

contain, (συμ)περιλαμβάνω, εμπεριέχω

catch the reader, τραβώ/ελκίζω το ενδιαφέρον του αναγνώστη

move, κίνηση

skip, παραλείπω

entirely, εντελώς, τελείως

post-script (PS), υστερόγραφο

sales, πωλήσεις

strong call to action, άμεση παρότρυνση για δράση

brilliant, θαυμάσιος, ευφυής

start off, ξεκινώ, αρχίζω

The telephoning process



We all know how useful the telephone is. No matter how many new devices of communication will appear, the telephone will always be a tool of primary importance.

Easy as it seems, a phone-call can turn out to be an irritating experience. We might say that the three first steps are easy to achieve; you lift the receiver, listen for the dialling tone and finally dial the number. The line, however, is often engaged or busy, as we say, and you have to put the receiver down and start the whole thing again.

If you are calling someone in a company and there is an operator, it may be easy for him or her to put you through but still difficulties may arise while speaking; you can be cut off and hold on the receiver hearing nothing but your own breath and a dull buzzing sound. In that case, of course, you replace the receiver and pick it up again only to find that something has gone wrong and the telephone is out of order. But if you are lucky enough, you finally hear the ringing tone and when you are ready to start your conversation again, you realize that you are talking to some stranger, either because you haven't been careful enough to redial the number correctly, or because the lines have been mixed.

Good luck, then, with your telephone calls, and don't forget to be quick when talking on the phone, because there are others waiting "in the queue" as well.

A. Questions

1. What are the three first steps of a phone-call?
2. Why can a phone-call become an irritating experience?
3. What does the operator do if you are calling someone in a company?
4. Refer to a difficulty that may arise while you are speaking on the phone.
5. What is meant by «others waiting "in the queue"».

B. Exercises

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct preposition.

- a. The telephone is a device ----- primary importance.
- b. A phone-call sometimes turns ----- to be an annoying experience.
- c. When you finish the call you put the receiver -----.
- d. You are often cut ----- while speaking.
- e. When you call the director of a company, his secretary usually picks ----- the receiver and asks you to hold ----- till he answers the telephone.
- f. Remember to be quick when talking ----- the phone.

2. Put the verbs in the brackets in the correct form.

The telephone -----¹ (*be*) a very useful device. Nevertheless, it sometimes -----² (*turn*) out to be a hateful tool. The line often -----³ (*engage*) and the caller has -----⁴ (*dial*) the number again and again. Even while -----⁵ (*talk*), he can -----⁶ (*cut*) off. In that case, he -----⁷ (*replace*) the receiver and -----⁸ (*pick*) it up again only to discover that the lines -----⁹ (*mix*) up or that the telephone -----¹⁰ (*be*) out of order.

3. Complete the caller's part in the following telephone conversation:

A: Hello. Avon 505231.

B:

A: Hold on a minute. I'll check if he's in.

(After some minutes). I'm afraid he's out for lunch.

B:

A: Of course, you can. I'll give it to him as soon as he's back.

B:

A: As you wish. You may call him in an hour or so.

B:

A: Not at all. Good-bye.

4. Put the verbs in the brackets in their correct form.

- a. If you are lucky enough, the line ----- (*not engage*).
- b. The telephone operator of the company will put you through to the manager, if you ----- (*want*) to speak to him.
- c. If I knew their number, I ----- (*call*) them.
- d. I would try to redial the number, if I ----- (*be*) you.
- e. If she had been careful enough, she ----- (*not make*) so many mistakes.
- f. If I ----- (*call*) him an hour ago, we could have gone out together.

5. Match the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| a. process | 1. the part of telephone that is held to one's ear |
| b. device | 2. wait on the telephone |
| c. receiver | 3. a person who works at a telephone switchboard |
| d. dial | 4. procedure; a connected set of human actions or operations in order to reach a particular result |
| e. telephone operator | 5. disconnect |
| f. put through | 6. call a number on the telephone |
| g. arise | 7. an instrument, esp. one that is cleverly thought out |
| h. cut off | 8. come into being |
| i. hold on | 9. a line of people waiting for sth. |
| j. queue | 10. connect a telephone call(er) by telephone |

Vocabulary

telephoning process, διαδικασία τηλεφωνικής επικοινωνίας
no matter how, ανεξάρτητα από, άσχετα με

device, μέσον, συσκευή
communication, επικοινωνία
tool, εργαλείο

of primary importance, πρωταρχικής σημασίας
phone-call, τηλεφώνημα, τηλεφωνική κλήση
turn out to be, αποδεικνύομαι ότι είμαι
irritating, εκνευριστικός
experience, εμπειρία
step, βήμα, ενέργεια
achieve, πετυχαίνω, πραγματοποιώ
lift, σηκώνω
receiver, ακουστικό
dialling tone, ο ήχος του τηλεφώνου που υποδηλώνει ότι η γραμμή είναι ελεύθερη
finally, τελικά
dial the number, σχηματίζω αριθμό τηλεφώνου
line, γραμμή
engaged, κατειλημμένος
busy, φορτωμένος, κατειλημμένος, απασχολημένος
put down, κατεβάζω, αφήνω κάτω
call, καλώ
company, εταιρεία, επιχείρηση
operator, χειριστής (τηλεφώνου)
put one through, δίνω τηλεφωνική γραμμή σε κάποιον, συνδέω

arise, προκύπτω
be cut off, διακόπτομαι (ενώ μιλώ στο τηλέφωνο) διότι «κόβεται» η γραμμή
hold on, περιμένω, αναμένω (στο ακουστικό)
breath, ανάσα, αναπνοή
dull, ανιαρός, μονότονος
buzzing sound, βουητό (στο ακουστικό τηλεφώνου)
replace, επανατοποθετώ
pick up (the receiver), σηκώνω (το ακουστικό)
out of order, χαλασμένο, δεν λειτουργεί (για τηλέφωνο, μηχάνημα κ.λπ.)
lucky, τυχερός
ringing tone, τόνος κλήσης (τηλεφώνου)
conversation, συζήτηση
realize, αντιλαμβάνομαι, αναγνωρίζω
stranger, άγνωστος
redial, ξανακαλώ, ξαναπαίρνω αριθμό τηλεφώνου
correctly, σωστά
be mixed, ανακατεύομαι, μπερδεύομαι
talk on the phone, μιλώ στο τηλέφωνο
in the queue, στην ουρά, στη σειρά



Specialists on call

The telephone has not been exploited as a selling tool by the marketing fraternity, to the same extent as direct mail, in part at least, because it is more difficult to control. It also requires more skill than many expect. When used sensitively, the phone can be a potent sales tool. It can cut the cost of the existing customer and potential customer alike, and save valuable time by cancelling journeys that will not result in new business.

A point to emphasise is that a particular advantage of telephone marketing over other forms of direct promotion is that it is easily monitored, and can, therefore, be readily refined on the basis of feedback during the course of a campaign.

It is important to recognise, however, that telephone marketing must not be seen as an alternative to direct mail. "A call can be followed up with more details in a letter".

The phone can be used as a means to help you to achieve broader marketing objectives than just shifting products. It can be used if and when you want to keep in touch with customers, to ensure they were happy with the service being offered, to iron out problems quickly, and to ensure that satisfied customers have stayed with the company.

Telephone marketing is a bold step to take because you're often taking people from a passive role to a more aggressive stance. And that takes time to work.

A. Questions

1. Why hasn't the telephone been exploited as a selling tool by the marketing fraternity?
2. What does it require?
3. How can it be useful?
4. In what way can it save time?
5. Which is the particular advantage of telephone marketing over other forms of direct promotion?
6. Can a telephone call substitute a letter?
7. What can businessmen use the telephone for?
8. What is "telephone marketing" thought to be?

B. Exercises

1. Write the correct form of the adjectives.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
a. -----	more difficult	-----
b. new	-----	-----
c. important	-----	-----
d. -----	broader	-----
e. many	-----	-----

2. Rewrite the sentences (using the new beginnings) without changing their meaning.

- a. It requires more skill than many expect.
More skill
- b. We easily monitor the telephone.
The telephone.....
- c. We must not see telephone marketing as an alternative to direct mail.
Telephone marketing.....
- d. People can use the phone to iron out problems.
The phone.....

3. Complete each sentence with a word formed from the word in capitals.

- a. The phone can save ----- time. VALUE
- b. Everybody admired the painting and said that the artist was very -----, SKILL
- c. The ----- of the government were really admirable. ACHIEVE.
- d. The phone can be used to achieve broader marketing -----, OBJECT
- e. The phone can be used if you want to keep in touch with -----, CUSTOM

4. Fill in the blanks with the right preposition and write the correct form of the verbs in the brackets.

- a. The telephone ----- (not exploit) fully as a selling tool ----- the market fraternity yet.
- b. When ----- (use) sensitively, the phone can ----- (be) a helpful device.
- c. The phone can save valuable time ----- (cancel) journeys that ----- (not result) ----- new business.

- d. A point ----- (emphasise) is that an advantage ----- telephone marketing ----- other forms ----- direct promotion is that it easily ----- (monitor).
- e. It can also readily ----- (refine) ----- the basis ----- feedback during the course ----- a campaign.
- f. A call, of course, can ----- (follow) ----- more detail ----- a letter.
- g. A phone can ----- (use) ----- keep ----- touch ----- customers and ----- (ensure) that they ----- (be) happy ----- the service ----- (offer).
- h. Telephone marketing ----- (take) people ----- a passive role ----- a more aggressive attitude.

5. Match the following so as to form fifteen pairs of synonyms.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| a. exploit | 1. cleverly; skillfully |
| b. extent | 2. handle; tackle |
| c. require | 3. information given |
| d. sensitively | 4. solve |
| e. potent | 5. amount; degree |
| f. potential | 6. attitude |
| g. cancel | 7. need; demand |
| h. monitor | 8. instantly; quickly |
| i. readily | 9. powerful; strong |
| j. refine | 10. contact |
| k. feedback | 11. possible; probable |
| l. shifting | 12. promoting |
| m. keep in touch | 13. improve |
| n. iron out | 14. call off |
| o. stance | 15. use or develop fully so as to get profit |

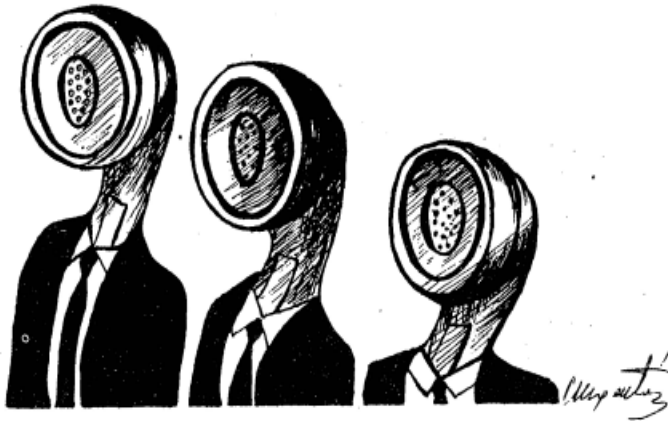
Vocabulary

specialists on call, ειδικοί στην τηλεφωνική επικοινωνία
exploit, εκμεταλλεύομαι, αξιοποιώ
selling tool, όργανο/εργαλείο πωλήσεων

marketing fraternity, σωματείο επιχειρηματιών
to the same extent, στον ίδιο βαθμό/ έκταση
direct mail, άμεση διαφημιστική ενημέρωση

με αλληλογραφία
in part, εν μέρει
control, χειρίζομαι, χρησιμοποιώ
require, απαιτώ
skill, επιδεξιότητα, ικανότητα
expect, πιστεύω, νομίζω, προσδοκώ
sensitively, με εξυπνάδα, με ευαισθησία
potent, δυναμικός, ισχυρός
cut the cost, μειώνω το κόστος/περικόπτω τα έξοδα
exist, υπάρχω
customer, πελάτης
potential, πιθανός, υποψήφιος, δυνατός, που μπορεί να γίνει
alike, εξίσου
save time, κερδίζω χρόνο
valuable, πολύτιμος
cancel, ακυρώνω
journey, ταξίδι
result in, καταλήγω σε, έχω σαν αποτέλεσμα
point, σημείο
emphasise, τονίζω, δίνω έμφαση
particular, ιδιαίτερος, μοναδικός
advantage, πλεονέκτημα
telephone marketing, προώθηση/διαφήμιση προϊόντος μέσω τηλεφώνου
form, τρόπος, μέσον
promotion, προώθηση
monitor, χειρίζομαι
readily, αμέσως
be refined, βελτιώνομαι

on the basis, με βάση, βάσει (του/της)
feedback, πληροφορίες
course, πορεία, εξέλιξη
campaign, καμπάνια, διαφημιστική εκστρατεία
recognise, αναγνωρίζω, παραδέχομαι
marketing, τεχνική εμπορίας, εμπορική συναλλαγή
alternative, εναλλακτική λύση, υποκατάστατο
be followed up, ακολουθούμαι
detail, λεπτομέρεια
achieve, επιτυγχάνω, κατορθώνω
broad, ευρύς
means, μέσον
objective, αντικειμενικός σκοπός, στόχος
shift, προωθώ
product, προϊόν
keep in touch, έρχομαι σ' επαφή, επικοινωνώ
ensure, επιβεβαιώνω, εξασφαλίζω
service, εξυπηρέτηση
offer, προσφέρω
iron out, εξομαλύνω, επιλύω
satisfied, ικανοποιημένος
✓ **stay with the company**, παραμένω πιστός στην εταιρεία
bold, τολμηρός
step, βήμα
passive role, παθητικός ρόλος
aggressive stance, επιθετική θέση/στάση
✓ **it takes time to work**, απαιτεί χρόνο για να φέρει αποτελέσματα/να αποδώσει καρπούς



Taking a message

John Knox wants to speak to Mr Gilford of GMS Ltd. Jean, the receptionist of GMS Ltd is answering his telephone call on the switchboard. Jackie is Mr Gilford's secretary. Here is an actual telephone conversation between them.

- Jean** : Good morning, GMS Ltd.
John Knox : Good morning. I'd like you to put me through to the Sales Department.
Jean : One moment, please. *(She is ringing the Sales Department's extension but the line is busy).*
Will you hold on? The line is busy.
John Knox : OK, I'm waiting. *(In a few seconds another voice is answering the telephone).* Hello; Sales.
John Knox : Hello. Can I speak to Mr Gilford please?
Jackie : I'm afraid he'll be out all morning. He'll probably be back at 12.30. I'm his secretary. Can I take a message?
John Knox : Yes. John Knox of ABC Electronics speaking. Could you ask Mr Gilford to ring me urgently please? It's about last month's micro-computers order. We haven't received them yet. Although Mr Gilford told me last week he'd inform me about it, I haven't heard from him. We need the order urgently 'cause we're running out of stock. I'm afraid we'll go to another firm if you don't take immediate action.
Jackie : Well, I'll certainly pass your message on to Mr Gilford. I'm sure he'll ring you as soon as he comes. Has he got your number?
John Knox : Of course, he's got it but write it down again. Six seven nine five nine four six.
Jackie : All right. That's Mr John Knox of ABC Electronics. Telephone number, six seven nine five nine six four.
John Knox : No. Nine four six.
Jackie : Sorry. Nine four six. May I have your extension number?
John Knox : There isn't one. That's my personal number.
Jackie : Thanks Mr Knox, I'll pass the information on to Mr Gilford as soon as he comes.
John Knox : Thank you. Goodbye.
Jackie : Bye, Mr Knox.

This is the message form Jackie completed for Mr Gilford.

MESSAGE FOR

Mr Gilford

WHILE YOU WERE OUT

Mr John Knox

of ABC Electronics

Telephone no. 6795964

Telephoned	✓
Called to see you	
Wants to see you	
Please ring	✓
Will call again	
Urgent	✓

Message: Mr Knox called and wants you to ring him back urgently about the microcomputers order which he hasn't received. He said he will place the order with another firm if you don't ring him as soon as you come back.

Date: 15th March
Received by: Jackie Fog

Time: 9.45

A. Questions

1. Is Jean Mr Gilford's secretary? If no, what does she do?
2. To which department does Mr Knox want Jean to put him through?
3. What does someone do when the extension line is busy?
4. What does Jackie have to do when Mr Gilford is out and someone calls him?
5. What will Mr Knox's Company do if GMS don't take immediate action for the delayed order?
6. How do you read a telephone number?

B. Exercises

1. Fill in the blanks with the suitable words.

- a. He wants to speak ----- Mr Gilford.
- b. She is answering the telephone calls ----- the switchboard.

- c. Would you please put me ----- to the Sales Department?
- d. The line is busy. Will you hold -----?
- e. I haven't heard ----- him for a long time.
- f. They have to order some microcomputers urgently because they are running -----
----- stock.

2. Rewrite the sentences using the new prompts.

- a. "It's about last month's order."
John said
- b. "We haven't received them yet."
He added that.....
- c. "I will go to another firm if you don't take immediate action."
Their customer warned them that.....
- d. "May I have your extension number?"
She wanted to know
- e. "Mrs Fog called and wants you to ring her back."
Maria informed her manager that

3. Which adverbs derive from the following adjectives?

- a. actual -----
- b. busy -----
- c. probable -----
- d. urgent -----
- e. immediate -----
- f. certain -----
- g. personal -----
- h. complete -----
- i. sure -----
- j. suitable -----

4. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own, so that their meaning is clear:

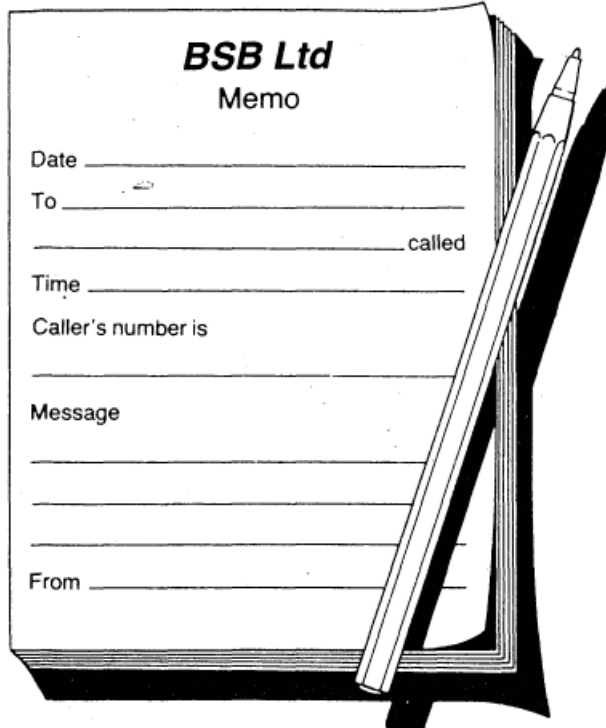
answer a telephone call on the switchboard, put someone through, take a message, hear from someone, run out of stock, pass the information to (someone).

5. It was about 11 o' clock on Friday Morning on May, 5th. Mr Harvey of NBA called Mr Austin, the Sales Manager of BSB, but he was out.

Ann Petersen, Mr Austin's secretary, answered the telephone. Mr Harvey told her he had seen the BSB's advertisement showing their flannels' quality and would like to ask him some details about it.

He said he would be obliged if Mr Austin called him back to fix a visit to the BSB warehouses where he could choose some pieces of flannels.

Fill in the message form using the information given.



BSB Ltd
Memo

Date _____

To _____
_____ called

Time _____

Caller's number is _____

Message

From _____



Listen and answer

1. Why is Maria ringing up the A.B.E. company?
2. What is the surname of the general manager at A.B.E.?
3. Did Mr Brown answer the telephone in his office?
4. Who answered the telephone in Mr Brown's office?
5. Was Mr Brown there at that moment?
6. Did Mr Brown's secretary take a message for Mr Brown to ring Maria back, or did she fix an appointment for another day?

7. Did they arrange the appointment for next Friday? Why?
8. When did they fix the appointment for?

Vocabulary

message, μήνυμα

receptionist, ο υπάλληλος υποδοχής, αυτός που υποδέχεται

call, κλήση, τηλεφωνώ, καλώ

switchboard, ταμπλό/πίνακας τηλεφωνικού κέντρου

actual, πραγματικός

conversation, συνομιλία

put (someone) through (to), συνδέω (κάποιον) στο τηλέφωνο (με)

sales department, τμήμα πωλήσεων

ring, τηλεφωνώ

extension (number), εσωτερική γραμμή τηλεφώνου

hold on, περιμένω (στο τηλέφωνο)

voice, φωνή

take a message, κρατώ/παίρνω μήνυμα/ σημείωμα

urgently, επειγόντως

microcomputer, μικροϋπολογιστής

order, παραγγελία

receive, (παρα)λαμβάνω, παίρνω

hear from (someone), έχω νέα από (κάποιον)

run out of (something), μου τελειώνει/εξαντλείται (κάτι)

stock, απόθεμα, στοκ εμπορευμάτων

take immediate action, λαμβάνω άμεσα μέτρα, ενεργώ άμεσα

pass (something) on to someone, προωθώ/μεταβιβάζω (κάτι) (χέρι με χέρι) σε άλλον

personal message form, προσωπικό έντυπο για σημειώσεις, σημείωμα

urgent, επείγων, -ουσα, -ον

place an order with (someone), δίνω παραγγελία σε (κάποιον)

Body language

The posed photographs of people give strange and unattractive signals. The photographs themselves are a first class job. They are the subject's self-presentation and they indicate attitudes which the subjects do not really wish to convey.

Many people have folded arms or crossed legs. These positions are regarded as defensive and non-communicative. Verbally, these can be translated as saying "Keep off!" or "I'm admitting nothing" or "You won't put anything over on me". The hedgehog syndrome.



Defensive...



... non-communicative



... hardly courteous

Some of the posers are cutting down their communication aids by diving hands into trousers' pockets. Hardly courteous, supposedly casual and relaxed, but only half-communicative on a shallow basis.

Well, do your own poses belong to one or even the three of the above mentioned ones? If so, don't deny the signals they convey. Simply try to avoid standing or sitting in such a way because your future boss wouldn't rely on a promise from such a person.

A. Questions

1. Do posed photographs always give attractive signals?
2. What do they indicate?
3. Which positions are regarded as defensive and non-communicative?
4. What does diving hands into trousers' pockets indicate?
5. Why should you avoid sitting or standing in the ways mentioned in the above text?

B. Exercises

1. Give the opposites of the following:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| a. unattractive | d. keep off |
| b. convey | e. cut down |
| c. defensive | f. courteous |

2. "Avoid standing or sitting in such a way".

Form some similar sentences of your own using "avoid+gerund".

3. Find the words in the text which mean the following:

- show; imply; denote
- viewpoints; points of view; aspects
- express; reveal
- considered
- not willing to talk; restrained
- showing or feeling little interest
- free from worry; easy in manner
- refuse to accept (as a fact)
- employer
- depend on

4. Fill in the blanks with the infinitive or the -ing form of the verbs in the brackets.

- Poses of people sometimes indicate attitudes which the subjects do not wish ----- (convey).
- She is regarded as ----- (be) defensive and non-communicative.
- He admitted ----- (pretend) ----- (be) casual and relaxed.
- I warned her ----- (avoid) ----- (sit) the way she does, when her boss is present.
- He refused ----- (give) me a straight answer.
- People's poses help us ----- (understand) some basic things about their character.

5. Discuss:

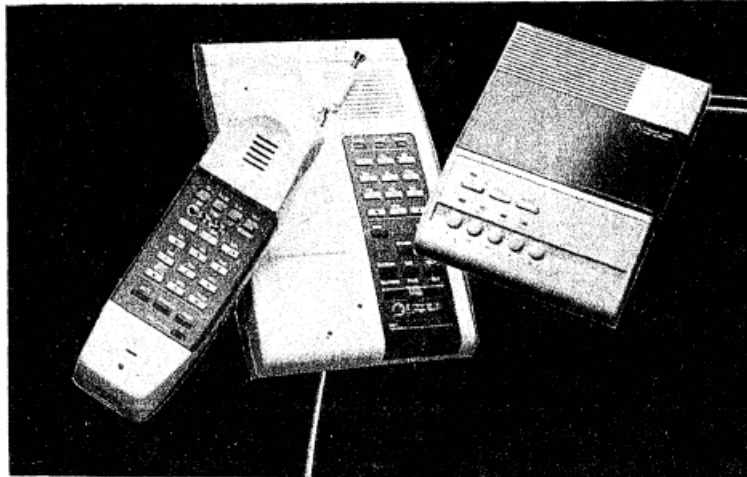
Refer to some other positions indicating the people's character or mood.

Vocabulary

body language, γλώσσα του σώματος
pose, ποζάρω, πόζα, στάση
unattractive, μη ελκυστικός
signal, σημάδι, μήνυμα, ένδειξη
first class, πρώτης τάξης, άριστος
subject, υποκείμενο, άτομο
self-presentation, αυτοπαρουσίαση
indicate, δηλώνω
attitude, θέση, άποψη, στάση (ως προς τη ζωή)
convey, μεταδίδω, εκφράζω, φανερώνω
fold, διπλώνω
folded arms, σταυρωμένα χέρια
cross, σταυρώνω
crossed legs, σταυροπόδι
position, στάση, θέση
regard, θεωρώ
defensive, αμυνόμενος, ευρισκόμενος σε άμυνα
non-communicative, συγκρατημένος, μη δια-
χυτικός
verbally, προφορικά, αυτολεξεί, κατά λέξη
translate, μεταφράζω
keep off, κρατιέμαι μακριά

admit, παραδέχομαι
you won't put anything over on me, δεν μου
τη σκάς, δεν τα χάφτω εγώ
hedgehog, σκαντζόχοιρος
syndrome, σύνδρομο
poser, αυτός που ποζάρει, μοντέλο
cut down, περιορίζω, ελαττώνω
communication, επικοινωνία
aid, βοήθημα, βοηθητικός τρόπος
dive, βουτώ
hardly, μετά βίας, σχεδόν καθόλου
courteous, ευγενικός, αβρός
supposedly, δήθεν, τάχα
casual, τυχαίος, άνετος
relaxed, ήρεμος, χαλαρωμένος
shallow, ρηχός
basis, βάση
belong to, ανήκω σε
mention, σημειώνω, αναφέρω
deny, αρνούμαι
avoid, αποφεύγω
rely on, βασίζομαι σε
promise, υπόσχεση

Recorded messages



Most companies have established a short break for their personnel to have lunch. But what about messages during the lunchtime? Who takes them, when nobody is in the office to answer the telephone?

Recorded messages on answerphones are usually the best answer to this problem, on condition that the caller has dialled the personal telephone number of the person he wants to speak to, or that the switchboard operator is in the telephone exchange to put him through to the proper extension number.

You're going to listen to the cassette, with a recorded message on Mr Gilford's answerphone, while he is in a meeting and his secretary is out for lunch.

Activity 1

Note down the following details while you are listening to the cassette for the first time:

- a. Gilford's job:
- b. Name of the caller:

- c. Estimated date of the cargo's delivery:
- d. Departure port:
- e. Arrival port:
- f. Name of the vessel:
- g. The vessel's nationality:
- h. Owner of the vessel:

Activity 2

Now listen to the cassette again and answer the following:

- a. What phrases does Gilford use to introduce himself?
- b. Does he explain his absence?
- c. Does he thank the caller?
- d. What reasons does Peter Stephens give for his call?
- e. Will he call back or does he want Gilford to call him?

Exercises

1. Choose words from the following two lists to form compound words.

tele-	phone
answer	board
switch	phone
micro	in
with	computer

2. Underline the mistakes in the following sentences, and rewrite them correctly. e.g. I'll call you as soon as I will be back.
I'll call you as soon as I am back

- a. Who takes them when there isn't nobody in the office?
- b. You are going to listening to the cassette.
- c. This is Tom Gilford speaks.
- d. Please leave your name after you hearing the signal.
- e. Thank you for call.
- f. The estimation date of arrival is 23rd March.
- g. The ship sails with a greek flag.

3. Match the following so as to make ten pairs of opposites.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| a. short | 1. arrival |
| b. take | 2. yesterday |
| c. best answer | 3. give; offer |
| d. proper | 4. unsuitable; improper |
| e. delivery | 5. long |
| f. departure | 6. before |
| g. after | 7. worst question |
| h. export | 8. despatch; shipment |
| i. tomorrow | 9. (drop the) anchor |
| j. sail | 10. import |

4. Fill in the blanks in the following table:

	Verb	Noun
a.	establish	-----
b.	-----	answer
c.	call	-----
d.	-----	operator
e.	-----	extension
f.	arrive	-----
g.	-----	owner
h.	-----	delivery
i.	export	-----
j.	despatch	-----

Vocabulary

record, καταγράφω, εγγράφω

message, μήνυμα

establish, καθιερώνω

answerphone, (αυτόματος) τηλεφωνητής

on condition that, με τον όρο/την προϋπόθεση ότι

dial, παίρνω/σχηματίζω αριθμό τηλεφώνου

switchboard, πίνακας/ταμπλό (τηλεφωνικού κέντρου)

telephone exchange, τηλεφωνικό κέντρο

extension number, εσωτερικός αριθμός (τηλεφώνου)

delivery, παράδοση

microcomputer, μικροϋπολογιστής

delay, καθυστέρηση

cargo, φορτίο (πλοίου)

despatch/dispatch, αποστέλλω, αποστολή

estimate, υπολογίζω

schedule, πρόγραμμα, χρονοδιάγραμμα

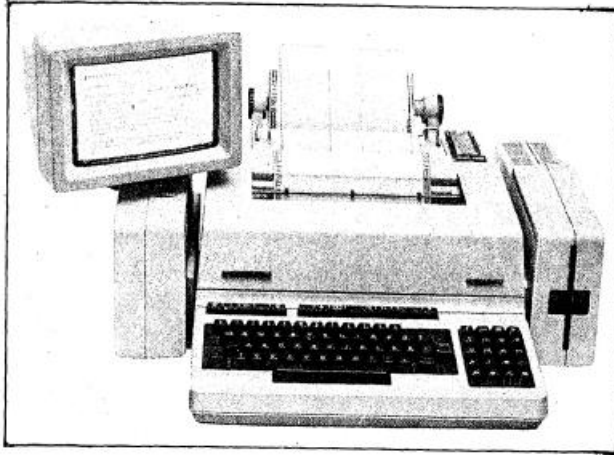
vessel, σκάφος, πλοίο

sail, αποπλέω

flag, σημαία

freighter, φορτηγό πλοίο, ναυλωτής/επιχειρηματίας φορτηγών πλοίων

The Telex - A necessary aid to business world



The telex is cheap.

It is fast.

It is accurate.

It is effective.

It sends messages everywhere in no time.

A telex machine works as a telephone and a typewriter. You dial a number and.... here you are in your correspondent's telex. Then you type your message on your machine and it appears on your correspondent's machine immediately, even if this telex is on the other side of the globe.

A. Questions

1. Mention three reasons why a telex is necessary in business.
2. Is it true that a telex takes much time to send a message?
3. Have you ever seen a telex? If yes, describe how it works.
4. Do you know any similar devices? What common features do they have with the telex?

B. Exercises

1. Complete the sentences with the appropriate word.

- a. The telex is an essential ----- to business world.
- b. It sends ----- in no time.
- c. It works as a telephone and a ----- .
- d. When you type your message on your machine, it ----- on your correspondent's machine.

2. Find the word in the text which means the same as the following:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| a. help | d. at once |
| b. not expensive | e. a person who has regular business relations with you |
| c. efficient | f. world |

3. Match the following words so as to make six pairs of antonyms.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| a. cheap | 1. inaccurate; not precise |
| b. fast | 2. expensive |
| c. accurate | 3. slow |
| d. effective | 4. ineffective; useless |
| e. everywhere | 5. disappear; vanish |
| f. appear | 6. nowhere |

4. Write at least one noun deriving from the following words:

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| a. cheap | 1. machine |
| b. fast | 2. telephone |
| c. accurate | 3. correspondent |
| d. effective | 4. appear |
| e. send | 5. immediate |

5. Apart from the telex, which other piece of office equipment do you find extremely useful? Describe its features and explain its function.

Vocabulary

telex, τέλεξ, τηλέτυπο

necessary, αναγκαίος,

aid, βοήθεια, βοήθημα

accurate, ακριβής

effective, αποτελεσματικός

message, μήνυμα

in no time, αμέσως, σε χρόνο μηδέν

machine, μηχάνημα, μηχανή, συσκευή

work, λειτουργώ, εργάζομαι

typewriter, γραφομηχανή

dial (a number), σχηματίζω αριθμό (σε καντράν τηλεφώνου, τέλεξ κ.λπ.)

correspondent, παραλήπτης μηνύματος, ανταποκριτής

type, δακτυλογραφώ

immediately, αμέσως

even if, ακόμα και αν

side, άκρη, πλευρά

globe, γη, υδρόγειος

APPENDIX V: TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS ABOUT THE TARGET BOOK

INTERVIEW 1: MALIA

M: Malia, thank you so much for your contribution to this interview. I would like to start...ah...by telling you the purpose of this interview...ah... which is your opinion on the English language teaching material of the Economics and Administration course

M: You're welcome. I hope you find my contribution useful (smiling)

M: Definitely. Well, first, I would like to ask you how many years of experience you have in teaching the English language

M: 13 years in public schools and 5 in the private sector

M: That makes it 18 years in total, right?

M: Yes, that's right

M: Are you working at a Vocational school at the moment?

M: No, but I don't see any difference.....

M: Right.... I suppose maybe in the teaching targets....the books.. you know....

M: Children however are the same everywhere....they are all devils, aren't they? (smiling..)

M: I suppose you are right (smiling also)

N: Have you ever worked in a Vocational school?

M: Yes, I have, for 3 years

M: Have you taught the specific subject "Economics and Administration?"

M: Yes, during those 3 years of teaching, together with other ESP courses such as English for mechanics, accountants....

M: Right.... Very impressive.... Well,.. I would like to ask you now if you know the sector to which the subject "Economics and Administration terminology" belongs to ?

M: From what I know of, it belongs to the same sector title, "Economics and Administration"

M: Yes, that's right, Well, Malia, which are the instructive aims of this subject?

M: I am not quite sure.... I guess for learners to learn English for business offices duties, such as letters, documents, phoning, this kind of thing....

M: Ok. Now, the teaching material of this subject...could you tell me what it consists of?

M: Well, what it consists or better what it doesn't include you mean? (smiling..) Nothing.... Just the course book ...just that....

M: Ok. Do you happen to know if there is more material in other schools, which you for some reason had not managed to have?

M: No, I heard no such thing. I don't know There should be a cassette.. We never had it however.. Nothing really, except the student's book

M: Just the student's book. Right. Malia, how many are the teaching hours for this subject?

M: I taught for 2 hours. Very little time....Given that it is a big book.... You can't teach all the material....impossible.....

M: Impossible.... I see.....Malia, what about the level of the learners you taught? What was their level of English?

M: Well. There was a variety I think....mainly too low... We had a couple of good learners....but mainly their level was Upper Elementary... I should say.... Yes

M: Ah ah.....Their level of English however.....what do you think their level should be in order to follow the content of the book, to understand...you know... to attend the lesson?

M: I thinkat least Upper Intermediate. It's quite a difficult book you know...

M: Right. Do you think the level of the book complies with the learner's English language level?

M: No, certainly not...

M: No...Mmm.. I'll like to ask you now if you are aware of the curriculum content of the particular sector....

M: What do you mean?

M: I mean...if you know what learners need to be taught according to the curriculum guidelines, which are its targets, where it focuses.....

M: To tell you the truth I don't know.... If you mean whether it is written somewhere.....

M: I mean if you have it in your school, if you saw it, if it was given to you by your principal.....

M: No, I haven't seen it. Nobody has given it to me.....

M: Right. The course book, the one you have taught and you know its content...what would you say its methodological approach is?

M: You mean how it is written?

M: Yes, how it is written, where it emphasizes, which linguistic features it focuses on..

M: It is full of grammar exercises, and lexis. I think this is where it focuses on.

M: Mmmm. You mean mainly on those... What are the aims of the book in your opinion? I mean, which are its targets, what should learners learn, be prepared and so on...

M: The book...on lexis I think, mainly to learn vocabulary, they are supposed to need it in the offices, write letters.....

M: Mmmm. I would like to discuss the book with you now in more details, that is, its content. Let's talk about vocabulary first.

M: Yes, What about it?

M: I would like you to talk to me about it, I mean how vocabulary is presented in the book, how it is suggested to be taught, tell me what you think about it....

M: Look. The book is full of lexis. This is not my style; I mean the long list of lexis underneath the texts. This provokes a chaos to the students. And they are bored of them. They are also difficult for many of the learners.

M: You mean that the vocabulary is a lot?

M: Yes it's a lot and boring. I choose some it they really need and I ask them to learn it...and I think those words are enough. Learners cannot memorize a huge and long list of words....

M: Certainly not. And I am not sure what's the reason for this ... Anyway, these....words....are they relevant to their subject of studies?

M: No. If you consider that this book was written...what ... 25 years ago...even more, things have changed a lot! Offices work with computers now. They do not have typewriters like they used to, we are not in the 80's. Students may have the words in front of them in the end of the text but we just select....

M: What do you think of the vocabulary? Is it difficult or easy?

M: I can't say it is all difficult. But it is a lot for the students. Their linguistic level is not that good and this gives them a hard time. Pronunciation is also difficult for them. Let alone the fact that the big list makes them think it is even harder for them to learn them (smiling)

M: Right. I would like us now to move to the texts please. What do you think of the texts? Would you tell me your opinion?

M: In the first place I don't like them. Many of them are irrelevant. How can I say it? Indifferent...Some texts that have letters are easier but many are difficult.

M: What do you mean by "letters"?

M: I mean that some texts have application letters for instance, which are easy, but there are also complaint letters which are hard and other texts which are also difficult. Generally they are boring. They are not up to date. I used to bring my own texts, students would ask me to do it too.

M: I see. Why was that?

M: If students don't like the texts.....the lesson aims at students you know... If they don't participate we have other problems. They are noisy, indifferent and this sort of thing ...

M: At least, are the texts authentic or not?

M: Of course not. This is why I used to bring texts from newspapers and journals or books, mine....I bought them myself....

M: You mean Malia that the texts do not present contemporary language learning environment?

M: No, as I said the book is quite old. I don't know if it has changed the past two years I have not taught it....

M: No, it has not changed from what I know. It remains the same. Well, the texts ... do they refer at all to the social and cultural environment of the English culture? To introduce them a little to this you know...

M: You must be kidding. Not at all. I used to gather the students whenever I could and showed them films with English subtitles, videos for the U.K., I got them from foreign publishers in the market...

M: That's really interesting. And did students enjoy that?

M: Yes, a lot; they even tried to be quiet to see and understand (smiling), to discuss the content, listen to the accent, to find out more about the place...

M: Well, do you think that the course book texts promote learners' active participation in the learning process? Do they like to read them? To work on them?

M: No, except of minimum cases, when texts dealt with CVs or an easy letter and they wanted to see how it was written. But in business offices now we have mails not letters.....this is what the book should include....in my opinion...

M: Of course. Your opinion is important. Tell me please. Are there comprehension questions underneath the texts?

M: Yes, in most of them

M: What is their role?

M: Either to discuss with the students or ask them to write something for homework...

M: Which did you choose to do?

M: I did not give homework to learners. This is because almost nobody does it. Nobody wants to write something. So, we discussed the questions a little, not all of them. They are difficult. But they are like the questions in the "build it up" course book. Have you ever taught it?

M: I don't remember. Probably yes.

M: Well, it's structural. What should we discuss with the learners? We can't discuss what seems to be obvious.... There is no communication gap

M: What do you mean?

M: I meant they all know the answers. What is there to discuss? The text gives you all the information and then.....what is there to ask? ...ask about something you already know? The correct thing should be not to know and find out....then it would be interesting....

M: I see. Are all text questions structural?

M: Yes, they are. It feels like you are in Primary school.

M: I see. Malia, could we now talk a little bit about the grammar in the book?

M: Yes

M: What is your opinion? What do you think of it based on your experience?

M: You mean what I think of the exercises?

M: Yes, for instance, what kind of grammar does the book introduce, let's say...

M: Well, the level is quite demanding. The exercises are good but for the students ... well ... I think they are many and difficult. I think the whole book is full of exercises ... and lexis as I said before...

M: You mean that the exercises were difficult for your learners' level?

M: When I taught the book ... the students came from different schools, their level was low ... I had to revise all the time ... You can't imagine the load of photocopies I have given to the students ...

M: You mean you brought your own material?

M: Yes, the students had a lot of gaps. We started from Present Continuous, can you imagine? I mean the tenses ... The book presupposes they already know this material ...

M: And they knew it?

M: No. We constantly revised. From the very first start ... many things. It was so tiring having photocopies all the time, given that we were many teachers and we all wanted to use the photocopier ... We had to wait in line ... In the end, my colleagues got tired of me, the learners would lose the photocopies ... there was a mess ... I don't want to remember it ...

M: I see ... You mean Malia that the grammar in the book is a lot and difficult for the learners?

M: It doesn't really matter that it is more than it should. The problem is that it was not appropriate for the learners' level to work with them, let alone the fact there was not enough time to do them ...

M: Is there a variety of these exercises? Are there different kinds of tasks?

M: Yes, there is a variety and there are different kinds of tasks. But they are useless if we cannot work with them since only a small amount of them were close to the learners' level and we needed to revise very basic things for them to understand

M: Do you mean that a theoretical background is also necessary?

M: Yes, I do. The book does not contain theory because it takes it for granted that all students know it. So we were forced to spend a lot of time learning the theory. If we had an accompanying grammar book, it would have been more useful. But you can't tell the kids to buy a grammar book... They will tell you that they are entitled for free education...and they are right.....

M: Yes, I suppose you are right. Anyway, how would you describe these exercises? For example, pleasant, boring, interesting or what?

M: Look. If the learners' level was better the exercises could be quite useful. Of course, grammar as such, is somewhat boring, but the exercises of the book are not bad I think, if anybody would like to focus there. But I think it is a waste of time. So many exercises that are not done....

M: Right. I see. Can we move on to the visual material of the course book now please? What do you think of it? What does it consist of?

M: Do you mean the pictures?

M: The pictures, the paper, the images.....

M: Ok. Well, Do you have old pictures at home?

M: How old?

M: Too old. Let's not imply our age! (smiling). Think of old and picture the paper of the course book and the pictures in it. That old! Or you can even think of an old printing shop where old newspapers are printed. Old, worn paper, of bad quality, dull colors, sketches that look like cartoons, of bad printing quality (something like Popay and Olive..) old, it reminds you of something old.....

M: You imply it is not interesting?

M: No. The students see colored things every day, in newspapers, books ... do you think they like "old"?

M: I suppose not. And what did you do?

M: We laughed a little, we joked, I brought them pictures from my material, colored ones, I even drew or placed little happy colored pictures next to the exercises I gave them from the internet ...

M: You mean to tell me you also did drawing?

M: Why not? They like it. I also like it

M: I sounds nice! At least, does the visual material have to do with contemporary office environments?

M: For desk top objects and such, yes there are a couple of pictures, some white and black sketches, old-fashioned ones and awful pictures.

M: And they enjoyed more what you brought/made for them?

M: Teenagers are lively, they like colors, movements, expression. They don't like dull books. They are interested in modern topics, from big enterprises, nice offices, with color, showing contemporary figures and staff, in various professional situations with nice environments.

M: Right

M: Many of my students were girls in this course. And you know how girls like color.

M: Mmmm. Did you ever happen to see your learners comparing the visual material of the course book to other of foreign publishers let's say?

M: They did it all the time. At least the material I brought was interesting to them, as they said.

M: Right. You sound disappointed.

M: Not disappointed. I did everything I could on my own. But those that design books should care a bit about development. Anyway....who cares about Vocational education in the first place?

M: Malia, I would like us now to discuss please about the activities of the course book. Firstly, which are these?

M: You mean the exercises...the kind of exercises?

M: I mean if the course book contains activities that cover all four skills, reading, writing, listening, speaking..

M: Yes. Well. For reading, there are the texts I told you about. What I mean is that the students read the text let's say and underneath there are comprehension questions...

M: How did you do these activities?

M: There are no instructions of course, since there is no teacher's book but we read the text and we discussed the questions or we wrote the answers ... rarely

M: You mean this was the writing and speaking practice?

M: Yes, but it was too structured, especially for oral activities

M: Yes, I see, you mean structural

M: Yes, structural, not spontaneous

M: Does the book contain other writing activities?

M: Yes, it does. It contains the grammar exercises and it also has a section about letters which are presented as models and then some activities follow to show to the students how to write a letter, such as an application or a complaint letter.

M: I see. Are there any listening activities in the course book?

M: There are some but there is no cassette, so they cannot be practiced

M: Did you do anything of your own?

M: Yes, I considered it very important for the learners to listen and understand the language as it is spoken really. I brought cassettes of my own and we practiced. We did a lot of listening exercises, with films as well, I showed them films and then we discussed what they saw and understood. They really liked it.

M: Right. Well done! Regarding the activities in the book, where would you say they focus on?

M: As I said they focus on grammar and lexis.....

M: Mmm. And in these activities, would you say there is a variety so as to cover for all learning styles?

M: What do you mean?

M: I mean that others learn better listening, others reading, other learners are kinesthetic

M: I don't think so. If the teacher doesn't do anything, there is no listening practice. So, for those for example that like learning by listening, there is no concern from the book as there are no such activities. Neither is there for kinesthetic learners who like to move or do something pleasant because the exercises mainly ask you to write something and this is boring

M: Are there any role-playing activities, any prompts for authentic communication situations, to role play a dialogue let's say and simulate a business office environment and communication for example?

M: No, there is nothing like that unfortunately. It would be nice if there were such activities. The students love the theater (smiling), playing, standing up, simulating, laughing, using the language, communicating. Who wants to write all the time? If they do that they end up hating books. Instead it is more interesting to take them to the lab, give them some sites (it would be nice to be offered by the book) and work on a topic, something authentic with meaning, something real, not just grammar and theory.

M: You mean that the activities in the course book do not help learners practise real working situations for future needs, to prepare them let's say accordingly so as to link to the real social and working future working life needs?

M: No, they are not authentic. If you teach learners only from the book you have them respond to the questions, they learn vocabulary, they write letters, and if of course you goby the book..... learners can do a load of grammar. But languages are not learned this way...Especially for learners who are supposed to be working in offices, how are they to understand, how are they to communicate? It will be impossible, they will not make it only with what this book offers. I find it rather difficult to be done. So, as you see, it's up to us to amend this... as always....

M: I think you sound disappointed now....

M: Rather angry

M: Is there a variety in activities such as transferring information, telephoning, conversations, group work, face to face interactions and such...

M: No, no, there isn't, there isn't

M: Would you say that the activities enhance learners' active participation in the teaching process?

No. The students are bored and compare the course book with other books from the market

M: And what is your opinion? Does the book focus on communication?

M: Of course not. How can a book focus on communication when it lacks listening or speaking tasks? And thinking that the learners of this sector need communication practice a lot, I don't know what to say!!

M: Would you say that in general you were satisfied with the book you taught? Does it help you fulfil your teaching goals?

M: No I wasn't. I was partly content with grammar, as this was plenty of input. But then again, this was not what the learners needed. Grammar tasks should be included in the book based on learners' real needs. Those that are responsible for the design should find learners' real linguistic level at this type of school and design the material accordingly. To tell you the truth I am not that happy with any of the Vocational school books. I think they need a lot of amendments.

M: Do you believe that the course book is linked to learners specific course needs?

M: No. I'll tell you why. Vocational learners usually have a low level of English and the course book is difficult for them. These learners need to practice in order to become future clerks and business office employees. They need to be trained how to listen or speak, to understand various accents... this course book does not offer this to them...and they will need it for sure....

M: So, Malia, would you please tell me what you think is missing from the course book, what you would like to change, improve, or add..?

M: In total? Because we discussed it here and there

M: Yes, if you did a flash back what would you say?

M: Well, a lot. I will tell you the needs based on what I experienced when I taught it three years ago

M: Yes, of course.

M: First, it should become smaller, that is, contain less material. Two hours of teaching are few for this book, or they should either add more to the time table. As well, it is unacceptable not to have instructions. All books have a teacher's book. How should I know where to place emphasis? Then, I think they should rewrite the book based on contemporary learners' real linguistic needs. Vocational learners' level is not that good. We also need extra grammar, theory so that we don't have to bring photocopies all the time. And then, what else?Ah....CDs, of course, for listening practice. Communication is also non-existent. They should add interesting activities, do theatrical plays, simulations of business office situations. To train them and prepare them for work. To help them use the language...and....change the pictures, add color, generally make the book more modern, pleasant for the kids. To help them love English school books. There is potential. If only people are interested for us here at schools.....(smiling)

M: You mean they are not interested?

M: It is not that they are not interested. They may be but things are not done right. Things are developing and moving forward each day. Books cannot stay behind. They need improvement....pictures, sound, content, everything. But well put, based on real needs. Not to design a book for the sake of designing it only.

M: Malia, I would like to thank you greatly for our talk and wish you the best (smiling)

M: You are welcome! (smiling). It was a very pleasant experience and I hope I have helped!

M: You sure have! Thank you very much!

INTERVIEW 2: MARILENA

M: Marilena, thank you very much for this interview! (Hi!). I would like to tell you why we are doing this interview (Yes). I would like us to talk about the English book that is taught at "Economics and Administration" course and I would like your opinion on it, ok?

M: Certainly

M: Well, how many years have you been teaching English for?

M: 10 years in the public sector

M: 10 years! Have you also taught in the private sector?

M: Yes, yes...

M: Ah! Good! You have quite an experience! (laughing) How many years have you worked or been working in Vocational schools?

M: 2 years

M: 2 years. The “Economics and Administration” course, have you....

M: I have taught it for the past two years and now

M: You have. You have taught the specific book....

M: Certainly, yes

M:specifically, for which we will discuss today..

M: Yes, for

M: Very good

M:the particular learners

M: Very good. What you are going to tell me is very important (I hope so) and thank you so much. So, as a start, could you tell me if you know, in which sector the specific course fits

M: In the “Economics and Administration” sector. The students of this sector are taught this lesson in order to prepare for the kind of English they need.

M: Yes, to do....

M: Actually, if the need it as...

M: office employees?

M: ...office employees, yes, yes.

M: Office employees

M: Yes, yes,

M: And secretarial work, also....

M: Yes, in businesses, associations, and not only....

M: Right. Good. Marilena, what does the instructive material of the specific course consist of?

M: When I started teaching I remember I had in my hands only two books; The course book and teacher's notes, with answers to the exercises.

M: So, you mean that the teacher's notes contained only the answers or..

M: Just answers. There were no instructions regarding teaching, so I did all the work myself, I read it and tried to detect its aims

M: Mmm. And what would you say its aims were?

M: This course book means to introduce to learners situations for the use of English in a working environment, through exercises, texts, etc... yes.

M: I see. So, this is what there was available to you

M: Yes, the book and the answers to the exercises

M: From what you know, was there anything else in another school of schools, which you might have not had?

M: No, because I asked, I asked other teachers and colleagues from other Vocational schools and there was nothing, and I also saw there were some listening texts but no cassettes, and there was nothing else to find

M: Right. Would you please tell me how many hours the course book is taught for?

M: It is taught for two hours now.

M: Two hours. Right. How many hours was it taught in the past?

M: 4 or 5 hours I think and it seemed reasonable because it is a big book and even 4 hours should not be enough

M: They should not be enough you think?

M: It is even worse now with just two hours

M: I see

M: It is a lot of material. It cannot be taught in two hours.

M: Ok. We will discuss this

M: And of course it cannot be learned either....

M: I see. We will discuss this more analytically. What you are saying is really important. Well, what about the learners' English language linguistic level, those you have already taught, what would you say it is?

M: It is A2 or B1

M: Mmm. Ok. Based on what specifications....

M: On the framework

M: You mean the European Framework of languages. In your opinion, what should the learners' level be so as to be able to follow the needs of the specific course book?

M: Honestly?

M: Yes

M: C1

M: C1! This high!

M: So as not to be stressed, not to be tired... because for an A2 or B1 level learner, this course book is a real struggle

M: A real struggle? This is how you experience it? Well, I'd like to ask you now if you are aware of the content of the specific sector curriculum. Were you informed about it at all?

M: I wanted to cooperate with other colleagues who teach the learners of this sector, and I asked them to find for me texts from books they owned, to do some translation, look at

documents, I understand that learners need to prepare themselves for their future working environment, in businesses, there.....

M: But you are not aware of the curriculum, you don't have it yourself

M: Officially not, no. Just by asking students and colleagues, I realized the framework I had to move in.

M: I see. Ok. Would you please tell me your opinion about the methodological approach of the book

M: Where....how....

M: What it emphasizes, how it is structured.....

M: Mmm, yes. I think, that the writers, having in mind to prepare the learners for students' future working environment, they designed a course book which focuses on vocabulary mainly

M: So, would you say it has a conceptual approach?

M: Yes, yes, because it is ESP and therefore, grammar is considered known, and so what is left to be done is specific English. This is where it focuses, vocabulary, as it considers grammar known but enhances this knowledge with a lot of grammar tasks and exercises

M: Good. Now, Marilena, I would like us to talk a little more analytically about its content

M: Yes, yes

M:and the parts of the book. Well, let's start with the vocabulary. Could you tell me how this is presented in the course book?

M: Firstly, there is a section in the end with the meaning of the words. In the end of every text in every unit, there is a variety of exercises with derivatives, matching, fill in the blanks, some pictures with equipment needed in an office. The vocabulary is a lot.

M: You are saying it is a lot. So, how are learners expected to learn this? Do they have to memorize it? Do they deal with only the most important words?

M: There are some tasks with prefixes for example (dis, im, un)...they learn words better this way, or we group words that have to do with some person and jobs (secretary, director, manager), based on themes to remember them. I focus on understanding, not on dictation because I think that in this level they should be able to understand the meaning of the words.

M: Right. Yes. It sounds good. So, do you think that the specific vocabulary is enough for the specific course learners' needs? And is it relevant to its aims or are there cases in which certain lexis are not relevant to the topics of the course?

M: Because this is an old book, it has some pictures of objects that are not used nowadays, I don't remember now....

M: I heard someone say about telexes.

M: Yes, yes, I remember it well, and we couldn't understand how it works and identify it in class. Well, not that the rest of the pictures depict contemporary objects...I'd say the opposite...

M: Mmm. Is the vocabulary easy for learners to learn or difficult?

M: It is rather sophisticated vocabulary. It is good vocabulary for a proficient user of English but I think it is not easy for learners to use, nor do I think that office employees will need this kind of vocabulary for the production of oral or written speech. They may need it for letters or to read and understand some vocabulary...

M: I see. Well, I am not quite clear with something. This big amount of words in the book, are they used or suggested to be used in a way so as to produce speech or are they there just for vocabulary enhancement?

M: There are a lot of texts, which are not authentic, but some of them are authentic like (for example, some letters, such as reference letters or memos) and in this sense, some of them may be relevant to the learners' future working needs

M: Mmm. I see. Do you think there is need for an extra vocabulary book, like the ones in the market, a companion for instance?

M: Yes, if there was something more. However, more pages are not always that friendly and a good suggestion for learners because big books are repelling to learners, especially Vocational

school learners that have a lot of books for their speciality. The problem is whether these books satisfy learners' real level and needs. Perhaps a grammar book would be more useful, because the vocabulary is varied, in exercises and they can also have help from us and from the lists of words in the end of the book. Grammar however, would be more helpful, a small booklet let's say or something in the Appendices. Of course we add with extra material, to clarify specific points. But we can't do everything; we can't do it because we don't have time and because too much grammar is not fun for the learners. So we just stick to the vocabulary of the texts, to help them learn a few things in order to respond to the future working needs.

M: Yes. Good. Let's move to the texts now please. You mentioned something about them. Would you please tell me what is your opinion on them?

M: Yes. Well, we cannot teach all the texts because we do not have time in any case. Some of them are very big texts and some others are quite simple. But they are not authentic. This is a problem. And there is a big number of them that are difficult, so we have to analyze all the vocabulary before we move to the texts. Some of them they try to imitate authentic texts, like the reference letters I told you about, but some dialogues are such boring texts (import/export etc). ...

M: ...I think the book talks about transportation means also, is this relevant?

M: ...Yes, it does, no it isn't. Maybe it would be when there is a text in the end that talks about holidays (laughters) or if anybody worked in a tourist agency perhaps.

M: Mmm. I see. Well, I understand that some texts are difficult and some are easy (Yes, yes) but they are not authentic (They are not authentic. They try to imitate them) ... but do they discuss contemporary environments?

M: They use contemporary topics as titles. A dialogue for example in an office, let's say, someone who leaves a memo to a secretary, but their approach is not contemporary. They are rather narration!

M: They are narration, you are saying, they are not (Communicative). I see. So, in this sense, do they promote learners' active participation in the lesson?

M: No. Even the texts, apart from comprehension purposes, they serve as vocabulary input only...

M: I see. Would you say that the texts introduce learners to the English cultural or social environment and use of the language, like this found abroad in professional or social places?

M: Well, this register thing is important. This is why I asked from colleagues to tell me how we write business letters, formal letters, and so on and understand the cultures

M: Mmm. Do you ever bring texts of your own?

M: Well, apart from photocopying a couple of pages from books, or translating something, well I brought some magazines or newspapers to work on some ads and from English companies, and Greek too, and I asked them questions to see, or asked them to write an application letter, insisting on formality

M: Ok. Did the students ask you to bring something specific or was it all your decision?

M: Well, sometimes, we got a little carried away...to learn about culture as you said, during holidays for instance, we had a simulation of a party which we were throwing for an imaginary colleague, about to be a pensioner, or a colleague's wedding or something like that and of course we had similar activities before Christmas.

M: But this was just your job. There was not a similar suggestion in the book (No, no, never). And did your learners like what you did? And if yes, why, and did you like it too?

M: Yes, definitely. I always try to put myself in my student's shoes, doing something different for the lesson of English, because this is relaxing and creative, it is as we call it learning to have fun or something like that. I believe they liked it because it was something different.

M: And what about you, why did you want to bring extra material?

M: Well, it's just a good habit I have had so far. I like to surprise my learners, to get away from the book, as I believe that even the best book needs its spices.

M: It's spices, ha? (laughters). Good, well, let's talk a bit about grammar now, shall we? (Yes). So, what is your opinion on the grammar of the book, could you tell me please?

M: Well, it has somewhat less exercises compared to the vocabulary ones, but there is no theoretical background.

M: There is no theory....

M: There is nothing.

M: There is nothing you say....

M: No, because I think it considers the grammatical phenomena known by the learners. Unfortunately.

M: Mmm. Right. Well, these...grammar tasks, do you think are appropriate for learners' future English language working needs preparation?

M: No. I also think that the book considers these phenomena known by the learners but they are not.

M: Right. What about the tasks? Are they all of the same style? Are they cyclically revised?

M: No. Unfortunately there is no revision.

M: You are saying there isn't.

M: For example, to help you say something and then revise it in the end, no there is no such thing.

M: So, what about learners' level? Does the book introduce such activities to cover for all levels?

M: No it doesn't

M: Mmm. Would you say they are pleasant or boring?

M: I will answer you this way: If there were six tasks, we do only the three of them!

M: Right. Did you ever need to bring your own grammar material in class (Yes, yes), what was that and why did you bring it?

M: Yes, yes. Not always but on topics I chose and I found important and difficult for learners; I brought extra exercises to work in class, not as homework...

M: Especially on theory?

M: Yes, Passive Voice let's say, defining or non-defining clauses and such.

M: I see. Good. Let's go to the activities now and talk about them a little. What kind of activities does the book contain?

M: Regarding skills you mean, productive and receptive....

M: Yes, reading, writing, speaking and listening.

M: Ok. Well, there are writing tasks, which come after reading comprehension, grammar tasks, and listening tasks but no cassettes.

M: So, there are no cassettes...

M: Yes, there is nothing like that. I asked the principal or other colleagues who taught the subject but they didn't have it either. There are no cassettes for the books of the other grades, A and B either.

M: So, you never did any listening exercises?

X: No, I didn't. However, I brought some songs to relax or listen to music....

M: Right.

M: But we didn't have any writing either, formal that is, so, I chose some texts, I set some words, I gave them to the students and we did some filling in the blanks or something like a jigsaw.

M: I see. You made it more pleasant this way...

M: And easier. Because it is very difficult to ask them to write specific register rather than a plain text.

M: So, which activities do you think does the book emphasize and which skills are more frequently presented?

M: I wouldn't say speaking....

M: You mean there are no speaking activities?

M: No. We did however some role-playing, pretending to be the employee and the job applicant...

M: Are these role playing tasks you are mentioning in the book?

M: No, no. We just played...I just used some prompts....and there was a job ad in the book and we role-played, this sort

M: But this is your job, again. It is not in the book?

M: Yes, it's mine. There is nothing like that in the book. It was just this ad and I usually brought them some authentic texts and we read and role-played, like the director or the manager and some candidates and so on....

M: So, I understand there are no speaking tasks in the book...

M: No, there aren't

M: No, you are saying...

M: No, just our own ideas.

M: So, where would you say the book emphasizes....

M: Not in writing, though I consider it quite important for an office employee....

M: Writing you are saying is important....

M: Yes, because, more or less you will be able to communicate when a visitor comes along, you or your boss let's say...But writing is important for correspondence

M: Mmm. I see

M: or reading, so as to read a report, a manual. Reading is the skill....

M: Reading is the skill that is being emphasized?

M: Yes, I suppose so. It is considered important and is given in a simple but complicated way.

M: I see. And, is there variety in the tasks? I mean are all learning styles covered? You said there are no role plays or group work activities and such....

M: No there is nothing like that. Just a couple of dialogues, which we changed and we played. But no, there is no variety. There are no listening activities for example...

M: Do you think that these activities are appropriate for the particular course needs?

M: At least not at listening level. Likewise, they are not, either on speaking or on writing. Even if they were, I don't think learners could respond to this level because it is rather "elevated". We mostly work on reading combined with vocabulary. This is the focus of the book I think.

M: So, as you mentioned before, it is conceptual....Well, are the activities difficult or easy? What do you think?

M: Well, it depends on the texts. If the texts are full of new words and tasks, then the activities are also difficult. We could say there is a variety on this because there are some easy exercises too, like fill in the blanks, match the meaning and so on.

M: So there is a variety in the reading activities....

M: Yes, together with the vocabulary...

M: With the vocabulary...right. What about activities that promote speaking and enhance this skill for communicative purposes? Are there any?

M: No, there aren't, no, scarce....

M: Right. And these scarce activities what form do they have? Reading comprehension for example after the texts or others as well?

M: These and other questions....

M: Did you give those other questions?

M: Yes, not only to talk but also to answer in written form, and for tests as well, like true and false questions.

M: Right

M: To help the students, because it is very difficult to produce speech....

M: These comprehension questions... would you say they train learners for real life communicative situations?

M: No, not really. They are very functional.

M: Functional (Yes, yes) you mean made for the purposes of the book in a way....?

M: Yes, yes

M: Is there a variety of tasks on ways to transfer information? I mean are there tasks to prepare learners for phone interactions or a conversation among people, face to face and so on?

M: As I said before, the book is all about endless long texts that discourage students one, due to their size and two, due to their topics. So, though it refers to some relevant topics, the book the way they are given is boring for the learners...

M: Right. So, would you say that the activities enhance learners' active participation in the lesson?

M: No, I wouldn't say so, unless there are some learners who like to ask questions all the time or some who work or want to work for their parents' professional field. Some of them have some experience or they are quite ambitious to work and ask questions....

M: Right. Let's see the visual material now, shall we? (Yes, yes). Could you please tell me what you think of it? Also the quality of paper, you know, the pictures, all that...

M: Ok. Well, it's not very staffed actually. It has some tables, and such, but its pictures and its sketches are not the best you can get.....even me, that I am not so good in painting I always try to add some pictures in the photocopies I give to the students...So, I would like them to be more....adult like, more modern, to have faces and images like in modern magazines for example, or in the course books in the market, something more real....

M: More real you are saying....

M: Yes, I could say more authentic....

M: So, you would say that the visual material is not contemporary?

M: No, and the sketches are not attractive at all.

M: So, I understand that the visual material is neither attractive nor interesting, right?

M: Right. Also, its disadvantage is that it is 99% black and white. There is no color.

M: As far as I know it is an old book (Yes), isn't it? From what I know it has been in schools for more than 20 years for this course. So, what is your opinion? Does it arouse learners' interest? Are they interested to take it, to see what's in it, to work with it ...

M: Well, it isn't attractive, due to its size...that's for sure. Big books are quite repelling (laughter). This is a disadvantage. Second, its content is difficult, and for learners that have no goals or the relevant linguistic level, it is not attractive at all. Third, it is not so friendly for their future working purposes.

M: I see. Very interesting!

M: Just knowledge. Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, that's it.

M: Right. Have you ever seen your learners compare this book to other books in the market?

M: Not really...There are not many specialized books in the market...

M: What about the visual material, do they like it, would they like something else?

M: They do not like the size mostly and the fact that it is very difficult for many of them, though I tried to simplify it as much as I could and did what I thought was really necessary....

M: Did you ever bring your own visual material in the class to supplement the book?

M: Yes, yes, yes. For example I brought some pictures with faces to choose and practise qualifications, and others.....

M: So, it was all your work, it was not in the book....

M: Well, yes...

M: So, I see that there is a problem with the book here... and I suppose your visual material was a motive for learners....

M: Yes, I would say so, and I often talked to them about job experiences of mine, job interviews, this sort of thing....

M: In order to have an idea for work.....

M: Yes, yes.

M: Right. Well, let's sum it up a little, shall we please?

M: Sure

M: Well, do you think that the content of the book links to real life situations?

M: Well, there are three important issues we need to consider. First, it is knowledge, the knowledge of the language in all levels, then, it is the use of the language for communication purposes and third it is the future, work. This means we apply all this to our professional environment. I think there is no link between these three....

M: Very interesting..

M: It is quite complicating....

M: So, these facts or issues are not related to one another...

M: No, they aren't

M: I see

M: Because the one leads to the other.....

M: Mmm. Do you think that the course book was designed based on needs analysis for the particular course?

M: Well, we need grammar, we need lexis and all the skills we mentioned but we also need to have a goal as well as a gradual level of difficulty in relation to the target which is learners' preparation for their future working needs.

M: Mmm. So, you think there is no link between needs and real life situations. Well, could you please tell me the lacks of the book? I mean, what do you think is missing, needs to be added, change, and so on.....

M: Well, there is no listening. Given that learners need it, listening needs to be added. Also, the texts... they need to be authentic, real texts, so that learners have a clear idea of the language, the culture, the working environment...It also needs to be more communicative, interesting and real because learners are informed, they know what is going on today. They may not have a personal working experience but they see and hear how it really is. New technologies should also be added. Furthermore, designers need to pay attention to the real level of learners and the book should be realistic about it. As well, because the book is very big, I think they should cut down on the material, make it less. There is no need to do so much vocabulary in Secondary education. They can do it in the University. Additionally, the layout should be better looking, friendlier, more attractive with authentic content, offering tasks for all four skills and not only reading, grammar and vocabulary

M: Well, thank you very much for everything.

M: You're welcome!

INTERVIEW 3: TAKIS

M: Taki, thank you very much for accepting to take part in this interview. I would like to begin with asking you how many years you have been teaching English for?

T: In the public sector you mean?

M: Public and private together

T: I worked 13 years in the public sector and 9 in the private one.

M: This means you have quite an experience....

T: Yes, sure.

M: How many years have you been working in Vocational schools for?

T: I have been working in Vocational schools for 5 years

M: 5 years.....

T: Sorry.....no.... 6 years.....

M: 6 years. How many years have you taught the “Economics and Administration” English course book for?

T: I’ve taught it for 3 years now.....

M: 3 years. Good. Well, what would you say the cognitive level of the learners of the particular course in English is? Are your students beginners, intermediate or advanced?

T: I think it varies. There are learners who have a B2 level and others who don’t know anything.

M: So, they are mixed ability...

T: Yes, they are mixed ability, but I have also had learners who had quite a good level of English.

M: I see. Well, in your opinion, what should the level of the learners be so as to follow the course book? Should it be, for example, B2 or lower than that?

T: I think it should be B2 at least. A beginner for instance could not understand this book. A student should really be in an Upper Intermediate level to understand the book which is difficult.

M: Upper Intermediate. Mmm. Well, what does the instructive material of the particular course consist of? Is there for example a course book, teacher’s notes, companion, workbook, grammar book...?

T: We have the teacher’s notes, there is vocabulary...

M: Is there a separate booklet for vocabulary?

T: No, there is some vocabulary in the teacher’s book and a lot in the student’s book.

M: Do you have the teacher’s book? And what else?

T: Yes, and the student’s book. Nothing else.

M: Do you know if there is anything else available which your school does not have it?

T: We don’t have cassettes.

M: Do other schools have cassettes?

T: No, they don't, no.

M: Right. Well, are you aware of the particular course curriculum?

T: What do you mean?

M: I mean if you have come across the curriculum and its content, if you have read it.....

T: Yes, our school advisor has talked to us a little bit about it. But we have nothing in written form.

M: So, you don't have it.....

T: No, no.

M:From the Pedagogical Institute?

T: Ah! You mean the curriculum.....

M: ... which describes what learners should know, the targets of the course, what needs to be taught

T: No, I don't have such a document.

M: You don't. Well, could you please tell me what the methodological approach of the course book is? Is it for example communicative, grammatical, conceptual?

T: It is structural. It has a structural and conceptual approach. There is nothing communicative about it. Not at all.

M: I see. Do you think that the vocabulary in the course book is appropriate for the specific course learners' needs?

T: The vocabulary yes. It is quite extensive but very difficult for the real level of the learners.

M: Would you say it is related to the specific needs of the course and the speciality, which is business office employees?

T: Not really, but it is not only for general purposes English.

M: Mmm. How is this vocabulary presented in the book and given by you?

T: We teach the vocabulary which is in the texts and the students underline and learn the words which are also in the end of the texts.

M: Right. What about the texts? Do you think they are easy or difficult?

T: They are difficult for the learners. The topics are not contemporary. There are words for example or texts that have to do with typewriters or telexes, which we do not use anymore and the kids laugh because they don't know what these things are. I try to explain it to them but I think it is useless knowledge. Why should a student know what is a telex? Why is this so important? In any case, anything in the book should be contemporary and it should be linked to technology. Otherwise, the learners feel bored. And then it is difficult for us, because we can't do our job right.

M: I guess it is difficult because they also make a noise, right? (T: certainly). Another thing I meant to ask you is if the texts are authentic or especially written for the purposes of the book.

T: No, they are not authentic. They are especially written for the course book. It is an old book; a very old book and very difficult to use.

M: So, I guess the texts are not that interesting since they are not contemporary?

T: No, they aren't, they aren't.

M: Mmm. Let's talk about grammar for a minute now please. Do you think that grammar is appropriate for learners to understand the content, is it minimum, excessive, what is your opinion?

T: I think it is excessive for the level of the learners. It should be simpler I think.

M: Are the activities in the course book boring, difficult, pleasant, repetitive? What do you think?

T: I think they are a lot. Nevertheless, a number of them are repetitive, which is not bad I think.

M: Do you imply it is good for learners to revise?

T: Yes, this is what I meant.

M: Did you ever need to bring your own material – grammar tasks in class?

T: Yes, sometimes yes. Sometimes for example, I brought material from foreign publishers, with pictures, drawings, sketches, which were very interesting, because the book is old as I said.

M: Mmm. I see. What about the activities? What activities are included in the course book? I mean reading, writing, listening and speaking activities.

T: There are reading comprehension tasks basically. There are also grammar tasks and some listening ones.

M: And listening. Are these activities appropriate for the needs of the course?

T: Some of them are. The activities are too many. The book is very big. It has a lot of pages.

M: Are they a lot?

T: Yes, they are. It is impossible to teach this material in one year.

M: For how many hours a week?

T: For three hours.

M. Which other activities does the course book focus on?

T: Just the writing activities.

M: Are there listening activities to promote the listening skills?

T: No, no there aren't; because the book has a grammar and structural orientation.

M: I see. Do these tasks arouse learners' interest for active participation in class or does it make them bored?

T: The book is difficult and makes them feel bored.

M: Mmm. Is there a variety of tasks? Do they care for all learning styles?

T: No, I don't think so.

M: You mentioned that there is not a cassette. Are there any listening exercises in the book however?

T: Yes, few, and we, the teachers, read them to the students....

M: Do you have the transcripts? Are there in the book?

T: I don't remember well, but I think I found something somewhere, in the internet, I am not sure. Generally however, none of the English books in Vocational schools have cassettes. So we are forced to do something else. We make photocopies and we bring cassettes from home, from various publishers, this...

M: Are there any speaking activities, like role-plays or simulations for instance?

T: No, there is nothing like that in this book. But I do them sometimes because I like them. And they are very effective. Role playing is very effective.

M: Do they students like it?

T: Yes, they like it very much. But we don't have something, like a model, to show us what to do. We have to think and find something, looking in various books. And the Vocational School learners do not have a high level of English, so they, we need a lot of work.

M: Shall we talk about the visual material now? What do you think of it? I mean pictures, diagrams, paper...

T: It's of poor quality. The pictures are old and black and white, the sketches are not attractive, and the paper is of bad quality. It is an old book and not attractive at all.

M: Mmm. Do students compare it with others in the market for example?

T: Of course they do, of course. The books in the market are so many and as you know, students like to use computers and they see a lot of things in there...

M: At least are the pictures relevant to the subject?

T: Yes, sure.

M: Are they relevant to working environments?

T: Yes, I could say they are, but they are not interesting.

M: Ok. Well, from your experience, does the course book focus on communication?

T: No, it doesn't. It's up to us to do what we can.

M: Well, another thing I would like to ask you is which things you consider hard in this book, what tired you or troubled you while teaching it?

T: The way it is written. It is very concisely written, without any pleasant pictures or situations... It is boring and old, old fashioned.

M: So, do you think there should be changes, improvement, additions to the book?

T: In my opinion the book has to change. I don't see how we could add or amend something. For example, change the typewriter and use computer? This is not complete work. I think it should be written all over again, with a different focus.

M: So, would you like to share with me some of these ideas regarding changes?

T: Sure. Well, first the whole presentation of the book has to change and be more attractive and pleasant with colored pictures, modern pictures. Second, it needs to have a communicative approach. Third, it must be accompanied by cds of sound and image. As well, it should contain various sites in every chapter, so that I can take my learners to the lab and do some nice activity with the computers, using internet, so that it is authentic, or watch a video. This is I think the best suggestion. Otherwise the students are bored of books. They like working with computers. Especially when we deal with language we need a different approach. We can't be in the classroom only with the pen and the board!

M: Good. Our conversation was really useful! Thank you so much for it! (thank you, thank you).

INTERVIEW 4: SONIA

M: Sonia, I would really like to thank you for this interview.

S: Thank you too!

M: Well, I would like to ask you how many years you have teaching English for

S: Oh! Let's see! I suppose for 29 years now!

M: Wow! It's a long time, isn't it? And from those years, how many have you been working for Vocational schools?

S: At least 15 years!

M: 15 years! Right! And how many years have you been teaching the course book for the "Economics and Administration" course for?

S: I have been teaching it ever since I started teaching in Vocational schools, that is for 15 years....

M: It is indeed a long time! You seem to have a long experience!

S: Yes, I suppose I do!

M: Right...

S: I have even memorized pages from the course book!

M: Impressive! I am sure your contribution to this research will be valuable!

S: I hope so!

M: Well, I would like to ask you about your learners' English language level, whether they are beginners, intermediate, advanced....

S: Well, the past years, the level of the students is not that good in English. We do have mixed ability classes and I can't actually define it but more or less it is B2, that is pre-intermediate, but we have a lot of students at A level

M: I see, they are indeed mixed ability classes....

S:Yes, we have elementary learners, yes they are mixed ability, though most learners in this course and sector of "Economics and Administration" have a better level than others even in English.

M: In your opinion, what should the learners' level be in order to understand the content of the course book?

S: I think it should be advanced

M: So, it should be more or less at least B2, right?

S: Yes, definitely so. This is because the course book does not teach you grammar, it rather revises it. It presupposes that grammar is already known to learners and it only refreshes their memory....

M: Right. What constitutes the teaching material? Except from the students' book, is there a grammar book, a companion, something else...

S: No. We only have the students' book and the teacher's notes. Just these two.

M: Right! You said there are also teacher's notes!

S: Yes, there are

M: Good! Have you been using them?

S: Sometimes, yes, I have. When I am not sure of the answer of an exercise, the correct answer I mean, then I look at it and I find it there.

M: I see. This...the teacher's notes, did you ask for it, or did it arrive at school along with the rest of the students' books?

S: I remember it had arrived at school with the other packages.

M: Right! Is there anything else which you might not have but other schools have it perhaps? Have you ever heard something like that?

S: No, I haven't. Neither did we have a cassette....

M: You didn't have a cassette either!

S: Never!

M: I suppose other schools don't have a cassette either?

S: There is nothing

M: Right, so, except from these two books. Right. Well, what would you like or need to have besides these two books in order to do your job right?

S: Look. Regarding grammar, I would say the input is more than plenty, it is supposed to revise the phenomena. It also has a lot of vocabulary, terminology, phrases, idioms and such. But what is missing I think is a communicative orientation which could give learners the chance to use the language they learn and practice how to use their English in their working environment, in an office, in an exhibition and so on. It should include role-plays, split dialogues, so that learners can apply the expressions they learn and really use them.

M: I see. What about other surplus material? Do you think that a companion, an extra grammar book, a workbook for example would be helpful or necessary?

S: Yes, we need such books and the students need them too. It wouldn't have to be something separate though. It could be enough to have this material in the appendices. It would be very useful.

M: I see.

S: I think a booklet with grammar theory (basic tenses, articles, Passive Voice, Conditionals, basic concepts) are necessary so that the teacher does not have to photocopy them all the time from other books...

M: I suppose you bring your material in class Sonia, don't you?

S: Yes, I bring photocopies.

M: Do your learners need it?

S: Yes, especially when we do grammar exercises, because my classes are mixed ability, and some exercises in the course book do not have all the phenomena, derivatives for instance, but it has conditionals on the other hand. What I mean is that the material is not graded from easier to more difficult to help the learners. So, I am forced to bring my own material from home, my own photocopies...

M: Right! Well, I would like to ask you now about the curriculum of the "Economics and Administration" sector...

S: I have no idea...

M: Have you ever had some information on it by the school or the school advisor, the Ministry of Education perhaps?

S: Well, I had no information or guidance

M: Right. Another thing. What do you think the methodological approach of the course book is? Is it a grammar centered approach, a communicative one, conceptual, what would you say?

S: It is certainly not communicative. I would say it is grammar centered and conceptual. It focuses on lexis and phrases. It is not communicative at all because it does not include situations based on which the learners could use the language to produce speech. It also makes a refreshing of grammar.

M: I see. Well, what about the vocabulary? Would you say it is rich? And is it relevant to this speciality?

S: Yes, I would say it is. There is plenty of terminology in the course book.

M: I see. And how is this terminology presented in the course book, how is it suggested to be taught?

S: Well, in the end of every chapter there is a list of words. There is also a list in the end of the course book. This means that students don't have to write the vocabulary because it is ready for them and they only need to add words they don't know and are not in the list.

M: Ok! Now, could you tell me a few things about the texts? Do you think they are difficult, easy, pleasant, boring, authentic or not?

S: Well, regarding the texts, when we have a dialogue, not other texts, then, this is quite pleasant and informative because there is new vocabulary, terminology which the students have to learn. The texts are also good, but many of them are very difficult, with demanding terminology and they are very difficult for the learners.

M: Right!

S: Compared to other Vocational school books, which are unacceptable, this has minimum grammatical or spelling mistakes. In this sense, it is a very good book.

M: I see! What about the content of the texts? Is it contemporary? Does it introduce contemporary working environments? I know it is quite old....

S: Yes, it is very old. It surely doesn't contain contemporary working environments. It is old-fashioned, especially when it comes to office equipment. For example, it still includes telexes. We don't use telexes any more. It also talks about drachmas. We don't use drachmas any more. We use Euros. But it includes pictures of offices, of staff, of coffee shops, etc.

M: Do you think that the texts are motivational for learners? Do they find them interesting?

S: Yes, they do, but I don't know which teaching method to follow in this book. Basically, I read the texts to them and then I translate them, because not all of them can do that. In the beginning I tried to ask them read the text themselves, without translating them, and asked them to tell me a few things about it. But this did not work because few could participate and few students knew the necessary vocabulary. So I realized that I should read and translate it for them, sentence by sentence, word by word and after that one student to read it without translating it and tell us what it said. And this worked better because they could understand and attend the lesson.

M: Right. Well, what about the activities? You mentioned there is no cassette for example.

S: No, unfortunately there isn't it.

M: But does it have listening exercises?

S: Yes, there are some, but we can't do them because we have neither a cassette nor the transcripts.

M: What other activities does the book include? For example, are there activities to practice writing skills...are there questions underneath the texts for instance?

S: There are comprehension questions mixed with some questions asking what the student thinks of something...

M: What about speaking activities?

S: There are some grammar tasks with blanks, to fill in the correct tense, some tables to fill in verbs or nouns, some tasks that ask them to do an ad in a newspaper and talk about why they would like this job, and this is also a letter to write.

M: Are these tasks many?

S: No, I would say they are scarce

M: I see. However, these scarce activities, do they provide authentic communicative situations?

S: No, or I should probably say just a 3% of them may do it.

M: Right. I would like to ask you now which of the four skills the book emphasizes.

S: The writing skills

M: I see.

S: The writing skills regarding grammar of course.

M: And what do students think of them? Do they find them pleasant, boring, easy, difficult?

S: These tasks are too many and because of that they are boring for the students. Every chapter has its questions, around 5, 6 or 7. If they were 2, 3 or 4 at the most, it would be more interesting. So, when I see that students complain and start saying “More exercises!!”, then, I omit some because I know it will tire them and I move forward to an easier one, like fill in the gaps for example.

M: I see. Now, what do you think of the visual material? I mean the photos, the quality of paper, do you think it is contemporary, attractive or not?

S: No, it isn't. The book needs a makeover.

M: I see. And how exactly is it?

S: Well, the paper is not exactly made of good quality paper let's say!! It is that old yellow and worn paper... you know... and the sketches and the pictures, they are like cartoons, they look very old-fashioned, they need a makeover; and the photos, too. For example, let's take the mobile phones. It shows the very first mobile that Sony Erickson had produced, you know

that big apparatus with that antenna on top! ... Students see it and keep asking me if this is a phone and laugh!

M: Do students compare the visual material with that of books sold in the market?

S: Yes, yes, they go, “how is this book? It’s terrible” ... this sort of stuff.

M: Right

S: What I mean is that the visual material and its whole design is worse than its content. I like the book though, I have been teaching it for many years, it is a good book but the visual material makes it look worse.

M: I see. Well, do you think that the book prepares learners adequately for the course needs?

S: Yes, I think it does. As long as we don’t miss any teaching hours and we have time to teach all the material, which is a lot, and the teacher can select some lessons....

M: And, do you think the book emphasizes communication and use of their listening and speaking skills?

S: No, unfortunately it doesn’t. It’s one of its negative points. Opposed to the amount of material it provides students with, it gives them no chance to apply this knowledge. Communication is non-existent. There is no role-playing for instance, or situations which could help them apply the language in a speaking environment.

M: Do you mean that it focuses on reading and writing rather than speaking and listening?

S: Well, it gives them vocabulary, they know what they will find in an office, what the furniture or the equipment is, a file drawer for instance, but it doesn’t ask them to practice a dialogue saying to someone how to bring them this file for example.

M: So, they can’t use this knowledge for communicative purposes...

S: No, they can’t, because they don’t have the chance to use this knowledge orally.

M:I see. So, do you think there should be any changes, additions or improvement in the book?

S: Yes, first of all it should contain communicative activities. This part needs to be enhanced because it is non-existent. Secondly, the visual material needs to change, the illustration, the

photos, etc. Third, the book needs to be linked with new technologies and contemporary material – it can't talk about telexes or drachmas for example. Another thing is that, in my opinion, the book must include a grammar summary like there is for the vocabulary. Also, the layout needs to be renewed, to use a better quality paper, to become more attractive. It should also have less exercises in each chapter, 3-4 instead of 6-7 for instance, so as not to be tiring.

M: I see!

S: This is what I think!

M: Ok! Thank you very much for this interview!

S: Thank you, too!

INTERVIEW 5: TETA

M: Teta, thank you so much for our talk. Can you please tell me how many years have you been teaching English for?

T: 15

M: And how many years have you been working at Vocational Schools?

T: Five

M: How many years have you been teaching the course book of the "Economics and Administration" sector?

T: 3 years

M: Right. What would you say your learners' English language level is?

T: The majority has an intermediate level. Very few are advanced and some are beginners.

M: I see. In your opinion, what level should the learners have in order to cope with the book?

T: I would say definitely above intermediate. I would say at least B2 level.

M: So, you're saying Upper Intermediate to Lower (B2).

T: Yes, yes, that's right.

M: What does the teaching material of the course consist of?

T: At the moment, what we have is the student's book, thank God, so as to have some contact with the language and an English book. Other than that...

M: You mean, there is nothing else? Just the student's book?

T: Just that!

M: Do you happen to know if there is something else available which you don't have in your school but other schools have it?

T: E. I presume that logically thinking, there should be a cassette somewhere, because there are a couple of listening exercises but there is nothing.

M: You mean you never had it in your school....

T: Never, never, and as you understand, I have no help on this...

M: I see. So, talking about lacks, what would you say is missing from the teaching material of the course?

T: In the first place I don't have any teacher's notes.

M: Mmm

T: ..which could give me some extra ideas on to how to move on with the lesson, some extra exercises if I need, and cassettes, there are no cassettes or cds, and perhaps some dvds, so we can see some real life situations and listen to the language, these things are missing I think.

M: Mmm. Well, are you aware of the content of the curriculum?

T: No, I have never seen it. There is nothing in our school.

M: So, you were never informed about it.

T: No, never.

M: What would you say the methodological approach of the particular course book is?

T: Well, there are the texts, and the vocabulary and grammar but other than that, nothing...Shouldn't the learners practise the language? Apply what they learn? There is no communication.

M: What about the vocabulary? What do you think of it?

T: Well, it is a lot, but I think I should be given the chance to help learners apply it somewhere. It is a lot, more than enough, but we have got to find out ways to apply it in real life situations.

M: I see. Can you tell me please if this vocabulary is relevant to the course needs?

T: Well, it does have terminology. But it needs to be contemporary. Things have changed, communication means have changed too, new technologies have emerged, so the vocabulary needs to be upgraded.

M: How is the vocabulary presented? How is it suggested to be taught?

T: The vocabulary is in the texts and is also given on a list in the end of the text, a very long list of words I would say...

M: Mmm. What about the texts? What do you think of them?

T: The texts could present real life situations but they are just written for the needs of the book. Sometimes they remind us nothing of what could really happen in an office, with an employee, who wants to communicate with someone. I believe they were written just for the sake of writing something in order to add it in the book, to have something to teach and that's it.

M: I see. Do you consider the texts easy or difficult for your learners?

T: I suppose neither too hard, nor too easy.

M: So, something in the between...

T: Yes, I would say yes, I think so...

M: And do you think they are interesting or boring? How do the students find them?

T: I think they don't find them interesting at all; On the contrary. They find them very boring. It's like reading a book which doesn't motivate you to read it because it doesn't give you the real picture of what is going on in the working environment of an office let's say. They are not authentic, that's why.

M: I see. What about their content? Is it updated or not?

T: It needs to be modernized because there have been a lot of changes over the past years. We can't stay at what used to happen more than 15 years ago for example. Now we have e-mails, not faxes and communication methods have changed. The book needs to show these to the learners, this is what it needs to teach them...

M: I see. Well, what do you think of the grammar in the book? Is it as much as it should be, does it need changes, more exercises? What would you say?

T: The grammar in the book is enough and it is in an advanced level. It offers exercises but the way they are presented is boring. Instead, it should ask learners to use grammar to produce sentences, so as to use the language and learn it better, speak and think better this way...

M: Right! I understand that there is no application of theory to practice, is that right?

T: Yes, that's right. Just by doing an exercise is not enough, there is more to it...there is no variety.

M: Ok. What about the activities? You said there are no cassettes. But are there listening exercises?

T: Yes, there are a few, but how can they be done if there are no cassettes?

M: I see...

T: And since there is nothing in the teacher's notes, that is we have no transcripts, we can't read them for example for the learners to listen...

M: I see... What about writing activities? Exercises, letters for example?

T: Yes, there are

M: Ok. And oral tasks?

T: No, there are no oral tasks. I think this is very bad, especially for someone who is supposed to work in the market and needs to communicate, listen or speak on the phone.

M: So, I can understand there are no tasks which train learners for oral communication...

T: No, there aren't. There are no tasks which would help them simulate office working situations and express themselves accordingly.

M: I see. What about the number of the writing activities? Are they many, a few, more than enough, scarce, what would you say?

T: They are plenty.

M: Mmm. Can I ask you whether you consider them easy or difficult and what do students think of them? I mean if they are easy or difficult for them to do...

T: Because the level of the book is quite advanced and the students have a lower linguistic level, the book is quite difficult, especially in grammar.

M: And what about the students? Is there participation? Do they find the tasks pleasant or boring?

T: Well, most of the time they are bored, because things are repetitive and they could appreciate some variety, something more vivid and interesting...

M: From your words I understand that the book is not that motivational for learners and does not enhance their participation, is that right?

T: Yes, they are bored, yes, yes.

M: What about the visual material of the book?

T: What do you mean?

M: I mean the pictures, the paper, its quality, what do you think of it?

T: Well. I would say I have seen a lot better. In my opinion the quality of paper is not attractive at all. It looks like photocopy paper. It looks old. Even the pictures remind of the past, not something modern, of today.

M: You are saying it isn't contemporary?

T: No, it isn't

M: And that means that it doesn't show contemporary working environments?

T: No, it doesn't.

M: I see. What about the learners? What do they think of them?

T: Very bored. They always ask "what is this", what is the other? They don't like them. They are not pleased. Especially when they see the books from the market, other English books, at private schools and they see so many differences...

M: You mean they compare their books with those in the market?

T: Of course they do. And they find them a lot better.

M: I see. Well, you mentioned something about few listening exercises but no cassettes, right?

T: Right. There are no cassettes. Nobody has sent or given us anything in the school.

M: So, I guess, you can't do listening exercises then..

T: That's right!

M: Right! Thinking of all those things you have told me so far about the lacks and problems in the book, would you say that it helps you fulfil your teaching goals?

T: Well, I am responsible to prepare learners for their future working English language needs as office employees. I need to teach them a certain linguistic input, for professional use in the future. I think that I cannot do this correctly because I don't have what I need from the book. I need the book to help me train the learners in speaking and listening as well. Students need vocabulary and grammar but they also need speech. They may know grammar perfectly in theory but they also need to use it and apply it in speech.

M: I see. And what do you do? Do you ever bring your own material in school? From other books I mean...

T: Well, as you understand, I am forced to. Learners need to be trained accordingly and listen to native speaking. They need to understand...

M: So, your students ask this from you...

T: That is correct! But even when they don't do it, I do it anyway! Because I want to see a happy class! A different class!

M: So, you mean that the material you bring them, ... they find it more interesting..

T: Yes. First of all, we sort of get away a little from this boring repetitive order of things in the book. So, with the material I bring them they listen to new things, the do things that are interesting and contemporary...

M: Mmm.

T: I think I help them this way...

M: So, you mean that the exercises in the book are repetitive, they are all the same...

T:Mmm, yes.

M: Well, Can you please tell me if you think there ought to be some changes or improvements in this book?

T: Yes, there need to be changes. Firstly, the book needs to be modernized. The texts need to be more modern, contemporary. They also need to add listening tasks, a lot of them. And because learners need to apply what they learn to real life situations the book needs to have speaking tasks as well, for example role plays. Grammar and lexis should also be given in a different way with a bigger variety of tasks. And of course, I need someone to show me how to do things, what I need to say that I haven't thought of so far, so that I can help them more.

M: Teta, thank you so much for this interview and I hope everything goes as you wish!

T: Thank you! You too!

INTERVIEW 6: NIKOL

M: Nikol, thank you very much for this conversation. So, how many years have you been teaching English for?

N: 17 years.

M: And how many of these years have you been working at Vocational schools?

N: 10 years.

M: Ok! And...how many years have you been teaching the course book of the “Economics and Administration” course for?

N: 5 years.

M: Ok! Can you please tell me the English language level of your students in this course?

N: Based on the Common European Framework of Languages I would say some of them are at B2 level but the majority are A1 or A2.

M: It doesn't sound too high!

N: No, it isn't!

M; Mmm. What should the level of your learners be in order to cope with the specific book do you think?

N: Definitely above B2 level.

M: Mmm. I see. So, Can you tell me what the teaching material consists of?

N: Just the student's book.

M: Just the student's book, (N: unfortunately) isn't there anything else? (N: unfortunately). Do you perhaps know if there is something available elsewhere, which your school doesn't have?

N: Perhaps they may have a cassette, which we, however, have never seen.

M: Right! Well, would you say there are other things that are missing, that you would need in the book or generally to add to the teaching material?

N: Yes, definitely the teacher's notes, a grammar book, a companion, a workbook...

M: Right. Are you aware of the content of the curriculum of the specific course?

N: No, I am not!

M: So, you have never been informed?

N: No, never!

M: Well, in your opinion, what is the methodological approach of the course book? I mean would you say it focuses on communication, grammar, lexis, other...

N: Well, it reminds me of very old teaching situations, what we use to call grammar-centered approach, but certainly not communicative.

M: Mmm. So, you would say it emphasizes grammar?

N: Grammar and lexis

M: And what is the linguistic level of the book?

N: Above B2

M: It sounds demanding...

N: Yes, it is.

M: And does the level of the book comply to the learners' linguistic level?

N: Certainly not. Most learners are A1 level.

M: Right. What about the vocabulary?

N: Well, there is a lot of vocabulary but I think it needs enrichment.

M: I see. Is it relevant to the course needs however?

N: Well, it is relevant to the terminology of the course but I think it needs to be contemporary. It needs refreshing, to adapt to more modern terms.

M: Mmm. I see. And how is this vocabulary presented and suggested to be taught?

N: It is mainly a list of words to be memorized.

M: So, it implies that learners need to learn words by heart?

N: Yes, that is right.

M: Do you also add words yourself, or do you just use the ones in the book?

N: Yes, I give others too.

M: Right. Well, what about the texts? What do you think of them?

N: Well, Marianthi, I would say they are rather difficult. Especially when we move to the end of the book and they are not at all authentic

M: So, would you say that they are especially written for the book?

N: Yes, like they used to do in the past and the students find them boring.

M: Do you mean that the content is not contemporary?

N: Not at all. Not at all.

M: So, do you think that the texts arouse learners interest for participation or not? And what about you? Do you like them? Do you find them boring?

N: No, they are not interesting, they are boring.

M: What about grammar?

N: There is a lot of grammar but it does not cover learners' needs. There should be an extra grammar book with exercises which are at the level of the learners.

M: I guess because as you said your learners' level is very low and the grammar of the book is demanding, right?

N: Yes, but even if it weren't like this, a supplementary book is always necessary.

M: Mmm. So, I understand you find revision in grammar useful, right?

N: Yes, right.

M: Ok. And what about the exercises? What form do they have? Is there a variety?

N: Well, the exercises are all of the same style. They cannot cover the differences in the linguistic level among learners.

M: I see. And what do your students think of them?

N: They find them boring and dull.

M: Well, grammar is rather boring anyway, isn't it?

N: Well, it is, especially now that learners use the internet and find so many interesting tasks there...

M: You are right! Well, what about skills activities? You know, writing, reading ...

N: Yes, there are writing and reading only. Just these.

M: You mean, there are no listening or speaking tasks?

N: No, the book has failed to offer this skills practice which is a communicative feature anyway and the book doesn't have it as we have already said.

M: I see. But there are no listening tasks?

N: Yes, there are some but what difference does it make? There is no cassette to listen to!

M: I see. And what about the writing activities you mentioned? Letters for example?

N: Mmm. There are letters based on some models.

M: And do the skills in general cover the learners' needs?

N: No, not at all. There needs to be a bigger variety of tasks. The book needs to be enriched with listening tasks, role plays, games...

M: Mmm. I see. Now, what do you think of the visual material? You know, pictures and ...

N: Let me tell you in just one word: Old-fashioned!

M: Old-fashioned you are saying!

N: Completely old!

M: You mean you don't find the pictures interesting...

N: No, of course not. If you compare them to what there is in the books that are in the market, you will understand. The kids see that.

M: So, you would say that the quality is not that good?

N: Poor! Poor!

M: The pictures however, are they relevant to the aims of the course?

N: Yes, I suppose so. But is this enough?

M: I see. So how do learners feel about it?

N: It bores them.

M: I see. And do the kids ask you to bring material of your own?

N: Yes, yes, they do.

M: So, do you? Do you bring photos from working environments?

N: Yes, to make it more interesting. But for me, this is a lot, it takes a lot of my time. I am not so familiar with the computer and I prefer to bring pictures from magazines...

M: I see. So, you don't use the internet...

N: No, unfortunately. The students are more familiar with this, they search at home and do more on their own.

M: I know what you mean. Students know a lot, sometimes more than we do; And what about the texts? Are they authentic?

N: No, not at all.

M: I see! Well, with all that the book offers, would you say it helps you fulfill your teaching targets, that is, to prepare your learners for their future working environments and the use of English?

N: Of course not. Nobody could be prepared just by having to read, doing grammar and learning vocabulary if they don't practice using the language with relevant speaking activities.

M: Mmm. So, the book doesn't emphasize communication, does it?

N: No, it doesn't

M: Right. Well, Nikol, I would like to ask you what it is that troubles you the most when teaching?

N: Well, I would say the lack of motive, like it happens with this old book, which makes students indifferent.

M: So, they are not interested.....

N: No. And when this happens it kills me really

M: I guess the students are naughty when they are not interested

N: Certainly, and it's so disappointing!

M: Yes, because otherwise, it makes you feel good and you want to keep on trying harder, isn't that right?

N: Well, I keep on going! I don't give up!

M: Good! Well, I would like to ask you now if you think there ought to be any changes, additions, improvement in the book...What do you think?

N: From the start. Completely from the start!

M: Could you please be more specific?

N: Well, first of all there needs to be a common orientation at all school levels and in the specific book they should produce appropriate tasks which can help learners practice the language and prepare themselves.

M: I suppose, the tasks should be interesting too, after what you have already said...

N: Definitely yes.

M: You also mentioned you would like it to be contemporary ...

N: Yes, that is right

M: And what additions, what supplementary material would you like, if any?

N: ...Grammar book, companion, with motivating tasks, role plays, for learners to improvise.

M: Right. Well. Nikol, thank you very much for this interview. I wish you the best!

N: Thank you! I need your wishes!

INTERVIEW 7: KATREEN

M: Katreen, thank you very much for taking part in this interview. Well, how many years have you been teaching English for?

K: Thank you too. Sixteen and more I could say.

M: And how many years of these have you been working at Vocational Schools?

K: Almost eight years.

M: Right. And how many years have you been teaching the course book of the “Economics and Administration” course?

K: 4 years.

M: And what is the level of the learners at this course?

K: I would say it is not good. Not even moderate. And there is a linguistic heterogeneity, which is very difficult for the teacher.

M: In your opinion, what should the level of the learners be to cope with the demands of the book?

K: I believe it should be quite high, especially in grammar.

M: Right. And Katreen, what does the teaching material in general consist of?

K: Just the student’s book. Nothing else.

M: Right. Is there anything else in other schools you haven’t come across in your school?

K: I don’t know. Honestly, I have no information. I myself have had only this book. Nothing else.

M: Right. So, do you think there are things missing from the teaching material and the book?

K: Basically there should be an extra vocabulary book and a grammar book. As well, visual and listening material.

M: Ok. Well, are you aware of the curriculum of the specific course?

K: Well, all these years we have been facing the same inconsistency problems. We don't know what to teach, what for and we have no information. If we don't ask, nobody will tell us and we are always unclear about many things.

M: I see. Well, what do you think the methodological approach of the book is? Does it focus on grammar, communication, lexis, what?

K: Generally, I am not very clear with the methodological approach of this book. I know it is supposed to prepare learners for office employees, to communicate with people, to talk on the phone, to write a document, but I don't see this being done through the book, the aim is not clear.

M: I see. Well, what is the level of the book would you say?

K: I suppose it is between B1 and B2 but the book presupposes that students need to have mastered the grammatical phenomena and all the details and that at least know how to write in English and make good syntax with proper vocabulary.

M: I see. Do you think that the level of the book complies with the level of the learners?

K: No, because the level of the learners is a lot lower than that of the book.

M: What about the vocabulary? What do you think of it?

K: The way it is presented makes it very boring. But there should also be changes and add more communicative chunks of speech, so that learners use them to produce speech. It is not logical to ask them to memorize list of words but to train them how to use them.

M: I see. Is the vocabulary however relevant to the needs of the course and the working needs of today?

K: No, I don't think it is.

M: And how is the vocabulary presented? How does the book suggest its teaching?

K: Well, what I do is that I choose some words, which I think important, I explain them and I ask the learners to learn them. But there is a list of these words but they are not so communicative or of contemporary use for the learners to use.

M: I see. Now, what about the texts? What do you think of the texts?

K: Well, I can't say they are that difficult. They are not very easy either, but they are boring and the students do not pay attention...

M: Is their content contemporary?

K: Well, how should I describe it? They are not ...vivid. They are stereotype and many times they give you the impression that they have nothing to do with the aims of the course.

M: I see. What about the grammar? Is it enough? A little? A lot? What do you think?

K: The texts presuppose a good knowledge of grammar, but this is not the case with the learners. Since there is not an extra grammar book, I consider this a great lack and so I try to do things on my own. What I mean is that there is no guidance to show us what to do. So, I would say there is grammar but it is not enough for the needs of my students.

M: I see. But is there a variety at least? Do the grammar activities cater for the learners' mixed ability level?

K: After every text there is a grammatical phenomenon introduced but it is of the same style and I consider it boring. There is no variety and it is not interesting.

M: Right. Well, what about the content of the texts? Are the texts authentic?

K: No, I can't say they are authentic. They try to be like the authentic ones but they fail to do so and show how the contemporary working environment really is.

M: And what about skills practice?

K: Well, skills are very important, and I consider communication as most important. Role plays, which are very useful, are non-existent though, just like listening because we have never seen a cassette so far.

M: Right!

K: ...No, never. If we had a cassette, and there are a few exercises, it would have been a lot better.

M: I see. No speaking and listening tasks. Are there writing skills tasks?

K: Yes, there are.

M: Do they cover the learners' needs?

K: No, I wouldn't say so. And they are also boring. We can't teach texts, 5 words and 3 lines of grammar for a whole teaching hour all the time. This is not learning a language. It is not communication!

M: So, where does the book focus on?

K: It focuses on texts, then on vocabulary and then on grammar.

M: Do you think these activities enhance learners' active participation in the lesson?

K: No, because the texts are boring and since there are no prompts for speaking skills practice, these activities are boring and the lesson becomes dull.

M: So, I understand there is no variety of tasks, is there?

K: No, I can't say there is! They repeat themselves!

M: Right! And what do you think of the visual material?

K: You mean the inside of the book?

M: Yes, what is your opinion?

K: Firstly, the illustration is not nice. We would expect from an English book the opposite, just like the books in the market, which have nice colors, contemporary pictures, nice letters. However, this is an old worn like book!

M: So, would you say that the pictures do not depict contemporary working environments?

K: No, they are very old! The book is dull, old and boring!

M: So, I understand that it is not so motivational for learners, is it?

K: Unfortunately it isn't. However, when I bring my material, from magazines, with nice colors, I have seen that student participate more. So I think that the book needs a big change.

M: I see. And would you say that the book links to the real needs of this course?

K: I'm afraid it doesn't.

M: And from what you have already said is it communicative?

K: No, it isn't.

M: Mmm. So, given all that, would you say that it helps you fulfill your teaching goals?

K: No, on the contrary I would say!

M: So, Katreen, which are some of the major difficulties you are facing with this book?

K: Well, the most important thing is that I myself am bored of this book! And it is very discouraging to have to teach a book you are bored of! The next thing is that students also feel this way and they are indifferent. And given the mixed ability level as well, you understand my job becomes very difficult! Perhaps it is my fault, I don't know! But the book doesn't help me at all! It is wrong, and this is very important for me!

M: So, do you think there should be changes, additions, improvement and so on?

K: I believe that the book needs to change from the start. I would change it completely, even its size, and make it look like a book for foreign languages! I consider the illustration important as well and the texts, which I would like them authentic, contemporary and communicative. I would also like some extra material like an extra grammar book. Some extra vocabulary might help and definitely listening and speaking tasks. Without listening to English, what kind of English shall we learn?

M: I see! Well, thank you very much for this talk and wish you well!

K: You too!

INTERVIEW 8: ZOE

M: Zoe, thank you very much for this interview! Can you please tell me how many years you have been teaching English for?

Z: 30 years

M: And how many years have you been working at Vocational schools?

Z: 8 years

M: Right! And how many of those years have you been teaching the course book of the “Economics and Administration” course?

Z: 8 years

M: Well, can you please tell me the level of your learners?

Z: Some of them are advanced and some are beginners. The majority are rather in an intermediate level.

M: And what do you think their level should be in order to cope with the needs of the book?

Z: At least better than the intermediate level because the book is quite demanding.

M: Zoe, what does the material consist of?

Z: We have nothing more than the student’s book only! Unfortunately!

M: There is not a teacher’s book?

Z: No, there isn’t

M: I see. Is there by any chance something else which you don’t have but other schools have it perhaps?

Z: I have spoken to colleagues and I know there is nothing else.

M: Well, what do you think is missing and you would like to have?

Z: Definitely a teacher’s book and cassettes.

M: Have you ever needed an extra grammar book?

Z: It might have been useful but we mostly need listening tasks and we don't have cassettes.

M: Right. Well, are you aware of the curriculum of the course?

Z: I have searched myself and I have seen that the Pedagogical Instituted focuses on a communicative approach so that learners prepare themselves for their speciality.

M: ...Right. Would you say that this is also the approach of the book?

Z: No, it focuses on grammar and vocabulary. But it is not communicative like the Pedagogical Institute would like the book to be. The book does not have the potential.

M: I see. What about the vocabulary? Is it appropriate for the course?

Z: It may be but it needs improvement.

M: But is it relevant to the needs of the course?

Z: It is but the terminology has to be updated because the book is old.

M : Right. And how is the vocabulary presented? How is it suggested to be given to the learners?

Z: It comes in lists after texts but it is not enough. My students need more vocabulary and as I said updated.

M: And what do you think of the texts in the book?

Z: They are all especially made for the book and of low quality!

M: So they are not authentic you mean?

Z: No, they are not

M: Would you say they are easy, difficult, pleasant, boring, what?

Z: Rather difficult and boring

M: Why?

Z: Because they are old.

M: You mean their content is not modern...

Z: No, and they do not arouse anyone's interest...

M: I see. What is your opinion on the grammar in the book? Is it enough, a lot, not enough? What do you think?

Z: The grammar is good, it is enough I could say but the students need a lot of revision and more exercises in their level because their level is lower than the book's.

M: At least, is there a variety of tasks?

Z: They all have the same style. But students would like to do different things. They would like to listen to a song once in a while let's say.

M: And what about the activities? Are all skills practiced?

Z: No, they aren't

M: What do you mean?

Z: Well, there are vocabulary exercises but nothing about speaking for example, dialogues, to ask learners role play something

M: And do you bring material of your own?

Z: Certainly. There is so much in the market that we just have to look.

M: You also mentioned there is not a cassette....

Z: Yes, that's right! There are some tasks but we can't do them

M: What about the writing activities?

Z: There are texts to fill in blanks, this sort of staff.

M: So, I suppose there is no communication practice through the book?

Z: No, not at all

M: And does the book motivate learners to participate in the lesson?

Z: No, because the book is boring and students do not respond positively.

M: What about when you bring your own material?

Z: Things are better. They find it more interesting.

M: What would you have to say about the visual material?

Z: The pictures, I see. They are old fashioned I would say.

M: Can you be more specific please?

Z: Well, it would have been better if the pictures were more vivid and modern, with modern offices and more color, because the color is dull, not like the pictures you can find in modern books, magazines or in the internet.

M: Do your students compare this book to other books in the market?

Z: Certainly.

M: And how do you respond to them when they do that?

Z: I tell them that it may change in the future!

M: Right! So, do you think there need to be changes, or additions in the book?

Z: Yes, of course it needs renewal both in the content and in the appearance. The needs of today's learners are different from the needs of the learners of the period that the book was written. So, how can we make it better? More interesting? Add variety, add authentic texts, variety regarding the level of the tasks. The book must also offer possibilities for communication and help learners understand what they hear, they will need this for their job. And of course, we need to have some extra material, like teacher's notes with instructions.

M: Right! Thank you very much and I hope something can be done about this book!

Z: I hope so! Thank you too!

APPENDIX VI: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How many years have you been teaching English for?
2. How many years have you been working or worked in Vocational Secondary Schools?
3. How many years have you been teaching or taught the course book of the “Economics and Administration” course?
4. Are you aware of the content of the curriculum of the office employees’ speciality of the particular course and its aims?
5. Which is its methodological approach in your opinion?
6. What does the teaching material consist of?
7. In your opinion, which is the linguistic level of the book?
8. In your opinion, which should the level of the learners who attend this course be in order to cope with the book?
9. In your opinion, does the level of the book comply with the level of the learners or not?
10. What do you think of the vocabulary?

Additional clarifying questions regarding vocabulary:

- (a) Is it a lot, enough, not enough, b) Do you think it is relevant to the course needs c) How is it presented and/or suggested to be taught by teachers? D) Do you think it is easy or difficult?)

11. What do you think of the texts?

Additional clarifying questions regarding texts:

- a) Do you think they are pleasant or boring? b) Do you think they discuss contemporary topics or not? c) Do you think they are related to contemporary working environments or not? d) Do you think they are authentic or especially

written for the purposes of the book? e) Do you think they introduce learners to the English language culture for social and professional reasons or not? f) Do you ever bring texts of your own? If yes why? If no, why not? g) Do you think that the texts motivate learners to participate in the lesson or not?)

12. What do you think of the grammar input of the book?

(Additional clarifying questions regarding grammar:

- a) Do you think the grammar tasks are appropriate for learners' level or not? b) Do you think they are easy or difficult? c) Do you think they have a variety or not? d) Do you think they are graded regarding their linguistic level or not? e) Do you think they cater for all learners' level and learning styles or not? f) Do you ever need extra grammar tasks or not? g) Do you ever bring your own grammar tasks? If yes why? If no, why not?)

13. What do you think of the skills practice in the book?

(Additional clarifying questions regarding skills:

- a) What tasks and skills does the book contain? b) Do you think it covers all four skills – reading/writing/speaking/listening or not? c) Do you think the tasks are enough for the needs of the course or not? d) Do you think they are easy or difficult? e) Do you think they are pleasant or boring? f) Do you think they motivate learners to actively participate in the lesson or not? g) Which skills do you think the book focuses on? h) Do you think that the listening and speaking skills train learners for authentic communicative situations or not? i) Do you think that the tasks cater for all learning styles or not? j) Do you think that there is variety in listening and speaking skills – role plays/games/dialogues/phone conversations/face to face interactions/group work activities or not? k) Do you think the reading/writing/listening/speaking tasks are relevant to the needs of the course or not? l) Do you think the reading/writing/listening/speaking tasks present authentic situations or not? m) Do you think the reading/writing/listening/speaking tasks are easy or difficult? n) Do you think the reading/writing/listening/speaking tasks are pleasant or boring? o) Did you ever need to bring tasks of your own? If yes why? If no, why not? p) In your opinion, do the current skills –

reading/writing/speaking/listening – prepare learners effectively for their future working English language needs or not?)

14. What do you think of the visual material in the book?

(additional clarifying questions regarding the visual material:

a) Do you think the visual material is relevant to the course needs – office equipment/office environment/office activities or not? b) Do you think it is contemporary or old? C) Do you think it is interesting or dull? D) Do you think it motivates learners to participate in the lesson or not? e) Do you ever bring visual material of your own? If yes why? If no, why not?

15. Which are the major difficulties you have confronted regarding the course book content?

16. In your opinion, does the course book help you fulfil your teaching goals or not?

17. In your opinion, does the course book focus on communication or not?

18. In your opinion does the course book prepare learners accordingly for their future professional English language needs or not?

19. In your opinion, is there need for changes, additions or improvement or not?

20. If no, why not? If yes, which are these do you think?

APPENDIX VII: PARTS OF THE INTERVIEW ANSWERS WITH THE GREATEST RESEARCH INTEREST

TEACHING MATERIAL	<p><i>There should be a cassette... We never had it however ...</i></p> <p><i>Nothing really, except the student's book</i></p> <p><i>The course book and teacher's notes, with answers to the exercises ...</i></p> <p><i>There were no instructions regarding teaching</i></p> <p><i>There are some listening texts but no cassettes, and there is nothing else to find</i></p> <p><i>Yes, [the teacher's book] and the student's book. Nothing else</i></p> <p><i>We only have the students' book and the teacher's notes. Just these two.</i></p> <p><i>Neither did we have a cassette</i></p> <p><i>At the moment, what we have is the student's book, thank God, so as to have some contact with the language and an English book.</i></p> <p><i>There should be a cassette somewhere, because there are a couple of listening exercises but there is nothing... any teacher's notes</i></p> <p><i>There are no cassettes. Nobody has sent or given us anything in the school</i></p>
METHODOLOGY	<p><i>It is full of grammar exercises, and lexis. I think this is where it focuses on</i></p> <p><i>They [tasks] focus on grammar and lexis</i></p> <p><i>Focuses on vocabulary mainly</i></p> <p><i>[Emphasizes] in writing ... or reading</i></p> <p><i>We mostly work on reading combined with vocabulary. This is the focus of the book I think</i></p> <p><i>It has a structural and conceptual approach. There is nothing communicative about it. Not at all</i></p> <p><i>At writing activities [it focuses]</i></p> <p><i>The book has a grammar and structural orientation</i></p> <p><i>No, it doesn't [focus on communication]. It's up to us to do what we can</i></p> <p><i>What is missing I think is a communicative orientation which could give learners the chance to use the language they learn and practice how to use their English in their working environment, in an office, in an exhibition and so on. It should include role-plays, split dialogues, so that learners can apply the expressions they learn and really use them.</i></p> <p><i>It is certainly not communicative. I would say it is grammar centered and conceptual. It focuses on lexis and phrases. It is not communicative at all because it does not include situations based on which the learners could use the language to produce speech.</i></p> <p><i>It also makes a refreshing of grammar</i></p> <p><i>The writing skills [it emphasizes] ... regarding grammar of course</i></p> <p><i>Well, there are the texts, and the vocabulary and grammar but other than that there is nothing. Shouldn't the learners practise the language? Apply what they learn? There is no communication.</i></p> <p><i>I am not very clear with the methodological approach of this book.</i></p> <p><i>It focuses on texts, then on vocabulary and then on grammar.</i></p> <p><i>No, it focuses on grammar and vocabulary. But it is not communicative like the Pedagogical Institute would like the book to be. The book</i></p>

	<i>does not have the potential.</i>
LEVEL	<p><i>We had a couple of good learners ....but mainly their level was Upper Elementary</i></p> <p><i>It is not appropriate for the learners' level</i></p> <p><i>Because for an A2 or B1 level learner, this course book is a real struggle</i></p> <p><i>I don't think learners could respond to this level because it is rather "elevated".</i></p> <p><i>Its content is difficult, and for learners that have no goals or the relevant linguistic level, it is not attractive at all. Third, it is not so friendly for their future working purposes.</i></p> <p><i>It is very difficult for many of them, though I tried to simplify it as much as I could and did what I thought was really necessary....</i></p> <p><i>A student should really be in an Upper Intermediate level to understand the book which is difficult</i></p> <p><i>The book is difficult and makes them feel bored.</i></p> <p><i>It should be advanced [learners' level to understand the content of the book]</i></p> <p><i>The course book does not teach you grammar, it rather revises it. It presupposes that grammar is already known to learners and it only refreshes their memory....</i></p> <p><i>The level of the book is quite advanced and the students have a lower linguistic level</i></p> <p><i>Grammar-centered approach, but certainly not communicative</i></p>
LEXIS	<p><i>The long list of lexis underneath the texts. This provokes a chaos to the students. And they are bored of them. They are also difficult for many of the learners.</i></p> <p><i>The vocabulary is a lot.</i></p> <p><i>It is good vocabulary for a proficient user of English but I think it is not easy for learners to use, nor do I think that office employees will need this kind of vocabulary for the production of oral or written speech. They may need it for letters or to read and understand some vocabulary...</i></p> <p><i>The vocabulary yes. It is quite extensive but very difficult for the real level of the learners.</i></p> <p><i>It also has a lot of vocabulary, terminology, phrases, idioms and such.</i></p> <p><i>Well, it does have terminology. But it needs to be contemporary. Things have changed, communication means have changed too; new technologies have emerged, so the vocabulary needs to be upgraded.</i></p> <p><i>There is a lot of vocabulary but I think it needs enrichment</i></p> <p><i>It is relevant to the terminology of the course but I think it needs to be contemporary. It needs refreshing, to adapt to more modern terms.</i></p> <p><i>It is [relevant to the needs of the course] but the terminology has to be updated because the book is old</i></p> <p><i>Certainly [brings material of her own]. There is so much in the market that we just have to look.</i></p>
TEXTS	<p><i>I don't like them. Many of them are irrelevant. How can I say it?</i></p> <p><i>Indifferent....Some texts that have letters are easier but many are</i></p>

	<p><i>difficult.</i></p> <p><i>Of course not. This is why I used to bring texts from newspapers and journals or books, mine</i></p> <p><i>There are a lot of texts, which are not authentic, but some of them are authentic like (for example, some letters, such as reference letters or memos) and in this sense, some of them may be relevant to the learners' future working needs</i></p> <p><i>Some of them are very big texts and some others are quite simple. But they are not authentic.</i></p> <p><i>They use contemporary topics as titles. A dialogue for example in an office, let's say, someone who leaves a memo to a secretary, but their approach is not contemporary. They are rather narration!</i></p> <p><i>The book is all about endless long texts that discourage students one, due to their size and two, due to their topics. So, though it refers to some relevant topics, the book ... the way they are given ... is boring for the learners...</i></p> <p><i>They are difficult for the learners. The topics are not contemporary ... or texts that have to do with typewriters or telexes, which we do not use anymore and the kids laugh because they don't know what these things are ... anything in the book should be contemporary and it should be linked to technology. Otherwise, the learners feel bored</i></p> <p><i>No, they are not authentic. They are especially written for the course book. It is an old book; a very old book and very difficult to use</i></p> <p><i>The texts are also good, but many of them are very difficult, with demanding terminology and they are very difficult for the learners.</i></p> <p><i>Yes, it is very old. It surely doesn't contain contemporary working environments. It is old-fashioned, especially when it comes to office equipment. For example, it still includes telexes. We don't use telexes any more. It also talks about drachmas. We don't use drachmas any more. We use Euros. But it includes pictures of offices, of staff, of coffee shops</i></p> <p><i>I realized that I should read and translate it for them, sentence by sentence and after that one student to read it without translating it and tell us what it said. And this worked better because they could understand and attend the lesson.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes they remind us nothing of what could really happen in an office, with an employee, who wants to communicate with someone. I believe they were written just for the sake of writing something in order to add it in the book, to have something to teach and that's it.</i></p> <p><i>I suppose they are neither too hard nor too easy</i></p> <p><i>I think they don't find them interesting at all; On the contrary. They find them very boring... They are not authentic, that's why</i></p> <p><i>It needs to be modernized [the content of texts] because there have been a lot of changes over the past years... Now we have e-mails, not faxes and communication methods have changed. The book needs to show these to the learners, this is what it needs to teach them....</i></p> <p><i>No, they are not interesting, they are boring</i></p> <p><i>I can't say they are that difficult. They are not very easy either, but they are boring and the students do not pay attention...</i></p>
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	<p><i>They are notvivid. They are stereotype and many times they give you the impression that they have nothing to do with the aims of the course.</i></p> <p><i>Rather difficult and boring</i></p>
<p>GRAMMAR</p>	<p><i>There is a variety and there are different kinds of tasks. But they are useless if we cannot work with them since only a small amount of them are close to the learners' level and we need to revise very basic things for them to understand</i></p> <p><i>The level is quite demanding. The exercises are good but for the students .....well,..I think they are many and difficult. I think the whole book is full of exercises...and lexis</i></p> <p><i>Yes, the students have a lot of gaps. We start from Present Continuous, can you imagine? I mean the tenses.....The book presupposes they already know this material....</i></p> <p><i>The book does not contain theory because it takes it for granted that all students know it. So we are forced to spend a lot of time learning the theory. If we had an accompanying grammar book, it would be more useful</i></p> <p><i>The exercises of the book are not bad I think, if anybody would like to focus there. But I think it is a waste of time. So many exercises that are not done...</i></p> <p><i>Perhaps a grammar book would be more useful, a small booklet let's say or something in the Appendices.</i></p> <p><i>It has somewhat less exercises compared to the vocabulary ones, but there is no theoretical background</i></p> <p><i>Regarding grammar, I would say the input is more than plenty, it is supposed to revise the phenomena.</i></p> <p><i>The grammar in the book is enough and it is in an advanced level. It offers exercises but the way they are presented is boring. Instead, it should ask learners to use grammar to produce sentences, so as to use the language and learn it better, speak and think better this way...</i></p> <p><i>The book is quite difficult, especially in grammar.</i></p> <p><i>There is a lot of grammar but it does not cover learners' needs. There should be an extra grammar book with exercises which are of the level of the learners</i></p> <p><i>The exercises are all of the same style. They cannot cover the differences in the linguistic level among learners.</i></p> <p><i>The grammar is good, it is enough I could say but the students need a lot of revision and more exercises in their level because their level is lower than the book's.</i></p>

<p>SKILLS</p>	<p><i>There are some [listening activities] but there is no cassette, so they cannot be practiced</i></p> <p><i>For those for example that like learning by listening, there is no concern from the book as there are no such activities. Neither is there for kinesthetic learners who like to move or do something pleasant because the exercises mainly ask you to write something and this is boring</i></p> <p><i>It would be nice if there were such activities [speaking]. The students love the theater (smiling), playing, standing up, simulating, laughing, using the language, communicating. Who wants to write all the time? If they do that they end up hating books. Instead it is more interesting to take them to the lab, give them some sites (it would be nice to be offered by the book) and work on a topic, something authentic with meaning, something real, not just grammar and theory.</i></p> <p><i>No, they are not authentic. If you teach learners only from the book you have them respond to the questions, they learn vocabulary, they write letters, and if of course you goby the book..... learners can do a load of grammar. But languages are not learned this way...Especially for learners who are supposed to be working in offices, how are they to understand, how are they to communicate? It will be impossible, they will not make it only with what the book offers. I find it rather difficult to be done. So, as you see, it's up to us to amend this... as always....</i></p> <p><i>How can a book focus on communication when it lacks listening or speaking tasks? And thinking that the learners of this sector need communication practice a lot, I don't know what to say!!</i></p> <p><i>There are writing tasks, which come after reading comprehension, grammar tasks, and listening tasks but no cassettes.</i></p> <p><i>No, there aren't [speaking activities]</i></p> <p><i>There is no variety. There are no listening activities for example...</i></p> <p><i>There aren't, no, scarce... [speaking activities]</i></p> <p><i>I think it is excessive [grammar tasks] for the level of the learners. It should be simpler I think.</i></p> <p><i>Nevertheless, a number of them are repetitive, which is not bad I think. There are reading comprehension tasks basically. There are also grammar tasks and some listening ones.</i></p> <p><i>No, there is nothing like that in this book [speaking activities, like role-plays or simulations]</i></p> <p><i>The material is not graded from easier to more difficult to help learners</i></p> <p><i>There are some [listening tasks], but we can't do them because we have neither a cassette nor the transcripts.</i></p> <p><i>Just a 3% of them Scarce speaking activities] may do it ..Provide authentic communicative situations]</i></p> <p><i>These tasks are too many and because of that they are boring for the students.</i></p> <p><i>No, unfortunately it doesn't [focus on communication]. It's one of its negative points. Opposed to the amount of material it provides students with, it gives them no chance to apply this knowledge. Communication is non-existent. There is no role-playing for instance, or situations which could help them apply the language in a speaking environment.</i></p>
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	<p><i>Well, it gives them vocabulary, they know what they will find in an office, what the furniture or the equipment is, a file drawer for instance, but it doesn't ask them to practice a dialogue saying to someone how to bring them this file for example.</i></p> <p><i>No, there are no oral tasks. I think this is very bad, especially for someone who is supposed to work in the market and needs to communicate, listen or speak on the phone.</i></p> <p><i>They are plenty [the writing activities]</i></p> <p><i>Well, I am responsible to prepare learners for their future working English language needs as office employees. I need to teach them a certain linguistic input, for professional use in the future. I think that I cannot do this correctly because I don't have what I need from the book. I need the book to help me train the learners in speaking and listening as well. Students need vocabulary and grammar but they also need speech. They may know grammar perfectly in theory but they also need to use it and apply it in speech.</i></p> <p><i>There are writing and reading [skills] only. Just these</i></p> <p><i>There are some [listening tasks] but what difference does it make?</i></p> <p><i>There is no cassette to listen to!</i></p> <p><i>There are letters based on some models</i></p> <p><i>The texts presuppose a good knowledge of grammar, but this is not the case with the learners. Since there is not an extra grammar book, I consider this a great lack and so I try to do things on my own. What I mean is there is no guidance to tell us what to do. So, I would say there is grammar but it is not enough for the needs of my students</i></p> <p><i>Yes, there are [writing skills]</i></p> <p><i>No, [they do not enhance learners' active participation in the lesson] because the texts are boring and since there are no prompts for speaking skills practice, these activities are boring and the lesson becomes dull.</i></p>
<p>VISUAL MATERIAL</p>	<p><i>Old, worn paper, of bad quality, dull colors, sketches that look like cartoons, of bad printing quality (something like Popay and Olive..) old, it reminds you of something old.....</i></p> <p><i>Its pictures and its sketches are not the best you can get ... I would like them to be more....adult like, more modern, to have faces and images like in modern magazines for example, or in the course books in the market, something more real....</i></p> <p><i>Its disadvantage is that it is 99% black and white</i></p> <p><i>It's of poor quality. The pictures are old and black and white, the sketches are not attractive, and the paper is of bad quality. It is an old book and not attractive at all.</i></p> <p><i>The book needs a makeover... for example, let's take the mobile phones. It shows the very first mobile that Sony Erickson had produced, you know that big apparatus with that antenna on top! ... Students see it and keep asking me if this is a phone and laugh!</i></p> <p><i>What I mean is that the visual material and its whole design is worse than its content. I like the book though, I have been teaching it for many years, it is a good book but the visual material makes it look worse.</i></p> <p><i>No, it doesn't [show contemporary working environments]</i></p> <p><i>Yes, I suppose so [the pictures are relevant to the aims of the course.</i></p>

	<p><i>But is this enough? Unfortunately it isn't [the book is not motivational for learners I'm afraid it doesn't [link to the needs of the course]</i></p>
<p>NEEDS</p>	<p><i>These learners need to practice in order to become future clerks and business office employees. They need to be trained how to listen or speak, to understand various accents... this course book does not offer this to them...and they will need it for sure....</i></p> <p><i>It should become smaller, that is, contain less material... I think they should rewrite the book based on contemporary learners' real linguistic needs... CDs, of course, for listening practice... They should add interesting activities, do theatrical plays, simulations of business office situations... They need improvement....pictures, sound, content, everything. But well put, based on real needs</i></p> <p><i>There are three important issues we need to consider. First, it is knowledge, the knowledge of the language in all levels, then, it is the use of the language for communication purposes and third it is the future, work. This means we apply all this to our professional environment. I think there is no link between these three....</i></p> <p><i>Listening needs to be added ... the texts... they need to be authentic ... It also needs to be more communicative, interesting and real ... New technologies should also be added ... pay attention to the real level of learners and the book should be realistic about it ... the layout should be better looking, friendlier, more attractive with authentic content, offering tasks for all four skills and not only reading, grammar and vocabulary</i></p> <p><i>The book has to change... it should be written all over again, with a different focus ... be more attractive and pleasant, with colored pictures, modern pictures... it needs to have a communicative approach...it must be accompanied by cds... it should contain various [internet] sites...</i></p> <p><i>It should contain communicative activities... the visual material needs to change, the illustration, the photos... needs to be linked with new technologies and contemporary material... the book must include a grammar summary [theory] ...have less exercises</i></p> <p><i>Needs to be modernized... the texts need to be more modern, contemporary... add listening tasks... speaking tasks ... I need someone to show me how to do things, what I need to say that I haven't thought of so far</i></p> <p><i>The needs of today's learners are different from the needs of the learners of the period that the book was written. So, how can we make it better? More interesting? Add variety, add authentic texts, variety regarding the level of the tasks. The book must also offer possibilities for communication and help learners understand what they hear, they will need this for their job. And of course, we need to have some extra material, like teacher's notes with instructions.</i></p>

**APPENDIX VIII: UNIT TWO OF THE TARGET BOOK VS SAMPLE
UNIT OF THE NEW MATERIAL**

LESSONS OF UNIT 2 OF THE BOOK	SAMPLE UNIT LESSONS I SUGGEST IN THEIR PLACE
Communicating with people	Six thinking hats. An unusual technique– Effective communication in business decision making
Body language	Greeting Visitors – understanding different cultures – business etiquette
The telephoning process	Phone etiquette
Taking a message	Answering the phone and transferring a call – holding the line -taking a message – leaving a message
Recorded Messages	Booking a hotel room
Specialists on call	Getting the best offer – Using hotel search engines effectively
Tele-communications in our life	SiLang – looking at job ads – preparing a CV - writing a mail
The mail minefield	SiLang - replying to an interview call – Following instructions.
The telex- A necessary aid to business world	Twitter as a means of social media
“We think, therefore we are RAFAX”	Twitter for businesses

APPENDIX IX: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW COMMENTS ON THE PILOT MATERIAL

R: Can you please tell me now what you think did not work regarding the instructions, regarding the activities?

S: I have here my notes [ok]. Ok this is for the booking a hotel room. On the instructions stage I wrote down 'cause I didn't remember it. It says: The students were quieter when instructions were explained in Greek.

R: So, what are you saying?

S: This doesn't always happen but sometimes... I know it happens with me because I ... I speak in English all the time and the kids make a lot of noise all the time. But sometimes, if I suddenly switch into Greek then that has kind of a bit of a startling effect and they, you know, they sit up and they listen. I am not saying that we should use Greek all the time but sometimes it can act as a sort of, you know, like ..it gives them a little shock, then they listen

R: So you are saying that this is also a key to classroom management? [perhaps, perhaps] You wouldn't like to have Greek in the between [no] so, this is a negative point you say [it's maybe a tool that we use] but it can be a good tool though..[yeah] for classroom management [yeah] good. Ok. Very nice. What else? It is interesting to hear things that have not worked well because we can prevent ...

S: I've written something here. The video pictures could have been a bit clearer, maybe it's my eyesight [ok. some of the videos should be clearer] perhaps, yeah, [ok. good], and ah! Another thing! That doesn't have to do with the presentation though, it's the correcting. It says: "Correcting the worksheet took a long time so, there was not so much time to do the hands on activity using the internet.

R: Ok. This is also some .. So you are saying it is important to pay attention to the, to the length of the activities as well [yeah, yeah, time management] yes, time management yes [mmm]. What other activities did not work well?

S: Ah! Actually, the listening you did yesterday, [yeah] wasn't as stimulating as the other tasks. I mean it was a bit like doing a first certificate practice tests [mmm]

R: So, the listening input as well, should be kind of motivating for the learners.

S: I think it should have been incorporated in some other lesson. I mean, it just went straight into it. It hadn't given them a warm up or anything.

R: It shouldn't be decontextualized [no, no,] very good. Ok

M: It was like an another listening ... like test [a listening exercise] like an exam, you know [a listening task]

R: So, listening or any other activity should be contextualized [yeah,] into the process of the whole activity

S: and sometimes we need to pre-teach a bit of vocabulary, for example, how to answer phone calls, on the list they had to fill in, there was the word prior. Some of them didn't realize that it meant before, yeah,

R: You are talking about the activity regarding the phone [yeah, during, before and after the phone]. So there, the vocabulary should have been pre-taught

S: Yeah, I mean the way [R: some key words] key words. Maybe we should ask them if they understand the worksheet if they actually go on.

R: Very nice, very important

S: What else? Anything else?

R: Any other instructions, anything else?

S: No

APPENDIX X: AMENDMENTS MADE TO THE ACTIVITIES

The following amendments were made based on teachers' comments on the piloting phase:

BEFORE	AFTER
Used some spoken Greek.	Put an effort to avoid spoken Greek. I didn't however have to use it for classroom management with the actual research class, as the teachers of the pilot lessons had suggested I could if needed.
Some video pictures were not clear enough	I downloaded them again and tried to make them bigger in order to be clearer
In the activity of Chapter 5, lesson 2, students were assigned to look for six to seven search engines. This did not leave enough time to do the hands on activity of booking a hotel room for their company.	In the actual research lesson, I assigned two to three search engines, thus, there was plenty of time to do the activity
In the end of lesson 2, chapter 6, I had asked the learners to do a short listening task as an extra task to fill in the last couple of minutes. The task was not directly linked to the topic of the lesson	All listening texts were context based and I managed to control time of the activities

APPENDIX XI: SAMPLE UNIT AND LESSONS OF THE NEW MATERIAL

Chapter 1

- **Lesson 1.** Greeting Visitors
- **Lesson 2.** Understanding different cultures – business etiquette

Chapter 2

- **Lesson 3.** Six thinking hats
- **Lesson 4:** Effective communication in business decision making

Chapter 3

- **Lesson 5:** Twitter as a means of social media
- **Lesson 6:** Twitter for businesses

Chapter 4

- **Lesson 7:** Phone etiquette
- **Lesson 8:** Answering the phone and transferring a call – holding the line -taking message – leaving a message

Chapter 5

- **Lesson 9:** Booking a hotel room
- **Lesson 10:** Getting the best offer – Using hotel search engines effectively

Chapter 6

- **Lesson 11:** SiLang – looking at job ads – preparing a CV
- **Lesson 12:** SiLang - writing a mail - replying to an interview call

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT PROFILE

TYPE OF SCHOOL: Vocational High School

LANGUAGE LEVEL: Mixed ability class

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: Twenty two

NUMBER OF LESSONS: Two

DURATION OF LESSONS: Forty to forty five minutes each

AIMS OF THE LESSON: To introduce learners to the cultural aspect of successful communication and to ways we should greet people we meet for the first time, to help them enhance their listening and speaking skills, to listen for specific information, to give their opinion, to work in pairs.

TYPE OF ACTIVITIES: Listening/speaking/reading/writing tasks

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Ability to apply expressions to practise; ability to “get the message across” and communicate.

METHODS USED: Communicative English, situational English, pair work, role playing.

TEACHING TOOLS: Computer, projector, videos, photocopies, pens, stickers, cartons, bags and suitcases.

SOURCES: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIRtF_Hp47M

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pHNld05YfA>

LESSON 1: GREETING VISITORS

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK ONE: Teacher greets students. They all write their names on a sticker to identify one another easily. Students are told they are going to watch a video to discuss about its content (*to arouse their content schemata*) - 5'

TASK TWO: Students are asked what the video was about. When it is clarified it is about greeting people they are delivered the worksheets and are asked to underline the expressions of the first dialogue they did not like or did not seem right to them (*to produce speech, to express their opinion, to understand the content*) – 10'

KEY TO TASK TWO: Underline the expressions that did not seem right to you

DIALOGUE 1 –HOW NOT TO GREET VISITORS

WOMAN: Excuse me, are you from Patternson's

MAN: Oh! Are you Vicky Hollett?

WOMAN: Yes!

MAN: Hi! Welcome to Philly....

MAN: So, how was your trip?

WOMAN: Not, too bad thank you. One of my bags didn't arrive from England!

MAN: Let's go then

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

MAN. Shoot! this bag is heavy. Are you married? How old are you?

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

MAN: Oh! It's cold out here! I hate this weather! It's like this in England isn't it?

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

MAN: Everybody says so!

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

TASK THREE: Students are asked to watch a second dialogue. When it is over they are asked to discuss how this is different from the first one (*to compare information, to express themselves, to understand the content*) -5'

KEY TO TASK THREE: (The man is more polite/his expressions are more formal/he offers to help/he listens to the visitor/he uses small talk)

TASK FOUR: Students are asked to listen again and fill in the blanks on the worksheet (*to understand for specific information, to practice writing and reading*) –10'

KEY TO TASK FOUR: Fill in the words that are missing from the dialogue:

DIALOGUE 2 –HOW TO GREET VISITORS

- A. Excuse me, are you from Patterson’s?
- B. Oh! Are you Vicky Hollett?
- A. Yes!
- B. Hi! I’m Jason from Pattinson’s. Welcome to Philadelphia. So, how was your trip?
- A. Not too bad thank you! One of my bags didn’t arrive from England!
- B. Will they send it to you here?
- A. That’s what they promised!
- B. Oh! Good! Can I help you with your bag?
- A. Yes, please. It’s a bit heavy I’m afraid!
- B. No problem. My car is this way
- A. Thank you!
- B. Do you travel abroad a lot?
- A. Well, a couple of times a year. I’d like to travel more
- B. You like travelling. So do I.
- A. Have you been to England?
- B. Oh! It’s cold out! What was the weather like in England when you left?
- A. Not too bad!
- B. But It’s gonna be nice and warm tomorrow!
- A. Then I think I’m gonna have a good trip!

TASK FIVE: Students are asked to listen again and fill in the table with the key points that should be kept in mind when meeting/greeting someone for the first time (*to extract specific information*) -5’

KEY TO TASK FIVE: Complete the missing phrases [what to do when meeting people for the first time]

1.	Make sure you <u>arrive on time!</u>
2.	Make sure you are dressed <u>smartly</u>
3.	<u>Identify</u> yourself and <u>greet</u> your guest
4.	Greet yourself <u>professionally</u>
5.	<u>Ask</u> about your visitor’s trip
6.	<u>Listen</u> to their answer

7.	<u>Take</u> your visitor to your car
8.	<u>Help</u> them with their <u>luggage</u>
9.	Make <u>small talk</u>
10.	But <u>polite</u> talk
11.	Keep the conversation <u>going</u>
12.	Be <u>pleasant and positive</u>

TASK SIX: Students sum up the most important points that should be kept in mind when meeting a visitor for professional reasons for the first time (*to produce speech*) (10')

LESSON 1: GREETING VISITORS
STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

NAME:.....

CLASS:.....

DATE:.....

TASK ONE: What is the dialogue about?

TASK TWO: Listen again and underline the expressions that did not seem right to you on the dialogue that follows:

DIALOGUE 1 - GREETING VISITORS

WOMAN: Excuse me, are you from Pattinson's

MAN: Oh! Are you Vicky Hollett?

WOMAN: Yes!

MAN: Hi! Welcome to Philly....

MAN: So, how was your trip?

WOMAN: Not, too bad thank you. One of my bags didn't arrive from England!

MAN: Let's go then

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

MAN. Sure this bag is heavy. Are you married? How old are you?

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

MAN: Oh! It's cold out here! I hate this weather! It's like this in England isn't it?

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

MAN: Everybody says so!

WOMAN: !!!!!!!

TASK THREE: Watch the video. How is this dialogue different from the first one?

TASK FOUR: Fill in the words that are missing from the dialogue

DIALOGUE 2 – GREETING VISITORS

- C. Excuse me, are you from Pattinson’s?
- D. Oh! Are you Vicky Hollett?
- C. Yes!
- D. Hi! I’m Jason from Pattinson’s. Welcome to Philadelphia. So your trip?
- C. thank you! One of my bags didn’t arrive from England!
- D. Will they send it to you here?
- C. That’s what they promised!
- D. Oh! Good! you with your bag?
- C. Yes, please. It’s a bit I’m afraid!
- D. No My car is this way
- C. Thank you!
- D. Do you abroad a lot?
- C. Well, a couple of times a year. I’d like to travel more
- D. You like travelling. So do I.
- C. Have you been to England?
- D. Oh! It’s ! What was the weather like in England like when you left?
- C. Not!
- D. But It’s gonna be nice and warm tomorrow!
- B. Then I think I’m gonna have a good trip!

TASK FIVE: Watch the video again and complete the missing phrases

1.	Make sure you!
2.	Make sure you are dressed
3.	..... yourself and your guest
4.	Greet yourself
5.	..... about your visitor’s trip
6.	..... to their answer

7.	..... your visitor to your car
8.	..... them with their
9.	Make
10.	But Talk
11.	Keep the conversation
12.	Be and

TASK SIX: Sum up the key points we should keep in mind when greeting people we meet for the first time

**LESSON 2: UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT CULTURES-BUSINESS
ETIQUETTE**

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

WARM UP: Students are reminded of the topic of the previous and discuss the main points (5')

TASK ONE: Students are asked to form pairs. They are given the instructions and are asked to work together in order to role play a visitor and a host following the guidelines of their tasks – 10'

TASK TWO: Students present their dialogues in class. A competition may also take place. If necessary, the teacher can demonstrate the expected dialogue with a student (*to practice their speaking and listening skills, to practice relevant expressions*) (30').

ROLE PLAY: Role-play a dialogue between a guest and a host. Use the following extracts/phrases. When you are ready present your dialogue in class. →

STUDENT A	STUDENT B
AT THE AIRPORT	
1. <u>Greet</u> the visitor and <u>ask</u> if he/she is Mr/Mrs.....→	2. <u>Greet</u> the host and <u>say</u> that yes, this is your name
3. <u>Welcome</u> the visitor and <u>introduce</u> yourself. →	4. <u>Thank</u> the host and <u>say</u> it is nice meeting him/her.
5. <u>Offer</u> to help him/her with the bags. →	5. <u>Thank</u> him/her and <u>say</u> that your bags are heavy.
7. <u>Say</u> it is not a problem and <u>suggest</u> to take him/her to his/her hotel. →	6. <u>Thank</u> him/her and <u>say</u> you don't want to put him/her into trouble.
9. <u>Say</u> it is your pleasure→	10. <u>Thank</u> him/her
ON THE WAY TO THE HOTEL	
11. Do some small talk (Ask how the weather was in his/her country when he/she left, how the flight was, how long it took, if he/she has been to your country before) →	12. Reply to the small talk!
AT THE HOTEL	
13. <u>Inform</u> the visitor that you will meet him/her the next day in your company. <u>Give</u> him/her the time and address. →	14. <u>Thank</u> him/her for the information and <u>say</u> you will be there on time.

15. <u>Thank</u> the visitor and <u>say</u> goodbye. →	16. <u>Thank</u> the host and <u>say</u> goodbye.
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KEY TO TASK TWO: [Probable expected output]

AT THE AIRPORT

- A. Hello! Are you Mr/Mrs....?
B. Hello! Yes, I'm Mr/Mrs....
A. Welcome to Greece. I am
B. Thank you! Nice to meet you!
A. Can I help you with your bags?
B. Oh! Thank you! But ... my bags are heavy!!!
A. No problem! Shall we go to your hotel?
B. Thank you! but... I don't want to put you into trouble!
A. Oh no! It's my pleasure! This way please! How was your trip?
B. Fine, thank you!

ON THE WAY

- A. Well, what was the weather like when you left?
B. Well, a bit rainy/sunny... I'm afraid!
A. Really! Did your flight take long?
B. Almost three hours!
A. Is that so!
B. Yes! Quite long!
A. Have you been to Greece before?
B. I'm afraid not!

AT THE HOTEL

- A. Well, here we are!
B. Oh! Great!
A. Well, I'll see you tomorrow morning at 10 o' clock, at my office, at 30 Trikalon street!
B. Yes, thank you, I' be there on time!
A. Great, thank you! Have a good day!
B. Thank you! You too!
C.

LESSON 2: UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT CULTURES – BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

NAME:.....

CLASS:.....

DATE:.....

WARM UP: What are some of the keypoints we should keep in mind when greeting a visitor for the first time?

TASK ONE: Work in pairs to perform a dialogue. Take a role each, read the instructions and prepare together.

STUDENT A: You are Mr/Mrs Brown. You are a representative from SML company. You are in the airport to welcome Mr/Mrs Jones in your hometown. Mr/Mrs Jones is a sales manager and is coming to Greece to work with your company on a new project. You are waiting for him/her to come, to take him/her to the hotel.

STUDENT B: You are Mr/Mrs Jones. You have come to Greece to work with SML company on a project. You expect to meet someone from the company to take you to your hotel.

TASK TWO:

Role-play the dialogue in class

STUDENT A	STUDENT B
AT THE AIRPORT	
<p>Greet the visitor and ask if he/she is Mr/Mrs.....</p> <p>(Χαιρετίστε τον επισκέπτη και ρωτήστε τον αν είναι ο κύριος/η κυρία.....) →</p>	<p>Greet the host and say that yes, you are Mr/Mrs.....</p> <p>(Χαιρετίστε τον οικοδεσπότη και πείτε ότι ναι, είστε ο/η.....)</p>
<p>Welcome the visitor and introduce yourself</p> <p>(Καλωσορίστε τον επισκέπτη στη χώρα σας και συστηθείτε) →</p>	<p>Thank the host and say it is nice meeting him/her</p> <p>(Ευχαριστείστε τον και πείτε του ότι χαρήκατε για τη γνωριμία)</p>
<p>Offer to help him/her with the bags</p> <p>(Προσφερθείτε να τον/την βοηθήσετε με τις βαλίτσες) →</p>	<p>Thank him/her and say your bags are heavy</p> <p>(Ευχαριστήστε τον και πείτε ότι οι βαλίτσες σας είναι βαριές)</p>

<p><u>Say</u> it is not a problem and <u>offer to take</u> him/her to his/her hotel (Πείτε ότι δεν υπάρχει πρόβλημα και προτείνετε να τον/την πάτε στο ξενοδοχείο του/της) →</p>	<p><u>Thank</u> him/her and <u>say</u> you don't want to put him/her into trouble (Ευχαριστήστε τον και πείτε του/της ότι δεν θα θέλατε να τον/την βάλετε σε κόπο)</p>
<p><u>Say</u> it is your pleasure and ask how his/her trip was (Πείτε ότι είναι ευχαρίστησή σας και ρωτήστε τον/την πως ήταν το ταξίδι)</p>	<p><u>Thank</u> him/her and answer the question (Ευχαριστείτε τον/την και απαντήστε στην ερώτηση)</p>
<p>ON THE WAY TO THE HOTEL</p>	
<p><u>Do</u> small talk! (Κάντε συζήτηση) <u>Small talk:</u> (Ask how the weather was, How the flight was, How long it took, If he/she has been to your country before) → πχ. Ρωτήστε πως ήταν ο καιρός, Πως ήταν η πτήση, Πόση ώρα έκανε, Εάν επισκέφτηκε τη χώρα σας ξανά)</p>	<p><u>Reply</u> to the small talk! (Ευχαριστείτε τον/την και απαντήστε στις ερωτήσεις του/της)</p>
<p>AT THE HOTEL</p>	
<p><u>Inform</u> the visitor that you are at the hotel and that you will meet him/her the next day in your office. <u>Give</u> the time and address (Ενημερώστε τον/την ότι φτάσατε στο ξενοδοχείο και ότι θα τον συναντήσετε την επόμενη ημέρα στο γραφείο σας δίνοντας την διεύθυνση και την ώρα της συνάντησης) →</p>	<p><u>Thank</u> him/her for the information and <u>say</u> you will be there on time (Ευχαριστήστε τον για τις πληροφορίες και πείτε του ότι θα είστε στην ώρα σας)</p>
<p><u>Thank</u> the visitor and <u>wish</u> him/her a good day (Ευχαριστήστε τον/την → Ευχηθείτε του/της να έχει μια ευχάριστη ημέρα)</p>	<p><u>Thank</u> the host and <u>wish</u> the same (Ευχαριστήστε τον/την και ευχηθείτε του/της το ίδιο)</p>

CHAPTER 3
CONTEXT PROFILE

CLASS: Vocational High School

LEVEL: Mixed ability

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: Twenty two students

NUMBER OF LESSONS: Two

DURATION OF LESSON: Forty to forty five minutes each.

AIMS OF THE LESSON: To introduce learners to real life like communicative situations; To improve listening and speaking skills; To extract information; To fill in a table; To familiarize them with decision taking; To train into ways to express their thoughts and relevant vocabulary; To enhance their cognitive development;

TYPE OF ACTIVITIES: Reading, writing, listening and speaking tasks.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Ability to understand the main idea; Ability to express their thinking; Ability to send the message across.

METHOD USED: Communicative English, situational English, presentation, group work, role-playing, De Bono technique, task based

TEACHING TOOLS: Computer, projector, stickers, video, power point application, photocopies, hats, papers, pencils

SOURCES: Video: The Bad Debate-Is this the last debate on earth?

LESSON 1: THE SIX THINKING HATS – AN UNUSUAL TECHNIQUE
TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK ONE: Students are shown a video of a bad debate to introduce them into the topic (3')

TASK TWO: Students discuss the content of the video (10')

- a. What is it about?
- b. Who participates?
- c. Why is this happening?
- d. Do you like it? Why? Why not?

TASK THREE: Students are distributed a worksheet and are asked to watch a presentation (prepared by the teacher introducing the six thinking hats method on a ppt), understand its content and transfer relevant information into a table (2')

TASK FOUR: Students are presented the De Bono method on a ppt and explained how it works (5')

TASK FIVE: Students are asked to share their answers with their classmates. When they are ready correct answers are shown on a ppt (10')

KEY TO TASK FIVE: 1. C, 2. B, 3. A, 4. B, 5. C, 6. B, 7. C, 8. A, 9. B, 10. A, 11. B, 12. A, 13. A/F, 14. E

TASK SIX: Learners are asked to sum up the content of the video by giving a short presentation based on their notes/table (10')

Alternatively: (given time available) students may be asked to form groups of 5 to present the method (each group talks about a different part (Method creator/what it is about/representation of hats/advantages/application))

LESSON 1: THE SIX THINKING HATS – AN UNUSUAL TECHNIQUE
STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

NAME:.....

CLASS:.....

DATE:.....

TASK 1. Watch the video.

TASK 2. What is the video about?

TASK 3. Watch a presentation about a certain technique

TASK 4. Discuss with your partner and fill in the following table choosing one of the options:

1. The technique is called:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Critical thinking b. De Bono c. Six thinking hats
2. The name of the person who created it is:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Edward Bano b. Edward De Bono c. Edward Bando
3. He was born in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Malta b. Marseilles c. Mexico
4. He studied:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pharmacy b. Medicine c. Molecular Biology
5. The method is used to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Control our thoughts b. Discipline our thoughts c. Organize our thoughts
6. The hats symbolize:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ways we express b. Ways we think c. Ways we talk
7. The white hat is used for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ideas b. Problems c. Facts

<p>8. The red hat is used for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Feelings b. Thoughts c. Ideas
<p>9. The yellow hat is used for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Happy thoughts b. Positive thoughts c. Clever thoughts
<p>10. The black hat is used for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Negative sayings b. Negative thinking c. Negative acting
<p>11. The green hat is used for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Problems b. Solutions c. Critical thinking
<p>12. The blue hat is used to:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sum up the main points of the conversation b. Stop the conversation c. Change the conversation
<p>13. The advantages of this method are: (You can choose more than one option)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Helps us decide easily b. Helps us end a conversation easily c. Helps us all to have the same ideas d. Helps us to express our own ideas e. Helps us not to fight f. Helps us to have more ideas
<p>14. The right order of the hats is:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. White, yellow, red, blue, black green b. Blue, white, red, yellow, black, green c. Blue, black, yellow, red, white, green d. There is no right order e. The only right order is the white in the beginning and the blue in the end

TASK 5. Now look at the right answers

TASK 6. Which are the main points of the six thinking hats method?

Option A: Make a short presentation of the six thinking hats method

You can talk about: a. the person who created the six thinking hats method

b. what the six thinking hats method is about

c. what each color represents

d. the advantages of the method

e. the order of the hats which we use to apply the method

Option B: Form groups of five. Work with your partners. Take a role each. Study your roles and within your group present your part of the six thinking hats in class

Student A: Talks about the person who created the six thinking hats method

Student B: Talks about what the six thinking hats method is about

Student C: Talks about the color of the hats and what they represent

Student E: Talks about the advantages of the method

Student F: Talks about the order of the hats which we use to apply the method

**LESSON 2: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS DECISION
MAKING**

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK ONE: Students are reminded of the six thinking hats method and discuss the main points (5')

TASK TWO: Students are distributed a worksheet with the task - They are explained what to do. A secretary-spokesman is allocated to sum up the ideas of every hat (5'). The students that are not able to come up with ideas due to their low level of English, they are offered with useful phrases and ideas regarding each hat, so as to motivate them talk (30')

TASK THREE: (optional) Students are assigned homework. They are asked to write a small text with the main points of the six thinking hats. They are also encouraged to talk about how they liked the activity they did.

LESSON 2: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS DECISION MAKING

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

NAME:.....

CLASS:.....

DATE:.....

TASK 1. What is the six thinking hat method? Discuss

TASK 2. You are going to participate in a discussion based on the following topic, using the six thinking hats method. You can use the following ideas in the discussion if you wish.

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION: WHERE TO START UP A TOURIST AGENCY BRANCH

You work for a tourist agency which is thinking of starting up a new branch. The agency is doing very well so far in Canada, where are the headquarters, but you also wish to expand in Europe. Your employers are not sure where to start up the new branch. However, there are two basic suggestions: France and Spain. This is quite a difficult decision as you don't want to waste your money especially now with the crisis in Europe. You, as staff members, together with your employers, are having a meeting in order to take the right decision.

USEFUL FRASES FOR GIVING AN OPINION

<u>FOR</u>	<u>AGAINST</u>
I think we should go to	I don't think it is a good idea
In my opinion we should go to...	I believe you are wrong
I believe we should go to	I am not sure you are right
We may go to	I am afraid it's not a good idea
I agree with you	I am afraid I don't agree with you
We may go to	I think we cannot go to
I like best	I am afraid I don't like the idea
You are right	I see what you mean but

RED HAT IDEAS

How we feel about the topic

NEGATIVE FEELINGS	POSITIVE FEELINGS	<u>Why?</u>
• I feel confused	• I feel excited	<p><u>BECAUSE:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't want to fail • We don't want to waste our money • We want to start immediately • We are not sure what to do • We don't know if we will succeed • We want to see the results • We have worked hard • We will succeed • We want to begin • We want to expand • We want to make more money • We want to help people find jobs • We want to discover new places
• I feel worried	• I feel curious	
• I feel insecure	• I feel prepared	
• I feel anxious	• I feel confident	
• I feel impatient	• I feel happy	
• I feel troubled	• I feel satisfied	

YELLOW AND BLACK HAT

<u>SPAIN</u>	<u>FRANCE</u>
<u>PROS (YELLOW HAT)</u>	
The climate is very good	The architecture is beautiful
The beaches are beautiful	You can visit Disneyland
It has a great history and culture	The museums are great
People are warm and happy	Paris is the city of fashion
The food is good	The food is very tasty
It has a lot of entertainment	French are polite
People speak English	People are hospitable

Hotels are cheap	Shops are elegant
Clothes are cheap	The weather is mild
It is famous for its paella	It is famous for its croissants
<u>CONS (BLACK HAT)</u>	
Hotels are expensive	The wine and food are expensive
Summers can be very hot	There is a lot of traffic
Food is expensive	People don't speak English at all
The roads are not very good	It is overcrowded
Spanish don't speak very good English	Paris is not very clean
There is a lot of corruption (διαφθορά)	The weather is quite humid (έχει υγρασία)

GREEN HAT – SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

- We should organize a campaign to see which place most people would like to visit
- We should send representatives to both countries to tell us their opinion
- We should have more information before we take our final decision
- We should consider setting up a new branch in another country
- We can have a branch in Paris only for winter holidays
- We can have a branch in Spain only for summer holidays
- We can have one branch in Spain and one branch in Paris

TASK THREE: At home, write a small text with the main points of the six thinking hats. You can also talk about how you liked the activity you just did.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEXT PROFILE

TYPE OF SCHOOL: Vocational High School

LANGUAGE LEVEL: Mixed ability class

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: Twenty two

NUMBER OF LESSONS: Two

DURATION OF LESSON: Forty to forty five minutes each

AIMS OF THE LESSON: To train learners into transferring information, to understand a monologue, to infer information, to improve their listening and speaking skills, to engage in a meaningful transaction.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES: Reading, writing, listening, speaking tasks.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Ability to understand the content; ability to “get the message across” and communicate.

METHODS USED: Communicative English, situational English, pair work, group work, role playing.

TEACHING TOOLS: Computer, projector, videos, photocopies, pens.

SOURCES: <http://www.businessenglishmaterials.com/twitter.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDHcBs94TXs>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3e5H9b9IM_Q

LESSON 1: TWITTER IN OUR LIVES

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK ONE: Teacher shows pictures of Twitter on a ppt to engage learners and involve them in a pre-listening stage (*to arouse their content schemata*) – (5')

TASK TWO: In groups, students are asked to write all the words they can think of about Twitter on a piece of paper. They then announce them and the teacher writes them on the board (*To brainstorm, to produce speech, to express their opinion*) – 10'

TASK THREE: Students are asked to listen to a text and fill in a relevant table (*to understand the content – to introduce new vocabulary*) -10'

KEY TO TASK THREE:

Twitter is one of the most popular social networking and micro-blogging services in the world. It allows account users to send 140-character updates on anything they choose, and for people to follow different users. It was created in 2006 by Jack Dorsey and now has more than 100 million users. Dorsey describes the word “twitter” as being “just perfect”. He said it means “a short burst of inconsequential information... and that’s exactly what the product was.” Twitter is used to keep in contact with friends, to network and keep up-to-date professionally, and as a source of world news. One analyst described 41% of twitter messages as being “pointless babble”. Twitter is one of the 50-highest-ranked websites and is rising steadily. It has enormous growth and revenue potential.

TASK FOUR: Students are asked to watch video and choose between given options the correct ones. (*to understand for specific information, to practice listening writing and reading*) (10')

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDHcBs94TXs>]

TASK FIVE: Students sum up the key points of using Twitter (pros/cons) (10')

KEY TO TASK FOUR:

<p>1. What is the video for?</p>	<p>a. Businesses b. <u>Twitter</u> c. Social media</p>
<p>2. What can you do with this application?</p>	<p>a. <u>Talk</u> b. Send e-mails c. <u>Look for information</u></p>
<p>3. How many characters can use when writing?</p>	<p>a. 150 b. 146 c. <u>140</u></p>
<p>4. Why is it good for businesses?</p>	<p>a. To design their product b. To follow their workers c. <u>To inform about their product</u></p>
<p>5. Finish the words about the main benefits of twitter</p>	<p>1. C_____n [conversation] 2. L_____n to c_____s [listen to customers] 3. S_____i_____d. [Stay informed] 4. R_____h [Research] 5. S_____n [Syndication] 6. E_____d y_____r w_____k [Expand your work]</p>

LESSON 1: TWITTER IN OUR LIVES

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

NAME:.....

CLASS:.....

DATE:.....

TASK 1. Look at the pictures on the ppt. What do you think we are going to discuss about today?

TASK 2. Form groups of three to four people. In 5 minutes, write on your worksheet as many words about Twitter as you can think of (**pros/cons**).

TASK 3. Listen to a text about twitter and fill in the table that follows with the missing information:

1. Listen to the text and fill in the blanks with the words from the right column of the table:

<p>Twitter is one of the most popular [1]_____ and micro-blogging services in the world. It allows account [2]_____ to send 140-character updates on anything they choose, and for people to follow [3]_____ users. It was created in 2006 by Jack Dorsey and now has more than 100 million users. Dorsey [4]_____ the word “twitter” as being “just perfect”. He said it means "a short burst of inconsequential information... and that’s exactly what the [5]_____ was.” Twitter is used to keep [6]_____ friends, to network and keep up-to-date [7] _____, and as a source of world news. One analyst described 41% of twitter [8]_____ as being “pointless babble”. Twitter is one of the 50-highest-ranked [9]_____ and is rising steadily. It has [10] _____ growth and revenue potential.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. different 2. websites 3. describes 4. users 5. enormous 6. product 7. in contact with 8. Social – 9. professionally 10. messages
--	--

TASK 4: Watch a video about twitter and choose the correct answer in the table that follows:

6. What is the video for?	d. Businesses e. Twitter f. Social media
7. What can you do with this application?	d. Talk e. Send e-mails f. Look for information
8. How many characters can use when writing?	d. 150 e. 146 f. 140
9. Why is it good for businesses?	d. To design their product e. To follow their workers f. To inform about their product
10. Find the letters that are missing about the bebenefits of twitter	7. C_____n. 8. L_____n to c_____s 9. S_____i_____d. 10. R_____h 11. S_____n 12. E____d y____r w____k

TASK FIVE: Let's sum up the key points of using Twitter (pros/cons) (10')

LESSON 2: TWITTER FOR BUSINESSES

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK ONE: Students are asked to watch a video, talk about its content and give a title of their own [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3e5H9b9IM_Q] - 10'

KEY OF TASK ONE:

People can find you anywhere you are to help you promote your products

Two types of promoted products for small business:

Promoted accounts and promoted tweets

1. Twitter looks at your card followers and searches for people of similar interests. When he finds a match twitter recommends you in the “who to follow section”. You gain new followers and spread a word about your business
2. Twitter constantly monitors your engagement and automatically promotes your best tweets. That’s why promoted tweets and accounts aren’t like traditional ads. You don’t write anything new. Twitter simply puts your best tweets in front of more of the right people at the right time. You only pay when someone follows your account, who engages with your promoted tweet, you never pay for something showing up on someone’s page. You determine the limit of how much you want to spend per day, per the follower or engagement. So there are never any surprises. You can also decide where geographically want your content to be promoted. So, it’s a great way to discover local connections. You’ll be promoted both on the web and on mobile.

Indicative title: HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR SMALL BUSINESS ON TWITTER

TASK TWO: In pairs, students are asked to role play a dialogue (*to produce speech*) (35’)

Student A: You are Mr Aggelopoulos, a salesman and member of “DELL” company, which advises small businesses on how to advertise their work. You have signed a contract with “Twitter” associates based on which, you have to persuade people to use Twitter for their business advertisement on exchange of payment. You have been assigned to visit Mr. Georgiou in his office to persuade him use Twitter in order to advertise his company.

Student B. You are the business manager. Welcome Mr Aggelopoulos in your office and respond to his questions based on the task guidelines. You can improvise by changing your answers if you wish.

SALESMAN (MEMBER OF “DELL” COMPANY)	BUSINESSMAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are in the office of a business manager. Greet him, introduce yourself and say where you work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greet the salesman and offer him a seat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell the manager you want to talk to him about a new way to advertise his company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask what it is about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain what it is and how it works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank him and say you are not sure because you are not good with technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain he doesn’t have to worry and how easy it is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about its benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give its advantages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say you prefer to advertise your business on newspapers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that people now use social media to communicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask where will people see him

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain where they can see him	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Say you understand but you don't want to spend much money
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Say he doesn't have to spend much money and explain why	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Say you will think about it
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make him an offer. Say you offer him free advice for a month on how to use twitter for his business	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank him and say you will call him if you accept the offer.

INFORMATION STUDENTS CAN USE ABOUT TWITTER

How it works: It is an online platform, you post a comment on it, you only press the tweet button

Advantages: It is good for conversation, you listen to the customers and their needs, you have quick information, you know about other products, you can extend your business

Where people can see you: On the web, on the mobile

What you pay: Only for what you spend

LESSON 2: TWITTER FOR BUSINESSES

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

NAME:.....

CLASS:.....

DATE:.....

TASK 1: a. Watch the video that follows. What is it about?

b. In groups, give a title of your own.

TASK 2.: Role-play the following task:

Student A: You are Mr Aggelopoulos, a salesman and member of “DELL” company, which advises small businesses on how to advertise their work. You have signed a contract with “Twitter” associates based on which, you persuade people to use Twitter for their business advertisement on exchange of payment. You have been assigned to visit Mr. Georgiou in his office to persuade him use Twitter in order to advertise his company.

Student B. You are the business manager. Welcome Mr Aggelopoulos in your office and respond to his questions based on the task guidelines. You can improvise by changing your answers if you wish.

SALESMAN (MEMBER OF “DELL” COMPANY)	BUSINESSMAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are in the office of a business manager. Greet him, introduce yourself and say where you work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the salesman and offer him a seat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the manager you want to talk to him about a new way to advertise his company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask what it is about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what it is and how it works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank him and say you are not sure because you are not good with technology

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain he doesn't have to worry and how easy it is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask about its benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give its advantages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say you prefer to advertise your business on newspapers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that people now use social media to communicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask where will people see him
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain where they can see him 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say you understand but you don't want to spend much money
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say he doesn't have to spend much money and explain why 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say you will think about it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make him an offer. Say you offer him free advice for a month on how to use twitter for his business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank him and say you will call him if you accept the offer.

YOU CAN USE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN YOUR DISCUSSION IF YOU WISH

<u>How Twitter works</u>	<u>Advantages:</u>	<u>Where people can see you through twitter:</u>	<u>What you pay for your advertisement:</u>
It is an online platform You post a comment on it You only press the tweet button	It is good for conversation You listen to the customers and needs You have quick information You know about other products You can extend your business	On the web On the mobile	Only for what you spend

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEXT PROFILE

TYPE OF SCHOOL: Vocational School

LANGUAGE LEVEL: Mixed ability class

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: Twenty two

NUMBER OF LESSONS: Two

DURATION OF LESSON: Forty to forty five minutes each

AIMS OF THE LESSON: To train learners into understanding listening input, to improve their listening skills and speaking skills, to practice phone skills

ACTIVITIES: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking tasks

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Ability to understand the content; ability to apply the information found.

METHODS USED: Communicative English, situational English, pair work, group work.

TEACHING TOOLS: Computer, projector, photocopies, pens, phone sets.

SOURCES: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWnbDVakeK0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KohByiv-xzE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhdiY50lt3o>

LESSON 1: PHONE ETIQUETTE

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK ONE: Teacher shows pictures of phone conversations on a ppt to engage learners and involve them in a pre-reading stage (*to arouse their interest and content schemata, to brainstorm, to produce speech expressing their opinion and introduce them to phone etiquette*) – [10']

TASK TWO: Students are shown a video regarding cell phone etiquette and discuss the main things that need to be done based on phone etiquette [15']

KEY TO TASK TWO:

- Turn cell phones off class
- Do not talk loudly into your mobile phone in public [bus/subway]
- Do not speak rudely when talking on the phone or writing a text
- Hang up the phone after apologizing when you dial a wrong number
- Ask for the party's consent when you want to use your camera phone

TASK THREE: Students are asked to watch another video regarding office etiquette and then in groups decide which steps should be taken before/during/transferring/putting on hold/ending a call – [15']

KEY TO TASK THREE:

Before the phone conversation

- Have a note-pad or something to take notes or handy
- Have your computer ready to use
- Be sure to drink plenty of water
- Try to answer calls by the second ring

Beginning the phone conversation

- When answering the phone, always state:
- The name of the office you are working for
- Your own name
- If the caller shares their own name, try to implement it throughout the call

During the phone conversation Remember:

- Courtesy
- Answer the phone with a smile!
- Respond as if you are answering questions for the first time

Transferring calls

- Always give the caller the extension you are transferring them to
- After the transfer, stay on the line until the other line picks up
- Give this person enough information about the call, so that the caller will not have to re-explain their situation or question

Putting someone on hold

First ask if the caller is okay with doing so

1. They can remain on hold

Give them a time estimate of how long the wait will be

2. You can call them back later

Be sure to call them back as soon as possible

Ending the phone conversation

- Say thank you
- You're welcome
- Is there anything else I can help you with?

LESSON 1: PHONE ETIQUETTE

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

TASK 1: Watch the following pictures. What do you think they are talking about? Can you tell what phone etiquette is?

TASK 2: Watch the video and copy the main things one should do based on the phone etiquette:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

TASK 3: Watch the next video about office phone etiquette and place a tick [√] next to where each instruction applies:

	Before the call	When the call begins	During the call	Transfer ring the call	Putting on hold	Endin g the call
Give your name						
Be polite						
Have your computer ready						
Answer with a smile						
Drink plenty of water						
Say how long they will have to wait						
Say thank you						
Stay on the line until the other line picks the phone up						
Respond as if you are answering questions for the first time						
Have a note-pad ready						
You can call them back later						

Say you're welcome						
Give enough information about the call so that the caller does not have to explain again why he/she called						
Answer the call by the second ring						
Give the name of the office						
Give the caller the extension you are transferring them to						
Ask if there is anything else you can help them with						

**LESSON 2: ANSWERING THE PHONE AND TRANSFERRING A CALL –
HOLDING THE LINE – TAKING A MESSAGE – LEAVING A MESSAGE**

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK 1: Students watch a video about office phone skills and discuss what it talks about:
(10')

A. DIALOGUE 1: ANSWERING THE PHONE

Secretary: Hello, this is the Multiplus company
Caller: Hello, is that the sales and marketing department?
Secretary: Yes, it is. How can I help you?
Caller: I'd like to speak with Mr. Smith please
Secretary: Could I ask who is calling please?
Caller: Yes, My name is Michelle Anderson
Secretary: Ok Ms. Anderson. Would you mind holding the line a moment?
Caller: Thank you

Secretary: Mr. Smith, you have Ms. Anderson on line 1
Manager: Oh, no. I don't want to talk to her
Secretary: Should I tell her that you're busy and you'll call her back later?
Manager: Yes, tell her that
Secretary: Ok.

B. DIALOGUE 2: TAKING A MESSAGE AND

Secretary: I'm afraid Mr. Smith is too busy right now to take your call
Caller: I see. Can you ask him to call me back, please?
Secretary: Certainly. Can I have your number?
Caller: Yes, it's 4441234
Secretary: Thank you
Caller: Goodbye
Secretary: Bye

.... TRANSFERRING THE MESSAGE TO THE MANAGER

Secretary: Here you go
Manager: Oh, did she say what she wanted?
Secretary: No, she just wants you to call her back
Manager: Anything else?
Secretary: No
Manager: Ok. Thanks

C. DIALOGUE 3: LEAVING MESSAGES

Secretary: Hello. Mr. Smith's office

Caller: Can I speak to Mr. Smith please?

Secretary: I'm sorry. Mr. Smith is in the meeting right now

Caller: Oh, I see. This isn't an important call though

Secretary: Could I ask who is calling, please?

Caller: Yes, I'm calling from Mr. Johnson's office. To whom am I speaking?

Secretary: My name is Jane. I'm Mr. Smith's new secretary

Caller: Nice to meet you Jane. Could you please tell Mr. Smith to call Mr. Johnson today?

Secretary: What is it about?

Caller: Mr. Johnson would like to talk about the prices of your products

Secretary: Ok. I'll tell him as soon as he finishes this meeting

Caller: Ok. Thank you. Goodbye

Caller: Goodbye

TASK 2: Students are asked to form pairs or groups of three, choose one of the dialogues and role play it based on the guidelines on their worksheet and the texts of the video above (35')

ROLE PLAYS: Choose a dialogue, practise it with your partner and act it out in class

GROUP 1 – DIALOGUE 1: ANSWERING THE PHONE

- A. Your name is Mary/John Smith. You work as a secretary for the accounting department of DEAL company. Respond to the caller's questions
- B. Your name is Helen/Paul Brown. You call for Mr Allen, the manager.
- C. You are the manager. You do not wish to talk to Mrs Brown and ask from the secretary to tell her to call back later

GROUP 2 – DIALOGUE 2: TAKING A MESSAGE

- A. Your name is Mary/John Smith. You work as a secretary for the accounting department of DEAL Company. Explain that Mr. Allen is not in his office at the moment and ask for the caller's number. Then, give the message to the manager
- B. Your name is Helen/Paul Brown. You call for Mr. Allen, the manager. Your phone is 5556235
- C. You are the manager. Take the message and ask if there was anything else the caller wanted

GROUP 3 – DIALOGUE 3: LEAVING MESSAGES

- A. Your name is Mary/John Smith. You work as a secretary for the accounting department of DEAL Company. Respond to the caller's questions
- B. Your name is Helen/Paul Brown. You call from Mr. Georgiou's office and you want to talk to Mr. Allen, the manager. As he is not there, leave a message

**LESSON 2: ANSWERING THE PHONE AND TRANSFERRING A CALL –
HOLDING THE LINE – TAKING A MESSAGE – LEAVING A MESSAGE**

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

TASK 1: Watch the video. What does it talk about? Discuss in class.

TASK 2. Read the following dialogues from the video you have watched

DIALOGUE 1: ANSWERING THE PHONE

Secretary: Hello, this is the Multiplus company

Caller: Hello, is that the sales and marketing department?

Secretary: Yes, it is. How can I help you?

Caller: I'd like to speak with Mr. Smith please

Secretary: Could I ask who is calling please?

Caller: Yes, My name is Michelle Anderson

Secretary: Ok Ms. Anderson. Would you mind holding the line a moment?

Caller: Thank you

Secretary: Mr. Smith, you have Ms. Anderson on line 1

Manager: Oh, no. I don't want to talk to her

Secretary: Should I tell her that you're busy and you'll call her back later?

Manager: Yes, tell her that

Secretary: Ok.

DIALOGUE 2: TAKING A MESSAGE

Secretary: I'm afraid Mr. Smith is too busy right now to take your call

Caller: I see. Can you ask him to call me back, please?

Secretary: Certainly. Can I have your number?

Caller: Yes, it's 4441234

Secretary: Thank you

Caller: Goodbye

Secretary: Bye

TRANSFERRING THE MESSAGE TO THE MANAGER

Secretary: Here you go

Manager: Oh, did she say what she wanted?

Secretary: No, she just wants you to call her back

Manager: Anything else?

Secretary: No

Manager: Ok. Thanks

DIALOGUE 3: LEAVING MESSAGES

Secretary: Hello. Mr. Smith's office

Caller: Can I speak to Mr. Smith please?

Secretary: I'm sorry. Mr. Smith is in the meeting right now

Caller: Oh, I see. This isn't an important call though

Secretary: Could I ask who is calling, please?

Caller: Yes, I'm calling from Mr. Johnson's office. To whom am I speaking?

Secretary: My name is Jane. I'm Mr. Smith's new secretary

Caller: Nice to meet you Jane. Could you please tell Mr. Smith to call Mr. Johnson today?

Secretary: What is it about?

Caller: Mr. Johnson would like to talk about the prices of your products

Secretary: Ok. I'll tell him as soon as he finishes this meeting

Caller: Ok. Thank you. Goodbye

Caller: Goodbye

TASK 3: in pairs or groups of three, choose one the role playing tasks, follow the instructions and prepare to role play it with your partner/partners. You can take ideas from the video dialogues you have already read or use ideas of your own (35')

ROLE PLAYING TASKS

ROLE PLAY 1 – DIALOGUE 1: ANSWERING THE PHONE

- D. Your name is Mary/John Smith. You work as a secretary for the accounting department of DEAL company. Respond to the caller's questions
- E. Your name is Helen/Paul Brown. You call for Mr Allen, the manager.
- F. You are the manager. You do not wish to talk to Mrs Brown and ask from the secretary to tell her to call back later

ROLE PLAY 2 – DIALOGUE 2: TAKING A MESSAGE

- D. Your name is Mary/John Smith. You work as a secretary for the accounting department of DEAL Company. Explain that Mr. Allen is not in his office at the moment and ask for the caller's number. Then, give the message to the manager
- E. Your name is Helen/Paul Brown. You call for Mr. Allen, the manager. Your phone is 5556235
- F. You are the manager. Take the message and ask if there was anything else the caller wanted

ROLE PLAY 3 – DIALOGUE 3: LEAVING MESSAGES

- C. Your name is Mary/John Smith. You work as a secretary for the accounting department of DEAL Company. Respond to the caller's questions
- D. Your name is Helen/Paul Brown. You call from Mr. Georgiou's office and you want to talk to Mr. Allen, the manager. As he is not there, leave a message

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEXT PROFILE

TYPE OF SCHOOL: Vocational High School

LANGUAGE LEVEL: Mixed ability class

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: Twenty two

NUMBER OF LESSONS: Two

DURATION OF LESSON: Forty to forty five minutes each

AIMS OF THE LESSON: To train learners into extracting and transferring information, to understand a text, to improve their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, to engage in a meaningful search of information.

ACTIVITIES: Reading, writing, listening and speaking tasks

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Ability to understand the content; ability to apply the information found.

METHODS USED: Communicative English, situational English, pair work, group work

TEACHING TOOLS: Computer lab, projector, internet, photocopies, pens.

SOURCES: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPTULRZQVOQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHitEgfK254>

LESSON 1: BOOKING A HOTEL ROOM

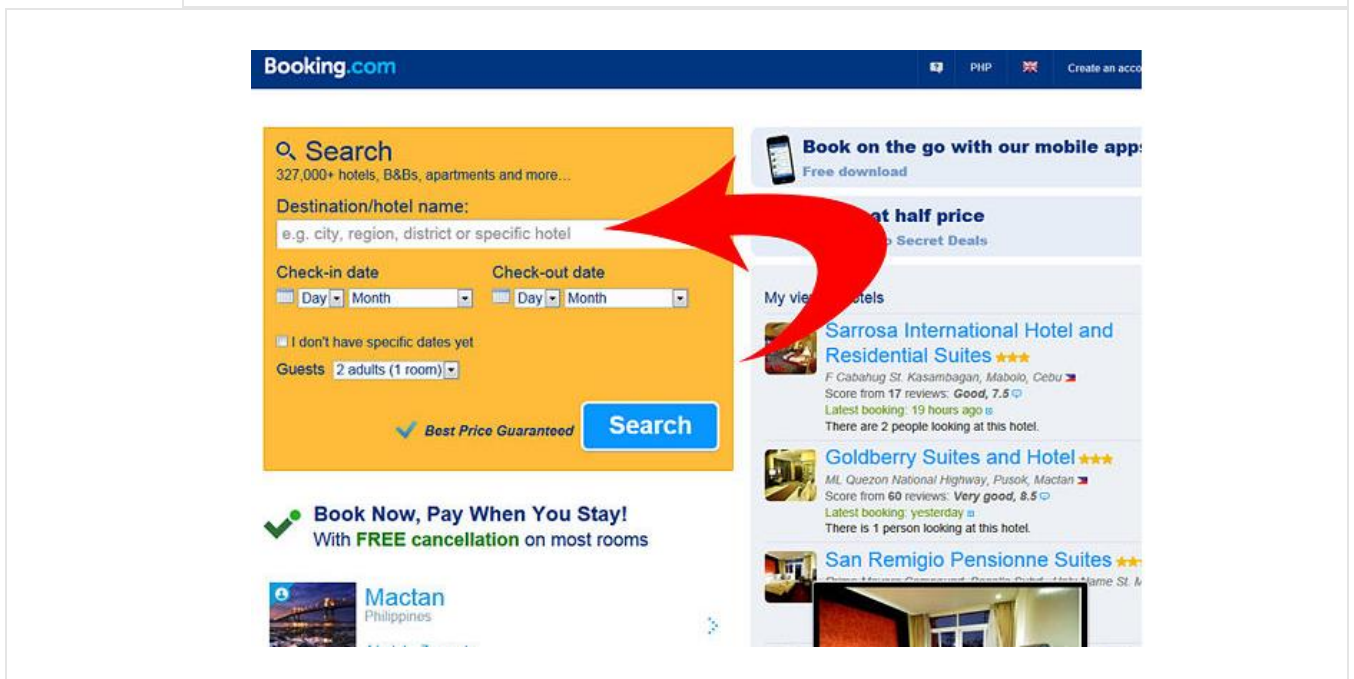
TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

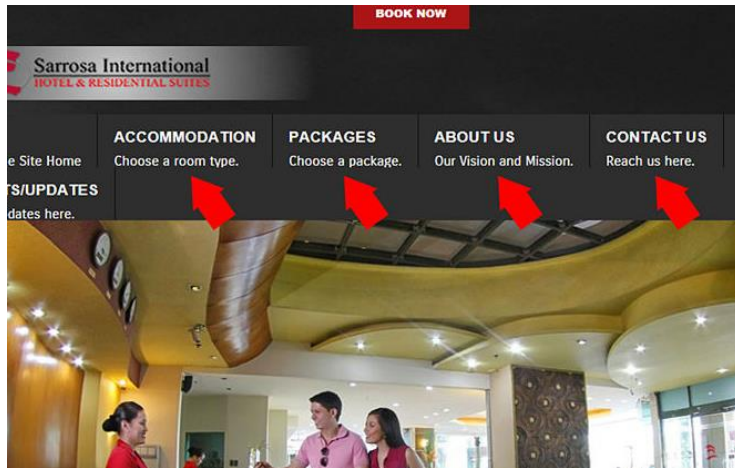
TASK ONE: Teacher shows pictures of hotel brochures on a ppt to engage learners and involve them in a pre-reading stage (*to arouse their interest and content schemata-to communicate*) – [5']

TASK TWO: In pairs, students are given photocopies with pictures (their accompanying texts have been purposefully taken out) are asked to discuss with their partner regarding the content and guess what needs to be done when booking a hotel room (*To brainstorm, to produce speech, to express their opinion*) – [10']

PICTURES OF STUDENTS' TASK:

How to Book a Hotel Room





Booking.com ✔ Best Price Guaranteed


Reservation number	740700896
PIN code	6736
Email	bachua@hotmail.com
Booked by	Evelyn Chua

Your reservation: 2 nights, 1 room
Check-in: Friday, 12 July 2013 (from 14:00)
Check-out: Sunday, 14 July 2013 (until 12:00)

Deluxe Twin Room	PHP 2772
Total price	PHP 2772

Please note: additional supplements (e.g. extra bed) are not added to this total.
 The total price shown is the amount you will pay to the property. Booking.com does not charge any reservation.

Sarrosa International Hotel and Resider Suites
 Address: F Cabahug St. Kasambagan, Mabo Cebu City, 6000 Philippines
 Phone: +63322325811
 Email: sarrosa@sarrosa.com
 Travel information: [Show directions](#)



Guest name: Jennifer Ward for max. 2 people.
 Meal Plan:
 • There is no meal option with this room.
 Prepayment:
 • No deposit will be charged.
 Cancellation policy:
 • If cancelled or modified up to 7 days before date of arrival, no fee will be charged. If cancelled or modified later or in case of no-show, 100 percent of the first night will be charged.

Any cancellation or modification fees are determined by the property. You will pay any additional costs to the property. Cancellation costs in local hotel time:
 • Until 4 July 2013 23:59 [Cebu]: PHP 0
 • From 5 July 2013 00:00 [Cebu]: PHP 1386

Free public parking is possible on site (reservation is not required).
 Internet:
 WiFi is available in the hotel rooms and costs PHP 213/hours. [See all policies](#)
 Need help?
 For urgent queries, please contact Sarrosa International Residential Suites: +63322325811
 If you would like to change or upgrade your reservation [booking.com](#).
 Our Customer Service team is also here to help. [Send us a message](#) or call us at:
 Local number: 001800 111 421 26
 When abroad: +44 20 3320 2609

wikiHow

TASK THREE: Students are now given another photocopy with the pictures of the previous task. This time the texts are included. Students work in pairs and make a list of things one needs to do when booking a hotel room. Possible unknown vocabulary (highlighted in the texts) can be explained (*to understand the content – to verify their answers - to introduce new vocabulary*) – [10’]

PICTURES AND TEXTS OF STUDENTS’ TASKS:

How to Book a Hotel Room

1. **Decide on a hotel. Ask yourself the following questions:**

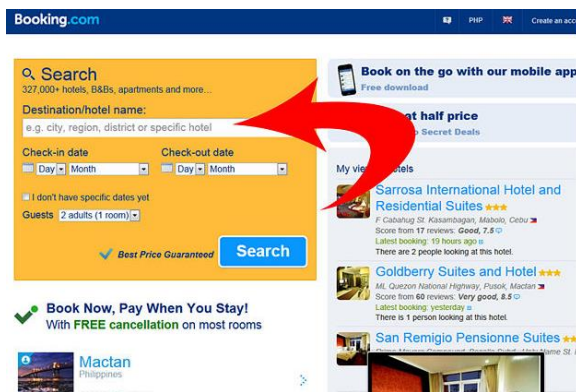


- Does the hotel fit within my travel **budget**? For a short stay, you can probably get by with not reserving an expensive suite, but for a longer stay you may appreciate more **amenities** and room to spread out.
- Is there any extra cost to having kids share a room? Some hotels will allow children under a certain age to stay for free in the same room as their

parents; however, you will need to find out the exact policy from each individual hotel.

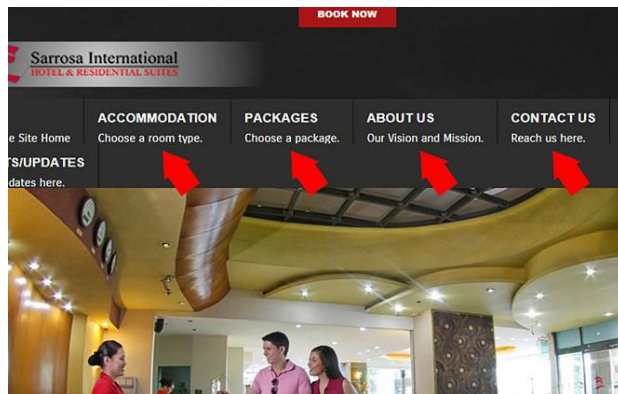
- What type of room is needed? Figure out if you need a small room (ideal for a very short stay), or a large apartment-type suite (e.g. for an extended stay with family).

2. Search for hotel deals on major travel sites like Travelocity, Priceline, Kayak.com, etc. You can even compare hotels within each site by checking the box next to hotels you like and then clicking on 'Compare' button. This way, you will have page view of three hotels side-by-side that you can also print for later review. Some hotels do not include free Internet, breakfast etc. That can be seen using the "Compare" feature.



3. Check the hotel website, if available, or check travel web sites like TripAdvisor or Yelp for hotel reviews. Check with your travel agent about the accommodations.

3.



4. Call the hotel directly. While you may get a better deal on discount travel web sites, they probably won't tell you about exclusive special deals. Make sure you politely ask if they have discounts, and they will tell you if they have or not.



4.

5. **Ask the clerk any questions you might have when making the hotel reservation.** If you get it done now, you won't get **frustrated** later. You may need to ask about parking, pets, smoking, if it is on a **steep** hill, etc.



6. **Request an information packet or brochure about the hotel, to ensure that you know exactly what to expect.**



6.

7. **Confirm the reservation and write down the reservation number.**
7.
8. **Confirm the hotel's cancellation policy**

Booking.com ✓ Best Price Guaranteed

Reservation number	740700896
PIN code	6796
Email	bachua@hotmail.com
Booked by	Evelyn Chua

Sarrosa International Hotel and Residences Suites

Address: F Cabahug St. Kasambagan, Mabo Cebu City, 6000 Philippines
Phone: +63322325811
Email: rolvel01@yahoo.com
Travel information: [Show directions](#)

Your reservation: 2 nights, 1 room
Check-in: Friday, 12 July 2013 (from 14:00)
Check-out: Sunday, 14 July 2013 (until 12:00)

Deluxe Twin Room PHP 2772
Total price PHP 2772

Please note: additional supplements (e.g. extra bed) are not added to this total.
The total price shown is the amount you will pay to the property. Booking.com does not charge any reservation, cancellation or modification fees.

for max. 2 people.

Meal Plan:

- There is no meal option with this room.

Prepayment:

- No deposit will be charged.

Cancellation policy:

- If cancelled or modified up to 7 days before date of arrival, no fee will be charged. If cancelled or modified later or in case of no-show, 100 percent of the first night will be charged.

Any cancellation or modification fees are determined by the property. You will pay any additional costs to the property.
Cancellation costs in local hotel time:

- Until 4 July 2013 23:59 [Cebu]: PHP 0
- From 5 July 2013 00:00 [Cebu]: PHP 1386

Internet:
WiFi is available in the hotel rooms and costs PHP 213 hours. [See all policies](#)

Need help?
For urgent queries, please contact Sarrosa International Residential Suites: +63322325811
If you would like to change or upgrade your reservation [Booking.com](#).
Our Customer Service team is also here to help. [Send us a message](#) or call us at:
Local number: 001800 111 421 26
When abroad: +44 20 3320 2609

KEY TO TASK THREE:

1. Search for hotel deals on major travel sites/compare hotels
2. Check the hotel website/check travel web sites /check with travel agent about accommodations
3. Call the hotel directly/get a better deal on discount travel web sites
4. Ask the clerk more things you need to know about facilities (parking/pets/smoking/ etc)
5. Request information or a brochure to have a clearer idea
6. Confirm the reservation and write down the reservation number
7. Confirm the hotel's cancellation policy

TASK FOUR: Students are asked to watch a video on how to book a hotel room. They are divided in pairs. Each pair has to decide on the order of the steps taken on a given list either before finding the hotel or after choosing a hotel. [10']

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPTULRZQVOQ>

KEY TO TASK FOUR:

BEFORE FINDING THE HOTEL

1. Go to the search engine page
2. Click on the city/country you want to visit
3. Click on the check in and check out dates
4. Click on the type of room
5. Click on the adults/children box
6. Click on the “search” bar
7. Click on the stars of the hotel
8. Click on the location of the hotel
9. Click on the facilities of the hotel
10. Click on the “apply” button

AFTER CHOOSING THE HOTEL

11. Click on the hotel of choice
12. Click on the inside/outside of the hotel pictures
13. Click on the map to see the area of the hotel
14. Look on the directions that tell us how to go there
15. Click on the “more” button for more information
16. Click on the room we want {double/single} to book
17. Click on the “book” button

TASK FIVE: (Optional) Students watch a video about how to book a hotel room over the phone

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHitEgfK254>] and have a discussion about it [10']

LESSON 1: BOOKING A HOTEL ROOM

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

TASK 1. Look at the pictures of the ppt. What do they show? What do you think we are going to talk about?

TASK 2. Look at another set of pictures given by your teacher. The accompanying texts are missing. They talk about what needs to be done when booking a hotel room. Can you guess what they say?

TASK 3. This time you have the pictures and the texts together. In pairs read through, discuss with your partner their content and make a list of things you need to do when booking a hotel room:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

TASK 4: Form pairs and take number one or two. Watch a video about how to book a hotel room on line. When it is over:

A. pairs with **number 1** have to find what we do before choosing a hotel.

B. Pairs with **number 2** will find what we do after choosing the hotel.

BEFORE CHOOSING A HOTEL	
Click on the “search” bar	1.
Click on the location of the hotel	2.
Click on the city/country you want to visit	3.
Click on the “apply” button	4.
Go to the search engine page	5.
Click on the facilities of the hotel	6.
Click on the check in/check out dates	7.
Click on the stars of the hotel	8.
Click on the type of room	9.
Click on the adults/children box	10.
AFTER CHOOSING THE HOTEL	
Click on the inside/outside of the hotel pictures	11.
Click on the directions that tell us how to go there	12.
Click on the hotel of our choice	13.
Click on the map to see the area of the hotel	14.
Click on the “book” button	15.
Click on the room we want [double/single]	16.
Click on the more button	17.

TASK 5: Watch the following video. What does it talk about?

LESSON 2 – GETTING THE BEST OFFER**USING HOTEL SEARCH ENGINES EFFECTIVELY****TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS**

TASK ONE: Students are divided in pairs, are asked to read a leaflet about hotel search engines and copy the information on the given table – [each pair is assigned to read information for 2 or 3 search engines] [15']

KEY TO TASK ONE:

HOTEL SEARCH ENGINES	IMPORTANT FEATURES (What these engines are good for/ what they offer)
1. Google Hotel Finder	Compare hotel prices – Put them in a shortlist – track them over time – use filters – use google map – select by travel time
2. Bing Travel – Rate Indicator	It is a great help when you want to find whether the hotel tariff is a good deal or not – do a historic search for specific dates – gives a comparative search
3. Hotels.com	Gives localized information – gives great deals and rewards programs Gives the cheapest rates – does not charge cancellation fees – download their free iPad, iPhone, Android app.
4. Late rooms	A Europe and U.K. centric site but also covers properties worldwide – Sign up to receive best deals – uncovers extra special discounts – added value extras – free hotel nights and packages when staying for more than one night
5. Trip advisor	Suggests reviews on hotels/resorts/flights/vacation rentals/vacation packages/travel guides – uses filter to sort the hotels by the amenities on offer

6. Booking.com	Has a nice layout – has large and clear fonts – you can use the search engine to locate and do hotel reservations – They show a lot of hotels
7. Hotels Combined	It covers the world – accepts and quantifies reviews from paying customers – compares prices – you can view the list when you search for the best hotel by destination
8. Hotwire	Discount travel and best hot deals – You can watch out for price drops –Compare the results with other sites
9. Venere	Includes bed and breakfast and vacation rentals – gives you a colorful map
10. Room key	Offers travelers direct access to a broad network of hotels around the globe – provides accurate and comprehensive information – makes it easy for travelers to discover what’s right for them - the interface is superb

TASK TWO: Students are divided in pairs. They are secretaries for “CAPA” ICT company in Athens. They have been instructed to book a hotel room for some of the company members that are visiting DLM company in London to do business with. Five people are travelling: two personnel members and an HR manager and his wife. They are leaving on March 15 and returning to Greece on March 18. They have asked that the hotel can offer the following facilities:

Near the city centre, wi-fi access, breakfast included, parking, air-conditioning, hair dryer in the bathroom, coffee/tea making facilities, laundry, gym.

They have to look at one of the search engines in order to find one or two hotels that fit the given information and facilities. Then they copy the information needed on the given table and present it in class (25’)

	HOTEL 1	HOTEL 2
Name of the hotel		
Country/City		
Check in date		
Check out date		
Double room/cost		
Single room/cost		
Location		
Facilities:		
PLACE A TICK NEXT TO EACH FACILITY IF AVAILABLE		
Wi-fi		
Breakfast included		
Parking		
Air-conditioning		
Hair dryer in bathroom		
Coffee/tea making facilities		
Laundry		
Gym		

LESSON 2 – GETTING THE BEST OFFER

USING HOTEL SEARCH ENGINES EFFECTIVELY

STUDENT WORKSHEET

TASK ONE: In the leaflet you have been given read about two or three search engines. When you do it, in pairs, copy the information needed on the next table:

HOTEL SEARCH ENGINES	IMPORTANT FEATURERS (What these engines are good for/ what they offer/what they can do for travellers)
1. Google Hotel Finder	
2. Bing Travel – Rate Indicator	
3. Hotels.com	
4. Laterooms	
5. Tripadvisor	
6. Booking.com	
7. Hotels Combined	
8. Hotwire	
9. Venere	
10. Roomkey	

TASK TWO: Work with a partner. You are secretaries for “CAPA” ICT company in Athens. You have been instructed to book a hotel room for some of your company members that are visiting DLM company in London to do business with. Five people are travelling: two personnel members and a HR manager and his wife. They are leaving on March 15 and returning to Greece on March 18. They have asked that the hotel can offer the following facilities:

Near the city centre, wi-fi access, breakfast included, parking, air-conditioning, hair dryer in the bathroom, coffee/tea making facilities, laundry, gym.

Look at one of the search engines in order to find one or two hotels that fit the given information and facilities. Then copy the information needed on the given table and present it in class (25’)

	HOTEL 1	HOTEL 2
Name of the hotel		
Country/City		
Check in date		
Check out date		
Double room/cost		
Single room/cost		
Location		
PLACE A TICK NEXT TO EACH <u>FACILITY</u> IF AVAILABLE		
Wi-fi		
Breakfast included		
Parking		

Air-conditioning		
Hair drier in bathroom		
Coffee/tea making facilities		
Laundry		
Gym		

CHAPTER 6
CONTEXT PROFILE

TYPE OF SCHOOL: Vocational High School

LANGUAGE LEVEL: Mixed ability

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: Twenty two

NUMBER OF LESSONS: Two

DURATION OF LESSON: Forty to forty five minutes each

AIMS OF THE LESSON: To introduce learners to the real life working environment; to familiarize them with the task of looking for a job in an advertisement; to train them to respond as job applicants; to promote their listening and reading skills; to enhance their vocabulary.

ACTIVITIES: Reading, writing, listening and speaking tasks

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Ability to understand instructions/ability to apply instructions/ability to distinguish formal language

METHOD USED: Communicative English, Situational English, task based English

TEACHING TOOLS: Photocopies, computer, software

SOURCES: <http://www.si-lang.net/software/>

LESSON 1: LOOKING AT JOB ADS – PREPARING A CV-WRITING A MAIL

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

Students are introduced to the ICT/Software. They are explained (tiold) how it works and what it is used for. They are also explained that the software does not allow them to proceed with any activity if the previous one is not successful (5')

TASK 1:

Students are then asked to read the first part of the job advertisement regarding the ICT/Software Developer. When they do, they are asked a few questions regarding: the content (5'):

FIRST PART OF THE AD:

- **Employer:** siLang,
- **Contract:** Permanent
- **Type:** Full time
- **Date:** today
- **Email:** hrteam@si-lang.net
- **Salary:** negotiable
- **Interview Date:** to be confirmed

Do you get excited about developing software or working on ICT solutions? Is coding and technical documentation your expertise? SiLang, a rapid growing.....

QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED TO STUDENTS AFTER THEY READ THE FIRRSST PART OF THE AD:

- a. What is the ad for?
- b. Who is the employer?
- c. What type of job is it?
- d. What about the salary?

TASK 2:

Students continue with the task. They are instructed to click on the word “**read more**” and read the full ad. When they finish they discuss the content or possibly unknown words (examples are highlighted in the text) and questions about the content of the text (15’):

SECOND PART OF THE AD:

Do you get excited about developing software or working on ICT solutions? Is coding and technical documentation your **expertise**? SiLang, a rapid growing company is seeking experienced software developer to join a multinational and dynamic team. Employees enjoy a wide range of benefits including: Competitive salaries, minimum 26 days leave plus bank holidays, flexible working arrangements, **contributory pension scheme**, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, career breaks/special leave, learning and development.

Job description - ICT / Software Developer

You will have to work like part of the ICT Delivery Unit, to support the development and implementation of project solutions. You will be involved in the design of systems and programs to meet highly complex business needs and in the preparation of **specifications** from which programs are developed. You have to create also technical documentation. There will be some travel required to centers and meetings across Europe.

Essential: Bachelor in Computer Engineering or Computer Science (Preferably a Master in Software Engineering).

Experience working with programming languages, operating systems and software. Strong programming and problem solving skills, ability to work independently and as part of big team, professional experience with coding and debug in a team environment is an asset.

If you are interested in joining our dynamic team please send your CV and your motivation letter to: hrteam@si-lang.net

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONTENT

- a. What is SiLang?
- b. What benefits does SiLang offer to the employers?
- c. What is the job of an ICT / Software Developer about?
- e. What are the qualifications needed for this job?
- f. What needs to be done to apply for this job?

TASK 3:

Students continue with the task. Before they begin the teacher discusses possibly unknown words (highlighted in the text) giving relevant examples. Then, they have to click on the word “**apply**” (to the job) and fill in the blanks of a given application mail. They are explained that if they choose a wrong word this changes into red color, meaning it is a wrong answer and that the exercise will be correct only when all the phrases turn green. They all have to wait for the teacher’s instructions before clicking on to the word **SEND** and move to the next activity (20’).

Key to task 3

E-MAIL to ICT/Software Developer Advertisement - TEXT

Dear Madam,

With this letter, I would like to express my interest in the position of (*a. senior expertise, b. software engineer c. ICT Software Developer*), advertised (*a. today b. a couple of days ago c. last month*) on (*a. siLang official website b. WorkZ.net website c. JobR.net website*). I have successfully attended several full courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level in (*a. **Welding Technology and Material Science** b. Media and Communication c. Pedagogics and Instructional designing d. Computer engineering and software development*). I have rich professional experience in the area of (*a. welding engineering b. media production c. training d. software development*) and I have also highly practiced my skills on (*a. database design b. financial **documentation** c. technical documentation*).

Moreover, I have excellent mobile (*a. programming skills, b. programming language skills, c. knowledge of **distributed systems***). In addition, I am fully prepared to work in a (*a. crowded and multinational, b. busy and multicultural, c. busy and globalized*) environment and I hope that you will give me the privilege to join the (*a. ICT Unit, b. ICT Delivery Unit, c. Delivery Unit*) of your company. I honestly believe that I am a suitable candidate for this job. For more details about my professional and academic background I attach my (*a. business card, b. academic records, c. resume*).

Thank you very much in advance for your consideration. If you have any further questions regarding my application, I will be happy to provide more details.
Sincerely,

LESSON 1 – LOOKING AT JOB ADS – PREPARING A CV-WRITING A MAIL
STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

TASK 1:

Read the first part of the job advertisement for the ICT/Software Developer. Think of the following and discuss your answers in class

- What is the ad for?
- Who is the employer?
- What type of job is it?
- What about the salary?
- Is there a fixed interview date?

TASK 2:

Continue with the task. Click on the “**read more**” word and read the full ad. Think of the following and discuss your answers in class

- What is SiLang?
- What benefits does SiLang offer to the employers?
- What is the job of an ICT / Software Developer about?
- What are the qualifications needed for this job?
- What needs to be done to apply for the job?

TASK 3:

Now click on the word “**apply**”. This is an application mail to the ICT/Software Developer Advertisement. Fill in the missing information. If you choose a wrong word this changes into red color, meaning it is a wrong choice. When you find the correct word all phrases turn into green. When this happen **DO NOT YET** click on the word **SEND** (the mail) but wait for your teacher to give you instructions.

LESSON 2. – REPLYING TO AN INTERVIEW CALL –FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TASK 1:

The teacher reminds the students of the previous task, namely that they had to mail SiLang company looking for a job. Students are now asked to proceed with a next task. They are asked to click on the mobile phone displayed on the screen of the software in order to answer a call. The call is from the company who have received their e-mail/resume and wish to know more about them (10')

Students are told that when a message appears on the right hand side of the screen, it means they have given an inappropriate (not formal enough) answer and have to answer again.

TASK 2: When the previous activity is over they are asked to discuss what the caller asked them – (questions and optional answers appear on their worksheet). They share their opinion in the class. The correct answers are given on a ppt by the teacher. (10')

KEY TO TASK 2:

QUESTION AND OPTIONAL ANSWERS

What is the employer asking you about, telling you or wants from you?

- Years of experience
- **Qualifications**
- Previous jobs
- **Thoughts about the new environment**
- Thoughts about the likes and dislikes
- Thoughts about the old job
- To answer immediately
- Instructions on how to go to the company
- **Information about the selection criteria**

- Selection will be based on interest in work
- Selection will be based on skills
- **Selection will be based on a task**
- The applicant has to answer in a month
- **The applicant has to answer in a few days**
- The applicant has to send a fax
- **The applicant has to send a mail**
- The applicant has to send a letter

TASK 3: Students proceed with the next activity. Now they have to answer another call from SiLang company who wish to arrange an interview appointment with the students/applicants (5')

TASK 4: When the call is over they are asked to complete the following statements (5')

KEY TO TASK 4:

- a. They want to see the applicant on Monday at 18h00
- b. They will meet at room 5B
- c. The guard will be in the main hall
- d. The guard will give instructions

TASK 5:

Students proceed with the next activity on the software which is to find the meeting room based on the instructions given at the information desk of SiLang company (10').

**LESSON 2. – REPLYING TO AN INTERVIEW CALL –FOLLOWING
INSTRUCTIONS**

STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

TASK 1:

Click on the mobile phone displayed on the screen of the software in order to answer a call. The call is from SiLang Company, who has received your resume and wish to know more about you as job applicants.

ATTENTION: when a message appears on the right hand side of the screen, it means you have given an inappropriate (not formal enough) answer and have to answer again.

TASK 2: Now look at the following questions: Which of the following phrases answer the question “What is the employer asking you about, telling you or what does he want from you?”

- Years of experience
- Qualifications
- Previous jobs
- Thoughts about the new environment
- Thoughts about the likes and dislikes
- Thoughts about the old job
- To answer immediately
- Instructions on how to go to the company
- Information about the selection criteria
- Selection will be based on interest in work
- Selection will be based on skills
- Selection will be based on a task
- To answer in a month
- To answer in a few days
- To send a fax

- To send a mail
- To send a letter

TASK 3: Now, continue with the next task and answer the call from SiLang Company.

TASK 4: Now complete the following statements:

- e. They want to see the applicant
- f. They will meet at
- g. The guard will be in
- h. The guard will

TASK 5:

Now proceed with the next activity on the software. Enter the SiLang building, talk to the guard and follow his instructions.

APPENDIX XII: KEY POINTS OF THE VOCATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM GUIDELINES MATCHED TO THE SUGGESTED SAMPLE ACTIVITIES (IN GREEK AND ENGLISH)

Based on the Vocational English language curriculum guidelines regarding the English language (http://www.pi-schools.gr/lessons/english/aps_agg.php) third year students need

to:

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES REGARDING LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS STUDENTS NEED TO ACQUIRE	SAMPLE CHAPTERS DESIGNED TO LINK TO THE CURRICULUM GUIDELINES
<p>Να κατανοεί και να παράγει αυθεντικό προφορικό λόγο κατά τη διάρκεια συζητήσεων μεταξύ δύο ή περισσότερων προσώπων για θέματα προσωπικά ή επαγγελματικά ή θέματα γενικότερου ενδιαφέροντος.</p> <p>[To understand and produce authentic oral speech during conversations between two or more people for personal, social or professional topics]</p>	<p>Chapter 1 – 2 lessons: <i>Greeting Visitors – understanding different cultures – business etiquette</i></p> <p>Purpose of activities: To introduce learners to the cultural aspect of successful communication and professional attitude; to greet people we meet for the first time; to enhance listening and speaking skills; to listen for specific information; to give their opinion; production of oral speech between pairs for personal/social/professional reasons; enhance communication.</p>
<p>Να διατυπώνει τις απόψεις του κατά τη διάρκεια μιας συζήτησης.</p> <p>[To formulate their opinion during a discussion]</p>	<p>Chapter 2 – 2 lessons: <i>Six thinking hats. An unusual technique– Effective communication in business decision making</i></p> <p>Purpose of activities: Introduction to real life like communicative situations; to improve listening and speaking skills; to extract information; to fill in a table; to formulate an opinion during a discussion; to familiarize with decision taking; to train into ways we express thoughts and relevant vocabulary; to enhance cognitive development.</p>

<p>Να κατανοεί προφορικό λόγο όπως ανακοινώσεις.</p> <p>[To understand oral speech in monologues]</p> <p>Να κάνει μια επαγγελματική συναλλαγή</p> <p>[To conduct a professional transaction]</p>	<p>Chapter 3 – 2 lessons: <i>Twitter as a means of social media- Twitter for business</i></p> <p>Purpose of activities: To understand a monologue; to infer information; to transfer spoken information; to improve listening skills; To engage in a meaningful and professional transaction; to improve speaking skills; to enhance communication.</p>
<p>Να διεξάγει τηλεφωνικές συνδιαλέξεις προσωπικής ή επαγγελματικής φύσης.</p> <p>[To understand and conduct personal or professional phone conversations]</p>	<p>Chapter 4 – 2 lessons: <i>Phone etiquette - answering the phone and transferring a call-holding the line-taking a message –leaving a message</i></p> <p>Purpose of activities: To understand a phone conversation; to take a telephone message, to transfer a telephone message; to hold the line; to enhance listening and speaking skills; to enhance communication.</p>
<p>Να κατανοεί απλά άρθρα γενικού ή ειδικού επαγγελματικού ενδιαφέροντος.</p> <p>[To understand simple articles of general or specialized and professional interest]</p> <p>Να δίνει προφορικές οδηγίες σε άλλα πρόσωπα για την εκτέλεση εργασιών.</p> <p>[To give oral instructions to people]</p>	<p>Chapter 5 – 2 lessons <i>Booking a hotel room – Getting the best offer – Using hotel search engines effectively</i></p> <p>Purpose of activities: To understand the content of a specialized article; to extract information; to transfer information; to improve reading and writing skills; to enhance interaction; to engage in a meaningful search of information; to enhance speaking and listening skills; to train into giving oral instructions; to enhance communication.</p>

<p>Να κατανοεί, αλλά και να παράγει διαφόρων ειδών αυθεντικό γραπτό λόγο, όπως αγγελίες/ σύντομο βιογραφικό σημείωμα, φιλικές ή επαγγελματικές επιστολές</p> <p>[To understand and produce various types of authentic written speech like advertisements, CVs, mails, instructions]</p>	<p>Chapter 6 – 2 lessons <i>SiLang-looking at job ads – preparing a CV - writing a mail – replying to an interview call</i></p> <p>Purpose of activities: (To enhance reading, listening and writing skills; to understand an ad; to write a mail; to understand instructions; to enhance relevant vocabulary; to understand professional language when replying to an ad or responding to an interviewer’s call; to understand various accents of English as in a multicultural professional environment)</p>
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APPENDIX XIII – PRE/POST-TEST-READING PART

PART ONE
Questions 1 – 7

- Look at the statements below and the comments given on the opposite page by mobile phone retailers.
- Which section (A, B, C or D) does each statement 1 – 7 refer to?
- For each statement 1 – 7, mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.
- You will need to use some of these letters more than once.

Example:

0 the extent to which mobile phones have changed in size

0	A	B	C	D
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- the need for retail staff to stay informed about the mobile phones they are selling
- the belief that the market will not sustain the present number of mobile phone retailers
- the use of mobile phones no longer being restricted to a specific group of people
- the relationship between charges and the number of mobile phone users
- a negative view of competing mobile phone retailers
- a comparison between changes in the mobile phone industry and that in a different sector
- these services available at mobile phone outlets that are not provided by other retailers

A

Market awareness of the mobile telephone has exploded and the retailer who specialises in mobile phones is seeing growth like never before. Admittedly, some customers buy their first mobile phone in the supermarket, but for advice, additions and particular services they turn to the specialist. There are a large number of mobile phone retailers and I can't help but feel the market only has room for four players. Undoubtedly, customer service is the factor that differentiates operators and I think this year we will probably see rationalisation in the sector.

B

When I first started in the industry, mobile phones were costing a thousand pounds and were as large as box files. Now, prices are constantly being driven down and handsets are considerably more compact. There is intense competition between the network providers, and every time they lower their tariffs, some people come into the market. This will continue, and while retail dealers' profits will be affected dramatically, network providers will have to generate more revenue by offering internet provision and data services to the mobile user.

C

Over a few years, prices have dropped sharply and technological advances have meant products have changed – and are changing. Successful retailers must try to keep on top of these developments and invest in the training of employees so they are able to offer impartial advice to customers. E-commerce is taking off but this won't necessarily replace traditional retail outlets. In order to stand out, you need innovative ideas on customer service. We don't believe in criticising other retailers, but there's nothing particularly exciting out there at present.

D

The mobile phone business is behaving like the internet: industry in take-up and the pace of innovation, and it's important not to be left behind. We must continue to innovate in delivering the product to the customer. In terms of service provision, you can draw comparisons between us and our closest rival, but clearly all the main mobile phone retailers have succeeded in taking the industry forward. Growth has accelerated rapidly and the mobile telephone has changed from simply being a business tool, to being a means of communication for everyone.

Example:

0 A B C D E F G

A The hotel staff assumed they should be booked into the same room.

B But there is clear evidence that things are slowly improving.

C This would enable women to make an informed choice about a hotel, and they would not be placed in the uncomfortable position of having to complain about poor service.

D It is advisable for them to do this during their stay rather than waiting until they check out.

E Making sure that facilities in guest bedrooms cater equally for the needs of male and female guests is one such idea.

F Most of the women, when questioned further, thought that the reason for this was that they were female and travelling alone.

G This is evident from the results of a questionnaire distributed to hotel guests by the Business Travel Association.

PART TWO
Questions 8 – 12

- Read the article below about a survey of businesswomen staying in hotels.
- Choose the best sentence from the opposite page to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap 8 – 12, mark one letter (A – G) on your Answer Sheet.
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0).

Hotels Failing Businesswomen

Hoteliers should take note because they are facing a further order of business. Women account for more than half of hotel bookings, and hoteliers should be doing enough for them. (0) These show that the number of complaints made about the way women guests are treated is increasing.

The Bartonfield Hotel in London also conducted a recent survey of UK businesswomen, which reveals that 70% feel they receive an inferior service. (8) The attitude of hotel staff made them feel out of place in public areas; for example, 62% chose to eat in their rooms because they were made to feel uncomfortable by staff when dining alone. (9) For years, the hotel has a number of women travelling alone and wishing to use the hotel restaurant were actually turned away.

Many of the suggestions for improved service put forward by the Business Travel Association are relatively simple. (10) Placing tables in restaurants in a way that allows the head waiter to introduce guests to one another, so they can themselves.

Wendy Manning, executive manager of the Bartonfield Hotel, agreed with the Business Travel Association that hotel star ratings should be influenced by the level of service they offer to female business guests. (11) 'Our survey highlighted the unwillingness of many women to air their views if they are treated badly,' Wendy Manning pointed out.

A group of influential businesswomen recently met to discuss the results of the Business Travel Association questionnaire. They suggested that businesswomen should not hesitate to make it clear if they have a problem. (12) Once clients have gone, it is all too easy for the issue to be ignored by hotel managers, and it will also be forgotten by the overworked business executives themselves.

PART THREE
Questions 13 – 18

- Read the article below about product life cycles and the questions on the opposite page.
- For each question 13 – 18, mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet for the answer you choose.

Product Life Cycles and Sales Strategy

One of the most important concepts in sales management is that of the product life cycle. This is a historical record of the life of a product, showing the stage in its life the product has reached at a particular time. By identifying the stage that a product is in or may be heading towards, companies can formulate better marketing plans. All products have 'lives' in as much as they are created, sell with varying profitability over a period of time, and eventually reach a stage where they are no longer produced. A product's sales position and profitability can be expected to fluctuate over time and so, at each successive stage in the product's cycle, it is necessary to adopt different tactics.

The two main features of the product life cycle are unit sales and unit profit. The unit sales figures show the number of units of a product that are sold, advertising and promotion, as customers buy the product experimentally. This is generally followed by a levelling off while it is evaluated – the length of this period depending on the use to which the product is put. Then, unit sales rise steadily through the growth stage, when the product is widely accepted, and so on to saturation level. By this time, competitors will have entered the market with their own version and, from this point, the sales team will have to work even harder to win all additional sales. Eventually, the product's sales decline as better versions enter the market and competition becomes too strong. The sales team can then begin to plan for the product's withdrawal. They can

complete this information from the records of unit sales.

Unfortunately, unit sales are not the complete story as it is unit profit that is the decisive factor, although this is not always recorded accurately. It is this figure that sales management has to monitor, though, to ensure an effective marketing strategy and to produce effective profits.

At launch, the product is created accurately on the basis of market research, but sales and profits initially remain fairly stable, but, when the product is proving successful, competitors will bring out their own 'copy-cat' products. With a competitor in the field, the original firm has to respond in order to maintain its market position. It can run special sales campaigns, improve its product, or offer extra services, sales calls and so on. Often the extra expenditure is not accurately charged to the product and the result is that, long before unit sales are noticeably falling, the unit profit has already fallen.

The product life cycle, then, presents a picture of what happened in the product's 'lifetime', so how can a manager use this information to make better decisions-making? Every sales manager has a chart on which the progress of sales is plotted and this can be used as a guide to the stage of development each product is currently in. An essential management skill is being able to interpret sales results and draw the right conclusions. The chart can be used to identify the stages in the sales cycle, based on when the rate of sales growth or decline becomes pronounced.

13 According to the text, the end of a product's life cycle is marked by

- A a sharp rise in production costs.
- B the product becoming outdated.
- C an increase in customer complaints.
- D less support from sales management.

14 What does the writer say about sales management in the first paragraph?

- A Companies should spend more time on their sales planning.
- B There are many managers who need to improve their sales performance.
- C Most sales managers fail to recognise which stage a product has reached.
- D The sales approach should change with each phase of the product life cycle.

15 According to the text, a greater sales effort is required for a product when

- A it is particularly innovative.
- B the advertising budget has been cut.
- C rival companies start to produce something similar.
- D consumer interest switches to a new product category.

16 According to the text, a good marketing strategy must primarily be concerned with

- A sales statistics.
- B product details.
- C consumer data.
- D profit information.

17 According to the text, profit levels may fail to correspond to the volume of sales because

- A the full selling costs have not been taken into account.
- B the production costs were not estimated correctly.
- C there are unforeseen problems with distribution.
- D there has been a lack of economic stability.

18 What does the writer say about the charts that show sales progress?

- A It is a matter of judgement where one sales phase finishes and another begins.
- B Managers should review policy when a sharp fall in sales is indicated.
- C It is difficult to see how sales charts can provide sufficient guidance to managers.
- D Managers should get confirmation of the data they plot on the sales charts.

PART FOUR
Questions 19 – 33

- Read the advice below about the use of technology in presentations.
- Choose the best word to fill each gap from A, B, C or D on the opposite page.
- For each question 19 – 33, mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Guidelines for giving Presentations

Most presentations today (0) ...*B*... on the use of some sort of technology, such as a laptop computer, linked to a projector. While this technology can help to (19) ... presentations better, it also has a (20) ... of getting in the way. As a general (21) ..., it is better to (22) ... on the content of a presentation as a means of (23) ... your audience's attention, rather than relying on sophisticated equipment.

Bear in mind that when an organisation invites (24) ... for a contract, they may (25) ... four or five presentations from different companies on the same day. Each of these companies will probably be using the same computer graphics (26) ... and the same equipment. The chances are the presentations will be similar too.

That's why the content and (27) ... of what you say are important. Think about what you want to say and how to say it as clearly as possible. As a first step you need to (28) ... the main points you want to get across. Audiences are easily bored and (29) ... to remember only the most encouraging, exciting or unusual ideas.

Next create your materials, choosing the images for your presentation carefully. Remember you do not want to stop your audience from listening to you, nor do you want to (30) ... them.

Finally, make all the necessary (31) ... for the equipment you need. If technology is to be an important (32) ... of your presentation, make sure you know how to use it (33) ... and test it out beforehand.

Example:

A	calculate	B	depend	C	determine	D	lean
0	A	B	C	D			

- | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|---|------------|---|--------------|---|---------------|
| 19 | A | produce | B | make | C | construct | D | build |
| 20 | A | behaviour | B | habit | C | practice | D | routine |
| 21 | A | method | B | law | C | rule | D | course |
| 22 | A | focus | B | define | C | target | D | direct |
| 23 | A | gaining | B | acquiring | C | collecting | D | taking |
| 24 | A | requests | B | calls | C | bids | D | commands |
| 25 | A | appoint | B | programme | C | schedule | D | catalogue |
| 26 | A | parcels | B | packages | C | bundles | D | packages |
| 27 | A | formation | B | design | C | structure | D | system |
| 28 | A | catalogue | B | label | C | mark | D | identify |
| 29 | A | point | B | tend | C | lead | D | move |
| 30 | A | disorder | B | mistake | C | confuse | D | complicate |
| 31 | A | appointments | B | procedures | C | arrangements | D | organisations |
| 32 | A | share | B | role | C | function | D | element |
| 33 | A | precisely | B | suitably | C | properly | D | accurately |

WRITING PART

PART ONE

You are going to attend an engineering exhibition in Frankfurt soon. Write a memo to your assistant:

- Explaining why you will be away
- Letting her know the dates you will be away
- Saying what work she should do while you are away.

Write 30-40 words

MEMO:

TO:

FROM:

DATE:

SUBJECT:

PART TWO

Read this part of a letter from Mary Bennett applying for a job.

With reference to your advertisement in The Times, I am writing to apply for the post of training assistant.

I am moving to your country next month with my husband. As you will see from the enclosed CV, I have had a lot of experience in training and I feel that I have much to offer your company.

If I am selected for interview, please could you give me information about how to reach your offices by public transport?

Write a letter to Mrs Bennet in 60-80 words:

- Acknowledging her letter
- Offering her a date and time for an interview
- Requesting the names and addresses of two referees
- Telling her the best way to reach you by public transport

PART ONE
Conversation One
(Questions 1 – 4)

- You will hear three telephone conversations or messages.
- Write one or two words or a number in the numbered spaces on the notes or forms below.
- You will hear each recording twice.

Conversation One
(Questions 1 – 4)

- Look at the notes below.
- You will hear a woman telephoning a conference centre office.

NOTES ABOUT TERMINAL

Date: 21st February

Title: (1)

Time: 10 am – 4 pm

Voice: (2)

Topic of extra workshop: (3)

Amount payable in advance: (4) £..... per person

Conversation Two
(Questions 5 – 8)

- Look at the form below.
- You will hear a man calling a computer supplier.

HILLS PC SUPPLIES
Customer Services
Telephone Message

Caller's name: James Firth

Client: Allen and Brown Ltd

Item(s) ordered: (5)

Order no/date: HP02345 / 12-3-02

Notes: order was delivered late by the (6)

and was supplied without (7)

Action: call to apologise and discuss (8)

PART TWO
Questions 13 – 22

Section One
(Questions 13 – 17)

- You will hear five short recordings. Five people are talking about a problem that occurred.
- For each recording, decide what each speaker is talking about.
- Write one letter (A – H) next to the number of the recording.
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- You will hear the five recordings twice.

13	.....	A	losing a business card
14	.....	B	taking the wrong equipment
15	.....	C	arriving late for a meeting
16	.....	D	forgetting an address
17	.....	E	misunderstanding a message
		F	missing a presentation
		G	forgetting to make a phone call
		H	taking the wrong documents

Section Two
(Questions 18 – 22)

- You will hear another five recordings.
- For each recording, decide what the speaker is doing.
- Write one letter (A – H) next to the number of the recording.
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- You will hear the five recordings twice.

18	.....	A	making a complaint
19	.....	B	confirming information
20	.....	C	giving instructions
21	.....	D	changing an arrangement
22	.....	E	requesting information
		F	making a recommendation
		G	giving an invitation
		H	requesting advice

Conversation Three
(Questions 9 – 12)

- Look at the notes below.
- You will hear a recorded message about a job vacancy.

Position: Manufacturing Administrator

Requires: (9)

Candidates should preferably be qualified in (10)

The person appointed will need to be (11) in their relations with other people.

Enquiry: (12)

28 José Martínez left the first company he worked for because it

- A set the staff impossible targets.
- B offered insufficient incentives.
- C provided inadequate support.

29 José Martínez finds that popular sports events

- A are good places to advertise his service.
- B raise brand awareness through team sponsorship.
- C increase public demand for his products.

30 What does José Martínez plan to do in the future?

- A develop a chain of restaurants
- B set up a franchise operation
- C expand into the frozen food market

You now have 10 minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

7

PART THREE
Questions 23 – 30

- You will hear a radio interview with José Martínez, the Director of Pizza Rapida, a pizza delivery chain in Spain.
- For each question 23 – 30, mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.
- You will hear the recording twice.

23 José Martínez became successful by

- A taking over a well-known competitor.
- B establishing an innovative retail business.
- C gaining a reputation for high quality.

24 Before José Martínez set up his pizza delivery service, he

- A tested samples on potential clients.
- B handed out product questionnaires.
- C assessed demand in different areas.

25 According to José Martínez, the Spanish fast food business

- A is different from that of the U.S.
- B has slowed slightly in its rate of growth.
- C employs an increasing number of women.

26 José Martínez wants his trainee managers to

- A develop a competitive attitude.
- B try out some of the shop-floor jobs.
- C spend some time working abroad.

27 José Martínez believes that at first people invested in Pizza Rapida because they

- A were attracted by what the company offered.
- B saw that the shares were performing well.
- C thought food companies were a safe investment.

6

SPEAKING PART

SPEAKING SAMPLE TASKS

Task Sheet for Candidate B

Task Sheet 2

A: WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN...?
Preparing for a job interview

- Studying the job advertisement
- Finding out about the company
-
-

B: WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN...?
Deciding whether to attend a conference

- Venue
- Speakers
-
-

C: WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN...?
Developing new products

- Market Research
- Costs Involved
-
-

BEC Vantage – PART TWO

Task Sheet for Candidate A

Task Sheet 1

A: WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN...?
Selecting applicants for a job

- Work Experience
- Personal Qualities
-
-

B: WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN...?
Choosing a new supplier

- Prices and Discounts
- Reputation
-
-

C: WHAT IS IMPORTANT WHEN...?
Aiming to improve production quality

- Up-to-date equipment
- Staff Training
-
-

BEC Vantage – PART TWO

BEC VANTAGE

Foreign Business Trip

Your company is attending a trade fair in a foreign country for the first time.

You have been asked to help with the preparations for the trip.

Discuss the situation together, and decide:

- what travel and accommodation arrangements you will need to make before the trip
- which kinds of business customs in the foreign country it would be useful to know about, and how to find out about these before the trip

BEC Vantage - PART THREE

ASSESSMENT OF SPEAKING

Candidates are assessed on their own performance and not in relation to each other, according to the following analytical criteria: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. These criteria are interpreted at Vantage level. Assessment is based on performance in the whole test and is not related to particular parts of the test.

Both examiners assess the candidates. The Assessor applies detailed, analytical scales, and the Interlocutor applies a Global Achievement Scale which is based on the analytical scales.

Grammar and Vocabulary

This refers to range and accuracy as well as the appropriate use of grammatical and lexical forms. At BEC Vantage level, a range of grammar and vocabulary is needed to deal with the tasks. At this level candidates should be accurate enough, and use sufficiently appropriate vocabulary, to convey their intended meanings.

Discourse Management

This refers to the coherence, extent and relevance of each candidate's individual performance. Contributions should be adequate to deal with the BEC Vantage level tasks. At times, candidates' utterances may be inappropriate in length.

Pronunciation

This refers to the candidate's ability to produce comprehensible utterances. At BEC Vantage level, meanings are conveyed through the appropriate use of stress, rhythm, intonation and clear individual sounds, although there may be occasional difficulty for the listener.

Interactive Communication

This refers to the candidate's ability to take an active part in the development of the discourse. At BEC Vantage level, candidates should be sensitive to turn-taking and sustain the interaction by initiating and responding appropriately. Hesitation may, at times, demand patience of the listener.

APPENDIX XIV: PRE/POST-TEST SPECIFICATIONS

Paper details	What's in the paper?	What do I need to be able to do?
<p>READING</p> <p>1 hour</p> <p>25% of total marks</p> <p>Parts 1-3: Reading component</p> <p>Parts 4-5 Text-based</p> <p>Use of English tasks</p>	<p>First there are three long Reading texts: multiple matching, gapped paragraphs and multiple choice</p> <p>Then there are two shorter Use of English texts, each with a different task, the first requiring you to supply missing words, the second looking for mistakes in a document.</p> <p>Texts are adapted from real world publications and reflect international business practices. You don't need lots of specialist knowledge to read them</p>	<p>The reading skills you need include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading for the main idea • Finding specific information and reading for detail • Understanding attitude, opinion and the writer's purpose • Interpreting visual information • Reading for gist, inference and global meaning • Understanding text structure or following an argument • Understanding vocabulary and grammar in a short text • Proofreading • Working out meaning from context
<p>WRITING</p> <p>45 minutes</p> <p>25% of total marks</p>	<p>You have to produce two pieces of writing. The first is compulsory, and you need to write to a colleague or colleagues within the company. It may be a note, message, memo or email.</p> <p>For the second piece of writing there is a choice from various tasks, such as a business letter, proposal or report.</p>	<p>You're tested on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well you fulfil each task and its purpose • Whether you've used the right style for the task • How well you can put together and develop ideas on the topic • The accuracy and range of your use of language
<p>LISTENING</p> <p>40 minutes including 10 minute's transfer</p>	<p>The Listening paper has three parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A task to complete notes from messages or 	<p>This tests your ability to listen for a wide variety of real-life purposes, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening for specific

<p>time 25% of total marks</p>	<p>conversations with one or two speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A matching task • A longer piece with multiple-choice questions <p>You'll have to listen to things like presentations, lectures, interviews, discussions and more informal business conversations</p>	<p>information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the topic • Understanding attitudes and opinions • Listening for details • Listening for the overall meaning of a whole extract
<p>SPEAKING 14 minutes Paired: two candidates together 25% of total marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Speaking paper has three parts and the tasks involve: • Answering some individual questions from the examiner about yourself and business-related topics • Preparing and then giving a short talk • Discussing a business-related situation with another candidate, before reaching a decision. 	<p>You're tested on many things, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your grammar and vocabulary • Pronunciation • Fluency • Your ability to organise your thoughts, negotiated and sustain a discussion • The appropriate extent of your answers.

APPENDIX XV: EXPERIMENTAL GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT THE NEW MATERIAL

Please give your views regarding the material you were taught. Please be sincere in your comments

A. Material Content and Organization	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The material instructions were clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Vocabulary and new words were presented clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The material was well organized and presented (e.g. time, tasks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments					
B. Learning Environment and Teaching Methods	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. The material was well structured and helped me learn the new language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The material was interesting and motivated me to participate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The material and its environment encouraged me and helped me to learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The material encouraged team and group work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments					
C. Student improvement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8. The material developed my ability to improve my reading skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The material developed my ability to improve my writing skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The material developed my ability to improve my listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The material developed my ability to improve my speaking skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments					
D. Quality of Delivery	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. The material was appropriate for my level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The steps I had to take to do the activities were clear and understanding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. The material was relevant to the course needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. The use of power point was appropriate and helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. The use of videos was appropriate and helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments					
E. Assessment	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. Feedback on assessment was on time and helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments					

APPENDIX XVI: EXPERIMENTAL STUDENTS' FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Please tell me about the reading/speaking/writing/listening activities
2. Please tell me about the use of power points
3. Please tell me about the use of videos
4. Please tell me about the use of authentic material
5. Please tell me about the use of pair work/group work
6. Please tell me about the use of role-plays
7. Please tell me about the activities. Did they help you use the language?
8. Please tell me what you think about books that contain such activities/material

Supplementary explanatory questions:

- A. Can you give me an example?
- B. Can you explain what you mean?

APPENDIX XVII: EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TEACHERS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Could you tell me your opinion regarding the reading/speaking/writing/listening activities?
- Could you tell me your opinion on the use of power points?
- Could you tell me your opinion on the use of videos?
- Could you tell me your opinion on the use of authentic material?
- Could you tell me your opinion on the use of pair work/group work?
- Could you tell me your opinion on the use of role-plays?
- Could you tell me your opinion in relation to the communicative aspect of the material and its ability to help learners use English?
- Could you tell me what the ideal book for this course is to you?

APPENDIX XVIII: EXPERIMENTAL STUDENTS' FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

R: Let's begin. I'll have it here.. well, I'd like you to begin with the activities. Let's begin with reading. Who would like to start? Feel free to talk as you please....

Class: [laughters]

R: Well, I see you are laughing!.. That's good!... Who would like to talk about the activities I asked you to read, to understand, what do you think? No need to worry, relax....

Maria: Well, they were very nice because we practiced our English, we also learned some new words we didn't know and ... they were easy, I mean... we could understand their content and they were useful

R: Ok.

Paul: I liked the activities because I could use the English I had been taught, in every day life situations, they were quite easy but also useful and the videos particularly, I believe they are the evolution of listening and they can help a student a lot more than mere listening [he means without watching it simultaneously]

R: Ok. And you? what do you think? About reading let's say.. Let's take each activity separately. Reading for instance as we said. Would you like to come a little closer? Well, what do you think about reading? What do you think about the activities that asked you to read something and understand it?

Maria: Well, because they had to do with topics of everyday life situations I think they were very useful. I thought they were easy and I also learned some words I didn't know, their accent....

R: Ok.

Georgia: I thought it was [reading tasks] interesting and motivating to read the texts...

R: Ok. And you?

Nina: It was material that was relevant to our needs and profession and we were more direct, more authentic, it was easier for us to talk, it was more interesting

R: Ok.

Sofie: I agree [you agree?] yes, because it [the material] was very relevant to us and very useful for our future career, and we could cooperate with our partner, and this was also very interesting and fun together

R: Ok. Good. You would like to say something?

Nina: Yes, I would like that I agree with all the others, because the material had to do with everyday topics, so it was easier to talk, we felt more confident, it did not demand any specialized knowledge or something, so we could... we felt better, more relaxed when we talked

Aleka: I agree with the kids too. I believe that everybody liked the activities and we would like something like that in our lessons and it would also be more fun for everyone

R: Ok. Regarding the activities that you were asked to write something, the writing activities that is, what do you think? You know, those that you had to write or complete for information. Were they difficult, interesting

Pepi: No, they were not difficult, they were useful

R: Please, give an example

Pepi: Specifically for students that are learning English, they will need listening in their everyday life. It was very useful [she means to write in combination to listening] for listening practice as well but also for dictation of the words.

R: So, as concerns writing, let's remain to this for a while. What did you think? I mean about having to complete information in a table for example? Can you comment on that?

Paul: They were very interesting, and I personally found them easy. There was not anything really difficult, and though I consider writing useful students generally should be encouraged to speak English in class. We should be encouraged more to talk than to write...

R: So, were these activities encouraging enough for you to speak English?

Paul: Yes, yes, they were

R: Ok.

Sofie: I believe that all the activities we did, reading, writing, speaking, because they referred to one thing specifically at a time they were very helpful for us to understand the topic we discussed about

R: Ok.

Georgia: The topics were simple real life topics and so reading was easier

R: What about writing;

Maria: Writing too

R: And Listening;

Angie: Interesting; especially combined with videos. It [the video] makes lessons more.... It motivates us to participate more in the lesson and not to be bored..

R: I see

Paul: I believe that listening is important and as I said videos are the evolution, that is, we can have both [sound] and picture and it helps us more than just listening [he means only the sound]. The student can watch the video and understand much more than just from listening [he means only listening without watching].

R: I see. So, you are telling us that videos can enhance listening skills [yes] because of the image? [yes, yes]

Pepi: Yes, and in some topics that may be more difficult they help us because we can understand better through the images

R: Ok. Let's talk about speaking now. What do you think of the activities? [laughters from class]

Paul: I believe they were basic. I believe that we should be allocated more time for speaking in schools [means to have more speaking tasks]. This will also help our social skills and will improve our English

R: So, the speaking activities we did... Please explain how you understand they were done...

Georgia: Well, you gave a task, it had an example, which we could follow if we wished or improvise or depend on it [R: so, what else?] we were groups of twos [pairs] and did the dialogues [R: you mean role-played] yes, yes, [ok] and it was very nice because we were with our classmates, we were not alone [laughters], you made it easier for us this way and it was more fun

R: So, you are saying that pair work was good? [yes]. Can you please explain what was good about it?

Nina: Well, we cooperated, we interacted with one another, and also, as my classmate said before, it helped us not to feel alone [yes...] and it also helped us a lot to improve our speaking skills

R: So, you mean, for social purposes and for you, personally, this is important? To cooperate I mean?

Sofie: Yes, and we don't do that at all [you don't..] in school, we don't do it at all [Paul: Yes, we never did it in school...or rarely did it....]

R: Ok. You wanted to tell us about it, about role-plays, you want to add to what Sofie was saying?

Paul: Yes, it is very important. I mean, I believe that through dialogues [role plays he means] we can also develop social skills and come closer to our classmates, to form a group, this is good.

Georgia: Basically, it is a skill we will face right directly after school, in our real lives. We will have to speak English, so this was a very good practice for us

R: Ok, and for you?

Aleka: To know a language it is important to be able to communicate and not just do grammar, vocabulary. Communication should be more...

R: Ok. And you? What about the role-plays?

Pepi: It was really something different that helped us use the language

R: You mean they helped you talk?

Nina: Yes

Aleka: This goes for me too

R: Ok. What about the power points?

Angie: Cool!

R: Cool! What else?

Georgia: They were nice [Maria: Good] because they were also something different. Something we never have

R: Please explain why they are different

Georgia: Normally, we are used to working with 2-3 pictures from our book, which, well, I would say that they are not considered the best pictures to look at! [all the class laughs] [You mean, old, you don't like them?] yes, yes, and they [the pictures in the power points] were also on topics we like and interested in and I think they were very nice

Paul: They [the pictures] are usually some drawings in our book

R: Ok. So, Can you please explain what the power points offered you?

Aleka: They made teaching more vivid, there was more immediacy in the lesson [ok..] and so all the students wanted to participate more [ok]

Pepi: We also get away from the book [Oh! You want to get away from the book!] yes

R: Ok

Paul: It [he means the use of power points] offered us more pictures and more interesting than those in the book [ok]

Nina: And they were closer to our interests

R: I see

Maria: And they were carefully selected, so...

Sofie: They did not make us feel bored

R: So, you mean they were interesting?

Angie: Yes, because, even the students that are usually naughty, I noticed that they liked these lessons we did upstairs in the classroom [means the lab] because they were something different

R: Right. What about the use of authentic material in the book? Should it be included and used in the book?

Aleka: There is more immediacy [more immediacy?] yes, and the students understands with much more simpler things what the teacher wants to show and teach to the learners. Because the book is not so... well, it's not motivating, you don't want to read it..

Nina: We see real life situations and we can understand them a lot better

R: Right. Well, regarding role-plays. Could you comment on what you liked more, the way they were conducted, something specific you would like to point out?

Maria: Well, it was nice seeing one another, how our classmate would react at each case, we even enjoyed our mistakes, we didn't mind them at all [laughter from the entire group], we cooperated with our classmates, we saw what they did.

R: Explain please your feeling during the role plays

Maria: Great! [Laughter from the entire group]

Sofie: Great! The first [she means role-play] was like "what is she going to ask us to do?" [Everybody laughs] but later I think all students came closer to one another, yes..

R: Yes? [Student wants to talk] how did you feel during the role-plays?

Paul: I wanted to say that the first time I felt embarrassed in the class, but then I got the hand of it like everyone else, I am sure, and I could express myself better and more relaxed

R: Right. So, you mean that when lessons were over, you felt more confident using English? [yes, yes, we did] you felt you could use your English better? [yes, to use them] or not?

Paul: To use them with foreigners... [Maria: yes,] [R: really?]

R: And more confident [R: more confident?] yes. [You mean your felt more confident to use your English? [yes..]

R: Ok. Well, if you were asked what books should include, your book let's say, what would you say?

Georgia: More visual material

Pepi: Visual material [yes]

Paul: And dvds, not just cds, for listening and power points for presentations...

Maria: If we could have such activities at least once a week it would be so much better because every day we have lessons from the same book, we open book, turn pages, close book [Group laughs [R: boring?] yes, it would be much better [She means to have alternatives]

R: Right

Aleka: And we would like it to have more role-plays

R: More role plays? [Yes, yes]

Maria: We had a great time in class and also when we used various objects that were useful in the role-playing [You mean the real objects we used? Please give some examples from real objects we used]

Maria: When we role-played we were secretaries and someone called us in an office, for example, we had real phones [yes..] also the suitcase [the suitcase..] [everybody laughs] [when did we use the suitcase? When we did the "greeting visitors" lesson?] yes, when we did this lesson!

R: So, you mean to tell me that you like using real objects when we simulated reality [yes, yes] regarding what it is like to work in an office

Angie: It was more real

R: More real. Right. We call these realia you know [students are using a Greek expression which means they really felt as if they were the people they were simulating [so you felt this, didn't you?!] Right! [group laughs] and you guys? What do you think? How do you picture your English book?

Sofie: To have more contemporary and interesting topics; to be directly relevant to our needs; to be motivating; to motivate us to learn more and use English

R: And prepare you better?

Nina: Yes, especially in more practical matters [regarding?] real life situations

Paul: And I also believe they should not be very extreme but they should be like the ones we did together

R: You mean to be real life topics that you will have to use in your future professions?

Angie: Yes. However, I would like to use both the book and role-plays. I need a balance [balance. Ok.]

R: Right! Well, is there anybody that would like to add something else, something that struck you, something we haven't discussed and you would like to add, in relation to the lessons we did, though I think we discussed we covered a good range of it but if you have anything else to say..

Georgia: We would like to be heard [Students laugh]

R: Ok! Well, thank you very much for your participation guys! [Thank you too!] I had a great time! All the best! Thanks a lot!

APPENDIX XIX: EXPERIMENTAL GROUP TEACHERS' INTERVIEW

R: If we could talk a little louder, so that we can be heard. So, I would like to discuss with you what you thought of the material we did, that is I did with the students in the classroom, that concerns the course of “Economics and Administration”. What did you think of it? Shall we begin with the activities? You can talk freely, I will not interrupt you except when there is something I don’t understand and I will ask you to explain it ok? Ok. Who would like to start? Thank you very much again.

June: We would like to thank you for this opportunity! Well, I believe it was a very interesting material. Students were taught in a different way, not in the sense that you gave them something they hadn’t seen before. I mean, I use some videos as well. What I mean is that the tasks were more communicative and focused on the way to use the language. And therefore, I consider it very important and it also gave me, let’s say some feedback, which I can use in class. It was totally relevant to what students should be taught as learners of this course “Economics and Administration” and I believe it was easily accessible, and quite easy for their level and could deal with it. Therefore, I believe it was very good, it was ideal for the students.

Villy: I will agree with... and I would like to add that with the activities, I like the fact that you helped even the weak students, you had some support in Greek, the translation for the students that could not understand instructions in English very well, there was the possibility in Greek and they were comfortable, this was very nice. It made feel comfortable and they were motivated to speak this way.

R: Ok. If we take each activity, reading, writing, speaking, listening, separately, because there were activities from each skill, would you like to talk for each one, how they were, how you believe the students reacted to them, I wouldn’t like to guide you, feel free to share your views, as you observed things.

June: Yes, well, for a start, reading, reading was an activity not in the sense it is usually done. I mean, students are used to seeing a text, text comprehension, comprehension questions etc. [R: Do you mean a linear approach?] a linear approach, yes. Reading was done in a different way, and it mainly focused on students’ understanding in order to use the language, the questions, the dialogues etc. It helped them very much in developing..., to begin speaking, it motivated them, first could see a written text, then, they could hear the text on the video, they could watch the movement, the movements of the body let’s say, so this could give them ideas as to how to use the language. And writing of course, it was done in a way [R: would you like to explain how? What form did it have? Did they have to write an essay for example, to fill in a table etc.] no, writing was writing for example some words they could hear on a video, words they were useful so that they would use them to form their own sentences or understand some rules like for example on

the lesson that had instructions as to how to greet a visitor in our area and they had to create a dialogue, questions-answers, and this is important because they had to think, so writing was done and at the same time speaking was easier for them later and from what I saw, ok. they looked at their papers a little [she means when acting out their role plays], but they also said their own things [R: do you mean they improvised?] Yes, improvised. So, this means that what they had done before with the writing helped them at the time of speaking, it was spontaneous and this is important, isn't it? Regardless of the mistakes they may have made, right? This has nothing to do with it. And of course listening, there were listening activities in the sense that they had to listen to exact questions-answers that would take part between participants in a dialogue let's say, and hear specific things that they had to conclude, like the rules they had to conclude.

R: Right. Well, what about speaking tasks, how... would you like to comment on them?

June: Speaking was done through pair work also, we gave them, you gave them dialogues they had to form, how to greet a foreigner that comes and how to help him with his suitcases for example etc. I think it was very effective. Pairs cooperated. Students were willing to do the tasks, even those that were shy, they got up in the end [She means they acted out the role plays] and tried and this is the most important thing I believe, I mean it gave them a motive, they all got up and participated and this was really impressive!

R: Do you think they liked the use of realia? That is, that they had real object let's say, suitcases on their hands [June: They liked it, they liked these very much. They find it [the use of realia innovative and fun and in a way I think it is a visual motive for learners to be able to use the language.

R: Before we proceed with you [Vally] I would like to ask something if I may. How, what impact do you think had the six thinking hats activity?

June: I believe it had a positive impact. The truth is they found it strange. I think that if we had more time, more hours to do it again it would have a much more positive impact on learners' use of the language. It is certain they were impressed by it, they found it, in the beginning, well, ok, like teens, when they see a hat let's say, they may want some fun, but gradually they responded on the tasks and started talking and expressing their views. For this, I believe that if was done a second and third time it would have a wonderful result.

R: So, you could take it and use it from now on [yes, yes, I will take it and I will use it, yes, yes] and not only for this; It can be used for many topics and reasons because it is a way to organize our thoughts, which teens need it because it's a life skill [yes] in my opinion. We can talk about this again if you like if you have something else to add. Would you [to Villy] like to give your opinion, perhaps for each activity the way you observed them in class?

Villy: I would like to start with reading [R: we should be heard a little better] yes, [R: you can start from wherever you wish. I wouldn't like to intervene. I would rather you said

what you think]. Well, I agree of course with everything but I will say them again [yes, whatever you wish]. Yes, Reading was not done in the ordinary way we know. The way it was done was very nice. Students, for example, were given a chance to read a dialogue, and so focused on expressions they had to use for the production of speech. Their tasks focused on key words which they usually had to look for. They noted them down, they understood their meaning, looking for... finding even synonyms in English, they could do paraphrasing, if they didn't remember the meaning and this was very nice. I saw that you supported them on this so that students would feel more confident with words they knew and could use [she means substituting words with others they knew]. These words in turn could help in following up activities which they were usually writing tasks, and students could pass on to their dialogues in a very clever way working in pairs [do you mean the role-playing?] the role-playing, yes. The students cooperated very well, helping each other and got up [she means to act] and this was really impressive! And acted out the dialogues [do you mean they felt comfortable?] comfortable, yes, they felt very comfortable with this, even those who were shy did not refuse, they got up finally... [I was also happy with this] they used, they tried to use the expressions and words they had known and so there was an easy transition to this. Because they had...with the preparation that had been done, it was obvious they had learned the new words... [do you mean they had understood them?] yes, and felt comfortable to use them...Of course, everything helped, realia for instance, as we said before, it was theatrical and teens like this [R: Do they like it?] yes.

R: Right. Would you like to comment, so as to clarify it, listening let's say, how it worked, how the students saw it, in combination with the videos, if that was positive [yes, it was clearly positive] negative...

Villy: It was very good because it was not just listening [she means it was not practiced only through a tape recorder] they could also see the moves, which they also need to do in their future profession and this helps them to comprehend better... and so [she means with the use of the videos] even if they don't know something, through the moves they can understand, and this helps in communication and in acquiring the new language [yes, mmm] yes, [right].

R: Right. I would like to ask you now, as discussed before, about the use of the power points in the lessons. Do you believe it was effective as a pre-reading let's say or pre-listening or pre-writing task? I mean, the fact that the learners had some pictures or a presentation to see on the power point, etc, was that positive, negative, what do you think?

Villy: Positive. There is a framework in the beginning, students are prepared for what they are about to see [mmm] and are ready to understand the new material, let's say in the six thinking hats lesson, there was a presentation and this was something completely new for them. They had an idea about what it is and then, they gradually saw how it really worked; and we saw that little by little, all the more learners began to participate and understand the task.

R: So, do you think it can serve as a motive, as a pre-reading writing or listening activity? To inform them about something, to show them something on the power point as a hint for the lesson, can that be positive for their learning do you think?

June: I believe it can [Villy: Yes] I believe it can function well and I use it myself quite many times. I teach most grammatical phenomena through power point [is it easier this way?] yes, it's easier for me and the kids, because they see them [mmm], I also add little pictures, I use bold letters [yes] red, green, yellow and the truth is that images are an vivid stimulus on the kids' brain, they make them happier, than let's say ask them to write a certain grammar rule. Of course, they say "scripta Manent" but nevertheless, things have changed [yes] and we must begin using the new technologies and in all lessons and especially English and all foreign languages are ideal for such tools and I think power point is an important tool which can be used anywhere, either grammar or reading. You can do, let's say, several things with a text that relates to... For example, with the second grade we did the Lord of the Rings. I found a very nice power point about the Lord of the Rings. When they saw it, they started with the pictures, who they were, who was the director, all this, they learned vocabulary related to cinema, all this before the teaching of the text. So, power point offers many capabilities.

R: I think, too, that very often, because kids know much more about new technologies [Yes that is correct] we can't overlook this [yes, that's right]. I mean, since students know so much [yes] they are more motivated [yes, of course] with the use of technology. So, if we use it in class [yes] for the lesson, I too have seen that this has a positive result [yes]

June: To tell you the truth, I had an A grade students who was at least indifferent let's say, I got him the very first day and I placed him over there [shows in front of the computer] because he wouldn't sit still and I asked him to help me [how nice!]. So, this discouraged him, he couldn't talk, because if I hadn't done this [smart move!] yes, I always do this, I always do it every time I see there is someone naughty who I must expel, and I don't like this [right, it might be dangerous] and so, I ask him to sit there to do this and that and I see he is sort of motivated, he even opens the book and writes a couple of words, because I give him initiative [yes]

Villy: When you give them initiative and show them that you trust them [yes] they feel that they are useful, that even if they are not capable learners, they feel they can do something: that they too are useful and contribute to the lesson; and this is important [very important].

R: This particular experience, sharing with other colleagues that is, is basic because I don't think that some colleagues' tactic – that is punish the student who is naughty – is not always effective. However, asking him to participate in this way, or give him initiatives, is it rather better and has better results, more positive [positive, yes].

June: Well, it's just that you can't always find the right way. For every kid you have to find a different way of approach

R: that's right. This is great. It's like that. Like when we are in a class and we are never the same. We may have the same class, we may have class and today that's Monday we teach in a certain way, on Tuesday we teach a little differently, on Wednesday we may change again, I mean, we are never the same because of the [different kids] different class. Yes. Well can you tell me what you think –though we talked about it in a way – the use of videos in the lesson? Do they enhance learning, do they not, what do you think?

Villy: They help very much [would you like to expand on this to have a clearer picture please?] yes, yes of course. They help because they have audiovisual material. And it's not just, they don't just listen, they can also see something. And as I said before, this helps them understand the language better. Speech is more communicative this way, more real. And they can, they facilitate later their production of speech.

R: So, do you mean that the videos I used in class with the learners, do you think they had a positive impact on students' learning?

Villy: Very much so. And every time I myself use videos in the lesson the students are more interested. In the past, when we did not have this opportunity and we had just a CD player, listening was a boring process whereas the see videos much differently. They like it.

R: Honestly, the students shared the same views with me. Well, would you like to comment on the use of authentic material a bit, I mean to be able to use some things which are authentic, they are not especially designed for the book or especially transformed for the lesson. They are as they come in real life, authentic, like the videos [yes, yes], like extracts from articles and so on, material that is which is not transformed for the purposes of a lesson but authentic, like the ones I have used. Do you think it is useful especially for Vocational school learners who need to prepare themselves accordingly for their future job or do you think they are not that important? What do you think?

June: I think it is very important because especially this book let's say we use, it is especially written, transformed [do you mean the book of the course Economics and Administration?] yes. Firstly, it is not authentic and it is old-fashioned any more. I mean it has nothing to do with today's reality. These things it includes are not used any more [would you like to give an example to...] well I can say it still talks about telexes let's say or typewriters, really now....[students don't know what they are] things that are not used [I think it still refers to drachmas] yes, yes [and it shows those old-fashioned mobile phones with those big antennas...] yes, yes, yes, this....So, we should... this...well it seems like we are moving into the fact that teachers need to be materials designers. Of course we add things. The truth is though, you can't do it all the time. Because there is a book, there is a guide, you try of course with some videos, power points etc. To me the book is really unacceptable. It must be replaced. It may be since the 80's [yes, it is this long, since the 80's]

Villy: We are forced to using it simply because it is there and we must use it. In another case it would be more helpful to use our own material [this is important] but we have the exams in the end that pressure us to follow the certain syllabus and the curriculum. Otherwise, I think we would teach differently, if it were up to us [do you mean if the curriculum were more flexible and open?] yes, yes, [so that you could also design your own material? Because now it is really a commitment you have] [she means they are forced to follow the curriculum guidelines].

June: So, authentic material is very important because it shows real life and the book doesn't depict real life at all, in fact it has nothing to do with the contemporary real life [not contemporary?]

Villy: We just feel fortunate because we have the means to do this lesson [she means to use videos or power points] because in other schools [she means at some schools she was appointed in previous years] they do not have this opportunity. Not all schools can offer projectors or there is simply one lab [*Villy has been working in Vocational schools for the second year. During the previous years she was assigned in Elementary, Junior of General High Schools. She is not yet fully informed about the fact that due to their specialities {mechanics, electricians, electronics, computer science etc,} all Vocational schools in Greece are equipped with many labs as they need to use them for the purposes of their subjects*] or if there is, there is only one lab and the teachers are many and you can't have such lesson, so there are other factors...

R: However, [Villy: we didn't have this problem, no]. So, from what you are saying, do you mean that the authentic material that was used in these lessons had a positive impact on students' [yes, yes] learning? [yes]. Well, could you explain a bit the use of group work, in the lessons you observed, let's say in six thinking hats for instance, how did the group respond, do you think group work is a good suggestion for communication among students, or do you think it doesn't play an important role. And also pair work, or dialogues, let's say the role-plays we had, do you think these enhanced learners' speaking skills or not? What is your opinion on this? Who would like to start first?

Villy: Its use ... [she means pair work/group work] played a very important role in helping learners talk because they were the final stage. They were the stage the lesson wanted to arrive and reached the target [she means using role plays the lesson fulfilled its final target]. The students produced speech using situational English, in an effective way, consolidating the new terms they had learned during the lesson and it seemed they had really comprehended them and had acquired this knowledge. So, I believe the lessons fulfilled their target... and this was the final aim [yes, yes], this was the aim of the lessons... for learners to use the language [yes, this was the main aim. The lessons mainly aimed – through the material I used in class – the final aim was for learners to use their English to a greater extent. I aimed at a more communicative approach. So do you think the aim was fulfilled?]

Villy: Yes, I believe the target was fulfilled because even the students that didn't believe in themselves and were shy got up and talked.

R: Well, this is good! [yes, yes]. Thank you (turning to June). Would you like to share your views on that as well? [meaning the impact of group word/pair word etc]

June: I will talk about group work, like in the six thinking hats activity let's say, which was very effective. I believe of course that if we had more teaching hours it would have been a lot more effective because, you know, generally students don't feel comfortable to talk in English. But I saw that they started [do you mean they opened up?] they "opened up" gradually and talked ... and I think this was very important; and the pair work worked very well because the students talked to each other and were able to formulate their dialogues and perform them in class in a theatrical way, let's say. And to tell you the truth, I didn't expect it would function so well, because these are third year learners, they are in their late teens, and so, you know, it is not like in elementary school let's say, where students like this theatrical style [it is Vocational school] it is Vocational school, and the truth is that I didn't expect they would respond this way, and I was really impressed by their willingness to do it, to get up there in the front of the class and present to us their work. I was really astonished in a way!

R: And when it comes from the teacher herself that knows the kids so well [yes] I mean the fact that you saw your learners having such positive response it plays a very important role because you know your learners very well.

June: Yes, I think it worked very well.

R: So, the pair work, group work, role-plays, can we comment on role plays a bit? Because they are also a communication means. Do role-plays play a positive role in learners' effort to communicate in English?

June: I think they do. Especially in this group and all Vocational groups of learners in general. Because we focused on communication and students could simulate their roles, to understand for example the different roles, like when I am a visitor let's say or the one who greets someone and it is important to understand the different roles and how language works. So, you are in a different role and when you have a specific role, job to do, they need to understand the different uses of the language, the use of the language in different circumstances. This is a very important aspect of role-playing. Every time you have to see on the role side, how to talk ...

R: Which they will have to apply immediately after graduation because from what I know many of them will continue with work [that's right]. They will not attend a University or some college, they will seek for a job. So, it is important to start using the language in a way. Would you like to comment something on that or ...

Villy: I agree with June

R: Ok. Well, let's sum up in a way, I wouldn't like to tire you unless you would like to add a few more things, what is your opinion on the material done in this class, do you think it enhanced learners' speaking skills? Was it communicative or not?

June: Well, the material was very communicative, it was very interesting and it doesn't matter so much what we as teachers say, but what learners told me. They said they liked this new way very much, it was so different from what they knew and also the students want to get away from the traditional things. Some students are not so familiar with English; some others have some certificates in English, lower for instance [she means B2 level of the Common European Framework for Languages]. However, even these students that have some certificates [meaning some better knowledge] told me that they liked this different way of the material very much because they didn't feel the grammar structural method "hanging over their heads" [she means pressuring them] but they felt more relaxed, freed from this and could focus on communication which they liked very much and they told me: "Mrs...won't be able to be here next year that you will change the teaching method, can we?... and I told them I am so sorry, I can't do anything about that,... [joking of course] but you could always come again next year and I will teach you this way!" So, what matters is that the students were very happy with this material, even with the six thinking hats [she means the lesson designed with the six thinking hats method] which in the beginning they found strange but they later loved"

R: Right, this is very important. [turning to Villy] Would you like to add anything else? [Villy: No]. Ok. Well coming to an end, what do you think that a book, like this one, of the "Economics and Administration" course, which you yourselves admitted it is old-fashioned, you said it includes things that are not used anymore, that it does not depict the real and contemporary business life, do you think that what learners are given through this book is relevant to what they will need for their future professions, considering the needs of the contemporary employment market, and the fact that students wish to have communicative activities like you said, what do you think the course book should include? What is missing and what do you think it should contain? It is very useful information to be transferred to the educational authorities as well. How would you like the book to be so as to be appropriate for learners? What material should it contain? Should it be as it is? Should we add some more things? Should take out some others? Can we comment on this for a bit as you please?

June: I think that the book needs replacement Watch out! [I am sorry, it came out so spontaneously and effortlessly!] it was spontaneous! Well, to tell the truth, I am not a book writer but firstly, texts should be relevant to contemporary office transactions. That is they should be relevant to what learners are taught in their speciality. I am under the impression, without being an economist, I don't work in a business either to know exactly what they need so as to tell book writers they should cover exact topics. I should have working in a business to say we need this kind of English for instance, right? Ok. [this is important] right. So, we could look at their speciality lessons in Greek and say, which are the

contemporary business transactions, the contemporary office duties? So, take both curriculums and syllabuses, and do in English whatever is done in Greek [good idea] I think it is a good idea [R: we should also know what the employment market needs] of course, everything has to link and be relevant. It would be nice for the learners to be taught in English the same material they do in Greek [R: what they do in Greek however, should also be contemporary!] that's right! [R: So, we should start from...] from the workplace [R: the workplace, to see what they need today and if necessary, change things].

Villy: The book for tourism is quite relevant to other courses because I saw that the colleagues that taught the other lessons asked me some things they were in the Greek books, in a parenthesis, English or French terminology that is, and in a way it was relevant and we also cooperated with colleagues [R: I guess the needs haven't changed a lot?] they haven't changed a lot. There are some things that need to be updated for instance, like the ways to book a room, you don't send telegraphs any more.

June: For instance, learners are also taught some accounting. Why not add some accounting lessons, their basic principles for instance; because when one works in an office, it's not only paper work, they will have other obligations too, which students do have, I mean they are taught about them, I mean accounting or something else, so, shouldn't they be taught a little bit of this as well? They should. So, I believe that there should be a relation between these two [she means Greek and English syllabuses]. For example, in the mechanics department, there is relation, ok the book is difficult, I can't object to that, and this is important [she means something to keep in mind]. But in this book [she means the target course book] I think it is a totally irrelevant thing... for someone who will have to work in an office and will be asked to have duties ranging from... making coffee to writing a mail [I see], this sort of thing. And of course, I believe....

Villy: And it is not accompanied by audiovisual material [June: There is nothing, not at all], [Villy: there is nothing [June: there is also illustration, right; Sometimes pictures...] [R: how are the pictures;] [June: There are five pictures all in all and these are black and white, this sort of thing! [R: Yes, right. Well, because people don't know that the book, did you say that the book has no audiovisual material? [Villy: nothing] it doesn't? [June: no, nothing] I think there are some, some dialogues but there are no... [Villy: there is some listening...] there is some listening... [June: I ask the children to read it] but it's not real, is it? It doesn't have to do with what learners will need to practice listening for, like a dialogue and say that... Well, you are saying that the visual material does not exist and this has to change, you are also saying that the material should be relevant to the needs of the course...

June: And the most important..., it should focus so much on grammar tasks. Why so much grammar? There is no purpose. This [she means the course] is about English terminology, it is words, phrases they need to know, it's not that important to specialize in passive voice, let's say, and I don't understand this obsession. There are exercises, God!

How many should they be? a book [R: How many pages does the book have?] 300, listen to that! [R: 300! This means it is not easy to finish the book in a school year] and it has synonyms, exercises, and it repeats itself, texts, exercises, synonyms, opposites, grammar, exercises [R: I understand there is no variety...] [Villy: nothing], [June: it's boring] [Villy: it is so broad in some topics, I believe it focuses on some issues a lot more than it should] [R: because as you said it is not relevant to the contemporary reality] [Villy: like with the food {she means in the tourism course}... why should there be so many chapters about food?

R: Right. Do you think that books should be communicative? To help learners use English?

Villy: Mainly this. It is basic, basic. [June: In a way, teachers can find a way, but if the book also helps...] [Villy: this should be its main focus, it should not be grammar structural as it is now ...

R: I wonder myself sometimes...

June: Also, there is no point in the book being this long [R: good point]. I don't understand why one would write an English book of 300 pages. Nobody will have time to cover its content. Why not write a book of 50 pages, why is this a problem? I don't understand.

R: So, would you rather... because I can understand that the book is important, it is a guide, would you like the book to be a small guide and allow you to intervene adding your own material [June/Villy: yes, yes] you would like this? [yes, yes] you would like to be "materials designers?"

June: Yes, but we would like to have guidance, to guide us as to the topics let's say, and then I could look for my own extra material from the internet perhaps etc [Villy: it could offer us links...] [R: do you mean links to guide you, and go there to...] yes, that's right

R: Right. Very interesting! [June: We mean we would like the book to include the topics, for instance, how to answer the phone, and then, apart from the book suggestions, allow me to use videos, or anything else I consider important, ask learners to do things, this sort of thing] do you mean to have guidance as to what you could do... [yes] and formulate the material based on your learners' needs. I see!

R: Well, Your comments have been very valuable and what you have shared with me is very important. Actually they depict the real teachers, the practitioners' needs!

June: And also, this curriculum guidelines we are sent in schools, and tell us learners should do this, learners should do that, ok, it is so decontextualized and I doubt that teachers have gone through the whole thing [R: Many teachers are not actually aware of it. I send it to my teachers, but if they don't read it...] yes, well, I have read it, I forgot it, I read it again, but it is so general, and its content is huge! Whatever I choose to do is ok!

There is no way I could do something irrelevant! So, I think it should be more concise and specific regarding the topics at least.

R: Would you rather you had a situational syllabus for instance? [June/Villy: Yes, yes, this, certainly], [June: At least for the students of the speciality courses] [Villy: yes, the speciality, because in those with the General English {she means the first grade of Vocational school and General High Schools}] [R: Yes, the majority in Vocational schools have speciality lessons] [June: yes, yes, that is true, and in the others {she means the first grade of Vocational school and General High Schools }you can also do grammar] [Villy: And the truth is that in Likio {she is talking about the Vocational Senior High Schools} we have to move on to the stage where learners should demonstrate what they already know {she means they should be able to use English}] [R: yes, that is true, I feel it is not worth asking learners to do more grammar over and over again in this stage {senior Vocational High School} after having doing it for so many years in the past. They need change. And therefore I agree with you. Our aim should be for the learners to use English after all [Villy: yes, yes]

R: Well, everything was very useful. Would you like to add something which I haven't said and you would like to talk about, anything, if you would like to share it...

June: I think we have covered everything

R: Thank you very much for this conversation! Everything you said was interesting and I hope the authorities could hear them as well!

Villy: That would be nice!

APPENDIX XX: CONSENT FORMS

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ
ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑΤΩΝ

ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑΚΗ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ Π.Ε. & Δ.Ε.
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΙΑΣ
ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΣΧΟΛΙΚΩΝ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΩΝ ΔΘΜΙΑΣ
ΕΚΠ/ΣΗΣ Ν. ΚΑΡΔΙΤΣΑΣ

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Αξιότιμε κ. Διευθυντά

Στα πλαίσια των καθηκόντων μου ως Σχολικής Συμβούλου (ΦΕΚ 1340/2002-Φ.353.1/324/105657/Δ1 και Φ. 354.11/121/123215/Δ1/04-10-2010) μου δίνεται η δυνατότητα να διεξάγω δειγματικές διδασκαλίες στις σχολικές τάξεις για διδακτικούς-ερευνητικούς και παιδαγωγικούς λόγους με την προϋπόθεση ότι δεν παρακωλύεται η ομαλή λειτουργία του σχολείου.

Με αφορμή αυτή τη δυνατότητα θα σας παρακαλούσα να δώσετε τη συγκατάθεσή σας σε διδακτικές-ερευνητικές παρεμβάσεις από εμένα στη σχολική τάξη με σκοπό προτάσεις για τη βελτίωση διδακτικού υλικού με προσθήκες, αλλαγές και μεθοδολογικές προσεγγίσεις. Οι δειγματικές διδασκαλίες σκοπό έχουν επίσης την ανίχνευση των απόψεων των εκπαιδευτικών και των μαθητών για τις συγκεκριμένες διδακτικές προτάσεις.

Ημερομηνία.....
Όνοματεπώνυμο Διευθυντή.....
Υπογραφή Διευθυντή.....
Με εκτίμηση
Μαριάνθη Μπατσιλά
Σχολική Σύμβουλος ΠΕ06



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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ΥΛΟΠΟΙΗΣΗ ΔΕΙΓΜΑΤΙΚΩΝ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΩΝ**

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Με εκτίμηση
Μαριάνθη Μπατσίλα
Σχολική Σύμβουλος Π.Ε.06



**GREEK DEMOCRACY
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND
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**SUBJECT: INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS AND THEIR CONSENT FOR
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVIEWS**

Dear Colleague,

For the purposes of my EdD research study at the Open University (UK) I would like to ask you to participate in an interview. The purpose of the interview is to discuss the content of the "Economics and Administration" sector English language course book in order for me to understand to what extent it is currently meeting needs of students and employers in Greece. The interview will not exceed more than 45 minutes and it will take place where and when you prefer. You can withdraw from the interview at any time you feel uncomfortable. Your name will not be identified and instead pseudonyms will be used. The interview will be transcribed and the data will be used only for the purposes of this research. Nevertheless, they may be published when the research is completed but your name will remain anonymous. You may also have a copy of the transcription if you wish.

If you wish to participate and after you read the following please sign this document:

I have read the purpose of the interview and my contribution to it and I am well aware of them. I have clarified any vague points and had answers to any questions I had. I am aware that the interview will be recorded and I declare that I participate in the interview freely and voluntarily and that I have received a copy of this consent form myself.

Teacher's full name:.....

Teacher's signature:.....

Date:.....

Marianthi Batsila
School Advisor for the English Language Primary and Secondary Education
Directorate of Education, Thessaly, Greece



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ
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**ΘΕΜΑ: ΠΛΗΡΟΦΟΡΗΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΓΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΤΙΚΩΝ
ΠΕ 06 ΓΙΑ ΤΗ ΔΙΕΞΑΓΩΓΗ ΣΥΝΕΝΤΕΥΞΕΩΝ**

Αγαπητή Συναδέλφισσα

Για τους σκοπούς της διδακτορικής μου διατριβής στο Ανοιχτό Πανεπιστήμιο (Μεγάλη Βρετανία) θα ήθελα να σου ζητήσω να συμμετέχεις σε μία συνέντευξη. Ο σκοπός της συνέντευξης είναι να γίνει συζήτηση για το περιεχόμενο του βιβλίου της Αγγλικής Γλώσσας του τομέα Οικονομίας και Διοίκησης της Γ' τάξης για να κατανοήσω τον βαθμό στον οποίο είναι συνυφασμένο με τις τρέχουσες ανάγκες των μαθητών και των εργοδοτών στην Ελλάδα αναφορικά με την Αγγλική Γλώσσα. Η συνέντευξη δεν θα υπερβεί τα 45 λεπτά και θα λάβει χώρα σε χώρο και χρόνο επιλογής σου. Θα πρέπει να γνωρίζεις ότι μπορείς να αποσυρθείς οποιαδήποτε στιγμή νοιώσεις άβολα και θέλεις να συνεχίσεις. Το όνομά σου και τα στοιχεία σου δεν θα ανακοινωθούν πουθενά ενώ θα χρησιμοποιηθούν ψευδώνυμα. Η συνέντευξη θα μαγνητοφωνηθεί και τα δεδομένα θα χρησιμοποιηθούν μόνο για τους σκοπούς της έρευνας. Ωστόσο, μπορεί να δημοσιευτούν όταν η έρευνα ολοκληρωθεί αλλά θα είναι ανώνυμα. Θα πρέπει επίσης να γνωρίζεις ότι μπορείς να έχεις ένα αντίγραφο της μαγνητοφωνημένης συνομιλίας εάν το επιθυμείς.

Εάν επιθυμείς να συμμετέχεις και αφού αναγνώσεις τα ακόλουθα θα σε παρακαλούσα να υπογράψεις την δήλωση που ακολουθεί:

Έχω διαβάσει για τον σκοπό της συνέντευξης και την συμμετοχή μου σε αυτή και είμαι πλήρως ενήμερη και κατανοώ το περιεχόμενο της επιστολής. Έχω ξεκαθαρίσει τις απορίες μου και πήρα απαντήσεις σε οποιοδήποτε ερώτημα σχετικό με τη συμμετοχή μου. Γνωρίζω ότι η συνέντευξη θα μαγνητοφωνηθεί και δηλώνω ότι συμμετέχω σε αυτή ελεύθερα και εθελοντικά και ότι έχω πάρει ένα αντίγραφο αυτής της δήλωσης και η ίδια.

Όνοματεπώνυμο συμμετέχοντος εκπαιδευτικού:.....

Υπογραφή συμμετέχοντος εκπαιδευτικού:.....

Ημερομηνία:.....

Μαριάνθη Μπατίλα
Σχολική Σύμβουλος Αγγλικής Γλώσσας
Πρωτοβάθμιας και Δευτεροβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης
Περιφερειακή Διεύθυνση Εκπαίδευσης Θεσσαλίας



**GREEK DEMOCRACY
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH
AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
REGIONAL DIRECTORATE OF PRIMARY
AND SECONDARY EDUCATION OF
THESSALY
SCHOOL ADVISORS' OFFICE OF
SECONDARY EDUCATION IN KARDITSA**

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Dear parents,

Please take a few minutes to read this letter which asks for your permission for your child's participation in a focus group discussion and its sound recording.

Purpose of the child's participation in the focus group discussion: Based on the content of the Governmental gazette 1340/2002-Φ.353.1/324/105657/Δ1 and 354.11/121/123215/Δ1/04-10-2010, among other duties, School Advisors are allowed to implement instructions in the classrooms aiming at innovative teaching suggestions and research practices for the improvement of methodological procedures and teaching materials. Within this framework, a series of teaching research interventions were implemented by me, aiming at the improvement of the content of teaching material. As a continuation of the interventions I wish to conduct a focus group discussion with the students aiming at their opinion on new material taught by me.

What will be asked by learners: The learners will participate in a focus group discussion during which they will be asked to respond to questions freely and discuss about the material. The discussion will not extend the 30 minutes time, will take place in the school library and will not obstruct the regular lessons timetable.

Learners' participation is voluntary: Your child will participate only if he/she wishes to do so and his/her participation in the discussion will affect neither its place in the school group, his/her relationship with the teacher/s, classmates nor his/her school progress. What is more, your child may withdraw anytime he/she feels uncomfortable and does not wish to continue participating in the discussion.

The content of the discussion is strictly confidential: The content of this discussion is strictly confidential and the data will be known only by the responsible person who will conduct the discussion (by me) and will be used only for the purposes of this study. Your child's name will not be announced to anyone or any place and pseudonyms will be used instead of their real names. There will be no information which might indicate or reveal your child's name.

Questions: For any questions you might have please feel free to contact me at: 6974314755 or at: marbatsila@gmail.com. You should also know that the school has given its consent for this intervention.

Parental consent:

I have read and fully understand the content of this letter and allow my child to participate in the focus group discussion and its sound recording.

Date..... Parent signature

Yours sincerely
Marianthi Batsila

School Advisor for the English Language

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ
ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑΤΩΝ
ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑΚΗ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ Π.Ε. & Δ.Ε.
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΙΑΣ
ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΣΧΟΛΙΚΩΝ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΩΝ
Δ/ΘΜΙΑ ΣΕΚΠ/ΣΗΣ Ν. ΚΑΡΔΙΤΣΑΣ

Ταχ. Δ/ση: Καραϊσκάκη & Αβέρωφ 14
43100 Καρδίτσα

Τηλέφωνο: 24410-47211
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e-mail : erss@dide.kar.sch.gr

Αγαπητοί γονείς,

Θα σας παρακαλούσα να αφιερώσετε ελάχιστα λεπτά στην ανάγνωση αυτής της επιστολής που αφορά στην άδειά σας για την συμμετοχή του παιδιού σας σε ομαδική συζήτηση και την ακουστική καταγραφή της.

Σκοπός της συμμετοχής του παιδιού σας στην συζήτηση: Μεταξύ των καθηκόντων μου ως Σχολικής Συμβούλου Αγγλικής Γλώσσας (ΦΕΚ 1340/2002-Φ.353.1/324/105657/Δ1 και Φ. 354.11/121/123215/Δ1/04-10-2010) είναι και οι διδασκαλίες στη σχολική τάξη με σκοπό προτάσεις για καινοτόμες ερευνητικές διδακτικές πρακτικές και την βελτίωση διδακτικών προσεγγίσεων ή διδακτικού υλικού. Με βάση τα ανωτέρω, υλοποιήθηκαν από εμένα διδακτικές ερευνητικές παρεμβάσεις με σκοπό την βελτίωση του περιεχομένου διδακτικού υλικού. Στα πλαίσια αυτής της παρέμβασης, επιθυμώ την διενέργεια ομαδικής συζήτησης μεταξύ των μαθητών με σκοπό την ανίχνευση των απόψεών τους για το περιεχόμενο των διδακτικών προτάσεων.

Τι θα ζητηθεί από τους μαθητές: Οι μαθητές θα συμμετέχουν σε συζήτηση στην οποία θα γίνουν ερωτήσεις για το εκπαιδευτικό υλικό και θα κληθούν να πουν ελεύθερα την άποψή τους. Η συζήτηση δεν θα διαρκέσει περισσότερο από 30 λεπτά και θα λάβει χώρα στην σχολική βιβλιοθήκη και σε χρόνο που δεν θα παρακωλύεται το μάθημα.

Η συμμετοχή των μαθητών είναι εθελοντική: Το παιδί σας θα συμμετάσχει μόνο εάν το επιθυμεί και η συμμετοχή του στην συζήτηση δεν θα επηρεάσει την εικόνα του στη σχολική τάξη, τις σχέσεις του με την εκπαιδευτικό ή τους συμμαθητές του ούτε την σχολική του απόδοση. Το παιδί σας μπορεί να αποχωρήσει όποτε αισθανθεί άβολα.

Το περιεχόμενο της συζήτησης είναι εμπιστευτικό: Το περιεχόμενο της συζήτησης είναι αυστηρά εμπιστευτικό και τα δεδομένα της θα είναι γνωστά μόνο από την υπεύθυνη υλοποίησης της συζήτησης και θα αξιοποιηθούν για τους λόγους αυτής της μελέτης. Το όνομα του παιδιού σας δεν θα ανακοινωθεί πουθενά, θα χρησιμοποιηθούν ψευδώνυμα και δεν θα υπάρξει καμία πληροφορία που να παραπέμπει στο όνομα του παιδιού σας.

Ερωτήσεις/απορίες: Για οποιοσδήποτε απορίες ή ερωτήσεις είμαι στη διάθεσή σας στο τηλέφωνο 6974314755 ή στο mail: marbatsila@gmail.com. Θα πρέπει να γνωρίζετε ότι το σχολείο είναι ενήμερο για αυτή την παρέμβαση και έχει δώσει την συγκατάθεσή του.

Δήλωση συγκατάθεσης:

Έχω διαβάσει και κατανοώ το περιεχόμενο της ανωτέρω επιστολής και επιτρέπω την συμμετοχή του παιδιού μου στην ομαδική συζήτηση και την ακουστική καταγραφή της.

Ημερομηνία..... Υπογραφή γονέα

Σας ευχαριστώ θερμά
Μαριάνθη Μπατσίλα

APPENDIX XXI: SPSS TABLES – CHAPTER 5

Table 1: The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion for the variables of the research for all companies

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Reading skills	Writing skills	Speaking skills	Listening skills
N		136	136	136	136
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	4,02	3,85	4,24	4,38
	Std. Deviation	1,014	1,126	,890	,834
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute Positive	,237	,206	,303	,339
	Negative	-,237	-,206	-,303	-,339
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		2,763	2,407	3,528	3,958
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

Table 2: The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov criterion for the variables of the research for the sub-categories of the companies

		Tests of Normality					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Business activity		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading skills	Industrial/craft business	,269	32	,000	,778	32	,000
	Trading	,208	35	,001	,877	35	,001
	Tourism and catering	,292	38	,000	,763	38	,000
	Service	,255	31	,000	,792	31	,000
Speaking skills	Industrial/craft business	,311	32	,000	,760	32	,000
	Trading	,194	35	,002	,861	35	,000
	Tourism and catering	,419	38	,000	,609	38	,000
	Service	,274	31	,000	,808	31	,000
Writing skills	Industrial/craft business	,258	32	,000	,790	32	,000
	Trading	,182	35	,005	,902	35	,004
	Tourism and catering	,256	38	,000	,810	38	,000
	Service	,229	31	,000	,839	31	,000
Listening skills	Industrial/craft business	,294	32	,000	,769	32	,000
	Trading	,209	35	,000	,851	35	,000
	Tourism and catering	,461	38	,000	,509	38	,000
	Service	,383	31	,000	,680	31	,000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 3. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test as shown in SPSS Viewer

		Ranks	
	Business activity	N	Mean Rank
Reading skills	Industrial/craft business	32	74,67
	Trading	35	53,37
	Tourism and catering	38	73,96
	Service	31	72,52
	Total	136	
Writing skills	Industrial/craft business	32	76,64
	Trading	35	56,10
	Tourism and catering	38	71,39
	Service	31	70,55
	Total	136	
Speaking skills	Industrial/craft business	32	70,91
	Trading	35	51,76
	Tourism and catering	38	84,18
	Service	31	65,69
	Total	136	
Listening skills	Industrial/craft business	32	64,08
	Trading	35	50,83
	Tourism and catering	38	84,20
	Service	31	73,77
	Total	136	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Reading skills	Writing skills	Speaking skills	Listening skills
Chi-Square	7,818	5,593	14,903	17,644
Df	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	,050	,133	,002	,001

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Business activity

Table 4. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test as shown in SPSS Viewer

.Ranks

Size of business		N	Mean Rank
Reading skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	82	65,40
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	38	71,37
	Large scale (more than 250)	16	77,56
	Total	136	
Writing skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	82	67,05
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	38	68,87
	Large scale (more than 250)	16	75,03
	Total	136	
Speaking skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	82	64,80
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	38	69,43
	Large scale (more than 250)	16	85,25
	Total	136	
Listening skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	82	66,93
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	38	65,51
	Large scale (more than 250)	16	83,63
	Total	136	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Reading skills	Writing skills	Speaking skills	Listening skills
Chi-Square	1,737	,604	4,295	3,403
Df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,420	,739	,117	,182

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Size of business

Table 5. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test as shown in SPSS Viewer

		Ranks	
Employees with the target duties		N	Mean Rank
Reading skills	1-5	52	66,57
	6-10	32	63,63
	11-15	15	80,20
	>15	37	70,69
	Total	136	
Writing skills	1-5	52	68,97
	6-10	32	66,14
	11-15	15	75,07
	>15	37	67,22
	Total	136	
Speaking skills	1-5	52	64,67
	6-10	32	56,09
	11-15	15	79,00
	>15	37	80,35
	Total	136	
Listening skills	1-5	52	65,21
	6-10	32	62,69
	11-15	15	74,77
	>15	37	75,61
	Total	136	

Test Statistics^{a,b}				
	Reading skills	Writing skills	Speaking skills	Listening skills
Chi-Square	2,292	,631	9,539	3,323
df	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	,514	,889	,023	,344

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Employees with office duties

Table 6. Additional requirements on the use of English in business

Business Terms				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid NO	115	84,6	84,6	84,6
YES	21	15,4	15,4	100,0
Total	136	100,0	100,0	

Table 7. Vocational school graduates employed by businesses

Vocational School Graduates				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	57	41,9	41,9	41,9
Yes	79	58,1	58,1	100,0
Total	136	100,0	100,0	

Table 8: Employers' perceptions about Vocational graduate employees' skills effectiveness

Have the target employees the necessary skills?				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No	67	49,3	84,8	84,8
Yes	12	8,8	15,2	100,0
Total	79	58,1	100,0	
Missing System	57	41,9		
Total	136	100,0		

Table 9: Need for improvement of the target employees' skills in relation to business activity

Ranks

	Business activity	N	Mean Rank
Improvement in Reading Skills	Industrial/craft business	15	37,33
	Trading	15	34,07
	Tourism and catering	19	35,26
	Service	18	29,83
	Total	67	
Improvement in Writing Skills	Industrial/craft business	15	36,50
	Trading	15	32,80
	Tourism and catering	19	38,63
	Service	18	28,03
	Total	67	
Improvement in Speaking Skills	Industrial/craft business	15	33,23
	Trading	15	27,97
	Tourism and catering	19	35,76
	Service	18	37,81
	Total	67	
Improvement in Listening Skills	Industrial/craft business	15	32,23
	Trading	15	24,57
	Tourism and catering	19	36,50
	Service	18	40,69
	Total	67	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Improvement in Reading Skills	Improvement in Writing Skills	Improvement in Speaking Skills	Improvement in Listening Skills
Chi-Square	1,517	3,391	2,568	6,983
Df	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	,678	,335	,463	,072

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Business activity

Table 10: Need for improvement of the target employees' skills in relation to business size

Ranks			
	Size of business	N	Mean Rank
Improvement in Reading Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,23
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	32,70
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	31,79
	Total	67	
Improvement in Writing Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,14
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	31,96
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	34,71
	Total	67	
Improvement in Speaking Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,89
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	29,39
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	39,14
	Total	67	
Improvement in Listening Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,24
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	30,41
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	39,21
	Total	67	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Improvement in Reading Skills	Improvement in Writing Skills	Improvement in Speaking Skills	Improvement in Listening Skills
Chi-Square	,385	,429	2,367	1,645
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,825	,807	,306	,439

Ranks			
	Size of business	N	Mean Rank
Improvement in Reading Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,23
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	32,70
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	31,79
	Total	67	
Improvement in Writing Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,14
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	31,96
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	34,71
	Total	67	
Improvement in Speaking Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,89
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	29,39
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	39,14
	Total	67	
Improvement in Listening Skills	Small scale (1-50 employees)	37	35,24
	Medium scale (50-250 employees)	23	30,41
	Large scale (more than 250)	7	39,21
	Total	67	

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Size of business

Table 11: Need for improvement of the target employees' skills in relation to the number of such employees working in businesses

Ranks			
	Employees with office duties	N	Mean Rank
Improvement in Reading Skills	1-5	24	35,56
	6-10	16	28,03

	11-15	7	38,64
	>15	20	35,28
	Total	67	
Improvement in Writing Skills	1-5	24	34,48
	6-10	16	28,50
	11-15	7	40,57
	>15	20	35,53
	Total	67	
Improvement in Speaking Skills	1-5	24	34,63
	6-10	16	33,09
	11-15	7	40,36
	>15	20	31,75
	Total	67	
Improvement in Listening Skills	1-5	24	34,00
	6-10	16	34,63
	11-15	7	41,57
	>15	20	30,85
	Total	67	

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Improvement in Reading Skills	Improvement in Writing Skills	Improvement in Speaking Skills	Improvement in Listening Skills
Chi-Square	2,417	2,440	1,194	1,834
Df	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	,490	,486	,754	,608

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Employees with office duties

APPENDIX XXII: SPSS TABLES – CHAPTER 7

Table 1: Results of t test for the independent groups for CG and EG in pre-testing

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reading_Pre_Test	Equal variances assumed	1,474	,232	,456	41	,651	1,49547	3,27861	-5,12582	8,11677
	Equal variances not assumed			,459	39,772	,649	1,49547	3,26130	-5,09703	8,08798
Writing_Pre_Test	Equal variances assumed	,054	,818	-,264	41	,793	-1,34199	5,09216	-11,62582	8,94184
	Equal variances not assumed			-,264	41,000	,793	-1,34199	5,08628	-11,61393	8,92995
Listening_Pre_Test	Equal variances assumed	,024	,877	-,005	41	,996	-,01443	2,89218	-5,85531	5,82645
	Equal variances not assumed			-,005	40,167	,996	-,01443	2,89884	-5,87245	5,84359
Speaking_Pre_Test	Equal variances assumed	1,039	,314	,209	41	,836	,95238	4,58526	-8,26734	10,17210
	Equal variances not assumed			,208	39,429	,836	,95238	4,58188	-8,31212	10,21688

Table 2: Results of all possible combinations between groups at two-sided t test of dependent samples

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	R_PRE_CG_100-R_POST_CG_100	-8,08081	15,57981	3,39979	-15,17265	-,98897	-2,377	20	,028
Pair 2	R_PRE_EG_100-R_POST_EG_100	-9,91736	11,64962	2,48371	-15,08251	-4,75220	-3,993	21	,001
Pair 3	W_PRE_CG_100-W_POST_CG_100	-8,57143	11,95229	2,60820	-14,01204	-3,13081	-3,286	20	,004
Pair 4	W_PRE_EG_100-W_POST_EG_100	-10,00000	21,15701	4,51069	-19,38049	-,61951	-2,217	21	,038
Pair 5	L_PRE_CG_100-L_POST_CG_100	-3,49206	8,06062	1,75897	-7,16121	,17709	-1,985	20	,061
Pair 6	L_PRE_EG_100-L_POST_EG_100	-19,09091	12,00449	2,55937	-24,41340	-13,76842	-7,459	21	,000
Pair 7	S_PRE_CG_100-S_POST_CG_100	-5,71429	18,04756	3,93830	-13,92943	2,50086	-1,451	20	,162
Pair 8	S_PRE_EG_100-S_POST_EG_100	-15,45455	16,25021	3,46456	-22,65948	-8,24961	-4,461	21	,000

Table 3: Results of t criterion for independent groups for CG and EG at post testing

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-Test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reading_Post_Test	Equal variances assumed	,084	,774	,943	41	,351	3,33202	3,53379	-3,80462	10,46866
	Equal variances not assumed			,943	40,831	,351	3,33202	3,53520	-3,80837	10,47241
Writing_Post_Test	Equal variances assumed	,017	,896	,019	41	,985	,08658	4,63193	-9,26779	9,44095
	Equal variances not assumed			,019	40,791	,985	,08658	4,63458	-9,27461	9,44777
Listening_Post_Test	Equal variances assumed	,055	,816	4,690	41	,000	15,58442	3,32323	8,87303	22,29581
	Equal variances not assumed			4,682	40,456	,000	15,58442	3,32864	8,85934	22,30950
Speaking_Post_Test	Equal variances assumed	,320	,575	3,035	41	,004	10,69264	3,52359	3,57660	17,80868
	Equal variances not assumed			3,044	40,746	,004	10,69264	3,51301	3,59663	17,78865

Table 4: The results of student’s questionnaires

Descriptive Statistics

	N		Minimum		Sum	Mean		Std. Error	Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Range	m	Maximum		Statistic	Statistic			
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	
Material Content and Organization	22	1,67	3,00	4,87	86,33	3,9242	,08188	,38398	,147	
Learning Environment and Teaching Methods	22	1,00	4,00	5,00	103,75	4,7159	,06219	,29171	,085	
Student improvement	22	1,25	3,75	5,00	100,25	4,5588	,06768	,31747	,101	
Quality of Delivery	22	1,20	3,80	4,80	92,00	4,1818	,06434	,30180	,091	
Assessment	22	2,00	3,00	5,00	81,00	3,6818	,19054	,89370	,799	
Valid N (listwise)	22									

APPENDIX XXIII: TEACHERS' MATERIAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST PROTOCOL

A. Material Organization	YES	NO	TO EXTENT	SOME
1. The material instructions are clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The material is well structured to help students understand and use the new language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Vocabulary tasks are clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Texts and tasks are clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMENTS				
B. Content and methods				
1. The topics generate discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The grading and sequencing of tasks enhance communication and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The material takes into account students' background knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The realia used promote interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
5. All learning styles are considered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The tasks are feasible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The topics are up-to-date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
8. There is topic variation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The content is appropriate to learners' level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The material is relevant to the course needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The material enhances communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
12. The use of videos enhance learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The use of ppt enhances learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
14. The material is motivating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMENTS				
C. Student improvement				
15. The material develops students' ability to improve their reading skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
16. The material develops students' ability to improve their writing skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
17. The material develops students' ability to improve their listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
18. The material develops students' ability to improve their speaking skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
19. The material develops students' ability to improve their vocabulary skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
20. The material develops students' ability to communicate in English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMENTS				

