



PONTIFÍCIA UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA
DO RIO DE JANEIRO



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**ANALYZING COURSE BOOK ADEQUACY AND
STUDENTS' NEEDS IN A BUSINESS ENGLISH CONTEXT**

MONOGRAFIA DE PÓS GRADUAÇÃO.

DEPARTAMENTO DE LETRAS

Programa de Pós Graduação em Letras



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Monografia apresentada ao Programa de Pós Graduação em Letras da
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Especialista em Língua Inglesa

Orientadora: Professora Márcia Lobianco Vicente Amorim



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To my mother for her endless and unconditional love, support, and encouragement.

To my students, the reason of inspiration in my job .

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**ANALYZING COURSE BOOK ADEQUACY AND STUDENTS'
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ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to evaluate the ESP classes offered to Business English students in two language courses in Rio de Janeiro and analyze the relevance of the textbook selected as course material. The data were collected through semi-structured questionnaires (with students, teachers and coordinators of both language schools); classroom observation; and document analysis. The triangulation of the data elicited from the different instruments has showed that the course book chosen does not entirely fulfill the needs of the learners concerning the use of English in professional contexts. Despite being considered appropriate by coordinators and some teachers in both courses, this research showed that the textbook can be much more effective and meaningful when complemented with materials brought by the teachers and students, who can better identify the learner's needs.

Keywords: ESP, Business English, learner's needs, textbook analysis, teachers' role

1. Introduction

Nowadays, with the wide spread of English as a global language, controversial debates have been generated over the different purposes of learning English and alternative ways of helping the students achieve their aims. As a matter of fact, English teachers have been feeling the responsibility of preparing their students to face the new challenges of the globalized world, in which proficiency in the English language is considered one of the most important assets a professional may have. As a result, when preparing a language course for professionals who are expected to use the foreign language proficiently in their working environment, teachers must be careful to match the expectations of the students so that they feel the relevance of the activities conducted in class.

As a matter of fact, there are key elements in the English Language Teaching (ELT) context that should be considered important ones when preparing a tailor-made course for a specific group of students. Some of these elements are the learners' profiles (such as, their individual characteristics, motivations for studying the foreign language and short-term and long-term aims for learning the language), the teacher's pedagogical preparation to help the learners reach their aims, and, last but not least, the conditions offered by the language institution to help teachers and learners achieve their objectives.

Based on the literature review of the ESP area, to be presented in the next section, and, more specifically the analysis of the EBE branch of

ESP, I decided to conduct a study with my EFL students in the two language courses where I have been working as a teacher.

In this study I will:

1. evaluate the ESP classes offered to professionals in the business area;
2. analyze the course material that has been selected to teach these business students; and
3. investigate the point of view of the people involved in this process (coordinators, teachers and students) concerning the relevance of the classes, the adequacy of the textbook chosen for these classes and some ideas brought by the teachers to improve the classes and the use of the textbook.

2. Literature Review on ESP

In order to clarify some of the aspects concerning English language teaching mentioned in the introduction of this paper, a further explanation of the differences between EGP (English for General Purpose) and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) according to the main authors presented in this research will be done in the following paragraphs.

EGP refers to educational contexts, such as the school, where learners' needs cannot readily be specified. EGP classes usually provide a broad foundation rather than a detailed and selective specification of language. As a general rule, the four language skills are equally emphasized, and there is no time limit for the students to achieve their aims.

It is important to mention that the definition of EGP is quite controversial particularly because the meaning of "general purpose" is usually left vague. A more helpful view is suggested by Strevens (1988), who prefers the label "English for Educational Purposes" (EEP) to account for a school-based learning of a language as a subject element within the overall school curriculum. According to this view, since the future English needs of the students are impossible to predict, the course content is more difficult to select.

However, ESP is a completely different field within the ELT area. In the 1960s, it was particularly associated with the notion of a special language register and with the important sub-field of English for science and technology.

Later developments have included a communicative view of language as applied to ESP, the recognition of the importance of needs analysis, and an increasing focus on appropriate perspectives on language learning and language skills.

In order to better define the ESP approach to English language teaching, I will review some works and theories of researchers and specialists in this field.

The British linguist and expert in English for Specific Purposes, Tony Dudley-Evans, and one of the most influential authors in the development of the modern notion of *genre*, together with Maggie Jo St John, the U.K. coordinator of the voluntary Nicaragua English and Sustainable community rural Tourism Project, authored the *Report on Business English: A Review of Research and Published Teaching Materials* (TOEIC, 1996). This report provides a critical review and evaluation of literature on Business English for foreign or second language users, represented by research findings in academic articles and dissertations. It also contains an examination and evaluation of current published teaching material with worldwide circulation. The study shows that there has been relatively little research into Business English and that there is a mismatch between the areas covered by research and those featured in teaching materials.

Thus, much of the research has been based on written communications, while the focus of most teaching materials is the spoken language. As an international language, English is used in both native to

non-native and non-native to non-native speaker interactions. However, little account is taken of these forms of interaction in the research.

Duddley-Evans and St John identify English for General Purposes and English for Specific Purposes as two distinct areas in the teaching of Business English. EGP in Business English is targeted at those with low levels of English or pre-experience and follows the constructs of EGP, covering grammar, lexis and functions within broad business contexts.

ESP for Business, on the other hand, is related to or designed for specific Business areas. It may be used in specific situations and represents a different approach, and not methodology, from those of EGP classes. It is likely to be designed for adult learners and is generally target to intermediate and advanced students whose aim is to develop business communication skills, specific business disciplines or both. It adds constructs from the fields of management and human–resource training to language-learning constructs.

In order to clarify some pedagogical labels used in this paper, I will review the difference between the concepts of approach, method and technique.

According to Anthony (1963 in Brown,2001), the concept of method is the second one of three hierarchical elements , namely approach, method and technique. An approach is a set of assumptions dealing with the nature of language , learning and teaching. Method was described as an overall plan for systematic presentation of language based upon a

selected approach. Techniques were specific activities manifested in the classroom that were consistent with a method and therefore were in harmony with an approach as well.

The terminology of the pedagogical literature in the field appear appears to be more in line with Antony's original terms, but with some important additions and refinements.

Brown (2001) describes the terms approach , method and technique in the following way.

An Approach is defined as theoretically well-informed positions and beliefs about the nature of the language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings.

A Method is a generalized set of specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives. Methods tend to be concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing and materials. They are almost always thought of as being broadly applicable to a variety of contexts. Thus, the term methodology refers to the pedagogical practices in general (including theoretical underpinnings and related research). Whatever considerations are involved in "how to teach" are methodological.

A Technique; also commonly referred to by other terms is any of a wide variety of exercises, activities, or tasks used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives.

Therefore, it is easy to understand why ESP has been considered an approach to EFL teaching and not merely a methodology.

Peter Strevens, another renowned researcher in the area, defines ESP as having been designed to meet the specific needs of the learner. According to Strevens, ESP contrasts with EGP because it is related in content to particular disciplines, occupations and activities and is centered on the teaching of appropriate language skills and contents that will enable the students to better perform in their working environment.

Moreover, some important points about ESP classes in comparison with EGP ones are concerned with the learners and their learning purposes. ESP learners are usually adults, who already have some familiarity with the English language and are learning the language in order to communicate in a set of professional skills to perform particular job-related functions. On the other hand, in EGP classes the age of learners varies from children to adults, and, the learning of the English language is the subject of the classes.

Based on the learning purposes, the objectives of instruction are identified. In an EGP class, as a general rule, the four skills are relevant. But in ESP, it is the needs analysis that determines which language skills are necessary for students, and syllabi are designed according to it. In a typical EGP class, there is more concentration on the teaching of grammar and language structures, mostly in isolation. But in an ESP class, the focus is on the context, and English is not taught as a subject separated from the student's real world or wishes.

The combination of the subject matter learners are familiar with and the use of the English language creates a meaningful context that is highly motivating. ESP classes are conducted through a field that is already known and relevant for the learner, and a meaningful context certainly increases motivation, which is a positive indication of successful learning. Regarding the term “specific” in ESP, it should be noted that, according to Strevens, it not only means English for a specific purpose, but it also implies specific purposes for learning English. Strevens also remarks that ESP assesses analyzed needs and integrates motivation, subject-matter and content with the help of relevant language skills.

Hutchinson and Waters are also well-known researchers in the area of ESP and have provided a brief overview of its development. According to these authors, there is a need for a wider view of ESP that focuses more on students’ needs.

What the authors mentioned above have in common is that they believe that ESP should be seen as any particular language which is directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning. Moreover, the authors do not consider ESP a monolithic universal phenomenon.

ESP has developed at different speeds in different countries. It is noticeable that one area of activity has been particularly important in the development of ESP. This is the area usually known as EST (English for Science and Technology).

ESP has been regarded as “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learners’ reason for learning.” (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987:19).

In fact, the most relevant aspect to be considered in this paper is what is highlighted in Hutchinson & Waters (1987:16): “ESP should be seen as an approach not as a product”. It is not a particular kind of language or methodology, nor does it consist of a particular type of teaching material. Understood properly, it is an approach to language learning which is based on learners’ needs. The authors also establish a context which will help us to see how ESP at the present time relates to the rest of ELT. Hutchinson & Waters (1987), represent this relationship in the form of a tree (cf. Appendix 1).

According to the ‘Tree of ELT’, ESP is broken down into three branches: English for Science and Technology (EST), English for Business and Economics (EBE), and English for Social Studies (ESS). Each of these subject areas is further divided into two branches: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). An example of EOP for the EST branch is ‘English for Technicians’, whereas an example of EAP for the EST branch is ‘English for Medical Studies’.

Hutchinson and Waters also note that there is not a clear-cut distinction between EAP and EOP: “people can work and study simultaneously. It is also likely that in many cases the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up, or returns to, a job”. (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987:16)

The relevance of English for Business and Economics (EBE) is also pointed out by the authors. This approach to the study of English is specially designed for employees in companies (small companies or

multinationals). Some areas that may benefit from EBE are: Accounting and Finance, Commercial Law, Economics, International Business, Management and Employment Relations, Management Science and Information Systems and Marketing and Executive Programming to mention a few.

Peter Master's publication *Responses for English for Specific Purposes* (2000) provides a wide array of ESP contexts, and is, thus, an appropriate introduction to the field. The selected articles in this book are short, accessible, and allow present or future ESP teachers or practitioners to see that teaching ESP is not as difficult as they may have feared.

In the section "Business and Economics", Master (2000) remarks that:

Among the current bywords in English language teaching, relevance stands out for its ever-increasing applicability to the demands of the profession. Some learners expected English language courses to be relevant to their academic, social, occupational, and personal needs and interests. Students of business English expect their courses to be relevant to their present or future jobs and their presence in English for Business and Economics (EBE) courses is often due not to an intrinsic interest in the language but to a desire to qualify for employment or promotion. (Master, 2000:76)

According to this passage, students of business English comprise two basic categories: present employees and future employees, which is a clear distinction for a course design and subsequent instruction, as the experiences and language needs of EBE students tend to vary. Also, it is important to identify which specific and other communication skills students have already acquired and which skills are considered necessary

in the learner's professional context. For that reason, Master highlights the importance of making a profile of each student with a brief questionnaire requesting such information as age, native language, previous training in English and dates.

Master (2000:76) quotes as relevant the fact that "The success of non-native speakers of English in the world of business depends not only on improving their language competence but also understanding and adapting to American corporate culture."

In the chapter "Negotiating Your Way To English", the author affirms the positive use of negotiation in the EBE classroom. Moreover,

The technique requires proper preparation, but when launched the situation develops its own momentum and requires only minimal teacher intervention. In negotiation, students are constantly, but unconsciously, challenged to improve their communication skills in English. (Master, 2000:81)

In the chapter "Developing Appropriate Schemata for Business Concepts", Master mentions an assignment of an American teacher who was working for the Peace Corps. Her assignment was to train Russian businessmen to understand and utilize international business practices in order to ease the entrance of Russia into the international business community. She was having a serious problem getting her clients to understand the true meaning of several essential concepts. This happened because of the reluctance to adjust their conception to the international standard, which was causing her to lose confidence. Master realized that what this teacher lacked was the appropriate schemata for certain business terms.

In the next section, I will comment on the methodology used in the development of this paper.

3. Method

As an EFL teacher of a private English language course in Rio de Janeiro, I have always been concerned with role of ESP as the most appropriate approach for English language classes in business contexts. While taking the specialization course in English at PUC-RIO, I engaged in some research to investigate what my students, coordinators and colleagues, who also teach in companies, think about the course book *Market Leader*, which has been selected as our course material.

As a matter of fact, the purpose of this paper is threefold. First, I will investigate whether the course book selected by the course coordinators is appropriate to fulfill the students' needs of English in their working environment. Second, I will try to understand how EFL is taught in classes for Business students in the two language courses where I have been working as a teacher. In order to do so, I will analyze the course book *Market Leader* and the way the teachers and the students use it in the classes.

Besides, I intend to investigate whether the language skills and activities contained in the textbook seem to be aligned with the *Research*

Report on Business English: A Review of Research and Published Materials (Dudley Evans & St John , 1990)

Last but not least, I will discuss a few possibilities of engaging teachers and students in a tailor-made course focusing on the target public's needs in the EFL classroom.

In order to conduct this study, I decided to use ethnographic of methods of research. According to Selinger & Shohamy (1989:18), ethnographic methods are concerned "... with describing observable behaviors and activities within their natural context and describing these in their entirety from beginning to end."

Furthermore, Holliday (1994:163) affirms that:

Ethnography is particularly important because it is a branch of anthropology, which studies the behavior of groups of people. (e.g. Spradly 1980:3; Murphy:6; Hammersley and Atkison 1983:2; Long 1983:18). As such it has developed research methodologies for investigating the teacher, student, classroom and institution cultures, which make up the social context.

Because of human behavior ethnographic studies, ethnographic research methodologies have been developed and applied in classroom research emphasizing what happens inside the classroom and what feedback students give about their process of learning acquisition.

The author also affirms that "the process of learning about the classroom needs to involve research." (Holliday 1994:162). He mentions a research process which should be carried out at an informal level so that it can be accessible to all practitioners. As a result, ethnographic methods

of research have become an important tool for teachers who are concerned with better understanding their classrooms.

In this study, I will try to carry out an accurate and thorough description of my work place based on the observations of those involved in the process (coordinators, teachers and students).

For that reason, I will collect data through the use of several research instruments, specifically, interviews (questionnaires), class observation and documents.

Through the data collection I intend to gain access to *what* the course book represents to the users (through the analysis of the students', teachers' and coordinators' questionnaires), *what* the material presents in itself (analysis of the book), and how it has been used in the language classroom.

The approach, objective, and design of the research will be expressed both in what will be regarded as important and the manner in which those data will be collected and analyzed. (Selinger& Shohamy, 1990:37)

Since data collection may be considered the most important element in research, all the knowledge to be acquired through research depends on how the data collection is going to be conducted and which procedures it is going to make use of. Hence, high quality data collection procedures are essential, since, depending on their quality, all the expected results could change.

The procedures used to collect the data will be affected by factors such as the kind of discipline

(linguistics, sociology, psychology) within which the researcher is working and whether the research is syntactic or heuristic, analytic or deductive. (Selinger & Shohamy, 1990:37)

In this study, besides using interviews and commenting on classroom observation, I will also analyze a document, the course book *Market Leader*, in order to evaluate how the teachers in the course where I work intend to teach English EBE students.

3.1- Document Analysis

According to Selinger & Shohamy (1990:163), when discussing language research methodology, "...there is no real catalogue of 'certified' methods; a variety of procedures are recognized as legitimate". Besides, these authors affirm that data collection procedures should be tailored to the situations under analysis.

Yet, there are some typical devices and procedures used for collecting data in this type of research, such as "interviewing informants, compiling biodata about them, administering open questionnaires, eliciting ratings and ranking, and using various unobtrusive measures such as studying learners' notebooks, handouts given by the teachers, and official documents". These unobtrusive procedures included in a data collection description belong to the qualitative research methods.

Through the data collection conducted in this research, I intend to gain access to what the course book represents to the users (through the analysis of the students', teachers' and coordinators' questionnaires), what

the material presents in itself (analysis of the book), and how it has been used in language classrooms.

In my study, the course book, *Market Leader*, used in the EBE classes researched, was analyzed in order to evaluate how the content fulfills the students' objectives, and what the themes included in the book intend to teach. Additionally, I intend to investigate whether the topics are appropriate to the students' needs and whether the material guides teachers to adapt it for their students.

In my research, I will also make use of questionnaires to be answered by the participants involved: the coordinator, three teachers and three students. In relation to questionnaires, Selinger & Shohamy (1990:172) state that "unstructured questionnaires, those with a low degree of explicitness, will include open questions to which the subject will be expected to respond in a descriptive manner."

Still according to these authors, questionnaires have a large number of advantages. Some of them are quoted below:

When anonymity is assured, subjects tend to share information of a sensitive nature more easily. Since the same questionnaires are given to all subjects, the data are more uniform and standard. Since they are usually given to all subjects of the research at exactly the same time, the data are more accurate. (Selinger. & Shohamy, 1990:172)

The purpose of the questionnaires I prepared was to gain access to the points of view of people who have different perspectives on the issue under study. The investigation was designed to elicit data in a more

descriptive and open nature, which seemed to be the best way to conduct interviews.

In this paper, I will also triangulate the data collected through the classroom observation, the analysis of the questionnaire, and the course book *Market Leader*.

Triangulation is used in research to indicate that more than one approach to the investigation has been used to enhance confidence in the findings. For that reason, at least two methods are used in a study with a view to double (or triple) checking results. The idea is that one can be more confident with a result if different methods lead to the same result.

Actually, 'triangulation' can take several different forms (Denzin 1970:472). One of them is 'data triangulation', which means using a variety of sampling strategies. Another is 'investigator triangulation', in which more than one observer contributes to the findings. 'Methodological triangulation' refers to using different methods (for example, observation analysis of transcripts, and self-report surveys) to collect the data. Finally, 'theoretical triangulation' demands that the researchers approach the data analysis with more than one observer contributes to the findings.(Allwright, D. and Bailey, K. M., 1991:73)

Triangulation is an important methodological concept because it allows multiple data sources for evaluation and decision making on the issue investigated. According to Selinger & Shohamy (1990:105) triangulation is "concerned with the ability of the researcher to confirm findings, either by re-inspection or by demonstrating the same findings through different sources ."

Triangulation, I argue, is not aimed merely at validation but at deepening and widening one's understanding. As a

research aim, this one can be achieved either by a person or by a research team or group. Doing so, there will be a reduction in the impact of the researchers' point of view, in other words, a reduction of subjectivity. (Selinger & Shohamy, 1990:105)

In the next section, I will report on the data elicited by the different instruments used in this research and conduct the data discussion.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

In this section, I will, first, present and discuss the data elicited through the questionnaires answered by the participants involved in the research. Second, I will analyze the course book *Market Leader*, and third I will comment on the classroom observation. Finally, I will triangulate all the information obtained through the different instruments so that I can better understand why this course book has been selected, how is used by

the teachers and whether this material is sufficient to fulfill students' expectations and needs.

4.1- Context

Since 2006, I have been working in two language courses aiming at providing consultancy in idioms. In this study, they will be referred to as Company A and Company B.

The owner of company A is also an English teacher in her own language course in companies. She is always trying to keep her language course updated by traveling around the world and making exchanges with foreign companies abroad, representing her own course. She adopts the Communicative Approach Methodology in her language course and several sorts of published materials in the EFL area. She also gives teachers the freedom to complement the material selected by herself whenever necessary, which is a positive point about her policy.

The coordinator of Company B, on the other hand, has been traveling around the world to improve her English and see about new technologies for teaching and has recently opened a new branch in another large capital city in Brazil, where she used to teach in an EFL course. Coordinator B intends to offer personalized work to each of the students. Company B uses several didactic materials and an approach of EFL teaching.

In Brazil, Company B has been working in Rio de Janeiro, Macaé and São Paulo; offering regular language classes, immersion courses,

Business English courses, translation and interpretation services, mainly in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese for Foreigners, Dutch, German and Italian. Apart from the services mentioned, the course also organizes intercultural courses for foreign employees.

It is also important to add that the coordinators from both companies trust their team of teachers and believe in their capacity and creativity in the language classrooms, yet the teachers are expected to follow the language course methodology closely.

In both Companies A and B a system of one-to-one classes has been adopted. One of my students has classes in his company while the other has classes at home. The classes aim at teaching EBE and they are concerned with developing the students' four linguistic skills in order to prepare them for the job market.

Since the classes follow the scheme of one-to-one teaching, the teacher is expected to prepare materials for the students and adapt the most appropriate ones to their business needs. The reason is that there is a lack of one-to-one published materials. A good exception is Peter Wilberg's *One-to-One Teacher's Handbook* (1987). However, in general, it is difficult to find published materials focusing on one-to-one classes.

In one-to-one classes, learners can inform teachers about their interests, work and experiences, and teachers can select material they are sure will interest and motivate their pupils. Besides, the teacher can advance with these materials in the students' own pace.

4.2 Analysis of the Questionnaire

As I have already mentioned in the methodology section of this study, I prepared questionnaires to be answered by the participants involved in my research – the course coordinators, teachers and students.

At first, I asked only the coordinator from Company A to participate in this investigation and answer the questionnaire. Later, I decided to invite the coordinator of Company B too. As this is an ethnographic work I really hoped that another point of view might add relevant information to the research.

Besides the two coordinators, three teachers and three students were invited to answer questionnaires. For practical reasons, I will present the questions asked followed by the most significant fragments of the answers given by the interviewees. They will be referred to by the first letters of their names for privacy reasons and to avoid the exposure of their opinions.

4.2.1- The Coordinators' Questionnaires

The coordinators of the companies where I have been working have been chosen to take part in this research not only because of the responsibility associated with their role, such as teacher trainers, but also because of the administrative support they provide to the teaching staff. They will be represented as coordinators **CA** (coordinator of course A) and **CB** (coordinator of course B).

Question 1: Who is responsible for the textbook selection in the course?

When answering this question, **CA** highlighted that the selection of the material was made by herself, as the owner and pedagogic coordinator of course A. She considers relevant the testing of the material with the student before adopting it. On the other hand, coordinator **CB** mentioned the course materials are chosen by the owner of the course. However, both mentioned that the books are chosen having in mind the necessities of the students.

Question 2: What are the main criteria used to judge the materials?

Both coordinators emphasized “students’ needs” as the main criterion. **CA** also considers the textbook attractive and interesting. Moreover she mentions that it also follows the methodology adopted in her language course, the Communicative Approach as the other materials of the course. Moreover, she confirmed that the material is always adapted to the students’ needs.

CB answers this question by repeating the same procedures for choosing a book quoted by **CA**. Concerning students’ necessities, **CB** considers it necessary to check the students’ needs and then order the material, yet she does not mention if the course is tailor-made to fit the students’ needs.

Question 3: How do you evaluate Market Leader? What is your point of view about the book?

CA evaluated the book as extremely efficient for the students, mainly for those in business. It “provides a great vocabulary file, good speaking proposals, and, several resources in the teachers’ guide”. She also pointed out some weaknesses in grammar, but interesting proposals such as that of “Case Study”. **CA** also affirmed that textbooks follow, in their majority, the “Communicative Approach” methodology. On the other hand, **CB** presented a brief answer to the questions and revealed that she considered the book inefficient. Furthermore, she considers the grammar not sufficient for students and criticized the fact that the book teaches British English, which she does not like.

Coordinator **CA** likes the book and affirms that it follows the Communicative Approach, however it is weak in grammar, which she considers to be the most important knowledge when learning a language.

Question 4: How far do you think this material matches the students’ needs?

In general, the book is presented by **CA** as an authentic business book. It contains contents for all companies’ departments, including the HR (Human Resources) and Finance. She affirms that, “if teachers have an engineer student or a marketing manager one, somewhere in the units she is going to find reference to these areas”. She also thinks that this exchange gives students curiosity to obtain knowledge from different Business areas.

However, if the student needs detailed content in an area, *Market Leader* does not offer him that kind of knowledge. Then, the student has to go through other more specific materials such as technical books or articles.

Complementing the answer above, **CA** also mentions that *Market Leader* has been working very well with her students. Also, they can perfectly make a link between book level one (intermediate) and book level two (upper-intermediate). For example, if the upper-Intermediate book has an article on “Consortiums”, this word would have been taught in the previous level, which facilitates the comprehension.

CB, on the other hand, expresses in her answer just the disadvantages of this didactic material and never presents its positive points. She mentions the difficult vocabulary for less proficient learners and the little emphasis on grammar. She also agrees that it is necessary to adopt extra grammar exercises to complement the ones suggested in the book.

Question 5: In your opinion, is the material enough to teach students of Business English? If not, how do you think it could be complemented?

CA thinks that there must be something else besides the course book. According to her, regardless of the material chosen, it would never meet all the needs of the students. Regularly she adopts two books: a grammar and a vocabulary book, which is not specific to the Business

area. Apart from these, she always uses movies in class but she did not mention the kinds of movie chosen and the criteria for choosing them.

CB, on the other hand, affirms that the course book is focused on the marketing area and if teachers have, for example, engineering students, it is necessary to complement the book with extra materials.

There are several observations to make about these answers. In relation to the last question, I partially agree with **CA**'s point of view. Firstly, apart from being the course owner, she is also responsible for the selection and evaluation of the material. Her answer seems to illustrate that she selects the materials by herself, yet, from my perspective, she did not mention the materials in relation to the students' needs, but in relation to the methodology adopted by the course.

CB was really brief and vague about what she thinks of the materials selection and stated that the school's main concern is to fulfill the students' needs. In fact, she does not really know how the evaluation of the material is done, despite being the pedagogic coordinator. This contradicted my expectations about her role in the selection process.

Another aspect to be considered is the difference between their answers in terms of size (short and long ones), explicitness (some are clear while some are not) and precision (while some were very focused on what I had asked others were not). This, I thought, could be related to their role in the language school. Since she is the owner and also the pedagogic coordinator, **CA** was more interested in demonstrating how her business works. On the other hand, **CB** seemed to be afraid of giving any

personal opinion because she needs to follow orders and does not know much about selecting material. Besides, even without mentioning it, she seemed to be totally against the use of *Market Leader*. However, she needs to use and recommend it because it is a choice of the language course.

As a matter of fact, **CB** answered the questionnaire because she felt she was expected to do that as a coordinator. However, she did not give me a long time for the interview, and did not demonstrate any interest in answering my questions. Also, **CB** seemed not able to interfere in the selection of the material.

I agree with the coordinators about the importance of adopting grammar books in the foreign language classroom. But, there must be contextualized learning of grammar, avoiding transformation into monotonous tasks for the Business students. Since the business students' have a very short time to acquire a foreign language, they need to know how to use grammar in specific situations, as any ESP course would suggest.

4.2.2- The Teachers' questionnaires

Three teachers who also work in companies A and B were invited to answer a questionnaire. I hoped that their answers to the questionnaire could add to my research by also reporting on different experiences concerning the teaching of EBE in the institutions where they work. I will refer to the teachers as **Ni**, **Ma** and **Ce** to protect their identities.

Question 1: How do you evaluate Market Leader? Comment on what you like and what you do not like about the material.

In this answer, all the teachers praised the material, but none of them expressed their opinions about the activities suggested by the material. **Ni** considered the material itself the methodology of the course; the Communicative Approach, and not just didactic material to teach adults. According to her point of view, the disadvantages of the material are the listening activities “they are too long”, and that is the reason why her students spend most of the time lost in the activity. **Ma**, on the other hand likes the listening tasks. **Ni**’s point of view about this skill is that it is not suitable to her students and that some adjustments should be made in her classes. However, it is not clear if she does it or not. The advantages of the material mentioned by **Ni** are the updated vocabulary files and good readings that follow. Moreover, **Ma** likes the topics, but did not mention details about them. **Ce** only mentioned the large quantity of activities and not their quality.

Question 2: In your opinion, is this material enough to teach your students of Business English? Why (not)?

Two teachers, **Ni** and **Ce**, answered there is enough material for their business students. However, the reason that **Ni** considered it enough is that she is that thinks that it is difficult to find materials of some specific areas to supplement the book. **Ma** thinks that *Market Leader* lacks grammar exercises but she likes complementing the book with extra materials.

Question 3: Are you allowed to (or expected to) complement the textbook with other relevant materials? If so, which?

Ni here confirmed that she is not encouraged to complement the material and prefers negotiating it with the students, who bring extra materials by themselves. She also observed that the grammar is not sufficient for them. **Ma** does complement the material and feels motivated in doing so because of her answers in the queries. As complementary materials used, she mentioned videos (DVDs). **Ce** seems not to mind about extra materials; however, she mentioned the necessity of selecting listening tasks with updated news.

Question 4: Comment on your students' reaction to the textbook and to the extra material brought by you.

In this question, the teachers answered that the course book is well accepted. However, **Ma** mentioned that it does not match the necessities of students from some areas. **Ni** answered that she follows the ESP principles mentioning that the students recognize the importance of the materials selection for the course development. She also quoted the importance she gives to the negotiation and not the imposition of the material.

Ma agreed with **Ni** concerning students' acceptance of the course book, but affirmed that they do not like having materials that are not from the Marketing area, because they have the impression it is a waste of

time. **Ce** also repeats, in a brief answer, that the book is welcomed by the students as well.

Question 5: In your opinion, how could Market Leader be improved?

All teachers were unanimous in their answers of implementation of the course book *Market Leader*.

Ni finds the listening activities very long and thinks it would be interesting to have an American version of the material. **Ma** thinks that more grammar activities should be included. And **Ce** suggests that there should be a web site for teachers' consultation with updated extra materials for an efficient complementary work.

In the teachers' questionnaires, I could observe that **Ni** was more enthusiastic when answering the questions. In my opinion, this is due to the fact that she was a pedagogic coordinator of the language course and could have more access to information about the company.

According to the teachers' answers, **Ni** and **MA** answered as I expected, but **Ce** did not. In my opinion the teachers' role is also to observe their students' needs in order to supplement the material or not, and it seems that *Market Leader* is not sufficient to fulfill students' needs. **Ni** reaffirms the principles of an EBE course in her answer. She mentions the importance of having the students recognize their role in the selection of the material during the course. She also gives a lot of importance to the negotiation between teacher and student in the selection of extra materials and seems to reject the imposition of the course book by the coordinators.

According to **Ni**, the students' interaction with the teacher is a relevant fact to be considered. Learners can contribute to the classes by bringing materials related to their area and telling their teachers about their routine at work. This makes the students feel they are part of the learning process and make them aware of their importance in this process. Moreover, in my opinion, it is the most effective way of learning, since imposed materials and contents are not really effective in EBE contexts.

Ma is motivated about complementing the course book with videos (DVDs) for example. As I know her work personally, I have learned that she has been designing her own materials for classroom use. Besides, she uses films and sitcoms with the students. However, she does not use these materials in the company where she works, but with her private students, trying to make her classes more meaningful and target to the students' needs.

According to **Ce's** answers, she does not seem to be interested in complementing the course book with additional materials and simply follows her boss's determination. I observed her necessity to improve the Listening with updated news. **Ma** thinks that more grammar activities should be included in the material, that in my opinion, also depend on the learners' level of proficiency and their learning objectives.

Questions	Ní	Ma	Ce
Question 1: How do you evaluate Market Leader? Comment on what you like and what you do not like about the material.	Equates the material with the methodology of the course. Considers the long listening activities a problem in the book.	Considers the listening tasks, vocabulary files and good readings positive points , but dislikes that fact that they are not really suitable to her students	Considers the large quantity of activities a very positive aspect .
Question 2: In your opinion, is this material enough to teach your students of Business English? Why (not)?	Considers the material sufficient. Moreover, she faces difficulty in finding specific material for her learners.	Considers the material insufficient and criticizes the lack of grammar exercises.	Considers the material sufficient and complete for business students.
Question 3: Are you allowed to (or expected to) complement the textbook with other relevant materials? If so, which?	Not expected to complement the material and prefers to negotiate with the students.	Expected to complement the material and uses videos/DVDs in class.	Not expected to complement the material and considers necessary the selection of listening tasks with updated news.
Question 4: Comment on your students' reaction to the textbook and to the extra material brought by you.	Recognizes the importance of selecting the materials, and, does not like having materials external to the Marketing area.	Does not like having materials external to the Marketing area	Considers the material acceptable.
Question 5: In your opinion, how could Market Leader be improved?	Thinks that the book should be improved with an American version.	Thinks that the book should be improved with more grammar activities and videos (DVDs).	Thinks that the book should be improved with a website for teachers and listening activities

			containing updated news.
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4.2.3- The Students' questionnaires

Considering the objectives of this research, I chose three students of the two companies where I teach. They are executives from different business areas (engineering and financial areas), and their levels of proficiency are elementary (**Fr**), pre-intermediate (**Cp**) and intermediate (**Fe**). All of them have their own private interests in studying English such as improving their professional performance and also using English on trips and for reading and for watching films.

All the students were asked whether they had any free time to answer my questions and none of them refused to do so. The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to facilitate the communication between the students and me.

When reporting on their answers I'll be referring to the students by the first letter of their names and surnames.

Question 1: What are your aims when studying English?

All three students were unanimous in affirming that they need to improve their English language skills aiming at a better professional performance in the company where they work, which confirms that their learning of the foreign language is focused on the labor market. **Cp** complements his answer by saying that he works in projects with foreign companies. **Fr**, besides facing constant challenges in the current company, still longs for new chances in his career and considers mastering the language important for his professional and leisure activities. **Fe**'s objective is to work in a multinational company and believes that a good knowledge of English is fundamental for this purpose.

Question 2: In your opinion, which activities should be part of this class material?

All the learners seem to have the same opinion about their interests and needs in learning English. The class material for **Cp** is sufficient, because the book includes commercial vocabulary, which is his main interest. According to **Fr**, the book fulfills his needs because it deals with interesting topics for his work and professional life, yet he agrees with the idea of complementing the book with extra materials to make it more effective. On the other hand, **Fe** considers all the skills important, except writing.

Question 3: How do you evaluate the activities in Market Leader? Which one do you think should be included? What do you like and what don't you like about the material? What do you consider more or less important?

The interviewees indicated that they like the book and evaluated it as “interesting”. **Cp** likes the material approach to several routine situations, yet he did not mention which situations were these **Fr** evaluates as “positive” the newspaper and magazine articles, mainly the listening exercises because listening is the skill that he needs to practice the most. He also finds the written focus important because he has difficulties in writing, and he feels motivated when he uses the vocabulary learned in the lessons. In relation to the negative points, he says that the book does not open space for the student to express opinions or maybe it is difficult for him to understand the author’s purpose. **Fe**’s opinion is totally favorable to the book. It is all directed to the Business area and good for those who, like her, work in this area.

Question 4: How far do you think this material matches your needs? What is your point of view about the material?

According to the students’ point of view, the material is, in general, well adjusted to their necessities. **Cp** finds the content good while **Fr** mentions that all the materials used, the course book and the practice file, are interesting and have helped him improve, mainly in the beginning of the course when he had difficulties in the exercises. The same participant mentions the emphasis on the interaction between teachers and learners and not just the book. **Fe** believes that her necessity for business English materials is fulfilled by the book, yet she thinks that it fails concerning the vocabulary file based on daily routines, because it does not make use of the typical jargon of her area of work.

Question 5: In your opinion, how could Market Leader be improved and in which parts?

Cp and **Fe** think that the book could be improved, while **Fr** finds it difficult to think about the question. **Cp** finds that the technical texts should be optional for those who work in the area. **Fr** does not give any opinion because he likes the subjects, the form of presenting them, and the reviews. He also mentions that it is a positive point that the authors of the book are native. However, **Fe** thinks that the book could be complemented with grammar exercises and everyday vocabulary.

Question 6: What do you prefer: the course book or the extra materials brought by your teacher?

All the participants agree that both are important in the learning acquisition process. However, **Cp** mentions that although the presence of the teacher is as important as the book. **Fr** mentions the use of the book as a basis of the process and the addition of extra material made by the teacher as interesting and complementary. **Fe** just mentions the combination of both.

Based on the students' answers to my questionnaire, I could observe that, nowadays, with the job market demands, taking English as a second language has the same value as learning a mother tongue. All the

participants answered that their priorities when taking the language course are related to their job demands such as taking part in meetings, using it in conferences, negotiating with foreign companies and other obligations belonging to the business world.

According to **Fr**, the material adopted was the basis of the learning process and the teacher has the role of identifying the students' necessities. Therefore, from the other participants' (**Cp** and **Fe**) answers to this question, we may notice that the book fulfills their expectations. However, in the end, they all agree that the supplementary material brought by the teachers is the best option. In the point of view the students, only teachers have the sensitivity to identify their students' needs. As a matter of fact, teacher guides, computers, e-boards, and new technology have a tendency to substitute the teachers, yet, in my opinion, this professional will never disappear, because teachers will always be fundamental in the students' evaluation and materials design. Another point is that there is a limitation imposed by the language course which chooses the book, and sometimes teachers are not allowed to change anything. They are expected to follow the books chosen by their coordinators as a straight jacket, which is a serious misunderstanding of the role of ESP classes.

Hence, there are two observations to be considered. One is the limitation imposed by the language course supervisors, according to which nothing could be changed by teachers. Some language courses have even recording cameras in the classroom to observe how teachers are teaching and whether they are following the school rules. The other

limitation is that some teachers do not like to change anything related to the printed material because it demands a lot of work, yet students have their own necessities and teachers should not forget them. In the end, learners become frustrated and demotivated because their needs are not being fulfilled.

In this section, I will analyze the course book, *Market Leader*, which I have been using with my students in the companies where I work, and evaluate whether it fulfills my students' necessities.

Questions	Fr	Cp	Fe
Question 1: What are your aims when studying English?	The aims are to improve the English language skills aiming at a better professional performance in the company where he works. Moreover, mastering the English language is important for his professional and leisure activities.		
Question 2: In your opinion, which activities should be part of this class material?	Suggests complementing the book with extra materials to make it more effective.	Considers the book sufficient, because it includes commercial vocabulary.	Considers the writing skills the most important part of the book.

Question 3: How do you evaluate the activities in Market Leader? Which one do you think should be included? What do you like and what don't you like about the material? What do you consider more or less important?	Considers the activities good, the most important being the news, magazine articles, listening exercises and writing skills tasks.	Considers the activities good and suggests the inclusion of technical texts as an option for those who need them.	Considers the Business material authentic.
Question 4: How far do you think this material matches your needs? What is your point of view about the material?	Considers the book adjusted to the students' necessities and important to the language acquisition process. His point of view is the emphasis on teachers and learners' interaction, since the book for itself is not sufficient.	Considers the book adjusted to the students' necessities and important to the language acquisition process. His appreciates the presence of interesting topics.	Considers the book adjusted to the students' necessities and important to the language acquisition process. His appreciates the specific terms of business English introduced in the book and the fact that the material is business-oriented.
Question 5: In your opinion, how could Market Leader be improved and in which parts?	The material could be improved in the way it presents the activities.	The material could be improved with optional technical texts.	The material could be improved with grammar exercises.
Question 6: What do you prefer: the course book or the extra materials brought by your teacher?	Considers the book important as a basis for the language learning process and enjoys the addition of extra interesting materials brought by the teacher.	Enjoys the combination of both: the course book plus the materials brought by the teacher.	Enjoys the combination of both: the course book plus the materials brought by the teacher.

4.3- Document Analysis

In this section, I will analyze the course book, *Market Leader*, which I have been using with my students in the companies where I work, and evaluate whether it fulfills my students' necessities.

4.3.1- The course book

Market Leader is a course book by Longman and designed by Simon Kent, David Falvey and David Cotton. Its target public is business people and students of business. According to the publisher, *Market Leader* contains business communication skills, which are supplemented by general English components. It is organized in two volumes targeted to students' different levels of proficiency: pre-intermediate and intermediate levels.

According to the publisher, this course book:

1- develops essential business communication skills such as making presentations, taking part in meetings, negotiating, telephoning, and use English in social situations.

2- improve the ability to communicate in English in a wide range of business situations.

3- develops communication skills and enlarge knowledge of the business world

4- help the students become more fluent and confident in using the language of business and should increase their career prospects.

Still, according to the authors, the edition I have been working with features new authentic texts and listening throughout, reflecting the latest trends in the business world.

Besides, *Market Leader* has been developed in association with the Financial Times, one of the leading sources of business information in the

world. According to the editors, it is for everyone involved in international business.

By observing students' needs in achieving their aims, English teachers are used to adopting materials already prepared by a publishing company and sometimes do not know how to complement them. As a matter of fact, a few of these materials succeed in keeping the interest of the students during the course by developing their fluency in the foreign language or by fulfilling their necessities in an EBP class. However, educators usually prefer to follow material already published or a methodology, most of the time chosen by the language course coordinators. Some of these teachers fully agree with the material without worrying if it fulfills the students needs.

The course book under analysis consists of 12 units, which are divided into sections of three units. Each unit contains the same sections: "Starting Up", "Vocabulary", "Discussion", "Reading", "Listening", "Language review", "Skills", "Case Study", not exactly presented in the same order. After each three units there is a "Revision section". Role plays and case studies are regular features of each unit as well.

The course book also contains the following additional instruction materials:

- "Grammar Reference", which presents explanations of grammar topics found in the book. Some of these topics are: modals,

present simple and continuous, past simple and continuous, simple past and present perfect, multi-word verbs, questions, future plans, reported speech, conditionals, time clauses and passives.

- “Writing File”, which presents layouts of: letters, investment plans, faxes, e-mails, sales leaflets and reports. The student must recognize the genre and reproduce it in writing, using the context of the activity proposed by the authors.

- “Activity File”, which presents a complementation of the Skills section. In this section there are role play situations for learners, in order to create dialogues in a business context situation. Some are represented in boxes for students with A and B speeches, however, other exercises request the student to complete, tables (for example, “Customer services”), and ask partners some questions.

- “Audio Scripts”, which presents all the written scripts of listening activities.

- “Vocabulary File”, which presents the meaning of the vocabulary introduced in the units. The units sometimes present a numbered glossary of new vocabulary. This is done so that students can identify the words and numbers in the vocabulary file section and understand their meaning.

- “Online support”: Longman on the web (Longman.com), which offers classroom activities, teaching tips and online resources for teachers of all levels and students of all ages.

The authors mention that, throughout the course, students are encouraged to use their own experience and opinions in order to maximize involvement and learning. They also mention that *Market Leader* is essential in Business English materials selection. When designing book, the authors claim to have catered for the wide range of needs students have, including different areas of interest and specialization, different skills needs and varying amounts of time available to study.

Market Leader offers teachers and course planners an interesting range of flexible materials to help their students meet these needs. This book makes suggestions on how to use the unit material extensively and indicates how the material in the “Practice File” integrates the course book. There are also optional extra components, including “Business Grammar and Usage”, videos and a series of special subject books to develop the students’ vocabulary and reading skills. Besides, according to my observations, it contains extensive extra photocopiable material in the “Text Bank” and the “Resource Bank”.

In *Market Leader* every unit displays a colorful picture with a quotation related to the theme of the unit to prepare the student for the “Starting Up section”. This is supported by questions to introduce a “Speaking Activity” and stimulate a discussion and hold the students’ interests (cf. Appendix 2). It seems that the authors consider the picture and quotation appropriate to make a prediction of what the unit talks about. In my observations with my students in class, some of them had difficulty in the interpretation of these quotations, while others could do it

easily. It seems that some of them work in the business area and others do not.

After the “Starting Up”, the units open with questions and/or an exercise to fill in the gap with new vocabulary or verbs (cf. Appendix 3). As the book focuses on the Business area, the authors use pictures and texts highlighting specific themes, such as “Careers”. Besides, all the other exercises intend to be contextualized as well. That makes it easy for the teachers to interact with students whatever business area they belong to. In order to do so, the authors try to follow a sequence of skills in each unit that is going to be described below.

The first section is “Starting Up”. It appears in every unit as the first activity with questions to discuss the topic and help teacher and students exchange ideas. Sometimes it presents an indication of the “Vocabulary File” to be visited with the number of the page where it is located.

Secondly, there is a “Vocabulary exercise” section that is sometimes placed after the “Reading” or “Listening section”. These exercises request the student to perform several types of activities, for instance, completing the sentences; combining verbs and nouns, crossing the wrong nouns or matching them; matching verbs and prepositions, transforming a noun into an adjective, matching prefixes to the noun; or putting words into a logical order to make sentences; practicing collocations and conversations.

The “Vocabulary section” is followed by the “Reading section” that starts with a discussion and an exercise to match words. The reading passage is introduced and it is followed by pair work or group work exercises and true or false questions. Almost all the texts are extracted from the *Financial Times*. Just in four units I could find other sources of articles, such as *Business Wire*, *theage.au.com.au*, *cnn.com* and *The Guardian*. In my opinion, even though this association with the *Financial Times* is very welcome, it also limits the students because they do not have access to other important sources of information in the business world and are limited to the reading of journalistic articles.

The next section is “Listening”, which is made of interviews with businesspeople, who represent several situations in business contexts. While listening, the students are expected to take notes to check their comprehension. (cf. Appendix 4)

The following section, “Language Review”, focuses on common problem areas at a pre-intermediate level. Each book unit contains a language review box which provides a review of key grammar items.

The “Skills” section, which comes immediately after, is for developing essential business communication skills such as making presentations, taking part in meetings, negotiating, telephoning, and using English in social situations. Each “Skills” section contains a useful language box which provides students with the language they need to carry out the realistic business tasks in the book.

The next section, “Case Study”, is linked to the business topics of each unit. They are based on realistic business problems or situations and allow students to use the language and communication skills they have developed while working through the unit. They give students the opportunity to practice their speaking skills in realistic business situations. Each “Case Study” ends with a writing task. A full writing syllabus is provided in the *Market Leader Practice File*.

The last section is the “Revision Unit”, which is based on the material covered in the preceding three course book units. Each revision unit is designed so that it can be done in one go or on a unit-by-unit basis.

In addition, the material also offers a site (www.pearson.com.br) with complementary activities, such as a CD rom, from which teachers choose the exercises they want, and DVDs with resources and films related to business.

4.3.2- Analyzing the document

In order to critically analyze the course book *Market Leader*, I made use of Hutchinson and Waters’ *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centred approach*, (1987).

In my analysis I could identify that the course book sometimes follows a structural linguistics language description in some exercises. Moreover, the grammar of the language is described in terms of syntagmatic structures which carry the fundamental propositions (statement, interrogative, negative, imperative etc.) and notion (time, number, gender etc.). By varying the words within these structural

frameworks, sentences with different meanings can be generated. (cf. Appendix 4).

The book emphasizes the work with grammar and lexicon in many different exercises such as: rearranging the words in a sentence, answering questions from a job interview, and matching words in the boxes. There are also role play situations that include of useful language for each situation. The authors list some structured sentences for the students to memorize and apply in a dialogue.

In the book's 'Writing File', I could identify the layouts of several types of texts and how they can be used in formal and informal contexts. The text types presented in the book are letters, dialogues, experimental reports, visual texts (pictures, diagrams, charts, graphs, cartoons etc.), letters from head offices to branches, letters of invitation, reports (sales reports, budget report, audit reports), newspaper articles, formal and informal e-mails, economic profiles, financial performance, company presentations, advertisement, sales leaflets, investment plans, faxes, and notices. But the book does not make the student practice with some other relevant text types in the business area, such as manuals and instructions, which is a serious flaw in an EBE course book.

The book also presents Reading Reports (on sales and budget), yet I could not find exercises in which the students are asked to read and interpret monthly, audit reports, work manuals, memos and reference material for professional exams.

Besides, I also noticed that the course material does not emphasize many functions concerned with social behavior, more specifically, the intention of the speaker or writer when producing a text, for example, advising, warning threatening, describing and so on, that are important for the reader to identify the communicative acts that are carried out through language.

The grammar is taught in a contextualized way and I could see that the structures help the students organize their notions of language. For instance, all the exercises will be contextualized with the subject-matter presented in the unit.

Concerning the focus on listening, I noticed that the listening micro skills are dealt with in communicative events, such as discussions, telephone messages (oral instructions as making calls, exchanging information and handling enquires, for example). The book also checks the students comprehension of oral reports, interviews, negotiations, presentations, and board meetings. Yet I did not find an activity in which the students would be asked to listen to lectures at seminars.

As matter of fact, *Market Leader* presents business communications skills in agreement with the core ones listed in the TOEIC report. In this material I could find skills such as negotiating, reaching an agreement, presenting your company, conducting successful meetings, socializing (greetings and small talk), exchanging information on the telephone, interrupting and clarifying information in meetings, socializing and

entertaining, negotiating and dealing with conflict; and presenting a product.

In my analysis, I saw that content follows the same patterns in all units, with some slight changes. Every unit starts with a topic for discussion as, for example, careers, selling on line, types of companies, stress, corporate entertaining, marketing, planning, managing people, conflicts, new business and products, and the activities are contextualized into them. However, I noticed that there is no flexibility to deal with the students' difficulties or specific needs. The material follows some patterns that do not change and does not make room for students' contributions or private necessities.

To conclude, in my point of view, the course book is not sufficiently effective on helping students achieve their specific needs when it comes to learning English for professional reasons. Moreover, the authors do not explain what teachers should do to help students achieve their aims with this material or which teaching procedures or tools they should use in order to do so.

4.4. Triangulation

In this investigation, different methods of data collection were used: the analysis of the context of my working place, questionnaires answered by the course coordinators, teachers and students, and course book analysis.

The analysis of the data elicited through the questionnaires points at the general perception, from the coordinators' and teachers' point of

view, that grammar is the most important area to be developed in the material. Based on my daily observations, I also noted that most of my students seem to value the emphasis on materials focusing on their working area. In order to achieve their proficiency, students confront hard situations where they should feel anxious to learn fast. Some of their challenges are found in listening activities or vocabulary sections of the course material. Sometimes, the extra activities motivate students' learning. As a matter of fact, in my opinion, EBP classes should not be centered on grammar skills, except in cases when the students have this specific need.

Another characteristic identified in my analysis is that the course book seems to be directed to catch the attention of business people and students of business. However, even though reading activities are taken from authentic and specific business sources, they do not present all sorts of genres business people would need to know and use effectively in their professional contexts.

The questionnaires revealed that teachers and coordinators consider their students' reaction to the course book very interesting, yet they agree that it is not really specific to their working areas. Sometimes, learners are not interested in some units because they think that they are not pertinent to their specific area. The problem seems to be that, by trying to focus on several different business areas, *Market Leader* never fulfills the necessities of all students. The coordinators and teachers interviewed agree that we must negotiate with our students what they

want to learn and how to do it, for that reason, the content of classes must be flexible in order to fulfill the students' needs.

However, the students' answers to the questionnaire showed that the book and the text types selected are considered interesting and capable of showing diverse daily situations in a company.

Students also commented on their interests in exercises intended to focus on their difficulties like those aiming at improving conversation and writing skills. As a matter of fact, students sometimes feel distrustful of their own capacity of development. On the other hand, this sensation could be reverted if there were more activities aiming at making the students feel encouraged to use the new vocabulary to construct new sentences by themselves.

Another point students mention is that some exercises in the textbook are not clear, which means that there is a possibility of not understanding the purpose of the authors.

Students' answers to the questionnaires also show that the course book must be enriched with some grammar exercises, technical texts, that would be optional, and day-by-day vocabulary. In general, the course book seems to generate expectations in the students on how much they will learn; that can be frustrating or not, depending on the way the teacher uses it. Indeed, a series of factors can concur for this, such as the way the teacher works with this resource, the type of interaction promoted in the classroom, the students' commitment to the learning process, and students' motivation, among others.

Concerning the fact that this material has been produced according to British English grammar and lexicon, which displeases coordinator A, I must say that it would be really helpful if students could be exposed to different types of English, mainly because, in a globalized world, people are expected to use English as Lingua Franca, that is, as a language of communication among people whose mother tongue is not English.

Nevertheless, in my context of work I observed, in a meeting with the teachers and a representative of the publishing company, that there are students who fail to understand the listening activities in the book because the accent emphasized is the British one. Besides, their difficulty also results from the fact that these activities are fast and long.

As a matter of fact, the representative of the publishing company mentions the importance of the teachers' role when implementing the listening activities such as breaking the audio into smaller parts, giving extra activities to break the ice and also underlining some vocabulary in the listening tapescript.

Moreover, concerning the expectation of complementing the course book with extra materials, teachers and coordinators agreed with the adoption of extra books or exercises on grammar and vocabulary. Just one teacher told that it is hard to find materials because sometimes the business topics and vocabulary are too specific for her students.

This confirms my expectations that the EBE teacher should be responsible for the one adopting, supplementing and even discarding activities on the basis of what he believes to be important or not for the students.

However, I have noticed that there are teachers who are almost forced to follow the course book from scratch, without questioning it, due to the imposition of the school. Such an attitude is problematic, considering the importance of the teacher's reflection on and critical evaluation of students' real needs and the most appropriate materials to help them reach their goals when learning a foreign language for professional purposes.

My interviews with the students show that learners agree that both the materials brought by the teachers and the course book are important. However, they state that the book is a guide for the class, but the teacher is the one who must identify the learners' necessities and add interesting and complementary materials to make classes more challenging and relevant.

In conclusion, the triangulation of the data demonstrated that, even though *Marketing Leader* is considered important as a base for teaching Business English, the teacher has an important role in implementing the activities in the course book and selecting extra materials that might be more varied and relevant in meeting business students' specific needs when learning English as a foreign language.

5. Conclusion and Final Comments

In this study I intended to evaluate the context of EBE teaching in the two language courses where I have worked as an EFL teacher and analyze the relevance of the textbook *Market Leader* that was selected as course material in EBE classes. In order to do so, I interviewed the coordinators of both courses, three teachers and students.

My research shows that *Market Leader* does not entirely fulfill the necessities of the interviewed learners, due to their individual characteristics, different working experiences, levels of language learning and working environments.

I also saw the importance of the teachers' role, in making adaptations in the material, leading the learning process, evaluating the business students' needs, and creating tailor-made solutions to help them fulfill their needs.

Another important point I highlighted in this study is the fact that coordinators and teachers are aware or not of the characteristics of a tailor-made course and the relevance of taking into consideration students' specific necessities in an EBE course.

According to teachers interviewed, the book should be adjusted in a way that the learners should be able to bring other materials to enrich the book. My interviews with the teachers show that some of them have been complementing the course book with videos, updated listening activities and news. While some of them follow exactly what the course determines, others have sensibility in identifying learners' needs and see the importance of negotiation and not the imposition of pre-selected materials.

In order to fill in this gap, I suggest that the materials in one-to-one classes could be supplied by the students themselves. Learners could contribute to classes more intensively and feel part of the learning process by bringing material like books, articles from relevant newspapers to class, bearing in mind their necessities in learning English.

My interviews with the students have also shown that they like the book but believe that for some business areas, it is not enough. Therefore, the extra material selected by teachers and students is important to help complement the material..

In this study I observed that the material selected is important for the students' short-term professional projects because it helps improve their language accuracy and performance in English. It thus enhances their chances of succeeding in the job market, by improving their chances of working for multinational companies and/or developing projects for foreign companies.

Besides, when commenting on the course book, students reported that they find its content good but attribute a greater importance to the relation established between teachers and learners and to the complementation of *Market Leader* with extra materials.

Moreover, the course material in an EBE course would have to serve as a source of inspiration for the professor, but it cannot be considered the only source or guide. Therefore, I find that the danger would be adopting the class book as a script, therefore limiting the teacher's role in an EBE class, and disregarding the professional reality of the students

In conclusion, as I have said before, *Market Leader* is a specific book for EBE classes. Yet, depending on how the teacher complements it, the book can become excellent material for EBE learners, or not. Therefore, to be meaningful to EBE learners, *Market Leader* must be adjusted to fit the students' realities, by being applied to their areas of work. Besides, teachers should also enrich the material and enhance learners' motivation by creating challenging and relevant contextualized tasks.

In addition, the students themselves should be invited to complement the EBE materials because business students, who are often specialists in a professional area, sometimes know more about it than the information provided by the book.

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7. Appendices

APPENDIX 1 : The Tree of ELT

ESP: approach not product

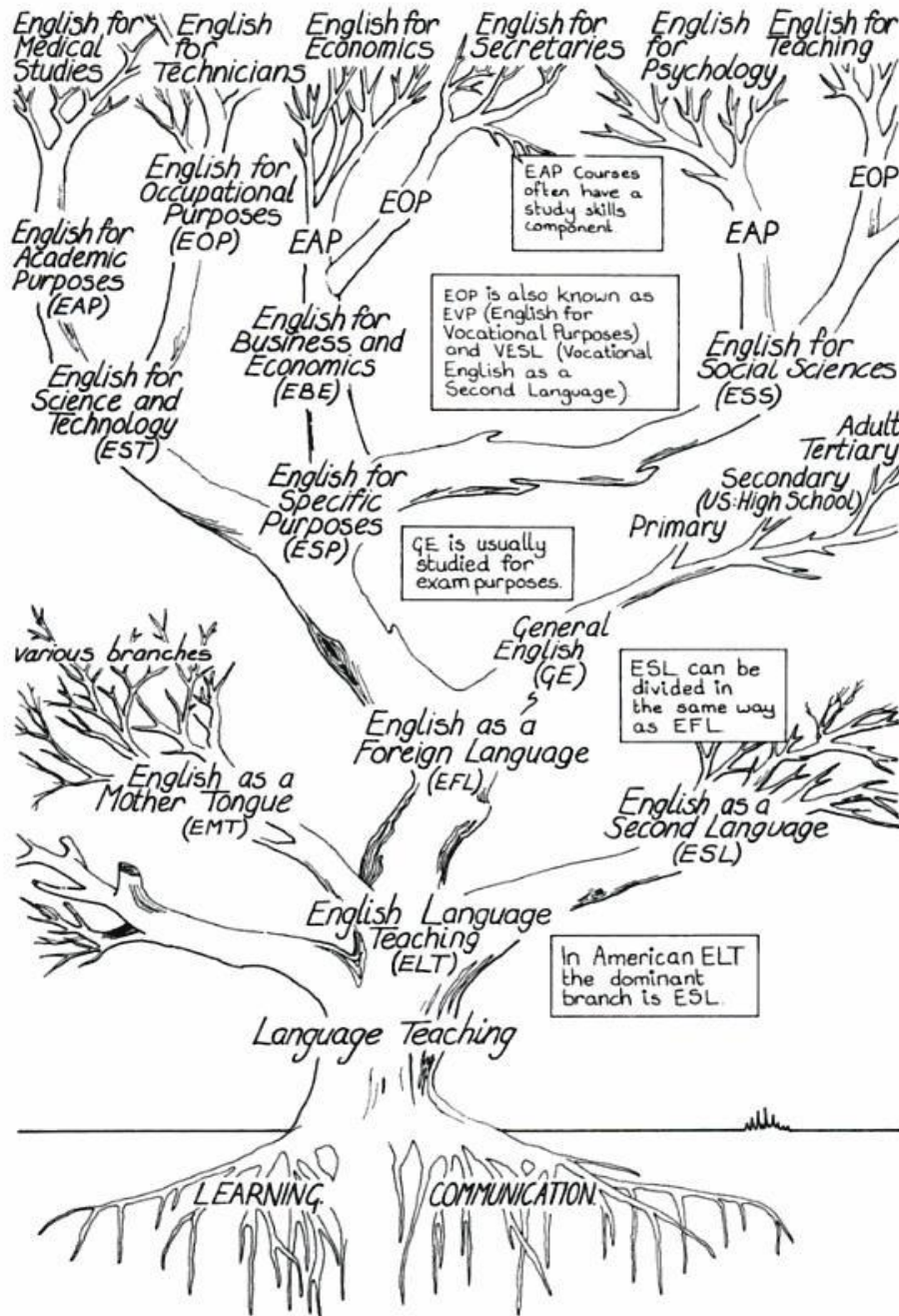


Figure 3: The tree of ELT

(Hutchinson & Waters, 1987

:17)

APPENDIX 2: Speaking Activity

UNIT 1

OVERVIEW ▼

- ☐ **Vocabulary**
Career moves
- ☐ **Reading**
Ten ways to improve your career
- ☐ **Listening**
Discussing ways to improve your career
- ☐ **Language review**
Modals 1: ability, requests and offers
- ☐ **Skills**
Telephoning: making contact
- ☐ **Case study**
Fast-Track Inc.

Nothing will work unless you do.

Maya Angelou, US author

Starting up

A Discuss these questions.

- 1 How ambitious are you?
- 2 Do you have a career plan? Where do you want to be in 10 years' time?
- 3 Which of the following would you prefer to do?
 - a) Work for one company during your career
 - b) Work for several different companies
 - c) Work for yourself

B Which of the following areas do you work in (or would you like to work in)? Why?

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Sales and marketing | 4 Administration and personnel |
| 2 Finance | 5 Production |
| 3 Management | 6 Research and development (R&D) |

C What should you do to get ahead in your career? Choose the four most important tips from the list below. Compare your ideas in a group and try to agree on a final choice.

- 1 Change companies often
- 2 Use charm with your superiors
- 3 Attend all meetings
- 4 Go to your company's social functions
- 5 Be energetic and enthusiastic at all times
- 6 Be the last to leave work every day
- 7 Find an experienced person to give you help and advice
- 8 Study for extra qualifications in your free time

UNIT 5 Stress

OVERVIEW ▼

- ☐ **Listening**
Dealing with stress
- ☐ **Reading**
A career change
- ☐ **Vocabulary**
Stress in the workplace
- ☐ **Discussion**
Stressful jobs
- ☐ **Language review**
Past simple and present perfect
- ☐ **Skills**
Participating in discussions
- ☐ **Case study**
Genova Vending Machines

‘The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you are still a rat.’

Lily Tomlin, US actress



Starting up

A Add the verbs from the box to the phrases below to create some common stressful situations.

going finding having making being travelling queuing going

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1going..... to the dentist | 5 to the hairdresser |
| 2 In the supermarket | 6 an interview |
| 3 stuck in a traffic jam | 7 a speech |
| 4 a place to park | 8 by air |

Which of these situations is the most stressful for you? Can you add any others to the list?

B What do you do to relax? Which of these activities are the most effective for you and why? In what other ways do you relax?

playing a sport reading eating/drinking having a bath
walking gardening massage shopping listening to music
watching TV meditating surfing the Net

C Decide which tip each of the following sentences could be added to.

- a) These are also a great way to network with influential people.
- b) Each day, take a small step that brings you closer to that target.
- c) If your boss refuses, ask him or her what you need to achieve in order to qualify for one.
- d) It will also establish you as a team player within the company.
- e) Pay attention to every single task that you do.
- f) You may discover a secret talent or a hidden passion.

Tip

2 3 4

5 6 7

6 7 8

5 9 10

1 2 3

2 7 8

D Match the verbs (1–5) with the noun phrases (a–e) to form expressions from the article.

- 1 to reach
- 2 to get ahead
- 3 to evaluate
- 4 to deserve
- 5 to master
- a) a promotion
- b) a skill
- c) a goal
- d) in one's career
- e) one's progress

E In pairs, discuss which three of the ten tips in the article are the most important.

Listening Improving your career

A 1.1 Listen to two people, Debbie and Nikola, discussing *Ten Ways to Improve Your Career*. Complete the table below with the number of the three tips they consider the most helpful.

	Debbie	Nikola
1	Tip no	Tip no
2	Tip no	Tip no
3	Tip no	Tip no

B Discuss these questions.

- 1 What do you think is the relationship between Debbie and Nikola? Why?
- 2 In your opinion, where are they from, and how old are they?

C 1.2 Listen to these extracts from the discussion and complete them.

Debbie If you want to move ahead in your career, you also need to evaluate your progress regularly. If you do that, you get a better idea of¹, and also of the areas that you need to².

Debbie When a challenge presents itself, you have to³. If you play it safe all the time, if you just settle⁴, you'll never move ahead in your career.

Nikola If you always do what you've always done, you'll only get⁵.

D Look at Nikola's comment in Exercise C. Do you agree with it? Why (not)?

