

iatefl

The 38th **BE**sig Annual Conference

Business *Unusual* –
Rethinking Business English for a Changing World



2025

**NOV
7-9**

President Hotel

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Welcome!

A very warm welcome to the 38th Annual IATEFL BESIG Conference! This year is extra special – our first time in Greece and IATEFL BESIG’s 40th anniversary of our founding in 1985.

Our theme, “Business *Unusual* – Rethinking Business English for a Changing World”, comes alive through sessions on coaching and training, soft skills, business communication, entrepreneurial thinking, and digital upskilling.

We were delighted to receive a record number of proposals, enabling us to create a varied programme for everyone. Special thanks to plenary speakers Rachel Paling and Virginia Lopez Grisolia for sharing their expertise, to the President Hotel staff for their support, and to IATEFL Head Office for their help with preparation and registration.

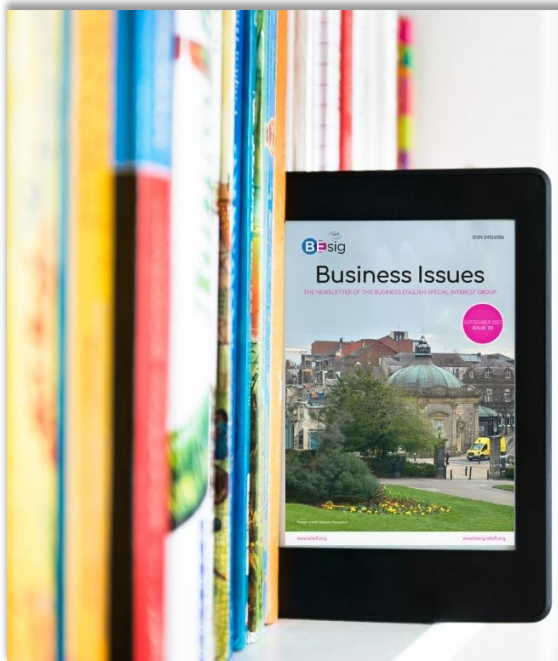
To celebrate turning 40, we’re thrilled to host a special celebration with surprises and plenty of opportunities to connect and make memories – just as BESIGers love to do.

We wish you an inspiring conference filled with great conversations, networking, fresh ideas, and learning to take back to your classrooms.

Please note: Any use or rebroadcast of images, video, content, comments or responses is strictly prohibited without the prior written consent of IATEFL BESIG.

Enjoy the conference!

Marjorie Rosenberg and Silke Riegler
IATEFL BESIG Joint Coordinators



Five reasons to read Business Issues

- ✓ Professional
- ✓ Networking and community
- ✓ Access to innovative ideas
- ✓ Pedagogical insights
- ✓ Global perspective

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IATEFL BESIG Annual Conferences

37 th	San Gwann, Malta	2024
36 th	Stuttgart, Germany	2023
35 th	Gdansk, Poland	2022
34 th	Online	2021
33 rd	Online	2020
32 nd	Berlin, Germany	2019
31 st	Iasi, Romania	2018
30 th	St. Julians, Malta	2017
29 th	Munich, Germany	2016
28 th	Sitges, Spain	2015
27 th	Bonn, Germany	2014
26 th	Prague, Czech Republic	2013
25 th	Stuttgart, Germany	2012
24 th	Dubrovnik, Croatia	2011
23 rd	Bielefeld, Germany	2010
22 nd	Poznan, Poland	2009
21 st	Bonn, Germany	2008
20 th	Berlin, Germany	2007
19 th	Milan, Italy	2006
18 th	Monaco	2005
17 th	Vienna, Austria	2004
16 th	Rotterdam, The Netherlands	2003
15 th	London, UK	2002
14 th	Berne, Switzerland	2001
13 th	Munich, Germany	2000
12 th	Brighton, UK	1999
11 th	Budapest, Hungary	1998
10 th	Reutlingen, Germany	1997
9 th	Potsdam, Germany	1996
8 th	Graz, Austria	1995
7 th	Wiesbaden, Germany	1994
6 th	Hamburg, Germany	1993
5 th	Munich, Germany	1992
4 th	Dortmund, Germany	1991
3 rd	Mannheim, Germany	1990
2 nd	Dortmund, Germany	1989
1 st	Bielefeld, Germany	1988

Friday, 7 November, EET (GMT+2)

12.30-13.00	Registration			
13.00-13.30	Opening – ATLAS			
13.30-14.30	<p>Plenary Talk - ATLAS</p> <p>Virginia Lopez Grisolia</p> <p>Learning from Athena: Embracing Change and Renewal in Business English Teaching</p>			
	ATLAS	COSMOS	MEZZO	ORION
14.45-15.15	Rachael Roberts	Silke Riegler & Andreas Hövener	Mike Pina	Lucy Tilney
Talks	Beyond hourly rates: Creating Business English offers for corporate clients <i>Commercial talk</i>	Lego for Creative Business & Tech English Teaching	How to Prepare Your Students for Conflicts at Work	Real Work, Real Words: Diaries in Business English
15.15-15.45	<p>Coffee Break Sponsored by </p>			
15.45-16.15	Grant Kempton	Linda Slattery & Catherine Prewett-Schrempf	Caroline Caroux	Prateek Sharma
Talks	Is it still Business English as we know it? <i>Commercial talk</i>	Reinforcing Human Intelligence in Business Writing	Tailored for Impact: Building Better Case Studies with Digital Tools	AI in Business English: Student Insights
16.30-17.30	Roy Bicknell	Katrin Lichterfeld	Jane Carvell	@ndy Vogt-Nas
Workshops	Business English goes avantgarde: new activities	Act like a Pro: Language & humanity in the AI era	Beyond Words: Sketchnoting for Business English	Break the ice - Crack the discourse
17.45-18.30	Open Forum			
18.30-18.45	Meet the Committee & Discover Volunteering Opportunities			
18.45-20.15	Welcome Reception & Networking			

Is your Business English offer working for you- or against you?



A quick self-check for freelance trainers

Many freelance Business English professionals step into corporate work hoping for stability - but end up stuck with hourly rates, rigid briefs, and little influence. ... It's frustrating, because you know you could add more value if only you had the chance.

The truth is, companies don't just want "English lessons." They want solutions to communication problems. The question is - does your offer show that?

Answer Yes or No:

1. I can describe my offer in one sentence that makes it clear who it's for.
2. My offer promises a business-relevant outcome (not just "better English").
3. I present my work as a structured programme, not just hours of lessons.
4. I can explain how my training supports the company's wider goals.
5. I have examples, quotes, or data that prove my approach works.

Your results

4-5 Yes: You're already positioning yourself as a strategic partner.

2-3 Yes: Solid foundations, but clients may not yet fully "get" your value.

0-1 Yes: You may be stuck in the hourly trap. Time to rethink your approach.



Scan the QR code to download my free *Corporate Offer Design Checklist* - a step-by-step tool to help you redesign your offer so companies say yes more easily.

And don't miss my session:

Designing Business English offers beyond hourly rates

We'll go deeper into how to create and pitch offers that companies can't ignore.

Saturday, 8 November, EET (GMT+2) (continues)

08.30-09.00	Registration			
09.00-10.00	Plenary Talk – ATLAS <u>Rachel Paling</u> Business Unusual: Rewiring Business English through Coaching and Change			
	ATLAS	COSMOS	MEZZO	ORION
10.15-11.15	<u>Rachael Roberts</u>	<u>Laura Edwards</u>	<u>Nick Munby</u>	<u>Amanda Croft</u>
Workshops	How to attract better-fit clients with smarter social content	Navigating the In-Between: Freelance ELT Identity	Corporate Strategy and Critical Thinking	Examining Status in Business English
11.15-11.45	Coffee Break			
11.45-12.15	<u>Gillian Bathmaker</u>	<u>Evan Frendo</u>	<u>Birte Horn</u>	<u>Christian Berlin</u>
Talks	Made-to measure, made easy with Business Impact <i>Commercial talk</i>	Rethinking BE: learning in the flow of work	Boosting business skills at university using AI	Addressing English for Global Readiness: Skills for Change
12.30-13.00	<u>Mike Hogan</u>	<u>Clarice Chan</u>	<u>Oksana Hera</u>	<u>Ami Salk</u>
Talks	Beyond AI: Teaching Real Communication <i>Commercial talk</i>	BELF insights from the business world	Cross-cultural interventions in business context	Package your course + sell directly to corporates
13.00-14.30	Lunch Break			

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Saturday, 8 November, EET (GMT+2) (continued)				
	ATLAS	COSMOS	MEZZO	ORION
14.30-15.30	Gillian Bathmaker	Ian McMaster	Alan Cargyl	Olga Zhdan
Workshops	Funny but serious: Energizing ideas for lessons	Communication: from small steps to giant leaps	Effective communication through the 'use of voice'	CLIL for Business English: A Shift in Focus
15.30-16.00	Coffee Break			
16.00-16.30	George Kokolas	Mandy Welfare	Juliana Pattermann & Gythe Eekhoutte	Annemette Henriksen
Talks	Going Beyond the Language: Integrating Soft Skills in English for Specific Purposes Teaching <i>Commercial Talk</i>	Rethinking the unusual: Managing a remote team	Fostering Motivation and Joy in Business EFL	Mastering jargon - Technical is the new BE norm
16.45-17.45	Kirsten Waechter	Tetiana Lesyk	Annabelle Baumann	Katarzyna Kowalczyk
Workshops	From disruption to direction: our future skill set	Pitching with presence: pronunciation in business	Teach Confident Speaking Skills with Comedy	English for artists – between control & creativity
19.00-22.00	40th Anniversary Party & Raffle			

Sunday, 9 November, EET (GMT+2)				
	ATLAS	COSMOS	MEZZO	ORION
09.30-10.15 Workshops	Marjorie Rosenberg Coaching learners through the Disney Strategy	Jon Pettigrew Enter the Voice Gym	Katerina Apostolaki Design Smarter: Building Better Workflows for Language Trainers	
	Catherine Aygen Gatecrashing My Way to a Great Client	Ridha Mejri Rethinking BE Training in the Age of AI	Alexandra Afanaseva Business English: 5 Soft Skills That Matter	Tone Holt Nielsen Teaching politeness strategies for business
11.00-11.30	Coffee Break			
11.30-12.00 Talks	Almut Koester Leadership and communication in a start-up	Bobby Zlatkov TENDERly	Alexia Schemien Coaching and AI for UnUsual Business English Tasks	
12.15-13.00	Panel Discussion and Conference Closing			

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Business English

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your
lessons!



Business English for Beginners (A1, A2 available from April 2026) offers up-to-date topics and practical exercises for effective and motivating teaching. With the coursebook, workbook, and teaching guide, you have everything you need for real-world results.

The **Short Course Series** (A2–B2+) offers job-specific language training and business skills in over 20 volumes, some in updated editions. These help learners quickly consolidate and improve their professional skills in a compact format.

For more information: crln.sn/besig

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Learning from Athena: Embracing Change and Renewal in Business English Teaching - Plenary talk

This plenary talk draws inspiration from Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom and strategic warfare, symbolizing clarity, courage, and adaptive leadership. Athena's gift of the olive tree represents sustainable renewal, change that is deeply rooted and built for the future. In the same spirit, Business English (BE) teachers have long played multifaceted roles, which continue to evolve. This session explores the dynamic progression of BE teaching from the 1980s to today, highlighting the expanding skillset required: from applied linguist to business expert, discourse analyst, soft skills coach, intercultural consultant, and communication strategist.

We will examine how technology, particularly AI, is reshaping BE teaching: influencing training delivery, necessary skills, and meeting the complex needs of modern learners. Additionally, we will consider the changing profile of BE learners, their expectations, and how digital tools are transforming their learning experiences. By understanding these shifts, teachers can better support professional development, personalize instruction, and deliver impactful language training.

The session concludes with a case study from the capital markets sector, illustrating how BE teachers can support multi-lingual and multicultural teams in achieving their professional goals.

Virginia Lopez Grisolia is an experienced educator with university degrees in Teaching English as a Foreign Language and English Language and Linguistics. She has extensive training as a simultaneous and consecutive interpreter, in both government and corporate settings. As the founder and Director of Studies at Interaction Language Studio, Virginia has been dedicated to the teaching of ESP and Business English since 1990. Her interests encompass BELF, Translanguaging, Andragogy, and providing effective feedback. With over 30 years of experience, Virginia has taught English Grammar and Linguistics at Teacher Training Colleges, Translators' Courses, and BA programs in Argentina. She has held leadership roles in the APIBA for decades and has been an active member of the IATEFL Business English for 14 years.

A promotional banner for BEsig featuring a group of diverse people standing in front of a building entrance. The BEsig logo is visible in the background. A white brushstroke graphic contains the text "Volunteer Now" in pink, followed by "Join our team and make a difference in our community!" in pink. Below this, a pink rounded rectangle contains the text "Stay tuned for more information during the conference!" in blue. At the bottom, a blue bar contains the website "www.iateflbesig.org" and the email "besig@iatefl.org" with a mail icon.

Volunteer Now

Join our team and make a difference in our community!

Stay tuned for more information during the conference!

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Business Unusual: Rewiring Business English through Coaching and Change Plenary talk

As global business evolves and technology advances, so too does the pedagogy of Business English. This talk will draw on the research from neuroscience and professional coaching—especially the work of acclaimed Greek-American Professor Richard Boyatzis and his Intentional Change Theory—to explore how Business English professionals can move toward transformational, coach communication to optimise and maximise client sessions. As many Business English trainers are intuitively adapting to clients' needs, the question is how to support them even more in the advent of AI and global corporate changes such as environmental or financial system change.

Practical aspects of professional coaching grounded in emotional intelligence can trigger deeper learner engagement, harness motivation and bring on transformation and sustainable change. Business English trainers become catalysts for growth, not only assisting learners with language but also empowering leadership communication, intercultural impact and honed soft skill communication.

From research to practice, in this world of 'Business Unusual', this plenary will offer how to rethink our roles in line with Education 4.0 as promoted by the World Economic Forum and how to transition into becoming 'High Quality Connectors' (Dutton, Jane & Heaphy, Emily 2003) and bring more future facing approaches to Business English which accentuate our humanness and impact. Coaching competences will be explored, in particular how to "embody a coaching mindset", which the International Coach Federation defines as "the development and maintenance of an open, curious, flexible, and client-centred attitude". From empathy to compassion, from problem to solution focus, from the negative emotional attractor state to the positive emotional attractor state, how we communicate with clients is the key to unlocking their language potential in business environments.

Rachel Paling holds a BA Hons Law/Spanish distinction in spoken Spanish; an MA in Human Rights; MA in Applied Neuroscience; MA in Neuroeducation and Neuropsychology; is a qualified UK Lawyer (non-practising) with over 38 years teaching experience. She is an International Coach Federation credentialed MCC Coach, Certified Coach Supervisor and registered ICF Coach Mentor. Creator of Neurolanguage Coaching® and Neuroheart Educational Coaching. She is currently undergoing a DBA/PhD at The Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), Ohio USA under the supervision of Professor Richard Boyatzis and is a Doctoral Fellow at the Coaching Laboratory, CWRU.



Five reasons to contribute to Business Issues



- ✓ Knowledge sharing
- ✓ Recognition & visibility
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Impact
- ✓ Personal fulfillment

Business English: 5 Soft Skills That Matter

Talk

What do today's job ads really ask for? This session explores the top 5 soft skills most in demand in the current job market, such as communicating across hierarchies (from team to C-level), leading virtual meetings, negotiating effectively, giving/receiving feedback, and public speaking. We'll discuss how these skills can be integrated into Business English lessons, making language training more relevant, impactful, and aligned with today's professional needs.



Alexandra Afanaseva is a CPCC-certified career coach, recruiter, and IBET-qualified Business English trainer with 14+ years' experience.

Design Smarter: Building Better Workflows for Language Trainers

Workshop

Business English professionals face digital overload from planning, client work, and delivery. This talk shares a practical, tool-agnostic framework to streamline workflows using design thinking. With familiar tools, attendees will learn to work like learning designers—reducing friction, saving time, and bringing clarity to lessons and client management.



Katerina Apostolaki is a learning strategist specializing in instructional design, UX, and digital learning systems. She designs scalable training solutions that align with business goals and currently volunteers as Media Coordinator for IATEFL BESIG.

Gatecrashing My Way to a Great Client

Talk

Back in 2016, I made a wishlist of dream clients. Top of the list? A big international company near my office. Today, they're one of my best clients. In this talk, I'll share the real story—how I got in, who helped, what I offered, and what I've learned. We'll talk prospecting, networking, connectors, positioning, and the processes that keep it all running. You'll leave with real-life do's and don'ts to try out in your own business.



Catherine Aygen runs A Star Formation, helping French professionals speak English with confidence. She loves public speaking, making LinkedIn videos, and can answer all your French bureaucracy questions.

Made-to measure, made easy with Business Impact



Sponsored Talk

Business Impact, Delta Publishing's recently launched two-level modular Business English series, is continuing to grow fast! Don't miss this chance to find out more about Business Impact's unique features and built-in flexibility. Join us and discover how planning and teaching made-to-measure Business English courses, that really fit your clients' real-world needs, is as easy as A-B-C! And get a sneak preview of what's coming up next on the Business Impact horizon.



Gillian Bathmaker is a passionate teacher with over thirty years' experience as a course developer, writer and teacher of business and general English. Her aim is always to enable participants to achieve their utmost potential - and have fun.

Funny but serious: Energizing ideas for lessons

Workshop

In the first part of this two-part workshop, we'll be taking a look at a number of short humorous video clips and discussing how to make the best use of them either as quick energizers or as full-session input. We'll then move on to discover how practising true-to-life business dialogues can ensure real-life relevance – and be fun. Serious fun guaranteed!



Gillian Bathmaker is a passionate teacher with over thirty years' experience as a course developer, writer and teacher of business and general English. Her aim is always to enable participants to achieve their utmost potential - and have fun.

Teach Confident Speaking Skills with Comedy

Workshop

Learn how stand-up comedy tools like storytelling, timing, and rapport can boost Business English learners' presentation skills. This hands-on workshop introduces practical, low-pressure activities that improve fluency, build confidence, and bring authenticity to learner communication—no jokes required. Discover how humor can be a powerful, accessible tool for teaching public speaking in a business context.



Annabelle "Bee" Baumann is a Communication Trainer, Speaker Coach, and Stand-up Comedian. With a CELTA and Cert IBET, she helps professionals speak with clarity and confidence by empowering learners to find their voice.

Addressing English for Global Readiness: Skills for Change

Talk

This session supports Business English professionals in higher education with practical strategies to develop learners' global readiness. It integrates English language development with intercultural competence, life skills, and test preparation. Through adaptable classroom examples, it demonstrates how these elements translate into real-world academic and professional success. The session offers concrete takeaways and contributes to rethinking Business English in response to evolving global demands.



Christian Berlin is an education professional with 20+ years in language education and management. As Director of the Language Department at De Vinci Higher Education in Paris, he leads a large team and drives curriculum and quality development.

Business English goes avantgarde: new activities

Workshop

This workshop will adopt the playful approach to language that inspired the DADA avantgarde artists. We will show how DADA principles underlie our didactical concerns about the need for more improvisation and creativity in the classroom. We will explore cut-up techniques using newspapers or similar media, and use Dada principles as a framework for speaking activities. We will also introduce the DADA wheel, a random method for generating activities for the classroom.



Roy Bicknell is a freelance trainer and teacher trainer working and living in Amsterdam. He specialises in Business English and specific interests are improvisation and reflective practice.

Tailored for Impact: Building Better Case Studies with Digital Tools

Talk

This talk explores how Business English trainers can rethink case study design by using digital tools and generative AI to create dynamic, customised materials. It includes practical strategies, an example of a tech-enhanced case study, and reflections on teacher roles, learner engagement, and Bloom's taxonomy. The approach challenges traditional reliance on static, ready-made cases and offers a more agile, learner-centred alternative.



Caroline Caroux is a course coordinator, content creator, and teacher at Pôle Léonard de Vinci in Paris. Passionate about foreign languages, she designs transdisciplinary curricula that prepare learners for global careers.

Effective communication through the 'use of voice'

Workshop

This practical and interactive workshop will demonstrate how to train our clients to be more effective in communicating through a focus on 'the use of voice'. The session will show how to coach clients in using speed, pause and stress to make their speech in business contexts, particularly in presenting, reporting, advising and explaining, more effective. This is increasingly important in an online world. The message of this approach is: speaking is not the same as communicating!



Alan Cargyl has been a trainer at IH London Executive Centre for over 25 years. He has been an ADoS there and for IH in Poland. He is a CertIBET trainer and has delivered workshops at several IATEFL BESIG conferences..

Beyond Words: Sketchnoting for Business English

Workshop

In this creative and practical workshop, Jane will guide you through how your students can use sketchnoting to simplify and electrify BE communication challenges. Sketchnotes are a visual note-taking practice that uses simple pictures and shapes, along with text, to harness the power of visual thinking and communicate ideas more effectively. Whether it's from a language training session, meeting, or conference, sketchnotes can help present and retain information in a truly memory-jogging way.



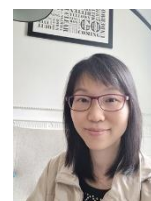
First-time Speaker Scholarship Winner

Jane Carvell is a BE trainer, language coach and visual thinking enthusiast. With a background in industrial design, she enjoys incorporating creative skills and design thinking techniques into her training sessions.

BELF insights from the business world

Talk

This talk shares findings from research on business professionals who use English as a business lingua franca (BELF), focusing on their communication challenges and key concerns. Some findings contradict earlier BELF studies and reveal gaps between what learners want and what business English courses often emphasize. The talk explores implications for a more learner-centred, research-informed approach to business English teaching and course design.



Clarice Chan is a researcher and practitioner in ESP and business English. Her 2018 paper published in English for Specific Purposes won an Outstanding Article on Business Communication Award from the Association for Business Communication, USA.

Examining Status in Business English

Workshop

Our English language learners often feel that they are at a disadvantage or somehow 'less than' their native English-speaking colleagues or clients when they speak in business contexts. Subconsciously, this feeling can translate into different non-verbal outward displays which can influence decision-making, team dynamics and success. In this workshop, we will explore status through eye contact, physicality and investigate the status dynamic in an interview situation.



Amanda Croft has 30 years acting and EFL teaching experience. She has an MA in TESOL specialising in gesture and language acquisition and has led workshops at IATEFL for 4 years. She runs STILE (Storytelling, Theatre & Improvisation in Language Education).

Navigating the In-Between: Freelance ELT Identity

Workshop

Freelance English trainers often find themselves in between: not quite teachers, not quite entrepreneurs. This interactive workshop draws on current research to explore how we navigate these liminal spaces. Using hauntology and liminality theory, participants will map their in-between experiences, uncover 'professional ghosts' influencing their practice, and collaboratively examine the structural challenges shaping freelance teaching today.



Laura Edwards is a freelancer in language assessment and digital learning, who also teaches university students. With a background in Educational Leadership and EdTech, I'm currently pursuing a doctorate in TESOL, exploring freelance teacher experiences.

Rethinking BE: learning in the flow of work

Talk

Josh Bersin's concept of "Learning In the Flow of Work" (LIFOW) sees learning as an integral part of an employee's daily work, rather than as a separate, scheduled event they must find time to attend. The goal is to provide the learner with content and support precisely when the need arises, using just-in-time tools, microlearning, and embedded practice. This talk uses real-world examples to explore how LIFOW applies to business English, and what teachers can do to maximize its effect.



Evan Frendo is based in Berlin, Germany, and has been active in Business English and ESP since 1993, mostly in the corporate sector. A frequent speaker at conferences, he also travels widely to run courses or to work as a consultant.

Mastering jargon - Technical is the new BE norm

Talk

Technical jargon is the new norm in the BE classroom. My business clients need highly specialised vocabulary rather than lessons on emails and phone calls. Usual course book materials do not provide the technical vocabulary needed, and it can be a struggle to find the adequate content without spending endless hours. This talk is for you if you are new to teaching technical English, want to know how to analyse your learners' needs, find the suitable vocabulary and turn it into engaging lessons.



Annemette Ø. Henriksen has taught BE for 20+ years in many Danish companies and government agencies. She knows a little about a lot and enjoys learning new jargon and helping learners master the specialist vocabulary they need in their fields.

Cross-cultural interventions in business context

Talk

Culture is multifaceted and multidimensional. Overlooking its impact on business interactions may cost effort, time, and money. However, in which conversations should we be most careful to notice these subtle cultural touches? And what should we do when a culture-loaded mishap has occurred? In search of answers to these questions, this talk will offer some insights into how cross-cultural elements change team communication dynamics, increase workload, and make people doubt their best intentions.



Oksana Hera is a business communication trainer and consultant from Lviv, Ukraine. She focuses on cross-cultural interactions in the areas of workplace and business communication.

Beyond AI: Teaching Real Communication

Cornelsen Sponsored Talk

In an age of AI and hybrid work, learners need more than transactional phrases—they need real-world communication skills—at work, online, and across cultures. Using fresh cases from the new editions of Business English for Beginners A1 & A2, we'll discuss how to meet modern learners where they are and where they're going. Expect honest reflection, sharp insights, and activities that do more than "teach phrases."



Mike Hogan is a leadership and communication trainer, coach and consultant with a background in ELT and Business English. With over 20 years' experience across 25+ countries, he supports international clients to succeed in today's complex world of work. He is also co-author of several Business English titles, including the award-winning Business English for Beginners series (Cornelsen).

Teaching politeness strategies for business

Talk

The complexity of multimodal, hybrid, multilingual and intercultural communicative situations require flexibility, context awareness and the ability to adapt your English to successfully build rapport. My presentation will focus on why and how research and theory on politeness strategies (e.g., Brown & Levinson, 1987) and intercultural politeness (e.g., Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009) are relevant for business English classes, illustrating with examples of activities from my classes.



Tone Holt Nielsen, PhD, is an Associate Professor at Oslo Metropolitan University, School of Business. She conducts research and teaches classes on business English, business communication and intercultural communication.

Boosting business skills at university using AI

Talk

In my talk I will illustrate how integrating AI into a business course at university boosted professional skills that are required in the workplace. Simulating startups, learners used AI tools for writing business plans or creating commercials. A decidedly student-centered approach of the course fostered problem-solving skills, critical thinking and creativity. Results showed increased student engagement and innovation, offering insights into effectively incorporating AI into EFL teaching.



Birte Horn has been a lecturer of English as a Foreign Language for over two decades. She has primarily worked at universities, teaching business English, English for Specific and Academic Purposes, Intercultural Communication, and Academic Writing.

Is it still Business English as we know it?



Sponsored Talk

The world has changed. That much is obvious. In the last five years, we have seen development in the wider ELL market in response to this change, but is this happening in the Business English segment? And is it needed? In this session I will be outlining what we at Pearson believe and what we have been doing to respond, and asking you to share what you believe to be the current needs and concerns of Business English teachers around Europe and the Middle East, as we plan for the future.



Grant Kempton has been involved in ELT for nearly 40 years. During that time, he has been a teacher, tester, curriculum coordinator, school director and teacher trainer, travelling to more than 69 countries. He received his MA in ELT from Reading University and has worked and written for Pearson.

Leadership and communication in a start-up

Talk

Leaders, who are often also the company founders, play an important role in a start-up and spend much time in internal and external communication. This talk draws on interviews and recordings of meetings in a start up to explore leadership communication and the role it plays in areas such as employee motivation, company culture and innovation. The findings are relevant for managers and entrepreneurs and show how language and communication play a key role in successful leadership.



Almut Koester is Professor of English Business Communication at WU, Vienna. She has a background as teacher/teacher trainer in Business English and is author of many books and articles on workplace and business communication.

Going Beyond the Language: Integrating Soft Skills in English for Specific Purposes Teaching



Sponsored Talk

This talk explores the hypothesis that educators in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) must go beyond teaching language proficiency to include essential soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. It will discuss the significance of these competencies in professional contexts and provide practical strategies for integrating soft skills into ESP curricula. By fostering a holistic approach to language education, teachers can better prepare students for real-world challenges, enhancing their employability and effectiveness in their respective fields. The session will also highlight successful case studies and interactive activities that promote both language acquisition and soft skills development.



George Kokolas has been the Academic Director and Teacher Trainer at Express Publishing for 25 years. He holds a Level 5 Diploma in Positive Psychology, is a certified LEVEL 7 TEFL teacher, and an Advanced Neurolanguage Coach®. He co-hosts the Teachers' Coffee podcast and served as Vice Chair of TESOL Greece. is a freelance business communication and English for Specific Purposes trainer. She holds a Cambridge Delta. Her interests include intercultural communication, online and blended learning, and instructional design.

The Business of Dramatic Creativity

Workshop

This proposal introduces a dynamic approach that leverages dramatic creativity and theatre skills to transform the learning experience for BE learners. A primary focus will be on the unspoken rules of communication—elements often underrepresented in standard BE materials but, in my experience, fundamental to a learner's linguistic confidence. The ultimate priority is efficiency, emphasizing intelligibility and the ability to convey complex ideas precisely and unambiguously.



Katarzyna Kowalczyk is an English language trainer. A speaker at IATEFL 2025 on "Drama in the Boardroom", she specializes in incorporating drama and memorization for Business English learners. Expertise: course design, cross-cultural communication, and enhancing pronunciation.

Pitching with presence: pronunciation in business

Workshop

Many professionals know terminology, but how they deliver it often matters more. In hybrid communication, where public speaking blends online and offline, poor delivery or intelligibility can lead to misunderstandings or diminish credibility. The workshop explores how pronunciation builds learners' confidence and presence. Participants practise activities on intonation, rhythm, and pacing to help learners improve clarity, impact, and authenticity in global pitches, meetings, and presentations.



Tetiana Lesyk is a Business English and pronunciation coach helping professionals sound clear, confident and credible. She trains teachers to integrate delivery skills into business-focused lessons.

Act like a Pro: Language & humanity in the AI era

Workshop

This interactive workshop equips Business English trainers and HR professionals with tools to enhance communication, mindset, and human-centered leadership. Drawing on strategies from elite athletes and insights into AI-era challenges, participants will explore language use, coaching for emotional intelligence, and recovery rituals to build resilience, clarity, and authority in global business contexts.



Katrin Lichterfeld has been working as a freelance in-company trainer and coach in Germany for 25 years. She focuses on communication across cultures and achieving long-term and sustainable peak performance with a sports approach.

Communication: from small steps to giant leaps

Workshop

In this workshop, we will look at how focusing on improving “micro skills” can lead to significant improvements in confidence and communicative effectiveness. This might involve incremental steps in developing listening skills — for example, allowing business partners more time to develop their arguments or asking more clarification questions — or the use of particular phrases.



Ian McMaster is a business communication consultant and author. He was editor-in-chief of Business Spotlight from 2001 to 2021 and is a former coordinator of IATEFL BESIG. His latest book (with Bob Dignen) is Trainingsbuch Business English (Haufe).

Rethinking BE Training in the Age of AI

Talk

This session explores how AI is changing not just how professionals do business but also what it means to communicate effectively in a VUCA world. We will examine how BE trainers can move beyond language instruction toward developing learners' AI literacy, critical thinking, intercultural sensitivity and ethical communication as well as how to stay relevant & add value. Join this session to rethink your role as a BE expert.



Ridha Mejri, raised in a bilingual Arabic-French environment, is a Business Communication & Intercultural Management senior lecturer at Worms University of Applied Sciences, Germany. He is also an in-company intercultural trainer & consultant.

Corporate Strategy and Critical Thinking

Workshop

The corporate world is notorious for the increasingly dizzy swoops and dives of its fortunes. Think Tesla. Cognitive biases threaten economies, jobs and growth. However useful AI proves to be, we need to think clearly in order to exploit its potential. Encouraging business students to explore how we think and mis-think about problem scenarios can be an attractive way of encouraging discussion, reflection on erroneous assumptions, and developing language acquisition.



Nick Munby has spent 31 years working in Germany, as a Business English language school DOS, a TEFL Cert. trainer, a lecturer at the Berlin School of Economics and Law, for the British Council on EMI teacher training projects across the world, and for MPs at the Bundestag. He's interested in how meta-cognition can assist language acquisition.

Fostering Motivation and Joy in Business EFL

Talk

This project explores how emotions shape EFL learning for adult learners enrolled in a German-language Business Bachelor program, delivered in a blended learning format. Based on survey, focus group, and interview data, we examine emotional barriers and enablers using self-determination theory. Our design-based research informs course redesign and highlights the need for emotionally responsive EFL teaching to foster motivation, joy, autonomy, and resilience in adult learners.



Juliana Pattermann is a teaching and research assistant at MCI with an academic background in business education and futures studies and practical EFL teaching experience (CELTA-certified). She researches the design of learning interventions for higher management education.

Gythe Eekhoutte is a teaching and research assistant in the Business Administration Online program at MCI. She holds a Master's in Organizational Psychology from the Netherlands and has industry experience. As part of her role in student counseling, she supports students in various matters, including study skills in a foreign language.

Enter the Voice Gym

Workshop

Business and professional EFL clients increasingly have a need for better pronunciation, particularly at higher levels. The Voice Gym materials give one to one and small group Business English clients a range of practical ways every session, to improve clarity, voice projection, confidence and phonemes. In the session, samples will be shown in the context of Underhill's (2020) challenge 'Coaching rather than Teaching.' Case studies of cross-overs from sports & fitness will be explored.



Jon Pettigrew is an Executive Trainer and Pronunciation Course Leader at IH London. He trained in EFL before a career in business and returned with wide experience. He has also worked in a range of UK university Business Schools.

How to Prepare Your Students for Conflicts at Work

Talk

Conflict is hard for everyone, but it's especially challenging for non-native English-speaking professionals. This session will equip ESL teachers with tools to help students handle criticism, disrespect, unfair treatment, and tough conversations. Attendees will learn how to teach key language, cultural cues, and strategies so students can navigate workplace conflict with clarity, confidence, and professionalism.



Mike Pina, with 15 years' experience as a mediator resolving workplace disputes, including discrimination, manager-employee conflicts, etc., offers strategies and insights to help ESL professionals prepare their students to navigate tough conversations.

Lego for Creative Business & Tech English Teaching

Talk

This talk explores a "business unusual" approach to language education, using a Lego activity to creatively teach Business and Technical English to university students. The approach is grounded in the idea that the combination of hands-on and collaborative tasks lower anxiety, enhance motivation, and promote authentic language use. It shifts the emphasis from linguistic accuracy to authentic communication in context. We share task design, student feedback, and findings from our research.



Silke Riegler, senior lecturer for business English and intercultural communication in Germany, aims at supporting her students build strong communication skills for the global business world through creative, engaging methods.



Andreas Hövener, senior lecturer in tertiary education in Germany, teaches English and social sciences. His focus is on ESP, intercultural communication, sustainability, and innovative learning methods. He is passionate about global collaboration.

Beyond hourly rates: Creating Business English offers for corporate clients



EARN
LEARN
THRIVE

Sponsored Talk

Many freelance Business English professionals default to hourly sessions dictated by the company. But what if you could design your own well-priced, outcome-driven offer, and have companies say yes to that? In this session, I'll show you how to create and present a high-value training offer that speaks to corporate priorities, positions you as a strategic partner, and gets the right decision-makers on board.



Rachael Roberts is a business coach for freelance language professionals. Through her coaching programmes, Designed to Flourish and Project Bloom, she helps educators grow sustainable values-led businesses that attract consistent, right-fit clients.

How to attract better-fit clients with smarter social content

Workshop

Struggling to get traction from your social media content? This interactive workshop will help freelance Business English professionals identify and fix the common mistakes that stop their posts from bringing in the right clients. You'll explore real examples (good and bad), and leave with practical strategies to make your content more visible, memorable, and effective, whether you're targeting companies or individuals.



Rachael Roberts is a business coach for freelance language professionals. Through her coaching programmes, Designed to Flourish and Project Bloom, she helps educators grow sustainable values-led businesses that attract consistent, right-fit clients.

Coaching learners through the Disney Strategy

Workshop

Walt Disney's success was partially based on his ability to look at ideas from different perspectives. This concept is the basis of a strategy that can be used in business English classes to encourage learners to come up with creative, but viable, ideas which can be implemented in their workplaces. Participants will be taken through the steps and have the chance to practice in groups in order to understand how the strategy works as well as tips on coaching their learners through the process.



Marjorie Rosenberg has taught business English in Austria for 40 years. She is an NLP trainer and learned the Disney Strategy from its creator, Robert Dilts. Marjorie is a BE author, joint coordinator of IATEFL BESIG, and past president of IATEFL.

Package your course + sell directly to corporates

Talk

Are you dreaming of selling courses in one shot to big companies so their employees sign up for sessions with you? I will outline how to pinpoint your market and teaching niche, write and package a course, sell to a large company, and roll it out to dozens of employees. I will suggest content, pricing, marketing and sales, billing, customer satisfaction, and especially how to generate repeat business. Bring your business sense with you for a realistic look at what training companies will buy.



Ami Salk has coached learners with over 40 mother tongues. She earned an MBA from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, followed by 15 years in banking, consulting and financial management before creating her training company.

Coaching and AI for UnUsual Business English Tasks

Talk

Business English teaching is increasingly shifting towards problem-based learning (PBL). This talk shows how peer coaching, AI as a study buddy, and real-life tasks promote strategic language use and communication skills. In one course that will be outlined, the teacher acted as facilitator while students created fictional businesses, took on active roles, solved real business problems, and built fluency, reasoning, and collaboration – developing communicative competence for the workplace.

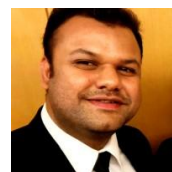


Alexia Schemien teaches Business and Technical English at BHT (Berlin). Her interests include AI in teaching, task-based learning, and learner autonomy. She is also committed to networking and developing teaching materials for higher education.

AI in Business English: Student Insights

Talk

This study explores how first-year International Business students engage with an AI-focused module in a Reading and Writing course at a Japanese university. The module introduced key AI concepts, ethics, prompts and applications. Students' responses were collected to investigate their perceptions of using AI in business contexts, and potential challenges. Insights aim to inform curriculum design and build critical thinking by effectively integrating AI in Business English contexts.



Prateek Sharma is a Senior Lecturer and a course coordinator at Kanda University of International Studies, Japan. His research interests include intercultural awareness in language education, Business English, learner autonomy, and AI in education.

Reinforcing Human Intelligence in Business Writing

Talk

Our talk examines how tertiary-level business writing instruction can reinforce the importance of human intelligence through the pedagogical integration of Authentic Instruction, Artificial Intelligence, and Academic Integrity. We will present our “triple AI” model—an instructional framework designed to help first-year business students develop effective communication skills, while also fostering the ethical awareness that underpins effective learning in digital contexts.



Linda Slattery has been a faculty member of the University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication since 2015. Her work currently explores the meaningful integration of artificial intelligence in tertiary-level teaching and assessment.

Catherine Prewett-Schrempf heads the Competence Center for Business English of the University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication in Vienna, Austria. She leads a team of around 40 internal and external staff delivering Business English courses.

Real Work, Real Words: Diaries in Business English

Talk

Diaries in Business English? Many assume corporate clients lack the time or interest. But when adapted well, short written or spoken reflections can boost fluency, confidence and learner autonomy. They also provide low-prep material to practise grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary, and make space for coaching-style conversations. This session shows how to adapt diary techniques for in-class use with busy professionals in fast-paced training environments.



Lucy Tilney spent 10 years at the BBC Natural History Unit before retraining in Spain, gaining CELTA and IHYL certificates. She now runs intensive Business English homestay courses in Bristol, focusing on pronunciation, reflection and conversation.

Break the ice - Crack the discourse

Workshop

This workshop looks at the utilization and analysis of language in an interactive setting. As ice breakers stimulate dialogue and encourage communication, they shift the focus on language perfection to achieving a profitable outcome of a task, thus guarantee communicative achievement. We will enjoy ice breaker tasks and subsequently analyse the discourse generated, with a focus on language components and interaction patterns. Let's turn "Breaking the ice" into "Cracking the discourse"!



@ndy Vogt-Nas is a trainer for BE and DaF. Her focus is on adult education in a business & university context. Fun ways to make language learning more approachable to the learner and the trainer is her priority. Live and love the language.

From disruption to direction: our future skill set

Workshop

Now that the first feeding frenzy of AI is over, we need to think about how to manage disruptions and develop skill sets that will help us thrive in our profession. Therefore, in my workshop we will do a risk assessment and a needs analysis to discover learning strategies that can help BE trainers to navigate their job in the next years. Together, we will explore key questions of our future roles and the direction we need on our journey.



Kirsten Waechter has been a business English trainer since 1998. She focuses on teaching business communication, ESP and EAP and intercultural and leadership courses. She designs her own materials in these fields and provides teacher training, too.

Rethinking the unusual: Managing a remote team

Talk

Working remotely has become less 'unusual', yet the intricacies of remote management is still complex. When I started at Arden, my manager in the UK and me in Berlin, we worked together to establish our 'place' within the organisation, write a course, and grow our team completely remotely. In this talk, I will reflect on this experience, what was crucial to implement so our team was successful, and how we developed inclusive practices which were eventually adopted by the wider organisation.



Mandy Welfare is a senior lecturer and manager at Arden University in Berlin. She has over 15 years' experience doing in-company training across Europe and published widely for digital and print.

CLIL for Business English: A Shift in Focus

Workshop

What helps lower level learners go from passive participants to confident communicators? In this hands-on session, you will explore how CLIL principles can elevate A2 courses through task scaffolding, lexical sequencing, and soft-skill-infused content. Grounded in real classroom experience, this session offers practical tools for designing smarter, more impactful lessons.



Olga Zhdan is a CLIL and TESOL-certified Business English educator who designs adult-focused courses using a Human-to-Human approach. International IELTS-instructor, presenter at IATEFL, TESOL, Teacher's Voice and ILCC conferences.

TENDERly

Talk

This talk will discuss the changing profile of business English students and the ever more demanding teaching context in the age of AI. To meet these challenges, we must rethink our attitude to teaching, course design and lesson content. The session will consider the impact of globalisation, mobility of populations, political and economic challenges and progress in technologies on ELT. It is suitable for experienced teachers of business English and for academic managers.



Bobby Zlatkov is a teacher, teacher trainer, oral examiner, academic manager, and translator. He holds CELTA, DELTA in Academic Management, IH Dip in Academic Management, NILE Trainer Development Certificate, BA in Modern Greek, MA in English Philology, and MA in Modern Greek.



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