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## BUSINESS LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION

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### ABSTRACT:

*THE PAPER PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE BUSINESS LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION. SIGNIFICANT ENGLISH TERMS OF BUSINESS ARE DEALT WITH IN THE PAPER. WE HAVE SELECTED THEM TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE CURRICULUM OF THE SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, WHICH ENCOMPASSES BUSINESS SUBJECTS THAT EQUIP LEARNERS WITH HARD AND SOFT SKILLS DEMANDED BY EMPLOYERS NOWADAYS. EMPHASIS IS PLACED UPON THE LINGUISTIC INFLUENCES THAT NEED TO BE INCLUDED IN THE INSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES (ESP), FOR INSTANCE FOREIGN TERMS THAT ARE USED IN CERTAIN BUSINESS AREAS AND UPON THE LEXICAL-SEMANTIC FIELDS WITHIN THE BUSINESS VOCABULARY. THESE LEXICAL-SEMANTIC FIELDS SHOW THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE COMMON LANGUAGE OF BUSINESS AND THE SPECIALIZED LANGUAGE IN FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF BUSINESS. THEREFORE, THE ESP TEACHER SHOULD INCORPORATE THESE LEXICAL-FIELDS IN LESSONS BECAUSE THEY ARE EFFECTIVE TOOLS IN CREATING EXERCISES THAT ACCELERATE THE ACQUISITION OF SPECIALIZED TERMS.*

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**KEY WORDS:** BUSINESS LANGUAGE, LINGUISTIC INFLUENCES, LEXICAL-SEMANTIC FIELDS, VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT.

### INTRODUCTION

The business terminology deals with the specialized communication used in six functional areas of the business (i.e. Production, Research & Development, Purchasing, Sales and Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Human Resource Management, Distribution). Based on terminology studies [1], we distinguish an internal business terminology that leads to the concrete designation of the set of units (linguistic or other), actually used in the specialized communication in business areas. Therefore, this internal terminology is interpreted strictly in relation to the problems of specialized communication. However, in the last decades an external business terminology of wider interest for non-specialists has also been formed.

Relevant studies [2] emphasize the role of linguistics in internal terminology is secondary, limited to the assignment of names, to the imposition of their forms (with the explanation of their origin or formation), and the conceptual-semantic problems are dealt

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with by the specialists. By contrast, the external terminology is mainly concerned with the problems of decoding and using the specialized meaning at several levels of communication.

[3] argues that there are two types of specialized lexicon: one representing a common trunk in that it is made up of terms with a wider diffusion, through education and the media; terms of this type also appear in texts targeted at a general audience. The second type of specialized lexicon is made up of strictly specialized terms in each field, which represent a specific technical-scientific terminology.

### **INCORPORATING LINGUISTIC INFLUENCES IN THE BUSINESS ENGLISH CLASS**

The language and terminology associated with business have evolved over centuries, influenced by various languages, cultures, and historical developments. During the Medieval period, trade guilds played a central role in regulating various industries and crafts. These guilds often developed their own specialized terminology and practices related to business. Then the Industrial Revolution brought about significant changes in business practices. As industries expanded and modernized, new concepts and terminologies emerged to describe factory management, production processes, and organizational structures. The globalization of business in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries has led to the adoption of terminology from various languages. English, as a global lingua franca for business, has not only absorbed terminology from Latin and French but it has also impacted other languages which have been incorporating a lot of English loans from the business area at a significant pace.

Incorporating linguistic influences in the Business English instruction can enhance learners' language skills, deepen their understanding of business terminology, and equip them with valuable tools for deciphering new terms and concepts in their specific area of business. It adds a historical and linguistic dimension to their language learning, making it more engaging and informative. The formation of the business language is a complex interplay of linguistic influences, with key contributions from Latin, French, and English.

Latin, as the language of the Roman Empire, had a profound influence on the development of the business terminology. Latin terms and concepts related to commerce, trade, and administration were widely used in the Middle Ages and Renaissance Europe. Here are some phrases that are still in use nowadays:

Status quo	“The current state of affairs” or maintaining the existing conditions or situation
Ad hoc	Something that is created or organized for a specific purpose, when necessary or needed.
Per capita	“Per person” or measurements or calculations on a per-person basis, such as “per capita income” or “per capita sales”
Ex post facto	“After the fact”, actions or decisions made retrospectively, often with the benefit of hindsight
Quid pro quo	“Something for something”, trade or deal
Modus operandi	An individual's or an organization's characteristic way of operating or doing things.

Other Latin phrases are commonly used in academic and professional writing, including business and finance. Latin expressions like “exempli gratia” (e.g.), “circa” (c.), and “et cetera” (etc.) are used to provide clarity and conciseness in written documents. Some currency names have Latin origins. For example, the word “dollar” comes from the Latin

word “taler,” which was a coin used in Europe. Latin phrases or words are sometimes used in business names, branding, and product names to convey a sense of tradition, prestige, or sophistication. Companies and organizations may use Latin mottos or phrases in their mission statements or corporate mottos to emphasize values, integrity, or professionalism. Contracts, legal agreements, and official documents often feature Latin phrases to establish legal formalities and clarify provisions. The following examples demonstrate how Latin mottos and phrases are used by companies and organizations to add depth and meaning to their branding, product names, and mission statements:

Apple Inc.:

*Motto: “Vires in numeris” (Strength in Numbers)*

*Meaning: It reflects the importance of data and technology in the company’s products.*

Intel Corporation:

*Motto: “Intellegentia” (Intelligence)*

*Meaning: It emphasizes the company’s focus on innovative technology and intelligence.*

Verizon Communications:

*Motto: “Veritas vos liberabit” (The truth will set you free)*

*Meaning: It promotes the importance of truth and transparency in communication.*

Harvard University:

*Motto: “Veritas” (Truth)*

*Meaning: It emphasizes the pursuit of truth and knowledge in education.*

Procter & Gamble:

*Motto: “Vivamus, Moriendum Est” (We live, we must die)*

*Meaning: It reflects the company’s focus on improving people’s lives through its products.*

The Norman Conquest of England in 1066 brought a significant infusion of French vocabulary into the English language. Many French terms related to governance, administration, and law became integral to the English business terminology. For example, terms like “entrepreneur” and “manager” have French roots. Other French words and phrases are commonly used in business to add sophistication, evoke a sense of style, or emphasize certain values as listed below:

Entrepreneur	“One who undertakes”, someone who starts and manages a business venture, taking on financial risks in the process.
Rendezvous	Scheduled meeting or gathering
Déjà vu	“Already seen”, describing a situation or experience that feels familiar, as if it has been encountered before
Coup d’état	Significant and sudden changes in leadership or strategy
Savoir-faire	“Know how”, describing someone’s competence or expertise in a particular field
Fait accompli	“Accomplished fact”, decisions or actions that have been finalized
Chic	It is used in marketing and branding to convey quality and sophistication.
Vogue	It is used in marketing and the fashion industry to describe something that is popular or in fashion.
Haute Couture	“High fashion”; it is used in marketing and the fashion industry.
Laissez-faire	It is used to describe a non-interventionist approach to management or economic policy.

Joie de vivre	“Joy of living”; it is used in marketing campaigns.
Force Majeure	“unforeseeable circumstances”; it is used in business contacts
Bona fide	“In good faith”; it is used in business contracts

English has become the language of business, enabling professionals, academics, and organizations worldwide to communicate, collaborate, and share knowledge in a globalized business environment. A substantial amount of research and management literature, including textbooks, scholarly articles, and management books by renowned authors like Peter Drucker and Michael Porter, is written in English. Thus English has become the primary language for standard business terminology used globally. Terms such as “marketing mix,” “brand equity,” “competitive advantage,” and “strategic planning” are widely recognized and used in their English forms. English has played a central role in standardizing the business terminology. Many foundational concepts, such as “strategic planning,” “leadership,” “marketing,” and “quality control,” are universally recognized and defined in English.

The English language is rich in business jargon that reflects contemporary business trends and practices. Words and phrases like *synergy*, *think outside the box*, and *customer-centric* are used widely in business discussions. New terms have come into use and gained prominence in recent years reflecting the evolving terminology of business. This terminology has been influenced by the technological developments, changes of consumer behavior and new business models adopted by organizations. Here are some terms and concepts that are frequently used nowadays: *intrapreneurship*, *gig economy*, *holacracy*, *employee engagement*, *agile leadership*, *lean management*, *change management*, *remote leadership*, *blockchain technology*, *disruptive innovation*, *supply chain resilience*, *employee engagement*, *design thinking*, *KPI (key performance indicator)*, *data-driven decision-making*, *OKR (objectives and key results)*, etc.

### **BUSINESS VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESP CONTEXT**

The update of the Business English syllabus is unquestionable, given the fact that we live in the age of globalization, where business terminology not only expands, but also interacts with other spheres of life. The business language is evolving rapidly, reflecting the variety of specialized languages in the functional business areas. Therefore, it is designed as a set of language tools used by people who work in different fields of the economy such as management, sales, marketing, accounting, research and development, etc. “However, Business English, as a variety of ESP, shares a number of characteristics with General English, still differing in point of content: it is a mixture of specific content and general content.” [4]

ESP instruction should be practical and applicable to real-world situations. We agree with [5] who points out that “the aims of the teaching and learning have to be adequately stated: they must be relevant to the learner, and realistic”. Learners need to both understand and express themselves effectively in their professional or academic environments. Lexical-semantic fields can be an effective tool for teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP), in business or other professional contexts. The structure of the business lexicon is dual. We distinguish, on the one hand, a common lexicon, which is frequently used in speech, with great access to the general public, and, on the other hand, a specialized lexicon, whose content reveals terminologies from the business areas. Analyzing the lexical-semantic fields within the business vocabulary can help teachers design materials which highlight the various categories and relationships between words. [6] considers *the field* the paradigm resulting

from the division of one lexical meaning between several lexemes, through immediate direct oppositions. The key lexical-semantic fields within business vocabulary that meet the requirements of the curriculum are classified as follows:

Finance and Accounting:

*Revenue: income, sales, earnings, profits, turnover.*

*Expenses: costs, expenditures, overhead, expenses.*

*Financial Statements: balance sheets, income statements, cash flow statements, P&L statements.*

*Investment: stocks, bonds, portfolios, dividends, ROI (Return on Investment).*

*Budgeting: forecasting, planning, allocation, budget, fiscal year.*

Management and Leadership:

*Leadership: management, executives, CEOs, leaders, managers, supervisors.*

*Strategy: planning, vision, mission, goals, objectives, tactics.*

*Teamwork: collaboration, synergy, cooperation, team building, diversity.*

*Decision-Making: analysis, choices, options, risk assessment, consensus.*

*Performance: KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), metrics, efficiency, productivity, benchmarks.*

Marketing and Sales:

*Marketing: advertising, promotion, branding, market research, campaigns.*

*Sales: prospects, leads, conversions, quotas, pipeline, clients, customers.*

*Product: features, benefits, pricing, competition, differentiation.*

*Distribution: channels, retailers, wholesalers, logistics, supply chain.*

*Customer Relations: Satisfaction, loyalty, feedback, support, CRM (Customer Relationship Management).*

Economics:

*Supply and Demand: market forces, elasticity, equilibrium price.*

*Monetary Policy: interest rates, inflation, central bank, quantitative easing.*

*Fiscal Policy: government spending, taxation, fiscal stimulus.*

*Economic Indicators: GDP (Gross Domestic Product), unemployment rate, CPI (Consumer Price Index).*

*Trade Economics: comparative advantage, protectionism, trade deficits, trade surplus.*

Legal and Compliance:

*Regulations: compliance, laws, regulations, standards, licensing.*

*Contracts: agreements, terms, conditions, negotiations, enforcement.*

*Intellectual Property: patents, trademarks, copyrights, infringement.*

*Corporate Governance: ethics, transparency, board of directors, shareholders.*

Technology and Innovation:

*Digital Transformation: technology adoption, automation, AI, IoT.*

*Disruption: disruptive innovation, startups challenging established industries.*

*Cybersecurity: data breaches, vulnerabilities, protection, privacy.*

*R&D (Research and Development): innovation, product development, technology advancement.*

Organizing content around lexical-semantic fields can make learning more engaging and relatable for learners as it mirrors the way language is used in the business field. The following words and phrases are part of the broader lexical-semantic field for the term “company,” and reflect the various aspects, characteristics, and contexts in which the term “company” is used in the business world:

Business entity terms: *corporation, firm, enterprise, organization, institution.*

Size and scale terms: *small business, startup, conglomerate, multinational corporation (MNC), microenterprise.*

Operational terms: *subsidiary, division, branch, headquarters, parent company, holding company.*

Corporate culture and identity terms: *mission statement, vision, values, brand, culture, reputation.*

Performance and financial terms: *profitability, revenue, earnings, financial health, market share.*

Here are ways in which the ESP teacher can use the lexical-semantic field for *business entities* in lesson planning to develop learners' vocabulary:

- The teacher makes sure that the vocabulary and concepts taught are relevant to the learners' professional context.
- The teacher can apply contextual learning, presenting vocabulary in context, allowing learners to see how the terms *corporation, firm, enterprise, organization and institution* are used in business contexts. Contextual learning helps learners understand the nuances of word usage and meaning.
- The teacher needs to create activities/exercises that make it easier for learners to build the knowledge about company operations systematically. For example, matching terms with the definitions supports both comprehension and logical acquisition.
- The teacher should invite business experts to talk about their company operations in class and to interact with students (for instance, they can ask students if they prefer to work in a corporation, a firm or an enterprise and to explain their preference).
- The teacher can play videos to help learners understand and use the correct term for various company operations, reducing the risk of misunderstandings or miscommunications.
- The teacher can adapt the vocabulary material based on this semantic field to suit different levels of proficiency and specific learner needs. For example, the teacher can create a material that can be used with beginner learners to introduce basic terminology or a material that can be used with advanced learners to introduce and analyze the complex concepts.

## **CONCLUSION**

Adapting the ESP instruction to keep pace with the evolving business language is a must nowadays. Teachers need to keep an eye on the latest trends in business to grasp the new concepts, identify learners' current needs and future needs for their job roles, adopt proactive teaching methodologies and ask for constant feedback.

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