



Designing a Business English Communication Certificate Training Course for Engineering Students

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The rapid breakdown of national barriers over the last decade has resulted in English language skills acquiring a great deal of importance in business sector. Ability to communicate at work place is vital, particularly in the present professional and business climate. In a world with ever-growing levels of globalization and interconnectivity, the significance of Business Communication increased rapidly. But lack of exposure towards Business Communication is a serious handicap for many aspirants. By recognizing this, researcher focused to train the Engineering Students for Business Communication and motivating to appear BEC examination-an internationally recognized qualification for getting employability. As a parts of this researcher designed a training course for CMREC students to gain the Business Communication, as well as to qualify the BEC examination. The training sessions were designed to make sure that the student has at least a reasonable base on which they can build a level that will help them face fierce competition when they begin to search for work.

Keywords: Business Communication, BEC (Business English Certificate)

(Broad area: Business English)

Introduction

In the present scenario ability to communicate in English is a vital, particularly in the context of professional and business. Rapid progress in trade relations among the companies from various places all over the world; the necessity for a widespread language to communicate is undeniable. English is the language of the world and mostly used between any internationally acting company and agent. Hence, the knowledge of English that is exclusively used within the business contexts is very important for individuals

working with associates, customers and accomplices from different nations to see one another, so they can shape compelling and gainful working connections.

So as to meet the gainful working relations, everybody from college graduates to senior managers must probably utilize English for their working environment. Furthermore, improving students own expertise of business English can highly affect their career. To fulfill this objective Cambridge is putting forth Business English Certification- BEC through standard test. In this way, comprehend graduates must have gain business English, which makes them able in their business setting. Otherwise the deficiency of business English is a serious handicap to any young aspiring professionals. So the need and importance of business English among the graduates and boosting the overall performance in their career; researcher has planned the syllabus according to BEC (Business English Certificate) examination pattern. It has been introduced from B.Tech first year onwards, that can instruct and prepare the students to get the advantage when enter the job world. In today's globalization, it is more significant to show employers that you can communicate in English effectively in every-day business circumstances. This paper acquaints with BEC examination and proposed language elements with a goal to accommodate the engineering students to learn, develop and practice the BEC examination.

Importance of Business English Certification

- BEC exam can open doors to pursue higher education.
- This Cambridge English exam will give worldwide recognition. As BEC is recognized by many agencies, international corporations, employers and also by colleges and universities around the world.
- BEC improves employability and career prospects because especially designed test to help you communication more effectively in an international work environment.
- It provides language Skills for real life business situations and improves confidence among students.

BEC Exam awarding certification in three levels

Business certificates conducting by Cambridge University are rigorous and thorough tests of English as per CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). It consists three levels like B1, B2 and C1. They cover all four language skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking. The content of the exams is based on everyday work and business tasks, to ensure employees can use English confidently. The differences among these papers are only complexity.

1. BEC Preliminary Exam (B1 Level)
2. BEC Vantage Exam (B2 Level)
3. BEC Higher Exam (B3 Level)

In this research paper, the researcher focused on BEC Preliminary Exam.

BEC Preliminary Exam Format

BEC Preliminary exam conducting by Cambridge English is made up of three papers developed to test aspirants' English skills. You can see exactly what is in each paper below.

Paper	Content	Marks (% of total)	Purpose
Reading and Writing Part Duration: 1 hr 30 minutes	Reading consists 7 parts Writing consists 2 parts	50%	Able to read and comprehend main points from charts or graphs, emails and messages. Able to produce two short pieces of writing: an internal communication, such as message or note, and some business correspondence, such as an email or a letter.
Listening Duration: 40 minutes, including transfer time	4 parts	25%	Able to follow and understand a variety of spoken materials including discussions, conversations and interviews about everyday life.
Speaking Duration: 12 minutes Pair work	3 parts	25%	Able to take part in conversation, asking and answering questions, and talking freely about your opinions when discussing business-related topics. It is face-to-face with one or two other candidates, which makes your test more realistic and more reliable.

Rationale & Research questions

The present study is exploratory in nature with a special focus on various language elements as a syllabus used for training the students to qualify the BEC examination. This course also aims to improve business English for their professional development. Under the training, B.Tech first year students are exposed to face-to-face training as a part of timetable. The syllabus of this course has been designed by researcher by

keeping the exam format in mind and centrally developed materials. The following are the research questions of the study:

- 1) What are the language elements should focus to train the students for BEC examination?
- 2) To what extent does the training programme helps the students to qualify the BEC and to gain the Business Communication?

Proposed Syllabus for BEC

Most business English courses help the students to focus on the needs to communicate within the context. So the syllabus must reflect the discourse they are confronted with and also have to decide what learning activities and tasks can be done to help the students to develop their business communication. It is important to select relevant language items the learner needs to know and practice to gain the confidence. In this paper the researcher has studied the BEC exam pattern and Business Benchmark book which is designed by Norman Whitby and picked up the important elements to construct a unique sequence of language experience by identifying the suitable activities to foster improvement.

Course Objectives:

- a. It provides language Skills for real life business situations and improves confidence among students.
- b. To train the students to qualify the BEC examination
- c. Develop study skills and communication skills in formal and informal situations.

Course Outcomes: Students should be able to

- Use Business English Language effectively in spoken and written forms.
- Comprehend the given texts and respond appropriately.
- Communicate confidently in various contexts and different cultures.
- Acquire basic proficiency in English including reading and listening comprehension, writing and speaking skills.

Syllabus: Training session has been divided into following five exercises.

Exercise-I

- Business Communication Skills: Intrapersonal skills and Interpersonal skills.
- Active Listening Skills- Listening Comprehension.
- Reading skills: Skimming and Scanning.
- Verbal Ability: Fundamentals of Grammar - Sentence Structure - Parts of Speech.
- Online Communication- “The power of word of mouse”: an article on the power of online customer opinions

Exercise-II

- Corporate Communication: First impression, Personal Grooming, Corporate & Business etiquettes.
- Business Relationships: Career advice: letters to an advice column, corporate gift-giving, teamwork, thinking globally- “Global HR Management”: an article.
- Technical and Business Vocabulary: Idioms, Phrases, Collocations, Abbreviations, and Analogy.
- Reading Skills: Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading

Exercise-III

- Presentation Skills: Group Discussion, Presentations Telephone Handling
- Reading Comprehension and Techniques: Interpreting bar charts, pie chart, table, and tree diagram.
- Listening to statistical information: short extracts- “Cafe Coffee Day”: an article on the growth of the Indian Coffee shop;

Exercise-IV

- Writing skills: Paragraph writing, Business letters, E-mail, Memo, Report and Essay writing.
- Recruitment- Preparing for an interview, Staff development: “Advertisements for training courses: variation between a memo and an advert: sport and business” an article.
- “Picture Description” including Description of Photos/Images/Posters/Advertisement etc.,

Exercise-V

- Exercises on Common Errors in Grammar: Tenses, Passive forms, Model verbs, Degrees of comparison, Articles, Reference words, word types and Quantity expressions.
- Usage of Words: Model verbs of obligation, Contrast words, words to describe causes and effects.
- Practice of previous BEC Exam: Listening tracks, Reading, Writing and Speaking parts, Communication activities, and Exam skills practice.

Methodology & Activities

Reading Skill: Under the reading skills focus should be more on Skimming and Scanning techniques by providing ample exercises. Some tips have been discussed with examples to students before the attempting tasks for better comprehension. Even the reading tasks help the students to enrich Vocabulary by identifying the prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, antonyms, phrasal verbs, idioms, collocations and paraphrase. Hence reading is also followed by vocabulary exercise.

Listening Skill: Here the researcher used Business Benchmark textbook, 2nd edition CDs for exposing the students for listening skills. An opportunity has been given for students to listen each task twice before discussing the answers. There is a pre-task which will help them up to anticipate what is going to be played. They should focus on pronunciation very carefully and has to be listened for gaining comprehension.

Speaking Skill: BEC speaking test is divided into three parts. Part 1 starts with couple of standard personal questions like; *can you tell me a little bit about you? What does your job involve? How do you see your career developing in the next few years?* And moving to business topics like; *how do you think business has changed in your country in the last few years?* Etc.

Part two called as mini-presentation. Students will get one minute to prepare a talk about a topic, and one minute for presentation. Third part is a discussion on given scenario or situation. To practice in speaking skills student will always encouraged. This can be planned in groups but individuals have to talk.

Grammar: Here the students will expose to various selected elements and then production takes place. They follow the instructions to the teacher for working on handouts and get the concepts across very clearly. Frequent errors are identified and can be explained with appropriate correction.

Writing Skill: Students are taught how to write a business letter, memo, e-mail, note, and report. They may focus on format and the importance of word count and register.

Vocabulary: Students focus more on business vocabulary like Finance vocabulary and Employment vocabulary. Vocabulary task leads to the speaking task so the students can use the words learnt.

Procedure & Findings

This BEC training is exclusively implementing at B.Tech 1st year for all branches of students. When they go to second year they will motivate to register for TASK- *Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge*, which established by the government of Telangana for enhancing skilling synergy among institutions of government industry and academia. TASK registered candidates through placement cell can appear for the BEC examination conducting by Cambridge. In the A.Y 2020-21, 800 students were registered through TASK from CMREC for BEC examination and qualified. It was also found that students who qualified BEC exam positively reported that conducting BEC classes further motivated them to improve their business English and helped to get good score in BEC exam. And one more important thing is students who got BEC certificate were selected in the placements.



CMREC Student stood topper in BEC across entire Telengana State with a score 168/170, and appreciated by TASK and Cambridge. Principal Dr. A.S.Reddy, and Trainer Dr.S. Rangaraju, Associate Professor also appreciated.

Conclusion

This paper indicates the significance of Business English Certification for getting employability of engineering students. It discussed the BEC examination format and important language elements to focus for qualifying the exam, as well as to gain business communication. The findings reveals that students who undergone the training programme as per focusing on selected language elements by the researcher were qualified the BEC exam by developing their business English and leads to employability.

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