Designing and Evaluating an ESP Course: English for Secretaries and Administrative Staff

Master’s Diploma Thesis

Supervisor: Mgr. Linda Nepivodová

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I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,

using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.

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Author’s signature
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Introduction

English for Specific Purposes has become one of the most prominent areas of English Language Teaching (ELT) focusing on practical outcomes. ESP strives to prepare students to communicate effectively and fulfil tasks that their profession or work situation requires. ESP has a long and interesting history. However, it is not based on a single theory underlying main principles or a methodology. Bearing that in mind, the thesis will work with definitions provided by various leading authors in the ESP field, concentrating on the needs-related nature of such teaching.

The main aim of this work is to create an ESP course: English for Secretaries and Administrative Staff. The course will be designed, taught, and evaluated with a special focus on possible re-designing based on the experience. Since ESP courses are typically taught to intermediate or higher-level students, the aim of this thesis is also to prove the feasibility of this course when taught to pre-intermediate students. The motivation behind this work is to create a practical, useful, and detailed course syllabus which can possibly serve as a teaching tool for other practitioners in the future. The main goal of the course to be designed is for the students to get rid of the fear to speak on the phone. As trivial as it might sound, such fears are common for ESL students therefore it represents a valid objective that can be worked on.

Firstly, a theoretical model will be presented where English for Specific Purposes will be classified and its history briefly described. Next, ESP as “goal oriented learning” will be introduced and defined with a special focus on describing what English for Specific Purposes is (not). Various definitions will be examined in order to understand the theoretical background and the context of ESP. In addition, the thesis will focus on learning environment and how ESP courses differ from general English teaching.
Next, key features of ESP will be addressed, mainly needs analysis that helps identify the main aim that students want to reach. Other components, that are important in designing an ESP course, will be addressed, such as organizing a course and selecting materials or types of activities. These will be crucial in creating a syllabus in which the language is transformed into teachable units. In addition, students’ motivation as well as the role of the teacher will be discussed. Finally, it will be explained why evaluation is of even higher importance in ESP than other general English courses, and how it will be carried out.

In the practical part of the thesis, the course will be presented and thorough needs analysis will be carried out. Moreover, evaluation of available materials for this ESP field will be done. The data will help create a syllabus that focuses on students’ wants and needs. Next, the course syllabus will be discussed and main activities will be described following a structure based on individual skills taught during the course. The syllabus will be taught as a ten-lesson course running from February 7 to April 11, 2017. Finally, the learners will be assessed and the course will be evaluated. The last part of the work will focus on possible future applicability of this course.
1 English for Specific Purposes

1.1 Classification and History

English for Specific Purposes has become one of the most prominent fields of EFL teaching. It is a sphere of teaching English aimed at particular areas that are concerned with specific professions and academic disciplines with courses specifically tailored to meet particular needs. Nowadays ESP represents a relevant approach within EFL teaching with its own well-established journal ("English for Specific Purposes: An international journal") that serves as a platform for academic research and further education. ESP as a single discipline did not, however, emerge as a planned course of action, but rather as the consequence of multiple trends. Originally, three main reasons for these trends were provided: the demands of a Brave New World, the revolution in linguistics, and learner’s needs (Hutchinson and Waters 1987).

ESP as a single discipline came to existence in the 1960s due to a rising number of people who wanted to learn English for commerce, science, or technology because general English simply did not longer met learners’ and employers’ needs. Rahman (2015, p. 24) also notes that the boom of ESP is the direct consequence of changes in the post-war world, economic growth, scientific expansion, “increased power of certain oil-rich countries”, and students using the opportunity to study in English speaking countries. Since English was accepted as an international language for technology and commerce, a new target group of learners was created. These were foremost businessmen-women or people working in the industry who needed to stay on track with latest developments in their professional fields. And for the first time in history, they had a specific reason as to why learn English (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 6). Secondly, the Oil Crisis of the 1970s led to “a massive flow of funds and Western expertise into the oil-rich countries” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 7). As a result, the
demanding new western world created an international language which was no longer seen as a required part of higher education, but became rather a necessity.

Along with the growing demand in business industry, powerful events took place in the field of linguistics. Researchers started to concentrate on language in real life situations and communication settings rather than on traditional definitions of formal assets of language (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p. 7). More emphasis was put on the difference between spoken and written English in general, as well as in its variants. At the same time linguists began to notice that teaching instructions needed to adapt to fulfill the needs and requirements in such variants. Lastly, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) claim that changes in educational psychology contributed hugely to the rise of ESP. They noticed that by tailoring English courses to learners’ needs, the effectiveness of their learning as well as their motivation would raise.

ESP has been historically classified in terms of two different branches, that is English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) (see e.g. Rahman 2015, p. 25). Since the beginnings of ESP, English for Academic Purposes, as a new and innovative discipline, dominated the field, whereas English for Occupational purposes lacked behind (Dudley-Evans and St John 1998, p. 2). Nevertheless, in the late 90s the expansion of business led to a huge demand in business English thus making EOP play a much more important role than in the early life of ESP. Although ESP has been traditionally divided into EAP and EOP, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 16) English for Academic Purposes and English for Occupational purposes cannot be separated with absolute certainty. They claim that as people study and work at the same time, EAP can be actually used in the occupational setting and vice versa.
Similarly, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) focused in their division of ESP on the specific purpose of why learners study English. The main part of their tree-diagram - the “trunk” - is comprised of three areas based on the learner’s specialism: EST (English for Science and Technology), EBE (English for Business and Economics), and ESS (English for the Social Sciences) (p.16-17). English for Business Purposes is perhaps the most important field of ESP for this thesis as little or no emphasis will be put on EAP throughout the work. ESB has become such an important and large area of English therefore it is sometimes viewed as an individual category. However, as business is an occupational sector, it must therefore be seen as a subcategory of EOP.
1.2 Defining ESP: What Is It (Not)?

English for Specific Purposes is characterized as teaching and learning specific skills needed for a particular purpose (Day and Krzanowski, 2011, p. 5). To be more accurate, ESP can be viewed as learning for business or academic career (Bracaj 2014, p. 41). Theoretically, it can be said that all learners need a language course tailored to their needs, but in practice “there has to be a compromise where learners with sufficiently similar needs can be grouped together“ (Day and Krzanowski 2011, p. 6). Pauline Robinson (1989, p.398) therefore sees ESP as “goal oriented language learning”. In other words, students do not study English in this particular sense to adapt the language itself; rather they use the language as a tool to reach their goals. Thus it follows that “the starting point for an ESP course or program is to decide the needs of the learners” (Bhatia, Anthony, Noguchi, 2011, p. 3). If the students are aware of their goals, it is much easier for the teacher to help them achieve their aims and meet their expectations. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 19) therefore talk about the importance of learning-centered approach “in which all decisions as to a content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning”. They see ESP as an approach rather than a fixed set of methodology or teaching materials and ask a simple question: Why do you need to learn English? This need is then characterized by the purpose behind the students’ motivation. It could be a doctor wanting to keep up with new developments and research in medicine or a businesswoman wanting to sell her products at international trades. These reasons will then determine the kind of language that is going to be taught. Or as Hutchinson and Waters put it: “Tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need” (1987, p. 8).

To support their view, they use contradictions of what ESP is not. Most importantly they stress that ESP is not just a matter of vocabulary or grammar for a particular profession as this would be too superficial, neither “a specialised variety of English” (p. 18). Even if ESP is designed for specific purposes, it does not mean that the language itself is special and differs
from English used in other situations. Although they admit that “there are some features which can be identified as typical of a particular context of use and which, therefore, the learner is more likely to meet in the target situation” (p. 18). Lastly, they point out that there is no need for a different kind of teaching than would be normally associated with any other English course, or better any language course in general (p.18).

Anthony Strevens, on the other hand, provides his own definition that is built around the difference between ESP and General English, providing four absolute and two variable characteristics. Such variables were helpful in understanding what ESP is or is not, especially in the late 90s where much confusion around the blurry classification existed.

“Absolute characteristics:

ESP consists of English language teaching which is:

1. designed to meet specified needs of the learner;

2. related in content (i.e. in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;

3. centred on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc., and analysis of this discourse;

4. in contrast with General English.

Variable characteristics:

ESP may be, but is not necessarily:

1. restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g. reading only);

2. not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology” (1988, p.1-2).

What this definition does is that it strictly differentiates general and specific English pointing towards the “specific” in English, emphasizing the practical use in a particular profession. As Gatehouse (2001) writes: “the word “specific” in ESP ought to be on the purpose for which learners learn and not on the specific jargon or registers they learn“ (p.3).
Chavid (2013) promptly notices that “this definition makes it mandatory that ESP courses should concentrate on the language, i.e. syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics etc., which is appropriate for some particular discipline, occupation, activity” (p.139).

However, in the late 1990s this belief was not widespread yet. Strevens recalls this dichotomy between scholars on one hand claiming that ESP was teaching English for any specific purpose whatsoever, whereas on the other hand thinking of ESP solely in terms of Academic English or Vocational English (p.1). Dudley-Evans, well aware of the confusion and different interpretations, attempted to offer a comprehensive definition which derives mainly from the one of Strevens’s. However, Dudley-Evans and St John decided to remove the fifth absolute variable (contrast with General English) and increased the number of variable characteristics:

“Absolute Characteristics

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners
2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves
3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems” (1998, p. 4-5).

It follows from the definition that ESP does not have to be focused on a specific age group, nor a specific discipline. Unlike other authors (see e.g. Robinson 1991) restricting ESP strictly to adult learners, Dudley-Evans and St John leave the room for other age levels with their variable characteristic- “likely to be designed for adults”. What is more, they allow other levels apart from the intermediate-advanced as well. Furthermore, they see ESP as more of an approach than a fixed methodology, which supports the view of Hutchinson and Waters. Although the content of learning differs from general English, a “methodology could just as well have been used in the learning of any kind of English“ (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p 18). Moreover, they prefer the broader explanation of ESP and do not restrict it to academic and vocational purposes only, as they say: “it is our contention that all courses in specialized language and practice fall under the English for specific purposes rubrics” (1998, p.3). As well as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) do: “ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (p.19).
1.3 ESP and GE: A Fine Line.

In order to design and develop an ESP course, we must determine what it is comprised of and what makes it different from other courses. Having previously defined English for specific purposes, with the help of the Strevens’s and Dudley-Evans & St John’s definitions, in opposition to general English we ought to examine this relationship more thoroughly. What is the actual difference between ESP and GE then? Hutchinson and Waters (1987) answer this quite simply: "in theory nothing, in practice a great deal" (p.53).

If we look at the definition of General English or English for General Purposes (EGP), it does not help much because general purposes do not convey any distinctive meaning. Also some misinterpretation might arise from the concept of “specific” in ESP and how we understand it. Firstly, the term specific is quite vague and does not contain a particular meaning that is why Strevens (1988) calls for using “for vocational purposes” instead. And secondly, it might be misinterpreted as being defined by a specific purpose compared to General English. Widdowson (1983) implies that “an ESP course is in one sense really no more specific in its purposes than is one designed for general purpose English teaching” (p.8). What he means is that an ESP course does not have a more specific purpose; it is just different from a GE one. ESP courses are goal-oriented and a great emphasis is put on practical training, whereas in GE the purpose is not so easily defined (p.8). While in ESP, needs analysis (see chapter 2.1) helps to find a goal, sets the main aim, and defines skills that need to be taught, in GE this must be achieved by introducing a set of objectives. These are oriented towards more general-purpose skills and are used for “developing a general capacity for language use” (Widdowson, 1983, p. 9). While ESP rather trains students for given situations, GE essentially calculates with any future eventuality. The main difference thus lies in the purpose of ESP and GE, which is according to Widdowson to train, or rather to educate (p. 10).
ESP courses are most importantly goal-oriented. Unlike GE teachers, ESP teachers ought to conduct a research and talk to specialists in the field of interest. They might be even expected to educate themselves in the given profession. Absurdly, in reality it may be the opposite. We can observe the influence that an ESP approach has had on other areas of English teaching, and also the unintentional side effect of ESP-textbooks-availability which has made it so convenient that sometimes ESP teachers do not even attempt to analyze, conduct, or evaluate.

Another issue when differentiating ESP from GE might be the level at which it is suitable to present the language. With GE it is quite straightforward as all different levels from a complete beginner to proficiency exist and are taught, while there is no fixed agreement as to at which level should ESP be introduced. However, the majority of authors believe that ESP courses should be designed for intermediate or advanced students (see e.g. Dudley-Evans and St John, 1989, Strevens, 1988). The key assumption for this claim is that ESP regards the use of registers, specific vocabulary, and overall the ability to carry out different tasks rather than the language itself therefore the students should already have some acquaintance with English. Additionally, the level itself might not be that important as the fact that the learner has already done any general course and wants to extend their competence in a particular field (Robinson, 1974, p. 10).

Since merely little research has been carried out in case of integrating ESP into the pre-intermediate level, this case study will produce seminal findings. An ESP program for pre-intermediate students will be designed and evaluated to prove the feasibility of such a course. Challenges and limitations of teaching ESP to A2-level students exist, yet there seem to be more flexibility than in the past. Firstly, many textbooks are designed and aimed at the pre-intermediate and lower intermediate level. Secondly, it is much easier to “encourage low-level ESP learners to communicate in English” (Day and Krzanowski 2011, p. 25) than in other
languages, since English has been used as a lingua franca for centuries. Additionally, a skilled teacher might turn a course comprising of a mixed-ability group of learners into an advantage. Procedures to make such a course efficient include more proficient ones helping weaker ones in those particular skills. Finally, ESP activities may be completed with ones from a general English textbook and transferred into a format suitable for the particular context (Day and Krzanowski 2011, p. 25).

Another criteria discussed is the proper age at which to teach ESP. Rahman (2015), similarly as Robinson (1991), states that ESP students are typically adults who have used English before and learn “the language so as to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular profession-related activities” (p.24). However, Dudley-Evans and St John, as well as Strevens, actually do not reserve ESP for any particular age group.

Having discussed the differences between English for specific and general purposes, one must realize that even though these are distinctive features, in reality a fine line between these two exist. As Far (2008) summarizes: these definitions “do not imply absolute separateness, but they in turn reveal the true nature of them, based on them one can clearly find the overlapping areas and keep track of GE and ESP” (p. 5).
2 Key Features of ESP

2.1 Needs Analysis

Having thoroughly defined what English for Specific Purposes is, the next step would be to look at particular components which are important in designing an ESP course. It was already mentioned that needs analysis is used to identify the main aim that students want to reach. It represents the process of gathering information about what and why should be taught in a course. During this phase, information about students’ wants and needs is collected which then serves as a basis for developing a curriculum. In the curriculum, those wants and needs are transferred to goals and objectives which lay a foundation to lesson plans, tests, and materials later used during the course. The objectives can be seen as “different points you pass on the journey (the course) to the destination (goal)” (Graves 2010, p. 75).

Robinson (1991, p.3) stresses that needs analysis has to take place before designing a specific course as it “aims to specify as closely as possible what exactly it is that students have to do through the medium of English” (1991, p. 3). Graves (2010) points out that in order to make a decision about what will be taught, information about “learners’ abilities, attitudes, preferences and desired abilities” must be gathered (p.98). Similarly, Bhatia et al. (2011) summarize the importance of needs analysis as an initial stage of designing any ESP course: “The starting point for an ESP course or program is to decide the needs of the learners” (p.3). Salas et al. (2013) stress how important needs analysis is as a pre-training step that if omitted, “shortcut on the front end will inevitably lead to students being shortchanged on the back end of the training experience“(p. 16).

If needs analysis must be conducted prior to designing any ESP course, what is then meant by needs? Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguish learning needs and target needs. The former is defined as „what the learner needs to do in order to learn“ (p.54), the latter is seen as
“the ability to comprehend and/or produce the linguistic features of the target situation” (p.54). Furthermore, they subcategorize target needs into necessities (“what the learner has to know in order to function effectively in the target situation”), lacks (what the learner actually knows in order to define their lacks), and wants (what the learner want to learn) (p.55-57). Berwick (1989) claims that needs are “the gap between what is and what should be” (p.65). Robinson (1991) argues that needs are a set for an individual group of learners making it impossible to have the same needs established for the same group of students by different teachers. On balance, it is important to note that however we define them, they are still the course- not overall- needs.

According to Otilia (2015), needs analysis has changed tremendously in the past fifty years. At its beginnings (1960s and 1970s) it referred to assessing the communicative needs and techniques which would help to achieve required objectives. Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of needs analysis could be found in Munby’s Communicative Syllabus Design (1987) where he offers a detailed procedure how to analyze target needs using communicative variables. However, nowadays the procedures of needs analysis have shifted far from solely communicative meaning and they “(…) aim at collecting information about the learners and at defining the target situation and environment of studying ESP“ (Otilia, 2015, p.54).

Although many approaches and terms considering needs analysis had been introduced, among the most important components of needs analysis three viewpoints were historically considered: Target needs analysis (TSA), Learning situation analysis (LSA), and Present situation analysis (PSA) (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987).
2.1.1 Target Situation analysis

The term was first introduced and used by Chambers in 1980 as “a communication in the target situation” (p.29). The most detailed approach to TSA can be found in Munby’s work (1987) where he creates a Communication Needs Processor (CNP) - a combination of procedures consisting of various questions about the communication variables (e.g. participants, topic) leading to identifying the target needs. He also notes that high target-level performance might not always be required as only a basic level of accuracy is needed for specific professions. TSA helps to define the level needed.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1989) state that “TSA includes objective, perceived and product-oriented needs” (p.124). The objectives and perceived needs are defined based on general knowledge and known facts, whereas product-oriented needs are derived from the target situation. Overall, the framework for target situation analysis could be summarized into the following questions:

Why is the language needed?

How will the language be used?

What will the content areas be?

Who will the learners use the language with?

Where will the language be used?

When will the language be used?

(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 59-60).

2.1.2 Learning Situation Analysis

Thus far we have discussed only the needed knowledge and abilities for learners to perform well in a target situation- the necessities. The course cannot, however, be based simply on the target needs, learners’ wants must be focused on as well. In other words, their reason for attending a course, their preferred strategies and ways of learning, as well as their
overall attitude towards English. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stress the importance of learning situation analysis (LSA) because TSA might not be the most reliable indicator in finding out what is needed in the ESP context (p. 62). Although TSA is useful in setting the final destination, “we must choose our route according to the vehicles (…) and the learner’s motivation for traveling” (p. 62). For analyzing the learning needs, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) use similar framework based on questions:

Why are the learners taking this course?

How do the learners learn?

What resources are available?

Who are the learners?

Where will the ESP course take place?

When will the ESP course take place?

(p. 62-63).

2.1.3 Present Situation Analysis

Present situation analysis determines strengths and weaknesses, skills, and learning experience (Dudley-Evans and St John 1998, p. 124). TSA determines the end result, the destination where we want students to arrive, whereas PSA identifies at what level the students are at the beginning of the course. “A PSA seeks to establish what the students are like at the beginning of their language course, investigating their strengths and weaknesses.” (Robinson 1991, p. 9) PSA is most likely to be conducted through a set of placement tests and is used to accompany target situation analysis.
2.2 Course design

Once we have conducted needs analysis and are familiar with what our learners need to be able to do, we can move forward to designing a syllabus for our course. By running a proper needs analysis, we answered WHY learners need to learn, WHO is going to be involved in the process, WHERE the course will take place, and WHEN it will be taught (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 21-22). According to this model the next step would to address WHAT and HOW of the course. By WHAT we mean the aspects of language and what topics and areas learners need to learn and what level of proficiency is to be achieved (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 21-22). By HOW we mean “how to transform subject matter knowledge into something that can be taught” (Graves 2000, p. 4).

At first, the data must be interpreted in order to produce a design, select materials, and develop a methodology for teaching them. While doing so, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) want us to remember that there might be a clash between what the learners need and what they actually want. They point out that “there is no one-to-one transfer from needs analysis to course design” (p. 65). While there are many different approaches to course design, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identify three main branches: language-centered, skill-centered, and learning-centered approach (p. 65).

In language-centered approach the practitioner designs a syllabus as closely to target situation findings as possible. Therefore only a very small part of English is taught to the learners. The learner is used only to identify the restricted area of English that will be taught, thus making this approach the opposite of learner-oriented (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 67). While simple and straight-forward, language-centered approach might be viewed as inflexible and rigid.
On the other hand, **skills-centered approach** looks at “the competence that underlines the performance” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 69). This approach is thus not goal-oriented but rather focuses on developing learners’ skills and strategies, which can be used after the ESP course is finished. Skills-centered approach does not look at the surface performance, or the general objectives of the course, but rather on more specific competence, or specific objectives of the course. Holmes (1982) claims that skills-centered approach is realistic in taking students’ abilities into consideration, enabling them to achieve what they can, given their language skills, and motivating them to continue, after the course is over.

Finally, **learning-centered approach** puts emphasis on the fact that “learning is totally determined by the learner” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.72). This approach is not only concerned with learners’ competence, but also with how the learners acquire it (p. 73). Unlike the other two, learning-centered approach “takes account of the learner at every stage of the design process” (p.74). It means that a syllabus based on this approach must be flexible and dynamic, incorporating feedback tools as well in order to respond to the developments in the learners’ needs throughout the whole course.

The choice of course design is crucial as it will influence the production of the syllabus, selection and adaptation of the content of the course, developing the methodology for teaching the materials, and defining the evaluation process in order to see if the established needs were met. Looking back at the course designs described above, a conclusion can be made that learning-centered approach would be the most suitable in case of the ESP course English for Secretaries and Administrative Staff. This particular course design will be efficient as the students of this course are well aware of what kind of skills they need to possess in order to be more effective in their positions. Since the course will be designed according to the students’ needs, a feedback along the way will represent a crucial element in
responding to the students’ demands. Moreover, the pace of the course and amount of materials might be adapted as well so that they correspond with the students’ needs.

2.3 Syllabus

Simply put, a syllabus is a document that tells us what is to be learnt and what learners should know at the end of a language course. Syllabus helps us to transform the language into teachable units that are represented in a planned and manageable way. It also gives a teacher “a visible basis for testing” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 83). While creating the syllabus brings many advantages to actual teaching, it does not secure that the topics/skills/situations will be learned. It is rather a plan of what is going to be presented in the lessons.

Each syllabus is created in a view of different criteria as topics, skills, strategies, or situations (for detailed description see Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, chapter 8) that can be actually combined and all integrated into the final product. In connection with course design, the syllabus plays an important role. Depending on which design from the above mentioned we might use, three types of a syllabus are considered. In language-centered approach the syllabus is a “primer generator of teaching materials” and determines the entire course (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p. 90). On the other hand, the skills-centered syllabus will primarily depend on using authentic materials (Holmes, 1982) and the selected texts will affect what is going to be focused on. Finally, in learning-centered approach the syllabus evolves together with the content and “is used creatively as a generator of good and relevant activities rather than just a statement of language content which restricts and impoverishes the methodology” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 93).
2.4 Content

Next, materials production must be discussed as ESP teachers are not expected to use general English textbooks. It is believed that teachers should use materials which are linked to the language that is relevant to learners’ specialisms (Robinson, 1980, p. 35). Firstly, we must take into consideration the source of language. Despite the number of ESP textbooks available, some ESP fields still have not been addressed. Bhatia et al. speak about publishers targeting “super-domains” such as science or engineering, whereas omitting other areas which ESP learners consider as being members of (Bhatia, Anthony, Noguchi, 2011, p. 3). Other case might include a situation where textbooks for such domains exist, yet they might not be relevant and appropriate in terms of level or skills. Even a specific textbook might prove to be too general to match particular objectives of our learners and their context. Salas et al. (2013) point out the importance of understanding learners’ expectations and needs in order to determine the appropriateness of the materials as “there must be a close correspondence between what learners wish to get out of the ESP experience and what the textbook has to offer“ (p.15). The content of the specific course will also differ in terms of what stage it is taught at. Dudley-Evans and St John (1989, p. 6) draw attention to Pre/In/Post- study phase depending on whether the students learn English prior or during their profession training.

At the same time, the demand on materials is extremely high. Materials should stimulate learners’ cognitive processes to think about using the given language (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1989, p. 171). In order to motivate and stimulate learners, materials must be challenging enough. “The input must contain concepts and/or knowledge that are familiar, but it must also offer something new” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1989, p. 172). And most importantly, connection with reality must be evident. According to Graves (2010), “activities should focus on student’s outside of class needs, and should help students develop specific language skills they need for authentic communication“ (p.152-153).
Producing high-quality materials obviously takes countless hours of preparation, thus preparing materials from scratch for every lesson seems impractical, maybe impossible. A good teacher must therefore be skilled in selecting proper materials. Dudley-Evans and St John (1989) argue that ESP practitioners must be able to:

“select appropriately from what is available; be creative with what is available; modify activities to suit learners’ needs; and supplement by providing extra activities (and extra input)” (p. 173).

The real key in selecting materials is to look at them from a student point of view. This strategy will help to evaluate if a given textbook contains a content that matches course objectives. There are many advantages to using textbooks since it provides security for both students and teachers (Graves 2010, p. 174). Students might feel safe having a “road map” guiding their way, and teachers are provided with a consistent syllabus.

On the other hand, using solely a textbook might not be efficient for some courses as “the content or examples may not be relevant or appropriate” (Graves 2010, p. 174). In other cases, the mix of activities is might not be balanced for a specific group or simply the group needs focus on different aspects of the language. Naturally, in these cases the material can be modified as well but the activities must always be central to the core objective. Whether it is replacing an exercise, leaving one out for stronger/weaker students, or supplementing the material with extra input, these are the skills needed for materials adaptation. It goes without saying that tailoring teaching materials comes with other issues as well. We might put ourselves in a major risk if we are not professionals in materials production. As Esteban (2002, p. 45) notes- creating our own materials should be considered as a last step after we have done research on all available commercially published materials and have not found anything suitable for a given course.
2.4.1 Authentic materials

Since we live in the 21st century, the Internet offers vast possibilities of how to use materials for ESP, or essentially, any ELT teaching. Salas et al. (2013) thus strongly recommend to never use any ESP textbook alone, but rather to customize and complement it with resources found online. Practitioners should maximize opportunities given by this technological era we find ourselves in, and utilize tools including Twitter, YouTube, or TeacherTube to access the resources, which offer authenticity that would not be possible to simulate in lessons.

Authentic materials, which have originally been produced for other than teaching purposes, might seem as a great option to supplement typical textbooks with. Yet when discussing authenticity, much discrepancy and confusion persists within this subject. A question whether to use authentic texts for listening, reading, and writing exercises caused a controversy within ESP (see e.g. Robinson 1980). Morrow (1977) characterizes such texts as “a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort” (p. 13). According to him, the pursuit of using the most relevant information led in some cases to a blind use of authentic texts. He argues that texts are once too often selected based on their topic, rather than function. While authenticity is maintained, relevance might be lacking altogether.

Widdowson (1976) goes further in his objections against the misuse of authentic texts and claims that if learners cannot understand the language in an “authentic” text, because of their lack of language knowledge, the language is not authentic at all. He prefers constructed texts which he argues are more authentic since they ensure that true communication between the writer and the reader is achieved. Richards (2001, p. 253) also suggests that authentic materials are often comprised of too difficult vocabulary and complicated language structures which proves to be problematic with lower level students. Martinez (2002) provides a list of
disadvantages such as a cultural gap or difficulties connected with different accents and dialects in listening. The vocabulary presented in authentic texts may be often far too difficult for non-advanced learners or completely irrelevant for any future use. Some authors (see e.g. Guariento and Morley, 2001) claim that using authentic texts for other than upper-intermediate or higher learners is ineffective or even demotivating. Moreover, it can represent a real burden for a practitioner as well.

Does it mean that authentic texts should not be used at all, especially with lower level students? Not necessarily as some studies show. From a study conducted by M. Chavez (1988) it follows that learners find authentic materials helpful to their learning and enjoy working with them (p.24). Moreover, they “do not innately associate a high degree of authenticity with a high degree of difficulty“ (p.24). Similarly, Miller (2005) is in favor of using authentic texts for lower level classes since they proved to be capable of “enhancing the development of listening comprehension skills better than the standard simulated listening texts found in an ordinary ESL textbook“ (p.48). Using them can also help students develop strategies for more complex tasks (Mevada, 2016, p.99). Finally, Hyland (2003) claims that these advantages outweigh any disadvantages connected with using authentic texts in ESL classrooms in view of the fact that using them “increases learners’ motivation and reflects positively on their learning process” (p.94).

2.5 Motivation

Motivation is a key element in engaging in learning process. Motivation can both generate and inhibit studying (Hutchinson p. 74) therefore plays an important role in any kind of learning. It is also a crucial factor that influences success of learning and improvement in all language skills. Whilst there are different kinds of motivation, two basic categorizations are used—extrinsic and intrinsic and integrative versus instrumental (see e.g. Brown 1941).
Extrinsic motivation is targeted towards obtaining an external reward, typically money or grades (Brown 1941, p. 76), whereas intrinsic motivation means to engage in an activity for its own sake (Pintrich and Schunk 2002). According to Brown (1941) extrinsic motivated behaviors dominate the elementary school environment because students are motivated by tests and grades, or positive feedback. In second language classrooms particular activities, that “capitalize on the intrinsic by appealing to learners’ self-determination and autonomy” (p.80), can be incorporated in ESL teaching. For instance teaching writing as a thinking process, or creating students’ own materials (p.80).

Integratively motivated students learn a language because they want to get to know the culture, people, and heritage associated with the language (Foreign Language Teaching Methods). On the other hand, instrumental motivation refers to “learners (…) studying a language in order to further a career or academic goal” (Brown 1941, p.75). This according to Strevens (1988) applies to ESP learning. If learners have specific needs, ESP course is a better option for them since such learning is more motivating. This will greatly vary based on the fact if the student is already trained in their occupation. If so, they will know exactly what their needs are and what skills are required to meet them, whereas a trainee might not have a clear idea of what they are supposed to know or learn in their mother tongue.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) wisely point out that students who are studying English just because it is on their timetable or their company sends them to and who do not have specific wants and definable needs, are likely to be demotivated when given a specific task. On the other hand, students with clearly defined wants might lose concertation and become impatient when the course does not address their specific needs (p.10). Therefore it is important to strive for as homogenous groups as possible when teaching any ESP course because such layout will ensure that the course can be specific enough in order to relate to the learners’ work needs (Dudley-Evans and St John 1998, p.153).
2.6 The Role of the Teacher in ESP

Although the approach to designing a course and methodology of teaching might not be dramatically different from any GE course, the role of an ESP teacher differs significantly. In ESP the teaching becomes so specific that the teacher loses the position of a “primary knower” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p.13) of the content. Therefore it is not uncommon for teachers to find themselves in situations where learners have a greater knowledge of a given area. Crocker (1981, p.9) describes an ESP teacher as not somebody “whose interest is in a body of information, but that of a professional offering a practical service”. The teacher is thus not someone who provides knowledge of the subject matter, but rather a guide that helps learners to express themselves.

Many teachers might experience an unnecessary fear of becoming an ESP teacher. While unnecessary, definitely not unjustified since the majority of English teachers are not trained whatsoever in this field. Scrivener (2005, p. 324) offers valuable advice: “You know about English; they know about the topic. Put the two together, and you have the potential for some exciting lessons”.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) suggest that teachers find it difficult to comprehend an ESP subject matter because of a long tradition in education of separating the Humanities and the Sciences, lack of re-training, and other personal fears such as stepping out a comfort zone (p. 162). However big the gap between knowledge of a teacher and a learner is, the teacher can still find a way how to help the learner express themselves in their field of interest more effectively. The main role of the teacher is naturally helping the student to learn. Even though the teacher does not have to be an expert in the target field, they should, according to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), possess a reasonable understanding of the given content (p.13). Nonetheless, Day and Krzanowski (2011) argue that the knowledge of a given content might
not be the most important trait of an ESP teacher, at least at the beginning of a program. More crucial is the interest and passion for a particular subject, and “hands-on knowledge will be picked up as you go along” (p.13). If a teacher has limited knowledge, the authors suggest three strategies to be adopted to make ESP teaching less daunting: “honesty and openness, preparation, and confidence” (p.7).

In reality, ESP teachers should occupy more than a position of a teacher. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) therefore use the term practitioner and associate ESP work with five key roles: teacher, course designer and materials provider, collaborator, researcher, and evaluator (p.13). They believe that ESP practitioners as collaborators should cooperate with subject specialists or specific subject teachers to find out which tasks students have to carry out in their work or in academic context (p. 16). Although teachers are more than welcome, yet not obliged, to acquire skills in the particular fields, they should be able to incorporate the subject matter to the English classes.

The role of a researcher is connected with teacher’s interest to keep up with latest developments in the area of ESP and integrating these findings into their teaching. Finally, the position of an ESP practitioner as an evaluator involves assessing both tests and teaching materials. The findings serve as a feedback to see if those set aims and goals were met and whether students possess required language or skills to “undertake a particular academic course or career” (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p. 16).

2.7 Evaluation

As with other language courses a wide range of assessing tools and requirements for evaluation exist, but with ESP the demand is much higher. Given the fact that ESP courses are mainly sponsored by companies that want to see a return from their invested time and money, evaluation of a given course is an inevitable responsibility of an ESP practitioner. Evaluation
can be carried out both quantitatively and qualitatively. The first delivers numbers and percentages and is typically in a form of a test or questionnaire. The latter focuses on answering why” and “how” questions using methods such an interview or a discussion (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p.128-129). Although often problematic to compare, these figures might bring valuable findings. There are no set requirements when it comes to assessment, yet two basic levels of evaluation should be considered: learner assessment and course evaluation (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 144). Assessment and evaluation can be both formative, which takes place when a course is in progress, or summative, which provides information about students’ overall achievement and course efficiency (Graves, 2010, p. 208; 215).

Assessing learners will mainly depend on the objectives of a given course which refer back to needs analysis (Graves, 2010, p. 210). Therefore in some ways the assessment is related to learners’ performance in their workplace and if they perform better in situations which were identified as their needs at the beginning of the course (Day and Krzanowski, 2011, p.27). This type of assessment is concerned with the ability to perform in certain tasks. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) highlight that learner assessment does not only indicate learners’ progress but also the overall effectiveness of the whole course (p.145).

As a part of pre-course assessment placement tests are considered. They are introduced at the beginning of a course to place a learner into a corresponding group (Graves 2010, p. 110). They are a formal way of assessing students’ proficiency, or in other words learners’ level of language. Typically, they are repeated at the end of the course to measure learners’ progress. However, one problem with using such tests to measure achievement exists. “They may violate a cardinal rule of achievement testing: teachers should test what has been taught” (Graves, 2010, p. 212). On the other hand, they are a handy tool when choosing or modifying materials in order to appropriately fit the target level.
During initial needs assessment, diagnostic tests could be placed as well. They help gather information about students’ learning needs and could therefore pinpoint what activities should be taught. They also determine students’ strengths and weaknesses, as well as their target needs to set the course content (Graves 2010, p. 110). Next, ongoing needs assessment might be carried out using achievement tests. These assess a current progress and how a learner is keeping up with the course.

Overall, learner assessment serves as both evaluation of learners’ skills in a target situation, and a feedback on what the learners need to know in the future. While testing takes place in GE courses as well, it is believed that “ESP tests are more effective than other alternatives” which explains a greater demand for evaluation of course designs in ESP teaching (Alderson, 1988, p.97). However, no clear evidence exists to confirm these claims.

**Course evaluation** is, on the other hand, a tool to assess whether a course is fulfilling its stated needs and whether the course objectives are being met. When conducting a course evaluation, four main questions should be asked:

- What do we evaluate? (the subject matter)
- Who provides the data and how? (techniques and actors involved)
- When (and how often) should evaluation take place?
- How do we analyze the data? (providing results)


To test whether learners’ needs were met, a practitioner can choose from a vast variety of techniques such as questionnaires, observation, or discussions. Once the areas, that are not being fulfilled, are known, appropriate changes can be made to the overall course design, syllabus, materials, teaching techniques, or administrative arrangements in order to avoid possible problems in the future (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.153). The areas that should
be of a main focus are: “the goals and objectives, the course content, the needs assessment, the way the course is organized, the materials and methods, the learning assessment plan” (Graves, 2010, p. 214).

As evaluation is a demanding and time-consuming activity, respondents as well as proper time of evaluation must be chosen wisely. While assessing can be done at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of a course, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) suggest the most valuable evaluation takes place after the course is finished “since the learner will be in a position to judge how well the course prepared them for the target situation they are now in“ (p.155). Though the most important part of course evaluation is the analysis when the data are converted to interpretable information. With quantitative data, statistic methods can be used, while it is inevitable to process qualitative data such as written comments manually, which are liable to be interpreted subjectively.
3 English for Secretaries and Administrative Staff

In the practical part of this thesis a series of ESP lessons will be designed to be used in a company course for secretaries and administrative staff. Firstly, a client’s profile will be introduced as well as background information discussing the motivation behind the demand for this course. Afterwards, as a part of needs analysis, information will be gathered using an interview form (see Appendix A) as a basis for students’ interviews. Next, evaluation of available textbooks will be carried out. Based on the interviews’ outcomes, appropriate materials will be selected, adapted, and developed. The syllabus will be devised based on these findings, and lessons plans will be tested in the classroom. Finally, the whole course will be evaluated together with providing suggestions for any possible adaptation.

Client profile

Company X\(^1\) was established in Brno in 2001 and provides rework services in the automotive industry. They specialize in checking, sorting, and repairing parts. Their offices are located all over the Czech Republic in order to ensure that their services are more accessible and to attain higher quality. Moreover, the company provides training programs and certification services for other companies.

Recently, several of company X’s employees have requested a special English course designed to target their needs at every-day job-related tasks. These employees were unable to locate a course or educational program that would address the topics they identify as essential for administrative and other tasks needed for their work performance. Having previously taught general English courses at this company, the teacher was asked to develop training and design materials customized to employees’ needs.

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\(^1\) The company agreed to cooperate on this thesis, yet wished to remain unnamed.
4 Needs analysis

As thoroughly discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis, needs analysis serves as a tool for identifying students’ wants and needs, that are subsequently transferred into goals and objectives, when developing teaching materials. To assess necessities, wants, and lacks, the same format, as introduced in the theoretical part, will be followed. By answering framework questions (see ch. 2.1), what and why of the course will be determined.

4.1 Target situation analysis (TSA)

Why is the language needed?

The company’s supervision offers its employees general English courses under a benefit program. However, a small group of staff has shown interest for a specific course that would target their needs. As a result of the discussion between the company and the teacher, a new specific course for administrative personnel was negotiated.

Learners who will attend this course need English for their every-day job-related tasks. Especially when receiving visitors in their company (students A, B and D), taking and leaving messages on the phone (students A and B), at meetings (students B and C), or on business trips (students B, C, and D). Although this course will be run in cooperation with the company, no promotion or other benefits will result from attending this course.

How will the language be used?

The ESP course will focus mainly on speaking and listening since the aim of the course is to help the students build self-confidence necessary to function in an English-speaking business world. There will be also some opportunities for reading as well, although in a lesser extent.
When conducting interviews, all four students stated that they wanted to improve speaking the most. Two of them also noted they experience difficulties when talking to somebody on the phone (student A and B) and would therefore like to focus on listening abilities.

As a channel, face-to-face communication will dominate the lessons. The students will be also exposed to telephoning simulations which they will be able to practice in role-plays. Regarding materials and types of texts, the course will rely on texts for specific purposes as well as teacher’s own materials.

*What will the content areas be?*

As Graves (2010) points out, consulting a colleague is a crucial step that must not be omitted (p.11). Therefore the findings were supported by the experience of my colleague teaching similar courses and a language school that agreed to collaborate by answering the following short questionnaire.

**Table 1. Needs Analysis Questionnaire**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In which job-related situations do secretaries use English the most?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In foreign language teaching four skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) are developed. In which job-related situations could secretaries use these skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you focus on all four skills equally when teaching English for secretaries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What specialized vocabulary and conversational topics should secretaries know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Which language level are your English-for-secretaries courses suitable for?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Hladká from JŠ Akademie rozvoje Lingua, secretaries typically use English when “introducing people, telephoning, introducing company, and talking about company structure”. Regarding speaking skills, secretaries need to communicate at meetings, when introducing people, and on the phone. My colleague Hana shares similar experience and sees telephone communication as the most important. Reading and writing concerns primarily email communication and reports. As far as listening goes, Hladká mentioned only records from meetings. However, my colleague stresses telephone communication as well. Overall,
speaking represents the most challenging and useful skill for such students. Finally, they both reported that these courses are typically taught to B1 and higher levels and neither of them have any experience with pre-intermediate groups.

Based on these findings and a review of business English and English-for-secretaries textbooks, several topics which might be beneficial for the given course were proposed. These topics were then incorporated in the questions. When carrying out the interviews, the students were given the option to choose from 15 topics or suggest others they would be interested in. All four students stated they would like to focus on the following topics: booking hotels/restaurants, making/receiving phone calls, and receiving visitors. Students A, B, and C mentioned they sometimes or often travel on business trips and need to communicate with clients there as well.

Who will the learners use the language with?

The learners will use the language with both native and non-native speakers dealing with business matters. However, they will be primarily exposed to non-native speakers of English since the company does not directly cooperate with companies from English speaking countries at the moment. It is also expected that the level of knowledge of a receiver might not be high or expert. The students will mostly use the language in contact with potential customers or visitors to the company.

Where will the language be used?

The language will be primarily used in the office or at meetings. The learners will thus need both face-to-face communication as well as telephone skills. Regarding the linguistic context, the language will be most often used in the Czech Republic with exceptional business trips to foreign countries.
When will the language be used?

The language will be used simultaneously with the ESP course and after the course is finished in students’ everyday work-life. These students will be therefore exposed to English in large amounts frequently every week in their lessons as well as in small amounts in work-related situations.

4.2 Learning situation analysis (LSA)

Why are the learners taking this course?

When asked during the interviews, all of the students stated they needed English in their positions and that learning English is an important skill that could improve their life. Three of the learners (students A, C, and D) admitted that they learn English because their employer wants them to, yet all of them said that they enjoy learning English at the same time. Student D even said that English was one of his hobbies. Only one of the students (student A) admitted that learning English was stressful for her as she feels pressured to perform well at work. Finally, all four learners showed a need to ask for and understand basic things in English and were not interested in skills requiring more advanced language use.

How do the learners learn?

To answer this question, different types of materials were of our interest. All participants stated they would like the teacher to prepare their own materials. Additionally, three of them (students A, C, and D) would prefer a combination with a textbook that offers a vast range of pictures, tables, and other materials to accompany traditional exercises.
What resources are available?

This ESP course is going to be taught in a single-practitioner model as described above. The syllabus of the course will comprise of a combination of the following materials: an ESP textbook, business English textbooks, teacher’s own materials, and activities found online on reputable ESL websites. A tablet or a computer will be used when projecting pictures to introduce a new topic or questions up for a discussion to change the interaction, as well as for listening activities.

Regarding teacher’s expertise, it must be said that the teacher has no previous experience with ESP teaching. However, the teacher has taught numerous general English courses before, especially company courses.

Who are the learners?

The group consists of 4 learners, 3 women (students A, B, and D) and 1 man (student C), aged 32-51. They all work for the same company, yet not all of them are close colleagues since they work in different departments. Students A and B work as personal assistants, and the other two in human resources. Although it was mentioned before that for any ESP course a homogenous group of students is likely to perform better, in this case the contrast is not so immense in order to create a specific course that would relate to the learners’ work needs.

In this part of the interview, the participants were asked about their learning routines to be well acquainted with what the teacher could expect from them to do, in addition to attending the course. All four of them stated they learn English approximately 2 or 3 hours a week including the course. Only student B learns English individually in small bits every evening. They all use English quite often at work or occasionally when traveling in their personal life.

To find out more about the students’ learning background, they were asked if they had ever withdrawn from a course and if so, what reasons stood behind their decision. Three of them
(students A, B, and C) chose the option that the course content was too difficult therefore it discouraged them to continue attending the course. Students A and C also noted that the materials they used were not interesting or varied enough.

Where will the ESP course take place?

The course will take place in the company’s meeting room which is equipped with a whiteboard, notebooks, and a projector for presentations, videos, etc. The lessons should not be interrupted by colleagues or supervision, since the meeting room is reserved in advance solely for the English course. The meeting room offers a comfortable learning space, there is enough day-light, as well as both windows and air conditioning to control room temperature.

When will the ESP course take place?

The course will take place every Tuesday before work at 7 a.m. and will consist of ten 90-minute lessons. This means that teaching should not be interrupted by phone calls or work-related duties, since it takes place in the beginning of the day. Moreover, students’ attention and cooperation is expected to be relatively high.

4.3 Present situation analysis (PSA)

It was determined in TSA what will be taught, what the teaching will look like, and what will be needed to ensure the desired end-results. However, before designing the given course, students’ strengths and weaknesses must be investigated. This was conducted through a placement test, a diagnostic test, and interviews.

During the interviews, the students were asked about whether they encounter difficulties when speaking. Three students (A, B, and C) admitted to often avoid talking in a group, since they feel quite uncomfortable, yet only one of them said she must repeat herself (student B) because the listener does not always understand her. For all of them it is often or sometimes
difficult to find a correct word when expressing an opinion. Nonetheless, only two of them (students A and B) feel often completely lost in a conversation.

As mentioned earlier, PSA is most likely to be conducted through a set of placement tests to identify at what level learners are. To test language level, the students were given a placement test (see List of sources) before the beginning of the course. Their level had been already tested when applying for general English courses, where all of them scored similarly. Nevertheless, to obtain current results, testing was repeated. Students were also given a diagnostic test to evaluate their understanding of specific topics and areas which were identified as essential for their positions. The test (see Appendix B) was compiled on the basis of the course syllabus overview. The test was administered at the beginning of the course and the results influenced the final form of the syllabus. The detailed results of both placement and diagnostic tests will be discussed in chapter 7, where evaluation will be carried out.
5 Materials Evaluation

There is a vast range of ESP teaching materials on the market focusing on many disciplines and occupations. However, for minor areas, such as work in administrative, the supply is dramatically smaller. Despite the lacking selection, several ESP textbooks might be combined and drawn upon for the purpose of this thesis. In this chapter, these available and suitable textbooks will be discussed, and the need for creating own materials and supplementing existing ones will be explained.

Although the content of ESP textbooks might differ in topics and balance of skills they develop, compared to those of general English, similar steps for evaluation can be adopted (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 132). Among the most important features of a quality ESP course book mentioned by Cunningsworth (1995) is: “the material is based on needs analysis, objectives are specified, specialist language is presented, balance between language items and skills is secured, the material is flexible, and activities mirror real-life situations” (p. 135).

Bearing these criteria and also the availability of the textbooks in mind, four of them were selected. Among these only one, namely English for Secretaries and Administrative Personnel by Toselli & Millán, was specifically aimed at English for secretaries. Although being in advance of others as designed for secretaries, no specific language level was stated inside. After closer assessment, especially of grammar segments, it was concluded that the overall level was even lower than the one of our target students. Therefore other materials had to be added.

Another two selected books were business English textbooks. Generally, business English textbooks are designed for intermediate+ students therefore the selection was quite limited in this area. Finally, In Company by Clarke and Business Goals 2 by Knight, O’Neil, and Hayden were chosen. These were also the only two books where the level, pre-intermediate in
this case, was determined. Since telephone communication is a huge part of everyday duties of anyone working in an office, *Telephone English* by Hughes was drawn upon as well.

Based on the evaluation of these materials several topics, which where the most common ones to appear in those textbooks, were written down. They were then incorporated into the interview form, where the students could select the most important ones for them or supplement this selection by others. As a result, the chosen topics were integrated into the syllabus, which is discussed in the following chapter.

**Table 2. Syllabus Topics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Banking</th>
<th>Import and export</th>
<th>Networking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Booking hotels/restaurants</td>
<td>Inquiry-offer-order</td>
<td>Receiving visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business trips</td>
<td>Making and receiving phone calls</td>
<td>Sales and negotiating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company meetings</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Talking to colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving presentations</td>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Writing e-mails</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there are advantages to using already existing textbooks (see e.g. Graves, 2010, p. 174), none of the above met the learners’ specific needs. The content was not the right level, some of the material was out of date, several activities seemed boring, or the examples were not relevant or appropriate. Therefore the materials had to be wisely selected, adapted, or supplemented with resources found online.
6 Course syllabus

To design the course, more of an analytic approach, as described by Wilkins (1976), was chosen opposed to a synthetic one. In the synthetic approach, “different parts of language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of language has been built up“ (p.2). In contrast, the analytic approach offers “the learner target language samples which, while they may have been modified in other ways, have not been controlled for structure or lexis in the traditional manner“ (Long and Crookes, 1992, p.3). Therefore the learners have to analyze the language themselves, as the language will not be controlled in most parts of the course.

Concerning various approaches and methods in language teaching, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) appears to be the most suitable for this ESP course. In CLT, the main goal is to develop communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) since “language learning is learning to communicate” (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983, p. 91). CLT stands upon various principles including the fact that “authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 172). In this context, teachers are both facilitators of the communication process, as well as “independent participants within the learning-teaching group” (Breen and Candlin, 1980, p. 99).

The structure of the course was based around four topics found useful for secretaries and administrative staff. When selecting the proper topics, existing ESP textbooks for the given context and the outcome of the students’ interviews were consulted as mentioned above (see ch. 4). Moreover, several communication functions (see Table 3), which were considered useful for the students, were added as well. In addition, relevant grammatical structures, which might be beneficial for the learners, were included. Since the majority of ESP courses is taught to intermediate or advanced learners, more emphasis is put on register and specific
vocabulary. In view of the fact that these intermediate or higher learners should be already able to use the language itself, ESP courses are normally aimed at mastering the ability to carry out different tasks connected with the students’ area of work or study. However, this course was designed to lower-level students therefore particular grammatical structures, found important and corresponding to presented functions, were integrated into the syllabus.

The final product was a ten-lesson syllabus which was created before the course started. This outline was used as a framework for the actual lesson plans which were created gradually as the course progressed. As mentioned above (see ch. 2.3), in learning-centered approach the syllabus evolves with the learners throughout the whole course and should be thus flexible and open to potential changes based on a feedback, in order to respond to current developments in the learners’ needs.

### Table 3. Course Syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>1. Introduction &amp; pre-course tests</th>
<th>Function: Socializing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Receiving visitors &amp; small talk I</td>
<td>Function: Offering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Receiving visitors &amp; small talk II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Telephoning: taking and leaving messages I</td>
<td>Function: Taking and leaving a message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Telephoning: taking and leaving messages II</td>
<td>Grammar: Past simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Telephoning: common expressions, numbers and politeness I</td>
<td>Function: Using telephone skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Telephoning: common expressions, numbers and politeness II</td>
<td>Grammar: Indirect questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Business trips: hotels and restaurants I</td>
<td>Function: Making a reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Revision &amp; final test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the types of activities, we worked on the assumption that learning is more effective when focused on communicative competence rather than formal correctness (see e.g. Krashen, 1981). In Communicative Language Teaching, “fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal” (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983, p. 92). On the other hand, a certain balance
must exist and both fluency and accuracy must be considered “with fluency being possibly more important than accuracy ‘at all costs‘” (Day and Krzanowski, 2011, p. 23). However, fluency over accuracy is more easily achieved with an advanced group of learners therefore this syllabus combined both, yet putting more emphasis on the communicative skills.

The actual process of teaching the course was based on several steps. Naturally, each lesson was initiated with a lead-in activity, such as a discussion, picture description, or reading a quote, which introduced the topic. Next, the communicative function was introduced by playing recorded conversations, presenting written dialogues, or demonstrating functional language by the teacher. In addition, the illustrated function was practiced. Afterwards, useful expressions for the function were elicited. In this part of a lesson, expressions were either elicited from students’ own knowledge or suggested by the teacher. If appropriate, particular grammatical forms were demonstrated and exercised. Finally, the learned function was further practiced in role plays. When necessary, role-played dialogues were analyzed in front of the whole class.

In the following part of this chapter, individual skills which were taught in the course will be presented. Moreover, various types of activities will be shown and its main aims and benefits will be discussed. Finally, particular examples from the actual lesson plans will be referred to. For detailed lesson plans, see Appendix D.

6.1 Speaking Comprehension

The main focus throughout the whole course was put on speaking activities that were based on the communicative functions. A great emphasis was put on student-centered communication. The students were provided with a lot of communication tasks to assure a semi-controlled and free oral practice. Most of the speaking activities were not liable to any specific correct answers thus the students were encouraged to check their solutions with a
partner or the whole group. This kind of feedback is especially useful for tasks “that routinely have to be performed in the business world” (Knight, O’Neil, Hayden, 2004, p. 5).

**Brainstorming**

Brainstorming activities are those types of tasks where no correct answer exists. They are rather designed to “pool students’ knowledge” (Knight, O’Neil, Hayden, 2004, p. 4). It is generally believed that brainstorming can build a confidence and create a pleasant environment for team work and cooperation because “it is often very productive as a whole-class activity” (“Brainstorming”, 2006). Brainstorming is especially useful when introducing new topics since it tests students’ knowledge in a natural way, thus representing a beneficial diagnostic tool. In ESP context, brainstorming helps students build self-confidence in order to execute tasks in an English-speaking business world.

In the actual lesson plans, brainstorming was present not only at the beginning of a lesson but when presenting different segments as well. In the very first lesson for instance, we brainstormed ideas connected to “work”, which made the students think about the topic and prepared them for the following activity that was a practice in using easily confused words *work* and *job*. Alternatively, in lesson 2, the students were asked what a *small talk* was, and additional ideas connected with socializing were elicited to present functional language.

**Dialogue building**

Dialogue building can be a useful diagnostic tool for testing students´ knowledge. It also requires students to communicate with each other therefore using their abilities to solve a problem or fill in a gap to finish a given task. What is more, it increases student-talking time to a maximum and allows the use of authentic communication situations. Therefore students´ are exposed to a real situation that they need to complete cooperatively.
A dialogue-building activity was used for example in lesson 8 focused on making reservations. The activity was launched by eliciting the first lines of a dialogue between a receptionist and a hotel guest booking a room. Next, the students were asked to finish the bubbles as in what way the dialogue might continue. In this stage, clues were needed. The students were reminded of hotel guest’s needs in order to complete the exercise.

**Discussions**

Discussion is one of the most useful skills for everyday life. On the daily basis we are exposed to different types of conversations, whether informal and personal or more business-like. Especially group discussions are part of job market in a form of interviews, selection procedures and others (Lightfoot, 2007). As there are endless types and forms a discussion can take, let us focus on those types that were actually used in the course.

Overall, discussions played an important role in the syllabus. They were typically incorporated at the beginning of a lesson to get the students focused and have them think about a particular topic, and also later in the lesson to make sure there was a balance between listening, reading, and speaking comprehension. Not only did they differ in who was participating (a pair or a group), the discussions were initiated by using different types of materials as well. For example in lesson 3 students discussed given questions, whereas in lesson 4 the talk was initiated by describing given pictures. In other cases, a discussion was used in a form of a free oral practice as in lesson 1 where the students were asked to speak about their job-related everyday tasks.

Although the most frequent type of a discussion was giving and sharing an opinion or viewpoint on a given topic, other types, such as making decisions, were featured. For instance in lesson 3 the students had to think about ways in which they could greet a visitor and agree on three topics for a discussion. Additionally, the students had to use various subskills as well
when performing a discussion activity. To successfully participate in the discussion, the students had to analyze, which means to think about a particular task and assess the relevance of each idea or topic before actually sharing any notes and comparing answers (Lightfoot, 2007). This proved to be useful as the students were made to think about the reasons which were linked to their arguments. Next, the students learned how to listen to each other and support their views without offending a colleague. According to Lightfoot (2007) these skills are best practiced when giving students slightly controversial topics, which was achieved for example in lesson 6. The learners talked about what at the beginning seemed as a banal question- the role of mobile phones and their effect on us, yet it turned into a heated discussion.

**Games**

Game-based learning is designed to practice students’ instant reactions and imagination. Games could enhance fluency and the ability to react in specific situations related to the learning context. “The game simply provides a rich context in which the development and personalised production of language can take place“ (Dodgson, 2015).

Although games can undoubtedly have a good effect on learners since they create a positive competitive atmosphere, it takes a fair amount of time to prepare them and explain the rules, which might appear problematic in a tight schedule such as this syllabus was. Moreover, role-plays with several exceptions seemed in the most cases as a better practice for the learned language. In total, two games were a part of the whole course, namely in lesson 1 and 6, and were presented exclusively as a final practice or a cool-down activity at the end of the lessons.
Role plays

“A role-play is any speaking activity when you either put yourself into somebody else's shoes, or when you stay in your own shoes but put yourself into an imaginary situation“ (Budden, 2005). Role playing is believed to be especially useful for ESP students because they learn to perform roles later in their careers (Robinson, 1980). It also helps them to get familiar with those types of situations they will face in their jobs. Among the advantages of role-playing is according to Harmer (1989, p. 352-353) the fact that they are “motivating”, “quieter students get the chance to express themselves”, and “the world of the classroom is broadened to include the outside world”.

Role plays occupied the most important position in the syllabus. They were an integral part of every lesson and were used to activate and practice learned functional language. Moreover, by creating these situations the students learned appropriate linguistic and extra linguistic behaviors. It also gave them the opportunity to compare their solutions with those presented by their colleagues. A role-play activity was always used as an extra practice or a final revision at the end of a lesson. Firstly, functional language was presented either with a reading or listening activity that was followed by a practical exercise where the given language was elicited from the students or provided by the teacher. Finally, the situation was simulated and further exercised in a role-play.

6.2 Listening Comprehension

Listening activities were carefully chosen to develop students’ listening skills. Throughout the course, both listening for gist and specific information were practiced. Before every listening, a pre-listening task, that helped set the scene, was introduced. This “gives the
listening a context and hence makes it a more realistic exercise” (Knight, O’Neil, Hayden, 2004, p. 4).

**Listening for gist** helped the students grasp the main idea of a recording. This task was especially used with longer recordings for the first listening, before any specific information was elicited, such as in lesson 1. Overall, since the course was aimed at learning and practicing specific language, listening for detail dominated the lessons. Therefore **listening for information** was widely used in all the topics in the course. The needed information was usually a name, a message, a date, or a number. Next, **listening for specific vocabulary** offered an opportunity to either teach new words and expressions or revise the already taught vocabulary. This strategy was used for example in lesson 6 for revising telephoning phrases. Finally, **listening for functional language** was incorporated into the syllabus and was connected with the communication functions. For instance in lesson 2 where the students had to match dialogues with corresponding pictures or in lesson 8 where the students listened to a quest booking a room and were filling in a booking form. Additionally, **listening for a sequence** was used when having the students listen for a correct order of events. This was especially useful in lesson 2 and 3, where greetings and conversations with visiting customers were practiced.

### 6.3 Reading Comprehension

According to the findings from the needs analysis, reading was not of our primary concern. However, to ensure balance between all the skills, reading activities were incorporated into the syllabus. Namely two types of activities were included. Firstly, in **close reading** activities the learners were required to read for a detail while paying attention to the actual meanings of particular words. Moreover, the students were not expected to only read to able to understand, but rather to think about the significance and relevance of a given text to a presented topic.
For instance, lesson 3 was initiated by a close reading activity, where the students got different cards with stories about behaviors around the world, and were asked to compare and contrast them. This served as both an opening and revising activity. Secondly, scanning or in other words quick reading made the student to quickly find a specific piece of information. For example, in lesson 2 the students were asked to read a short paragraph about business goals and answer the given questions in pairs.
7 Evaluation

7.1 Learner assessment

Learner assessment was carried out in a form of pre-course testing and final evaluation. The students were given a placement test to assess their level, and a diagnostic test which was administered before the course started and again in the very last lesson to compare the obtained results. The students were well aware of the assessment plan and agreed to cooperate in both of its stages.

Placement test

As a part of assessing learners, the placement test (see List of sources) was introduced. Placement tests are used to assess learners´ level of language and are given at the beginning of a course. For purposes of this course, the placement test, found on a resource webpage for Macmillan´s *New Inside Out* textbook, which could be filled online, was administered. Two students (A and B) placed at A2 level according to CEFR\(^2\) and the other two passed slightly over the B1 level (C and D). Regarding their weaknesses, they encountered the most difficulties when presented with new grammar, they had not learned before, e.g. second and third conditional or wish clauses. Moreover, unknown advanced vocabulary remained problematic as well. Additionally, it must be mentioned that the results of such a test might be skewed, as the students were allowed to guess correct answers, although they were discouraged to do so. Therefore these results were accompanied by an oral examination to get a balanced assessment.

Interviews which were conducted for the purposes of the needs analysis, served as an adequate tool to assess speaking skill, which was not targeted in the placement test. Together with the written form of the test, balanced results were secured. It appeared that the learners

\(^2\) Common European Framework of reference for Languages
sometimes did not fully understand the question from the interview form therefore the query had to be repeated. Nevertheless, when the question was rephrased, the students were able to answer without difficulties. Regarding learners’ fluency, they were able to express themselves, yet they often struggled to find a correct word. This did, in most cases, influence the overall comprehension. Overall, it can be said that the most important thing all of the students were lacking was self-confidence and the ability to express oneself in a natural way.

Since there were no elements of the placement test that would have been taught in the course, repeating testing for measuring achievement would be useless. Therefore the results from this pre-course assessment were primarily used when choosing or modifying materials for the syllabus in order to fit the student’s level.

**Diagnostic test**

Students were also given the diagnostic test to assess their knowledge of particular topics and areas which were seen as vital for their occupation. The test (see Appendix B) was structured on the basis of the course syllabus and handed at the beginning of the course. The test was comprised of tasks which were based on the objectives of individual lessons that referred back to the students’ needs established in the needs analysis.

**Table 4. Learner assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Type of test</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DF</strong></td>
<td><strong>progress</strong></td>
<td><strong>DF</strong></td>
<td><strong>progress</strong></td>
<td><strong>DF</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. job x work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. irregular verbs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. indirect questions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. telephone phrases</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. making a reservation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D=diagnostic; F=final
+ increase ≥20%; ++ increase ≥40%; +++ increase ≥60%; ++++ increase ≥80%
The first part of the test concentrated on the general ability to talk about the learners’ positions, daily job-related activities, and also welcoming visitors to the company. These were tested orally in a short dialogue. The students managed to pass the presentation without great difficulties. They also handled welcoming visitors quite well, although they used limited vocabulary, and only a handful of phrases which they repeated, e.g. “The boss is in the meeting”, “One moment please”, or “The boss is busy now”. They, however, were unable to produce small talk and were lacking socializing skills. In writing, the learners failed to use words “job” and “work” properly. Students A, C, and D received two out of five points, student B one point. The very next exercise was focused on past simple and irregular verbs. Here, the overall score was much higher. Students A, C, and D filled seven out of eight sentences correctly, student B five of them.

Next, the test focused on telephoning with three written exercises and oral testing. In writing, three students were unable to make indirect questions and received three (A), two (B), and four (C) points out of fourteen. Only student D managed to fill half of the sentences in a correct manner. This was, however, anticipated given their language level. In addition, the knowledge of common telephone expressions was tested. In this part of the test, mixed results were received since every student struggled with different expressions. However, the most successful was student C with seven out of twelve points, followed by students D with six points, students B with four correct sentences, and student A with three correct answers.

Regarding the oral examination, similar results were received. All learners struggled to find correct expressions and were unable to take or leave a message properly, e.g. when saying: “Can you leave a message?” (student B and C) instead of “Would you like to leave a message”? or “Can I take a message”? Another example of improper communication was incorrect echoing of student A in sentences such as: “Please, call later. Yes?” or “I will send you an email. Yes?” Overall, neither one of them was able to produce natural echo questions.
as a part of a polite conversation, which were targeted later in the course in lesson 3. Finally, none of the students was able to offer the caller to connect them to the required person. This part of the test showed that the students were lacking ability to speak on the phone and use correct expressions and report messages to their colleagues or superiors.

The last part of the test comprised of useful phrases when making reservations in hotels or restaurants. This type of exercise brought similar results to the telephoning one. Every student struggled with different expressions, yet no one was able to successfully pass this part of the test. Students A and B received four points out of fourteen, student C five, and finally student D filled in half of the exercise correctly.

**Final test**

As a final test, the diagnostic test was administered again in order to compare the obtained results. It was observed that altogether there was not a single area in which the students would earn less points compared to the diagnostic test. In the next part of this chapter, the final results will be thoroughly discussed and compared to the ones gained in the diagnostic test.

In the first part of the final testing, the students were asked again to describe their position which they managed comparably to the first testing. However, their social skills have improved significantly. All of them were able to welcome a visitor: “Hello, My name is X, how can I help you?” and offer them something to drink. Moreover, as a part of small talk student A asked: “How was your flight?” and students C and D took the visitor into a meeting room and asked them to wait. In the written test, all the students have improved in using words “job” and “work” correctly, results of students A, C, and D even increased by more than sixty per cent. The second exercise was aimed at irregular verbs and since the beginning score was already quite high, the improvement was not so significant. What is more, students B and C obtained the exact same amount of points as in the diagnostic test, which was caused
only due to a wrong spelling. It clearly shows that at no point during the course were the students asked to spell irregular verbs properly.

In the next exercise, the ability to create indirect questions was tested. Student B increased her score the most, namely by five points, since she started with the lowest score in the diagnostic test. Students A and C both improved significantly as well. On the other hand, student D obtained high results in the first testing therefore the shift was not dramatic. Next, the knowledge of telephone expressions was assessed. Here the weakest student in the diagnostic test was student A, who has improved her score the most in the final test. Student C obtained the most points, but improved the less, since he had the best result in the diagnostic test. Overall, the students improved the most in those types of exercises where specific vocabulary was required. However, they continued to make other, mainly grammatical, mistakes therefore they did not score maximum points. For instance, student B filled all the gaps in exercise 5 with the correct verbs, but she did not put all the verbs into their correct forms.

During the oral examination, the increase of active knowledge of vocabulary was immense. Student A was able to tell the caller to send an invoice via email and connect them to another colleague: “I will put you through to my colleague Karolina”. Student B handled misunderstanding of information in a proper way: “I didn’t catch what you said. Could you repeat that?” Both students C and D were able to take a message from a caller. Additionally, students C managed to arrange a new meeting for his boss. The last part of the test focused on making a reservation. All the students increased their final score by more than forty per cent, achieving from eleven to thirteen out of fourteen points.
7.2 Course evaluation

Course evaluation was carried out in two ways, that is formative, during-the-course evaluation, and summative, after the course was finished. Both the teacher and the students played an important role in assessing the effectiveness of this course. The formative evaluation was done through a systematic observation and a feedback at the end of each lesson. Additionally, notes suggesting pros and cons of each activity and any possible changes were noted down. These pieces of information were used to “retain effective aspects of the course and to change ineffective aspects while teaching it” (Graves, 2010, p. 215).

Formative evaluation

Originally, only four topics, namely receiving visitors, small talk, telephoning, and business trips were selected as a stepping stone to be complemented, as the course would progress. However, because of a careful evaluation after the first lesson, it was decided that such content would be comprehensive enough, and no other supplementing was needed. Additionally, a true need for telephone language and a lack of skills needed to execute this type of communication was observed. Therefore this topic was later during the course split into two segments- taking and leaving messages, and common expressions, numbers and politeness. Finally, it was decided that only these four topics in total would be taught in this course, yet the pace would be slower than originally anticipated. Thus every topic was divided into two parts with a special focus on extra practice and a small revision at the beginning of the next part.

Firstly, speaking comprehension was examined. During the second lesson, it turned out that the time needed for warmer activities was not sufficient for these students. However, since communication skills were the most important part of the whole course, discussions and conversations were dedicated enough time to be comfortably executed. Moreover, the
students really enjoyed speaking activities throughout the lessons, because they felt that there had never been enough of student-talking time for them in their previous English courses. They almost had to be stopped in every discussion in order to assure other skills were being developed as well.

As far as listening goes, some differences among the students prevailed throughout the whole course. Generally, students A, B and C needed to play every recording twice to be able to fill in the activity. On the other hand, student D was a quick finisher, which had to be taken into consideration. She was usually challenged to spot some extra information or to listen to a specific fact in a recording, which worked fine. All in all, every listening activity was originally designed to be played twice therefore the pre-intermediate level was adequate for the students and no changes in level had to be made. Additionally, chosen recordings were proved to be useful content-wise when presenting or practicing the target functional language.

Regarding reading comprehension, some changes had to be made. As the course progressed, the students were presented with longer and possibly harder texts, which actually turned to be too difficult. In lesson 5, all the students found the text about telephone conversation comprehensive. As this was not anticipated, since the article was designed as pre-intermediate, and no extra activities were available, more specific instructions had to be given. What is more, some passages had to be directly translated. This led to a change in lesson 7, where it was anticipated that the text about hotels might be too difficult. Therefore this particular exercise was assigned as homework so that the students had more time for careful reading and a proper preparation. Moreover, using a print dictionary was encouraged. Finally, this proved to be beneficial as the students appreciated being prepared and could react to the text more confidently.
Summative evaluation

Summative evaluation was carried out through a final discussion with the students using an evaluation form to note down the answers\(^3\) (see Appendix C). The outcomes were combined with teacher’s notes and were analyzed on the basis of the structure proposed by Graves (2010, p.214-215).

Overall, the students evaluated the whole course positively as they felt it helped them to progress in both overall language level and the knowledge of specific tasks. Student A stated to have finally lost her fear of talking to foreigners when she said: “After 25 years I finally started to speak”. Student B shared similar feelings of being more confident when confronted with English. Moreover, she enjoyed being made to talk a lot during the course and appreciated that the teacher spoke solely English. However, she thought that the pace was too quick for her, which she mentioned as the only drawback of the whole course. Additionally, student C said: “The teacher spoke English all the time, which I liked.” And finally, student D reacted: “I liked the individual approach of our teacher. She was always prepared.”

Next, the learners were asked if the course was useful for their positions. Student A thought that her vocabulary had grown significantly. Student B stated: “The chosen topics were great for my position.” Student C agreed when saying: “The topics were very useful for my everyday work.” Finally, student D said: “The course was from more than 85% useful for my position.”

Regarding goals and objectives, they were appropriate since they came of the detailed needs analysis. They were specific enough because they were focused on particular tasks such as “Students can greet a visitor”. Moreover, they were also level-appropriate to be achievable,

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\(^3\) Even though the questions were asked in English, the students first tried to answer them, yet switched to Czech immediately. They claimed they wanted to really express their opinion and felt it would not be comprehensive enough in English. For the sake of the thesis, the answers will be translated. Original answers could be found in Appendix C.
since they corresponded with the pre-intermediate level, for instance: “Students will revise past simple”. Regarding students’ point of view, they all stated during the final discussion that the course was useful for their positions and the goals were achievable. What is more, the objectives were actually reached. Student A mentioned a great vocabulary growth and student D appreciated having done practical role plays for daily work tasks. Student C also mentioned: “The learned language corresponded with our daily tasks.”

As far as the course content goes, the topics were what the students needed. Student A benefitted the most from telephoning roleplays and when learning how to communicate with a hotel receptionist. Student B said: “The chosen topics were excellent for my position, especially telephone communication and small talk”, students C and D also noted that ordinary phone communication was of great importance for them. Students A,B, and D agreed that although only four topics were addressed, they were focused enough and dealt with comprehensibly. Students A and B then concluded they would appreciate one lesson aimed at trade fairs, since they are part of their position as well. Even though student B mentioned trade fairs before, students C and D do not take part in outside-of-company activities therefore they would probably not benefit from such a specific training.

Lastly, regarding the level of the content, there were differences in the individual skills therefore reading activities had to be adapted to a lower level. This might have been caused by the students not being used to reading English texts therefore having not developed this skill to the same extent as listening and speaking. It was also mentioned by student A, who stated that at the part of the course where more reading was introduced she started to feel lost. However, she said: “The teacher reacted to this situation quickly and changed the plan.” Student B, on the other hand, thought that the level was adequate when she mentioned: “The course fit my level perfectly.” Student C felt comfortable level-wise in this course and student
D would have preferred a bit quicker pace: “The level was ok, but sometimes the practice took longer than needed”

When mentioning the needs assessment, this played a very important part in designing the course. Had it not been done, the need for and lack of telephone communication would not been noticed. The students lacked socializing skills altogether and could handle various situations with only a limited amount of phrases and vocabulary. Although being able to execute given activities, the students were lacking confidence and the ability to express themselves in a natural way. Additionally, the needs analysis helped to specify the content areas as well as typical settings where the language would be used.

Another important factor was the way the course was organized. It was designed so that it would flow form one topic to another. All in all, the connection between the topics was clear. The topics that were split into two parts were always interconnected, and part II typically started with a revision of part I to secure smooth and distinct linking. Students themselves could see a progression between each segment, which they mentioned in the final discussion. Student C claimed to have become more confident when speaking English, and similarly student A noted that she was gradually losing her fear to speak which reflected into her actual job. As the course was slowly finishing, she was presented with the perfect opportunity to practice learned language- a real phone call from a very important foreign customer. She claimed she was about to panic, as she usually would in the past, but then she calmed down and tried to answer the phone. She said: “I arranged a meeting for my boss, I told the customer to send the query via email, and I even put him through to my colleague at sales department.”

Regarding the frequency, student B suggested attending the course twice a week for an intensive practice. She also mentioned: “I would like to continue attending this course. I need
a lot of practice because I tend to forget vocabulary very easily.” Student C was happy with the timetable and would like to continue attending the same course moreover recommended it to his colleagues. Finally, student D put in a request with the company’s management for having this course as a part of the company’s benefit program, which GE is a part of. Student A also enjoyed attending this course and said: “I would recommend this course to all my colleagues which I have already suggested to the company’s management.”

**The materials and the methods** were crucial for the course. Even though the course was aimed at only four topics, it was of a great benefit for the students since they could really deepen their knowledge and foremost sufficiently practice given tasks. The students really enjoyed the warm-up discussions and roleplays as mentioned before. Student C appreciated listening activities and suggested using videos instead of just recorded audios in the future. Student A felt that the roleplays were very useful and proposed having extra one or two lessons outside of the classroom in a following course, to really put the learned knowledge into a test. She stated: “I would like to have a real task- buy three tickets to Paris and book a room in a hotel”. This would be, without a doubt, very beneficial. However, it would have to be planned in cooperation with the company so it corresponds with the company’s actual needs. Regarding their roles and the one of the teacher, student D appreciated that the teacher was always prepared for every lesson and changed her role according to a given situation. For instance when introducing a new topic the teacher worked as an educator, but during the roleplays coming to the other side and becoming one of the students was needed.

On the basis of both student assessment and course evaluation, several changes could be made when teaching this course in the future. More focus will be put on reading comprehension, and especially pre-reading phase, to prepare students for longer texts. Moreover, readings could be more specific content-wise, for instance using email communication or hotel webpages to address students’ job-related needs. In case of materials,
listening activities might be more varied by using videos or authentic audio recordings. If the group was homogenous, other specific topics such as trade fairs could be implemented into the syllabus. Last but not least, for quick finishers other supplementing materials must be designed and allowed for.

Regarding assessment plan, the diagnostic test would be ideally carried out as predominantly an oral examination since the whole course focused on communicative competence. There are, however, many drawbacks connected with assessing oral interaction (see e.g. Ahmed, Pollitt, Rose, 1999). Such a test would have to be devised carefully and an alternative scale, to points used in common tests, for evaluating the communicative tasks would have to be implemented. Finally, listening should be part of the diagnostic test in the future as well, because understanding a caller or a visitor was the most important passive skill the students were learning.
8 Applicability

This course was designed for a specific group of secretaries and administrative staff, but could the same syllabus be used for another group of people working in the administrative? We believe that this course would be beneficial, although not ideal, for other administrative workers. In the view of the fact that the four selected topics are crucial for anyone working in this field, this course could be useful for them. However, as seen in case of students A and B of this course, showing the need for other specific topics for their position, this course should be ideally used as a general syllabus to be complemented with other topics specifically aimed at the students’ needs. Trade fairs mentioned by the students of this course are definitely not a typical setting for everyone working as a personal assistant, since it is dependent on the field a given company works in. Therefore for a secretary working in a different company, other topics and tasks would be required. Thus this syllabus should be used as a backbone for ESP courses aimed at administrative personnel, and supplemented by other topics required by the students on the basis of a proper needs analysis. Finally, the pace could vary as well with a different group of learners therefore shortening each lesson to one hour is justifiable as well.

Because the course was designed as a part of this thesis, it was relatively inexpensive. However, in the future when personal motivation would not be taken into consideration, all the costs connected with course design, self-education in the target field, and materials development would have to be recognized.

Finally, traditional English courses do not seem to meet needs of a particular group as effectively as ESP courses do. However, bearing the language level of a certain group of students in mind, it must be said that a combination of ESL and ESP course would be ideal for especially lower level groups. As observed during this course, the students were lacking not only the ability to perform well in specific communicative tasks, but also the overall knowledge of English. Even though ESP courses are typically designed for higher-level
learners, it was proved that it does not necessarily have to be the case, because the evaluation and assessment clearly showed how the students benefited from this ESP course. Therefore in addition to meeting the specific needs of the students, a simultaneous general English course is proposed. As a result, a useful combination that targets general English knowledge and specific job-related tasks would be created, and the demand for a relevant and effective English course would be met.
9 Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis was to design, teach, and evaluate an ESP course: English for Secretaries and Administrative purposes, and prove the feasibility of this course with pre-intermediate students. The outcome of the detailed needs analysis was a ten-lesson syllabus focusing on four topics, accompanied by five examples of functional language and three grammatical topics. The course focused mainly on developing communicative competence and teaching functional language in a series of tasks needed for the students’ daily tasks. On the basis of materials evaluation and interviews’ outcomes, appropriate materials were selected, adapted, and developed. The course was running once a week from February 7 to April 11, 2017.

The main focus in the research part of this thesis was devoted to a detailed evaluation that was carried out through learner assessment and course evaluation. As a part of assessing the learners, a placement test, a diagnostic test, and an oral examination were conducted. By comparing the results from the diagnostic and final test, the progression was measured. The students did better or received the same score as in the diagnostic test in all the tested areas. Regarding written exercises, each of them improved the most in different areas. Nevertheless, the biggest difference in score for the whole group was observed in case of distinguishing between the words “job” and “work” and telephoning skills. There was quite a big shift in the ability to create indirect questions and make reservations. However, as a group the students did not increase their final score much in case of irregular verbs. Finally, student A was the one who made the biggest progress overall. During the oral examination, the increase of active knowledge of vocabulary was noticeable. Additionally, communication on the phone and social skills improved extensively as well.

Course evaluation was carried out through observations during the course, and through a final discussion, using prepared questions from the evaluation form, when the course was
finished. As a result of formative evaluation, the pace was decreased, more time was devoted to speaking tasks, and changes in reading comprehension were made. Although the during-a-course evaluation is crucial for the rest of the course to run smoothly, a summative evaluation brings important findings about course efficiency. Firstly, the goals and the objectives were level and topic appropriate. What is more, it was proved from students’ own experience that they were achieved. The course content was suitable, yet if the group was homogenous, they would have benefitted from adding more focused topics. Next, the level of speaking and listening comprehension was adequate, but reading remained problematic level-, and content-wise. Finally, the course was well organized and a progression was visible.

It was concluded that the course was successful, yet several changes could be made in the future to improve the quality of this course. Firstly, pre-reading phase should be of higher importance to prepare the students for longer texts, and topics for reading comprehension could be more specific. Next, other than audio files, might be added to the materials. Additionally, listening comprehension should be a part of the diagnostic text as well. Regarding applicability, it was suggested to use this course as a template for other ESP courses aimed at teaching administrative staff, with possible topic supplementing or pace adjusting. Finally, it was proposed that a combination of ESL and ESP course would be ideal for especially lower level groups to target both general language knowledge as well as specific tasks.
List of Abbreviations

CLT  Communicative Language Teaching
CNP  Communication Needs Processor
EAP  English for Academic Purposes
EBE  English for Business and Economics
EFL  English as a Foreign Language
EGP  English for General Purposes
ELT  English Language Teaching
EOP  English for Occupational Purposes
ESL  English as Second Language
ESP  English for Specific Purposes
ESS  English for the Social Sciences
EST  English for Science and Technology
GE   General English
LSA  Learning situation analysis
PSA  Present situation analysis
TSA  Target needs analysis
List of Tables

Table 1. Needs Analysis Questionnaire
Table 2. Syllabus Topics
Table 3. Course Syllabus
Table 4. Learner assessment
List of Sources

PRIMARY

SECONDARY


Appendix A: Interview Form

(1) Why are you learning English?
(2) Which is the most important English task for you?
   a) Asking for and understanding basics
   b) Understanding native English speakers
   c) Exchanging ideas with others
   d) Writing emails or letters
   e) Other (please specify)
(3) Do you think that
   a) English learning is stressful, but important for work
   b) English learning is important to improve my life
   c) English learning is fun and one of my hobbies
   d) Other (please specify)
(4) How often do you use English?
(5) How often do you study English?
(6) Which skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) would you like to improve in this course?
(7) In which job-related situations do you need to use English?
(8) What topics/situations do you want to study?
   Choose five most important ones
   a. Banking
   b. Booking hotels/restaurants
   c. Business trips
   d. Company meetings
   e. Giving presentations
   f. Import and export
   g. Inquiry-offer-order
   h. Making/receiving phone calls
   i. Marketing
   j. Money
   k. Networking
   l. Receiving visitors
   m. Sales and negotiating
   n. Talking to colleagues
   o. Writing e-mails
   p. Other
(9) How often do you avoid talking in a group because you feel uncomfortable?
(10) How often do you repeat yourself because the listener did not understand you?
(11) How often is it difficult for you to find a correct word/expression?
(12) How often do you feel lost in a conversation?
(13) Have you ever withdrawn from a course?
   Reasons for Withdrawing
   a) Lack of teacher's support and collaboration
   b) The course content was too difficult / easy
   c) The class was too much work
   d) Lack of challenging/interesting course books
   e) Personal reasons conflicted with school
   f) Other (please explain)
(14) What kind of learning material would you like to study?
   a) A book with lots of pictures, tables and charts
   b) A book with audiovisual material (videos etc)
   c) A digital book with interactive tasks
   d) Teacher's own materials/handouts
STUDENT A

Teacher: Why are you learning English?
Student: I need English in work. I am a personal assistant and I sometimes must speak English.

T: Which is the most important English task for you?
S: a) Asking for and understanding basics

T: Do you think that
S: a) English learning is stressful, but important for work
It is stressful because I must speak English in work.
b) English learning is important to improve my life

T: How often do you use English?
S: I use English in work. Sometimes when I travel also.

T: How often do you study English?
S: three hours in a week.

T: Which skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) would you like to improve in this course?
S: speaking and listening.

T: In which job-related situations do you need to use English?
S: In office and in meetings. And when somebody calls.

T: What topics/situations do you want to study? Choose five most important ones
S: b) Booking hotels/restaurants
d) Company meetings
h) Making/receiving phone calls
i) Marketing
l) Receiving visitors

T: How often do you avoid talking in a group because you feel uncomfortable?
S: Very often.

T: How often do you repeat yourself because the listener did not understand you?
S: I don’t repeat myself. My problem is that I don’t know words but people can understand me what I say.

T: How often is it difficult for you to find a correct word/expression?
S: Yes, it is a problem for me.

T: How often do you feel lost in a conversation?
S: Often.

T: Have you ever withdrawn from a course?
S: Yes.

T: What were the reasons?
S: b) The course content was too difficult / easy
d) Lack of challenging/ interesting course books

T: What kind of learning material would you like to study?
S: a) A book with lots of pictures, tables and charts
d) Teacher’s own materials/handouts
Teacher: Why are you learning English?
Student: English is very important in my job and I like it.

T: Which is the most important English task for you?
S: a) Asking for and understanding basics.
   b) (Other) Fairs

T: Do you think that
S: b) English learning is important to improve my life.
   e) (Other) It is necessity for me.

T: How often do you use English?
S: Every week at work.

T: How often do you study English?
S: every day in evening.

T: Which skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) would you like to improve in this course?
S: For me speaking and listening.

T: In which job-related situations do you need to use English?
S: I need English for telephoning. It is also problem for me when customers come.

T: What topics/situations do you want to study? Choose five most important ones
S: b) Booking hotels/restaurants
c) Business trips
d) Company meetings
h) Making/receiving phone calls
l) Receiving visitors
p) (Other) Fairs

T: How often do you avoid talking in a group because you feel uncomfortable?
S: Often.

T: How often do you repeat yourself because the listener did not understand you?
S: Often, it is my problem.

T: How often is it difficult for you to find a correct word/expression?
S: Very often.

T: How often do you feel lost in a conversation?
S: Often

T: Have you ever withdrawn from a course?
S: Yes.

T: What were the reasons?
S: b) The course content was too difficult / easy

T: What kind of learning material would you like to study?
S: d) Teacher’s own materials/handouts
STUDENT C

Teacher: Why are you learning English?
Student: My boss wants that I speak English and also I learn for myself.

T: Which is the most important English task for you?
S: a) Asking for and understanding basics

T: Do you think that?
S: b) English learning is important to improve my life

T: How often do you use English?
S: Often at work or on holiday.

T: How often do you study English?
S: Three hours in week.

T: Which skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) would you like to improve in this course?
S: Definitely speaking.

T: In which job-related situations do you need to use English?
S: In business trips and in meetings.

T: What topics/situations do you want to study? Choose five most important ones
S: c) Business trips
d) Company meetings
h) Making/receiving phone calls
l) Receiving visitors
 o) Writing e-mails

T: How often do you avoid talking in a group because you feel uncomfortable?
S: Very often.

T: How often do you repeat yourself because the listener did not understand you?
S: I don’t know. Not often.

T: How often is it difficult for you to find a correct word/expression?
S: Often

T: How often do you feel lost in a conversation?
S: Sometimes.

T: Have you ever withdrawn from a course?
S: Yes.

T: What were the reasons?
S: b) The course content was too difficult / easy
d) Lack of challenging/ interesting course books

T: What kind of learning material would you like to study?
S: a) A book with lots of pictures, tables and charts
d) Teacher’s own materials/handouts
Teacher: Why are you learning English?
Student: I must speak English in my position but I enjoy it.

T: Which is the most important English task for you?
S: a) Asking for and understanding basics

T: Do you think that
S: b) English learning is important to improve my life
c) English learning is fun and one of my hobbies

T: How often do you use English?
S: Quite often at work or on trips.

T: How often do you study English?
S: Two hours per week.

T: Which skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) would you like to improve in this course?
S: Speaking

T: In which job-related situations do you need to use English?
S: On business trips and with customers.

T: What topics/situations do you want to study? Choose five most important ones
S: b) Booking hotels/restaurants
d) Company meetings
j) Money
k) Making/receiving phone calls
l) Receiving visitors

T: How often do you avoid talking in a group because you feel uncomfortable?
S: Sometimes. I want to speak with other people English but sometimes I don’t understand them.

T: How often do you repeat yourself because the listener did not understand you?
S: Almost never.

T: How often is it difficult for you to find a correct word/expression?
S: Sometimes.

T: How often do you feel lost in a conversation?
S: Only sometimes.

T: Have you ever withdrawn from a course?
S: No.

T: What kind of learning material would you like to study?
S: a) A book with lots of pictures, tables and charts
d) Teacher’s own materials/handouts
Appendix B: Diagnostic test

(1) Use “job” or “work” and fill in the gaps.

1. The builders have done a great …………….. on your extension.
2. Gardening is tiring………………….
3. Jim has changed ……………….. three times in the past six years.
4. Being a fireman is a dangerous……………….
5. How long does it take you to get to ……………….

(1 point per each correct answer)

(2) Change the verb into the past simple.

1. She ………………… (bring) some chocolates to the party.
2. I ……………… (hear) a new song on the radio.
3. I ………………… (read) three books last week.
4. They ………………. (speak) French to the waitress.
5. He ………………. (understand) during the class, but now he doesn't understand.
6. I ………………… (forget) to buy some milk.
7. She ……………… (have) a baby in June.
8. You ……………….. (lose) your keys last week

(1 point per each correct answer)

(3) Transform these sentences. Pay attention to the correct word order.

1. Where is the closest cinema?
   Can you tell me ………………………………………

2. Why are you still in your pyjamas?
   I wonder …………………………………………………

3. Where does your father come from?
   I have no idea ……………………………………….

4. Why did you sell your computer?
   May I ask …………………………………………………

5. How much milk did you buy?
   Can you tell me ………………………………………

6. Why did you do that?
   Can you explain ………………………………………

(2 points per each correct answer)
(4) Match the right synonyms.

a) to connect somebody
b) to replace
c) to be cut off
d) to be engaged
e) to reach somebody on the phone

- to be disconnected
- to hang up
- to be busy
- to put sb through
- to get through to sb

(1 point per each correct answer)

(5) Fill in the gaps with the right words.

to answer- to overhear- to hang up- to speak up- to leave- to use- to mistake

a) Could you …… please? I can hardly hear you.
b) I´m afraid Mr. Young is not available at the moment. Do you want to…… a message?
c) Then we said goodbye and …… .
The customer …… me for my colleague and started shouting at me.
e) By accident, the assistant …… the management discussing salaries.
f) Would you mind if I …… your mobile?
g) Would you mind …… the phone? I´m busy now.

(1 point per each correct answer)

(6) Mr. Zhou is making a reservation at a restaurant called Renoir’s. Read the conversation below and complete the questions.

A: Hello, Renoir’s. How may ……… ?
A: I’d like to ……… please.
A: Certainly. When is ……… ?
A: Wednesday 11th.
A: Can I ……… ?
A: Mr. Zhou
A: Can you ……… ?
A: Z-H-O-U
A: How many ……… ?
A: a table for two.
A: Is there ……… I can do for you?
A: No, that’s all everything. Thanks.
A: We look forward to seeing you then. Goodbye.

(2 points per each correct answer)

Oral examination

1. Ask a student: Can you describe where you work, what is your position, and what are you daily tasks?
2. Tell a student: Imagine we meet for the first time. I am a visitor to your company and would like to speak to your director. Roleplay the situation.
3. Roleplay the following situations with a student:

The person you want to speak to is away on a business trip.
You are connected to receptionist and want to speak to Mr. Jones
You are put through to a wrong person.
You can’t hear the other person very well.
You want to leave a message.
Appendix C: Evaluation form

1. What did/not you like about the course?
2. Do you think the course has helped you improve your English?
3. Was the course useful for your position?
4. Were the topics important for your job?
5. Was the course too easy or too difficult for you?
6. Did you like the materials?
7. What would you change in the course to improve it?
8. Would you like to attend another semester of this course?
9. Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?
STUDENT A

Teacher: What did/not you like about the course?
Student: Začala jsem konečně po 25 letech mluvit a přestala se stydět.

T: Do you think the course has helped you improve your English?
S: Ano. Rozšířila jsem si slovní zásobu.

T: Was the course useful for your position?
S: Ano, hlavně pro rozšíření slovní zásoby a praktický nácvik denních pracovních situací. Dokonce jsem to teď použila, když volal pan Brázda. Už jsem chtila začít panikařit, ale vzpomněla jsem si na to, co jsme se učili. Nakonec jsem domluvila šéfově schůzku, požádala jsem zákazníka, ať poslé nabídku emailem, a přepojila jsem ho na kolegy z obchodního.

T: Were the topics important for your job?

T: Was the course too easy or too difficult for you?
S: Byl odpovídající, v jedné části se ubíral pro mě směrem k velké obtížnosti a tudíž k nepohopení, ale včas jste to upravila.

T: Did you like the materials?

T: What would you change in the course to improve it?
S: Návrh 1-2 lekcí strávit v terénu mimo učebnu a prakticky vyzkoušet určitý úkol, zadání: Kupte jízdenku do Paříže a objednejte hotel.

T: Would you like to attend another semester of this course?
S: Ano. Uvažuji o tom. Cítím se jistější a ráda bych získané znalosti udržela a následně prohloubila.

T: Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?
S: Ano. Doporučila bych ho všem svým kolegům a už jsem to navrhla i vedení firmy.

STUDENT B

T: What did/not you like about the course?
S: Nejvíce se mi líbilo, že jsem byla nucena hodně mluvit sama, a že jste na nás pořád mluvila anglicky. Co mě trošku vadilo, že to bylo na mě hodně rychlé.

T: Do you think the course has helped you improve your English?
S: Pomohl mně v tom, že se cítím jistější a nebojím se anglicky promluvit.

T: Was the course useful for your position?

T: Were the topics important for your job?
S: Ano, vybraná témata bohatě stačila. Nejdůležitější témata pro mě byla telefonování a přivítání ve firmě (small talk).

T: Was the course too easy or too difficult for you?
S: Mě široviny naprosto vyhovoval

T: Did you like the materials?
S: Ano. Materiály dostatečně řešily probíranou látku.

T: What would you change in the course to improve it?
S: Navrhují frekvenci minimálně 2x týdně 1,5 hodiny.

T: Would you like to attend another semester of this course?
S: Ano. Potřebovalo to intenzivně cvičit, často zapominám slovíčka.

T: Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?
S: Yes.
STUDENT C

T: What did/not you like about the course?
S: Líbilo se mi, že jste mluvila jenom anglicky.

T: Do you think the course has helped you improve your English?
S: Ano. Obsah kurzu koresponduval s naší každodenní prací.

T: Was the course useful for your position?
S: Ano. Témata byla užitečná pro moji každodenní práci.

T: Were the topics important for your job?
S: Velice, předeším telefonování.

T: Was the course too easy or too difficult for you?
S: Zaměřením i úrovní mi, myslím, odpovídal.

T: Did you like the materials?
S: líbilo by se mi využít například i videa místo klasických nahrávek.

T: What would you change in the course to improve it?
S: Jenom ty materiály.

T: Would you like to attend another semester of this course?
S: Ano.

T: Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?
S: Ano. Již jsem doporučil.

STUDENT D

T: What did/not you like about the course?
S: Líbil se mi Váš individuální přístup, příprava a nepodcenění žádné lekce.

T: Do you think the course has helped you improve your English?
S: Ano, rozhodně. Oceňuji především nácvik pracovních situací.

T: Was the course useful for your position?
S: Ano. Z více jak 85%.

T: Were the topics important for your job?

T: Was the course too easy or too difficult for you?
S: Úroveň mi vyhovovala. Akorát mi někdy mi přišel nácvik situací zdolný.

T: Did you like the materials?
S: Ano.

T: What would you change in the course to improve it?
S: Ne, viceméně nemám výhrydy. Hodně se mi líbilo, že jste se zapojila do těch cvičení s námi.

T: Would you like to attend another semester of this course?
S: Ano.

T: Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?
S: Ano. Zažádala jsem o zahrnutí kurzu do naší firemní AJ.
## Appendix D: Lesson plans

**ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

**LESSON PLAN 1  INTRODUCTION**

Date: 7.2. 2017  
Number of students: 4  
Length of lesson: 90 min

**MAIN AIMS:** Students will practice talking about different professions  
Students can ask and answer questions about work related tasks  
Students can use easily confused words “work” and “job” correctly

**SUBSIDIARY AIM:** Getting to know the students  
Students can listen for specific information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTER ACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Introduction and testing**                 | 30 min| -introduce the course and hand out tests  
- carry out interviews about their course expectations |              | Interview individual students while others are writing the tests to save time  
Diagnostic test  
Oral examination  
Interview     |
| **Warmer-brainstorming**                     | 5 min | -elicit ideas connected with “work”                                       | T S          |                                                                          |
| **Introducing the difference between “work” and “job”** | 15 min| -Elicit ideas and present language  
- hand out Worksheet 1  
- Feedback | T S | -Explain the language  
do couple of sentences together with students and then let them finish individually  
-the rest of the exercise could be used as homework |
| **Practice**                                 | 10 min| -Worksheet 2- students guess partner’s profession by asking yes/no questions  
-correction of possible failures | S S          | -give instructions before handing out the worksheets                      |
| **Listening**                                | 20 min| -Worksheet 3  
-students listen to 2 friends speaking about a new job  
- peer-check after first listening (exercise 1)  
-whole class feedback after second listening (exercise 2) | S S          |                                                                          |
<p>| <strong>Speaking- pair</strong>                           | 5 min | -students discuss in                                                       | S S          | -if students occupy the                                                   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Discussion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- follow-up of previous exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- free oral practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pairs their job</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Same position, navigate them towards talking about likes and dislikes or everyday tasks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooler - game</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to check knowledge of vocabulary of different professions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- to end the first lesson in a positive way</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10 min</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Games of charades</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sit one student in front of the class and write a name of a profession on the board, others give clues until guessed correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ss S</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON PLAN 1
WORKSHEET 1

WORK
➢ an activity (uncountable) - When will the work on your house be done?
➢ a place - I usually get to work at seven a.m.
➢ music, paintings or writing by an artist - *The complete works of Shakespeare*

JOB
➢ a task (countable) - I can’t do two jobs at once
➢ a position – I’ve got a new job as a consultant.

EXERCISE

1. The builders have done a great .................. on your extension.
2. El Prado gallery is currently exhibiting .................. by Manet.
3. She’s got a .................. working for an international auditors.
4. Gardening is tiring .................. .
5. Being a fireman is a dangerous .................. .
6. Jim’s changed .................. three times in the last six years.
7. She’s stressed because she’s got problems at .................. .
8. Worringly, .................. losses have increased sharply over the last 12 months.
9. I’m trying to find a .................. for the summer.
10. The Prince has never done a day’s .................. in his life.
11. I got a lot of .................. done this morning.
12. If a .................. is worth doing, it’s worth doing properly.
13. I had the .................. of telling him to stop picking on Brian.
14. How long does it take you to get to .................. ?
15. In the end I gave him up as a bad .................. .
16. She’s the best person for the .................. .
18. I have a long list of .................. to do before I go away on holiday.
19. What time do you finish .................. on a Friday?
20. Come on! We’ve got a .................. to do.
21. Come on! We’ve got a lot of .................. to do.
22. Cleaning out the garage was a big .................. .
23. He’s not really a hippy. He’s just allergic to .................. .
24. I’ve seen a .................. that might interest you advertised in the paper.

Source: Wilson, B. (n.d.).
LESSON PLAN 1
WORKSHEET 2

STUDENT A
TASK: Choose a profession. Your partner will ask you questions to find out who you are.

1. Is your job dangerous?
2. Do you work indoors or outdoors?
3. Do you have to wear a uniform?
4. Do you work shifts?
5. Do you get a high salary?
6. Is your job prestigious?
7. Do you drive a car?
8. Is your profession typically for men or women?
9. Do you need education?
10. Do you work with people?
11. ...
12. ...
13. ...
14. ...
15. ...
16. ...
17. ...
18. ...
19. ...
20. ...

Source: Author.
WHAT'S IN A JOB?

1. 5.04 Two friends meet and talk about someone's new job. Listen to their conversation and answer the questions.
   a. What is the relationship between Eddie (the man) and Fiona (the person with the new job)?
   b. How does Eddie feel about the new job?

2. Complete the dialogue using the questions in the box.

   Does it involve long hours?
   Does it mean a lot of travelling?
   Does she enjoy it?
   Does she have to work weekends?
   How much holiday does she get?
   What does it involve?
   What's she doing?

A: Hi, Eddie. How are you?
B: Oh hello, Jennie. I'm fine. And you?
A: Fine, thanks. How's Fiona?
B: Oh, she's okay. She's got a new job.
A: Really, that's good.
B: Well, yes. I suppose so, but I'm worried she's working too hard.
A: Oh dear. a) Does it involve long hours?
B: Officially 40 hours, but she often works late. We don't see her at home much.
A: b)
B: It's the same company – you know – educational software – but she's now Regional Marketing Manager for western Europe.
A: Sounds impressive. c)
B: Apart from being in charge of the sales reps, she's also involved in new product development and the whole marketing strategy of the company.
A: d)
B: It seems to. At least a couple of trips a month.
A: I see.
B: I don't mind that. It's the weekends that cause problems.
A: e)
B: Not every weekend, but we can never make plans.
A: Oh dear. f)
B: It's not bad. Three weeks a year. But that's a long way off.
A: You're being a bit negative. g)
B: It's hard work, but I think she enjoys the challenge.
A: But you're not very happy.
B: I'm happy for her. The money's good, and it's great for her career, but there is a downside.
A: Well, it's always difficult at the beginning. Anyway, give her my regards. Why don't we go for a drink sometime?
B: Okay, I will, and yes, I'd like that.

3. Work with partner. Ask questions as in 2 to complete your chart.
   Speaker A: Look at the chart on page 135.
   Speaker B: Look at the chart on page 142.

4. Ask your partner similar questions about their job or the job of someone they know.

# Lesson Plan 2

**Receiving Visitors & Small Talk**

**Date:** 14.2. 2017  
**Number of students:** 4  
**Length of lesson:** 90 min  
**Main Aims:**  
- Students will practice using small talk and socializing  
- Students can keep a conversation going  
- Students can greet visitors in their company  
**Subsidiary Aim:** Students can listen for a gist

## Stage and Aims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage and Aims</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Warmer - Discussion  
- to get students thinking about the topic | 10 min | - hand out cards to pairs for students to discuss  
- Worksheet 1 | S S | |
| Listening - Presenting functional language - Greeting visitors  
- to present functional language  
- to listen for gist | 12 min | - Elicit formal and informal greetings  
8 min | - Ss match dialogues with pictures  
5 min | - Worksheet 1 | T S  
S | Fold the paper so that students do not see dialogues for the first listening  
(English for secretaries and administrative personnel, rec. 5.1) |
| Role-play - Greeting visitors | 10 min | - Give students different situations in which they can greet a visitor and let them roleplay them | S S | |
| Presenting functional language - Brainstorming  
- to test students’ knowledge | 7 min | - Elicit ideas - What is small talk? | T S | Write on the board small talk; how someone can keep a conversation going? |
| Reading - Scanning  
- to read for information | 15 min | - Ss read about business goals and answer questions in pairs  
- Worksheet 1 | S S | Let students discuss in pairs and correct any possible failures |
| Listening  
- to listen for information | 15 min | - Worksheet 2, topic 1  
- students match the phrases in pairs, whole class feedback  
- Ss listen and check their answers | | |
LESSON PLAN 2  
WORKSHEET 1  

TOPIC 1: SMALL TALK

1) Warm-up
1. Do you like meeting new people?
2. What is usually a topic of conversation when meeting new people?
3. Do you find it easy or difficult to start a conversation?
4. What do you do when you meet a visitor waiting in your office/reception/…?

2) Listening
TASK: Listen to dialogues and match them with pictures.
V= visitor  S=secretary  M=Mr. Norton

Roleplay similar situations with your partner.

1 Culture focus

a When people meet in business, there is often ‘small talk’ before the business discussion begins. Read the tips for making small talk. Choose the three most important tips in your opinion.

b Compare your choices with a partner. Do any of the tips seem strange to you?

Making small talk in business

Talking easily with people can make a bigger impression than exchanging business cards. Here are some tips:

1. Smile first and always shake hands when you meet someone.
2. Take your time during introductions. Make an extra effort to remember people’s names, and use them frequently in the conversation.
3. Maintain eye contact in any conversation.
5. Be prepared. Think of three topics you can talk about.
6. Play the conversation ‘game’. Answer with more than just ‘yes’ or ‘no’.
7. Don’t be a detective! Avoid all personal questions if you don’t know the person well.

2 Listening

a Match the sentences 1–6 to the responses a–f.
1. Nice to meet you.
2. Hello. I’m Sonja Blum.
3. Thank you for coming today.
4. How are you?
5. Would you like a coffee?
6. Hello. Nice to see you again.

   a. Not at all. Thank you for seeing me.
   b. Nice to meet you, too.
   c. Very well, thank you.
   d. Yes, please. That would be nice.
   e. Hi, Steve Verwoert.
   f. Hello. Nice to see you, too.

b Which pairs of sentences would be used by people meeting for the first time? Which would be used by people who have met before? Which could be used by both? Complete the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First time</th>
<th>1b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Met before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c Listen to two conversations in which people greet each other. Which two people have met before and which haven’t? How do you know?
ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
LESSON PLAN 3 RECEIVING VISITORS & SMALL TALK II

Date: 21.2. 2017
Number of students: 4
Length of lesson: 90 min

MAIN AIMS: Students will practice using echo questions
Students can offer a visitor help

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Students can read for information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading and Comparing</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>- every student gets a different card to read and compare the information</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>- make a list of main similarities/differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to warm-up</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>- present the situation</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to revise small talk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenting functional language</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>- present the language and do topic 2, exercise 1 on worksheet 2</td>
<td>T S</td>
<td>- depending on time select exercises to be done as HW or extra practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to practice using echo questions</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Read about echo words with the class and then have them complete exercise 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- present expressions for showing attention and brainstorm other phrases</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- students do exercise 3 individually + feedback</td>
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<td></td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>- divide students into pairs and ask them to read mini-dialogues, then let them do exercise 5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- ask the pairs to read conversation in exercise 6 and identify small talk techniques + whole class feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- students practice keeping a conversation going</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional language: offering</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>- let students do topic 3, exercise 1 + peer check</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to tests students’ knowledge and experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>- elicit key phrases when offering</td>
<td>S T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to practice offering in various situations</td>
<td></td>
<td>- practice in pairs, exercise 2</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Reading

Making conversation around the world

In every country you visit, there are things you should and shouldn’t talk about. Here are some guidelines for making conversation in five countries around the world.

Brazil

Brazilians tend to talk very fast, and conversations are often very lively, with frequent interruptions and a lot of physical contact. Don’t be worried if the person you’re talking to exclaims ‘No!’ at something you’ve said. He or she isn’t disagreeing, but is showing polite interest in what is being discussed. People stand close in front of each other and maintain steady eye contact at all times – it’s considered rude to break eye contact. Brazilians may not want to talk about their own personal lives, for example their position in a company, their income, religion or family, but they may ask you personal questions of this kind! Stay away from topics such as economic and environmental problems, ethnic and class differences, and politics, but feel free to talk about food, Brazilian music and arts, and soccer and other sports.

India

Conversation is considered an art form in India. People put a lot of time and effort into a discussion, and will discuss politics and religion enthusiastically. Indians enjoy giving opinions and hearing those of their guest, provided that their guest knows what he or she is talking about! It’s important to talk about your friends and family in order to establish a relationship with business partners. Other ‘safe’ topics of conversation include Indian traditions, movies, music and sports, especially cricket. Avoid talking about personal matters and social problems such as poverty.

Italy

Italians like to talk, and there’s rarely a moment of silence in the course of a conversation in Italy. Italians will welcome discussion about Italian art, film, architecture, food and wine, and, of course, soccer. It’s also OK to talk about current events, but avoid talking about politics. You should also stay away from religion, and don’t ask about someone’s family, job or salary unless you know them quite well.

Philippines

Filipinos can be enthusiastic conversationalists, and they often ask quite personal questions regarding your marital status, income, religion and other sensitive subjects in order to establish a relationship. Make sure you don’t express annoyance with the questioner – it should be possible to avoid answering the questions if you don’t want to answer them. In contrast, try not to be too direct when communicating with Filipinos yourself, as they are more receptive to an indirect approach. It’s recommended that you break eye contact several times during a conversation, since too much eye contact may be seen as rudeness rather than a sign of attention. Subjects that are welcome are Filipino culture and customs, family and sports, especially basketball. Subjects to avoid include politics and religion.

United States of America

Generally, Americans like to laugh, and they enjoy being with people who have a sense of humour. They usually maintain regular eye contact and smile a lot. People often compliment each other, for example about their clothing or achievements, especially as a way to start a conversation – even with a stranger. Americans also often ask, ‘What do you do?’ to begin a conversation, and it’s very acceptable to ask about work-related matters. Sports are very popular in the US, especially baseball, football (American football, not soccer) and basketball. Books, food, music and movies are good topics, but not religion, politics or other controversial subjects such as racism, unless you know the person you’re talking to well. Finally, Americans may expect you to speak English.

2. Role-play

Student A

You are at your first interview at a restaurant. The manager invites you to sit on the restaurant’s patio. Enjoy some small talk before getting started.

Student B

You are about to interview someone for a position at your restaurant. Invite the interviewee to join you on the patio. Make a small talk before starting the interview.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Here are some possible questions and statements for you role-play. You can don’t have to use them all. You can also change them to fit your dialogue.

Expressions

- It's such a nice day.
- It's great to meet you.
- The patio is beautiful.
- Was it busy today?
- Thanks for coming in.
- Shall we have a seat on the patio?
- We can’t complain about this weather, can we?
- I see you have your resume with you.

LESSON PLAN 3
WORKSHEET 2

TOPIC 2: ECHOING

Echo Questions
To make echo questions, repeat the verb to be, auxiliary verb, or use ‘do’ in the correct tense if there is no auxiliary.

Examples:
A: I can speak three languages. B: Can you?
A: They went to Japan last week. B: Did they?

1. Reply to the statements using echo questions.
   I like pop music. ________?
   She works as an accountant. ________?
   I went to Egypt last year. ________?
   It’s a really nice place to visit. ________?

Echo Words
Repetition of key words back to the speaker helps to show interest in what the speaker is saying.

A: I have just bought a new sports car. It cost $100,000. B: $100,000
A: I travelled around south-east Asia for six months. B: Six months

2. Reply to the statements with echo words.
   I’m going to Italy next week. ________
   It took me two hours to get here. ________
   Harry is looking for a new job. ________
   I saw Sophia yesterday. ________

Wh- Questions
To keep a conversation going and to show interest, ask follow-up questions. Remember to use the other techniques along with asking Wh- questions otherwise it may sound like you are ‘grilling’ the other person.

Example:
I went to the hospital yesterday.
Follow-up questions - Why was that, then?
Which hospital did you go to?
What did the doctor say?

3. Write five follow-up questions for the following statement.
I went to the cinema yesterday.
1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
7. In pairs, take it in turns to start a conversation by asking a question to your partner. Keep each conversation going for at least two minutes by asking five follow-up questions for each topic. Don’t forget to use echo questions, echo words, show attention and agreement.

1. Where do you live?
2. What are you going to do at the weekend?
3. Do you like going to the cinema?
4. Have you ever been abroad?
5. How long have you studied English?
6. Where do you come from?
7. How did you get here?
8. Where did you go on your last holiday?
9. What’s your favourite food?
10. What do you do when you’re not working/studying?

4. Read these mini-dialogues

A: He teaches English.  B: English. Really? Where does he teach?
A: I'm thinking about moving house.  B: Are you? Where do you want to move to?
A: She worked there for 10 years.  B: Did she? How interesting. Why did she leave?
A: I've bought a new computer.  B: A new computer. Have you? Which brand did you buy?

5. Write examples of the techniques used by Student B to make small talk.

Echo questions:
Echo words: English.
Showing Attention and Agreement: Really?
Wh- questions: Where does he teach?

6. Work with a partner. Read the conversation. Identify the techniques for making small talk.

A: What do you do?
B: I'm a student.
A: Really? Where do you study?
B: At the local university.
A: That's interesting. Do you like studying there?
B: Yes, I just started last week.
A: Last week. Not long then. What are you studying?
B: I'm studying business administration.
A: Are you? I studied that too. What do you want to do when you graduate?
B: I'm not sure yet. I might start my own business.
A: Right. That's a good idea. What kind of business?
B: I want to open my own coffee shop.

Source: Small Talk Techniques (2014).
LESSON PLAN 3
WORKSHEET 3

TOPIC 3: WELCOMING VISITORS

1. Quiz

a. What is the right thing to do when you have meetings with visitors? Choose the answers about your company, or the answers which you think are best.

1. Where do you have meetings with visitors?
   a. in the reception area
   b. in a meeting room
   c. at someone’s desk

2. What do you offer visitors to drink?
   a. a cold drink
   b. a hot drink
   c. a choice of hot or cold drinks

3. Do you offer visitors food?
   a. yes, always
   b. no, never
   c. it depends on the time of day and the person

4. When do you have food?
   a. before the meeting
   b. during the meeting
   c. after the meeting
   d. never

b. Compare answers in pairs. Do you think the answers are the same in all companies?

2. Practice

Work in pairs. You are going to greet visitors to your office.

Role play 1
You are meeting for the first time. Think about three topics you can talk about.

Host
Introduce yourself.
Offer your visitor a seat.
Offer your visitor a drink.
Make small talk.

Visitor
Introduce yourself.
Accept a drink.
Say ‘thank you’ when appropriate.
Make small talk.

Role play 2
You have met before and you know each other well. Think about three topics you can talk about.

Host
Greet your visitor. Ask how he/she is.
Offer a drink.
Make small talk.

Visitor
Greet your host and respond to his/her question.
Accept a drink.
Make small talk.

Offering
May I... take your coat?
... help you?
... offer you something?
Can I get you something?
Would you like a...?
What would you like to...?
How about a...?
ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
LESSON PLAN 4  TELEPHONING: TAKING AND LEAVING MESSAGES I

Date: 28.2. 2017
Number of students: 4
Length of lesson: 90 min

MAIN AIMS: Students will learn vocabulary and expressions used when taking and leaving messages
Students can take a message from a caller
Students will revise past simple-irregular verbs

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Students will practice taking notes when listening

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTER ACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Warmer**  
  **Discussion**  
  -to get students thinking about the topic  
  -to test students’ knowledge | 10 min | -hand out pictures and questions to pairs for students to discuss  
  -Worksheet 1, 1.) | S S          |                                                                 |
| **Listening**  
  -to listen for information | 7 min | -hand out cards with one question for each student  
  -worksheet 1, 2.) A.  
  -play the recording once a have students tell you the caller’s name and message  
  -whole class FB  
  -play the recording again and have students match it with pictures | T S          | Fold the paper so that students do not see dialogues for the first listening |
|                  | 7 min |                                                                         | Ss           |                                                                 |
|                  | 4 min |                                                                         |              |                                                                 |
|                  | 4 min |                                                                         | S S          |                                                                 |
| **Vocabulary**  
  -practice using vocabulary from the listening | 7 min | -students match the correct expressions together  
  -worksheet 1, 2.) B. | Ss T         | Let Ss write the phrases to their notes if needed and have them create a learning aid |
| **Role-play**  
  -to practice learned vocabulary | 10 min | -student roleplay situations from the listening | S S          |                                                                 |
| **Listening**  
  -to listen for information | 8 min | -prepare students for the listening by asking them what kind of information will be needed in each gap  
  -worksheet 1, 3.) | T S          | Let students discuss and check in pairs |
| **Role-play**  
  -to practice taking messages | 25 min | -Let students decide which course of action would be best in each situation  
  -put them in pairs to discuss and give reasons  
  -demonstrate role play and let students perform the rest  
  -worksheet 1, 4.) | S S          | Ask students what was the main difference between the messages in Listening, ex.4 |
LESSON PLAN 4
WORKSHEET 1

TOPIC 1: TAKING A MESSAGE

1) Warm-up

1. What is happening in each picture?
2. Why the people in the pictures need to make a phone call?
3. How often do you make phone calls?
4. Is it difficult to speak on the phone in a foreign language?

Source: Author.
2) Listening

What do you do when someone calls you and your boss is not available?
What information do you ask?
What do you do when you don’t understand the speaker?
What are the most important elements when taking or giving a message?

A.

B. Match the expressions 1-5 from Listening to those with a similar meaning a-e

1. May I have your name? a) He is not in the office now
2. Would you like to leave a message? b) May I ask you which company you are calling from?
3. Mr. Costner isn’t in c) May I ask who is calling?
4. Where are you calling from? d) Can I take a message?

3) Listening

a. Listen to two phone calls and complete the messages.

1. MESSAGE
   For: ____________________________________________
   Call from: _______________________________________
   Time: 4.20 p.m.
   Call back __ Will call again ______
   Message: _________________________________________

   Number: _________________________________________

2. While you were out ...

   Message for: _______________________________________
   called __ at __________ a.m./p.m. ______
   Message: _________________________________________
   _________________________________________
   _________________________________________

   Number: _________________________________________

4) Role play

Look at the four situations below, where a receptionist answers and says that the person called is not available. In pairs, discuss the best thing for the caller to do (a, b or c) in each of the situations.

1. Peter calls a colleague, Gemma, to tell her about a report he has written. Gemma is not in the office today.

2. Nicola Hancock is planning to come to a meeting at Pam Coleman’s office. Pam calls her to find out what time her flight is going to arrive, but she is in a meeting.

3. Niall Rogers has complained to Sandra Hoffman about some items missing from his order. Sandra has arranged for the items to be delivered tomorrow. Sandra calls to tell Niall this, but he is on the phone to someone else.

4. Martina Lopez is preparing some information for her company’s brochure, but she is not sure about the latest prices. Martina calls Paco, the Sales Manager, to ask him but he is out of the office today.

   a. Leave a message explaining everything.
   b. Ask the receptionist to get the other person to call back.
   c. Leave a message about the general situation but send the details in an email.

Roleplay the conversation in 4 with a partner

### ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
### LESSON PLAN 5  TELEPHONING: TAKING AND LEAVING MESSAGES II

**Date:** 7.3. 2017  
**Number of students:** 4  
**Length of lesson:** 90 min  

**MAIN AIMS:**  
Students will learn vocabulary and expressions used when taking and leaving messages  
Students can report a message to their superior  
Students can leave a message when calling somebody  

**SUBSIDIARY AIM:** Students will practice reading for information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Warmer</strong></th>
<th>10 min</th>
<th><strong>Grammar</strong></th>
<th>10 min</th>
<th><strong>Reading</strong></th>
<th>3 min</th>
<th><strong>Cooler-Role play</strong></th>
<th>20 min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-to revise various telephone situations</td>
<td>Ss choose a card and roleplay given situations</td>
<td>-elicit the regular and irregular form of past simple by playing Irregular Verb Wheel Game</td>
<td>-write the sentences on the board and have students identify the verb object</td>
<td>-Ss are going to read a text about giving advice on making calls, elicit ideas before reading</td>
<td>-accept all answers at this point</td>
<td>-have students perform this task in pairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>worksheet 1, 5.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-worksheet 2, 2.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>-have a volunteer pair to role play in front of the class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-correct any observed errors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-worksheet 2, 2.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-correct any observed errors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Answers:** 1 Mrs. Parker told Lisa to send the fax as soon as possible.  
2 Will you give Mr. Hamilton our phone number?  
3 Could you take Mr. Hamilton and me to the airport?  
4 Tell Miss Hobson and Mrs. Robbie I’ll be out of the office tomorrow.  

If necessary, elicit useful phrases from the previous lesson. If needed, practice past simple using cards (show a card, elicit the correct form and have students make a sentence).
LESSON PLAN 5
WORKSHEET 1

1) Warm-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. You don’t know what number to dial</th>
<th>2. You don’t know who to speak to</th>
<th>3. You don’t know which extension number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. The person you want to speak to has left the company</td>
<td>5. The person you want to speak to is in a meeting</td>
<td>6. The receptionist mispronounces your name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Nobody with that name works in the company</td>
<td>8. The person you want to speak to is on another line</td>
<td>9. You are put on hold for a very long time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. You have dialed the wrong number</td>
<td>11. You can’t pronounce the name of the person you want to speak to (“Mr. Boisseaux”)</td>
<td>12. The person you want to speak to is out of the office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Grammar

Irregular Verb Wheel Game

http://www.macmillandictionary.com/verb_wheel/

Past simple, verb + object pronoun

Leave a message about a past and future action

Example:
Would you like to leave a message?
* Mr. Clifton / Mr. Harris / call
Tell Mr. Clifton Mr. Harris called, please.
1 Miss. Jackson / Mr. Brown / call
2 Mrs. Jones / Mr. Hall / sign the contract
3 him / I / pick up the documents yesterday evening
4 her / Mr. Thomas / leave for Paris this morning
5 Dr. Lane / we / postpone the meeting
6 Mr. Dawson / the lawyer / accept our offer

Example:
Mr. Clifton is busy at the moment.
* Call back / this afternoon.
Could you tell him I’ll call him back this afternoon?
1 ring / tomorrow morning
2 arrange another meeting / next week
3 meet / at the bank at 11:15 a.m.
4 see / the Director / on Friday
5 interview / again next week
6 confirm / the prices

TOPIC 2: LEAVING A MESSAGE

1) Reading

a Discuss the statements in pairs.

1 Make a note of the things you want to talk about.
2 Phone at lunchtime.
3 If the other person already knows you, don’t say your name.
4 If you get through to someone’s voicemail, don’t leave a message.
5 Say the name of your company in a message.
6 Just leave a short message.

b Read this advice about making phone calls and check your answers.

Before you call ...
Think about your main reason for calling, and what you want to say. Make a list of things to say before you call, so that you don’t forget anything while you are on the phone. You could also try to imagine the other person’s answers, so that you can be prepared.

Try to choose a good time to phone. It’s not usually a good idea to phone very early or very late in the working day, or around lunchtime. And if you call another country, think about what time it is in that country.

When you call ...
If the other person is available, say who you are (he/she may not recognize your voice) and briefly why you are calling – give him/her time to remember the topic, as he/she is probably not thinking about it when you phone.

Leaving a message ...
If the other person isn’t there and you have to leave a message, remember to say:
- your name and the name of your company – spell any difficult words.
- your telephone number – you may want to give a different number, for example a mobile, if you know you will be out.
- the best times/days to contact you.
- why you called.
- what you want the other person to do, for example call you back.

Keep your message short and clear – just give the minimum necessary information. If you need to say more, it may be better to email, and refer to your email in the phone message.

Discuss the advice about leaving a message. Are there any situations in which some of the advice wouldn’t be necessary?

### 2) Role play

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>You don’t know what number to dial</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>You don’t know which extension number</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The person you want to speak to has left the company</td>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Nobody with that name works in the company</td>
<td>8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>You are put on hold for a very long time</td>
<td>10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>You can’t pronounce the name of the person you want to speak to (“Mr. Boisseaux”)</td>
<td>12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>The person you want to speak to is not at their desk</td>
<td>14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>You have phoned the same person many times and they are still not available</td>
<td>16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>You are put through to the wrong person</td>
<td>18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>You want the mobile number of the person you want to speak to</td>
<td>20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>The person you speak to can only speak to you for one minute</td>
<td>22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>The person you speak to is not available for a meeting at the time you would like</td>
<td>24.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>You have a bad signal on your mobile</td>
<td>26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Congratulations, you have finished the game!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
LESSON PLAN 6 TELEPHONING: COMMON EXPRESSIONS, NUMBERS AND POLITESS I

Date: 14.3. 2017
Number of students: 4
Length of lesson: 90 min

MAIN AIMS: Students will practice using telephone phrases
Students will practice saying numbers

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Students can listen for specific information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTER ACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Warmer-Discussion</strong>&lt;br&gt;- to get students’ focused</td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>- whole class discussion (do not join unless necessary)</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>- alternative: ask about the phone calls they’ve just made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong>&lt;br&gt;- to revise telephoning phrases from the previous lesson&lt;br&gt;- to test students’ knowledge</td>
<td>4 min</td>
<td>- play the recording first and have students do - worksheet 1, 1.), A</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>(Telephone English, Recording 2:10-3:00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 min</td>
<td>- play the recording again and have students identify the phrases they hear&lt;br&gt;- worksheet 1, 1.), B</td>
<td>T Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>- elicit synonyms</td>
<td>Ss T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>- have students do C</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong>&lt;br&gt;- to introduce common expressions used when talking on the phone</td>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>- Ss work individually and in pairs, worksheet 1, exercise 3</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong>&lt;br&gt;- to listen for information&lt;br&gt;- to practice saying numbers</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>- play the recording twice and have Ss do worksheet 1, exercise 4&lt;br&gt;- peer check</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>(In Company, CD1, track 05-09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>- follow-up discussion</td>
<td>T S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>- have Ss do exercise 5.</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON PLAN 6
WORKSHEET 1

TOPIC 1: COMMON EXPRESSIONS, NUMBERS

1. Discussion

To write or telephone?
The advantages and disadvantages of having a phone
Mobile phones- a must, a friend, or a foe?
Have you ever dialed the wrong number?

2. Listening

A. Listen and answer the questions yes (Y) or no (N) for each call.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Call 1</th>
<th>Call 2</th>
<th>Call 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the person who answers know the caller?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the caller want to speak to the person who answers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Listen and tick the phrases you hear

2. Can I help you?
3. Hello. Three double five, double one two.
4. Can I speak to Vitale Marini, please?
5. Can I have your name, please?
6. Who's calling?
7. This is Walter Geiger.
8. Can you put me through to him, please?
9. It’s Midori.
11. This is Silvia at AIC computing.
12. Is Freddie there?
13. What can I do for you?
14. Could I speak to Freddie, please?

C. Put phrases 2-14 in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer the phone</th>
<th>Offer help/Ask who's calling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Good morning, AIC Computing.</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>..................................................</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>..................................................</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
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<tr>
<td>..................................................</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask to speak to someone</td>
<td>Say who you are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>..................................................</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>..................................................</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>..................................................</td>
<td>..................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Vocabulary

A. Match the right synonyms
to be disconnected- to hang up- to be busy- to put sb through- to get through to sb
a) to connect somebody
b) to replace
c) to be cut off
d) to be engaged
e) to reach somebody on the phone

B. Fill in the gaps with the right words

to answer- to overhear- to hang up- to speak up- to leave- to use- to mistake

a) Could you …… please? I can hardly hear you.
b) I’ m afraid Mr Young is not available at the moment. Do you want to …… a message?
c) Then we said goodbye and …… .
d) The customer …… me for my colleague and started shouting at me.
e) By accident, the assistant …… the management discussing salaries.
f) Would you mind if I …… your mobile?
g) Would you mind …… the phone? I’ m busy now.

C. Work with a partner. Find synonyms.

Ex.: a) The line is still busy. The line is still engaged.
a) The line is still busy.
b) Martin Ross speaking.
c) I’ d like to speak to Mrs Evans. Is she in?
d) Could I borrow the directory for a minute?
e) I’ m phoning to ask about …
f) Could you connect me with the financial department?
g) Can you bear with me for a minute? I’ ll get a pen.
h) Shall I tell him something?
i) Please, do not hang up.
j) At weekends I am available only on this phone number.

4. Listening

1. 1.05-1.09 Listen to the extracts and write down the phone number.
   a. 6857
   b. __________
   c. __________
   d. __________
   e. __________

2. Listen again and put the phrases in the order that you hear them.
   a. Can I speak to Derek LaMotte, please?
   b. You have one message from 903586759 at 18.30 on April 1.
   c. Ring now on 902386980. I'll repeat that for you. If you know the answer, phone us now on 902386980.
   d. Can you give me the number of Budget Car Rental, please?
   e. No, I'm afraid you've got the wrong number.
   f. I'm sorry. Could you say that again a bit slower?

3. Underline phrases in the sentences in 2 that you think are useful to know.

4. Discuss the following questions with a partner.
   a. Do you find it easy to remember telephone numbers? How many do you know by memory?
   b. Write down five random telephone numbers and dictate them to your partner as fast as possible.

5. Role-play the following situations with a partner.
   a) Call a colleague and ask them to connect you with sales department.
   b) Your colleagues called you instead of a reception. Dictate them the correct number.
   c) You need to telephone a customer. You have an appointment on Tuesday the 3rd at 16.45 but you need to change it to Thursday the 5th at 15.00.
   d) Call to ATT Company and arrange your director a meeting with Mr. Jones.

## ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
### LESSON PLAN 7 TELEPHONING: COMMON EXPRESSIONS, NUMBERS AND POLITENESS II

**Date:** 21.3. 2017  
**Number of students:** 4  
**Length of lesson:** 90 min  
**MAIN AIMS:** Students will practice using telephone phrases  
Students will practice using indirect questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Grammar**   | 8 min| - Elicit what the text might be about by having students to describe the picture  
- worksheet 2, 1.) | T Ss | Hand out the text only to those who read it, others have to listen carefully |
|                | 5 min| - elicit ways how to sound more polite | T Ss |         |
|                | 7 min| - have 2 students read the text and have other to answer the question | Ss |         |
|                | 5 min| - have Ss analyze the text in pairs | S S |         |
|                | 4 min| - Feedback | T S |         |
| **Practice**  | 8 min| - do worksheet 2, exercise 2.) with the whole class to check Ss’ understanding | T Ss | - possible homework |
|                | 7 min| - let Ss do second exercise alone, monitor, - peer check | Ss |         |
| **Speaking**  | 10 min| - divide Ss into pairs and go over instructions in exercise 3.), worksheet 1  
- monitor | S S |         |
|                | 5 min| - have one pair role play their dialogue in front of others  
- give FB | Ss Ss |         |
| **Game**      | 20 min| - worksheet 4  
- On the throw of a die, students take turns to move around the board. On landing on a square, the student to the player’s left asks him/her a question beginning with the prompt on the square. The player answers the question, talking for approximately 30–60 seconds. • If the player doesn’t talk for long enough or speaks | Ss |         |
with too many pauses, he/she goes back to the nearest ‘too busy to play’ square and starts from that square next turn. • If the student who asks the question uses the wrong form, he/she moves back to the nearest ‘too busy to play’ square. • If a student lands on a ‘too busy to play’ square, he/she misses a turn.
TOPIC 2: POLITENESS
1) Read the conversation. What is the customer asking about?

A: InterAir, Can I help you?
B: Yes, please. I’d like some information about a flight arriving from Munich.
A: Could you tell me what the flight number is?
B: The flight number? I’m not sure. I know it leaves Munich at 6:30 pm.
A: Oh yes, that’s IA 245.
B: Could you tell me what time it arrives?
A: Yes, the arrival time is 7:10 pm.
B: Do you know if there’s any delay?
A: No, the flight is on time. You can track all flights on our website.
B: Oh, that’s great. Can you tell me what the website address is?
B: Thanks!
A: You’re welcome.

Complete the table with examples from the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct question -normal question order</th>
<th>Indirect questions -affirmative word order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informative questions</strong></td>
<td>What is the flight number?</td>
<td>Could you tell me………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What time does it arrive?</td>
<td>Could you tell me………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the website address?</td>
<td>Can you tell me………………………</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes/No questions</strong></td>
<td>Is there any delay?</td>
<td>Do you know if………………………</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author.
2) Practice.

A) Reorganise the words to make indirect questions or statements.

a) tell if got my me could you she message
b) know be back will do when he you
c) do long know takes you how it
d) remember the what bus time can leaves you
e) this know do what word you means
f) know think he wants what you to do
g) idea the is time I’ve no what

B) What time does the flight leave?
Could you tell me what time the flight leaves?
NOT Could you tell me what time does the flight leave?
b) Which terminal does it leave from?
c) How far is the factory from the airport?
d) How long is the meeting with Mr Fuentes?
e) Which car hire company is it?
f) Which models do they have available?
g) Do I need an international driving licence?
h) Where are we staying?
i) Is it a nice place?
j) How far is the hotel from the nearest town?
k) Have they booked a meeting room?

3) Speaking

Speaker A: You are travelling on business in the UK. When you finish there, you are going straight to another country for a special conference. You are expected to receive information about this trip from your office, but the hotel’s Internet connection doesn’t work and you don’t have access to your email. Ring your office to get the information. Ask questions in 4 B) and note all the information.

Speaker B: You wanted to send this email to a colleague when he rings you. Answer his questions.

3a Could you tell me …?  
Jon Hird

[Diagram showing a question mark with various question cards around it, including:
- Have you ever …?
- Do you know …?
- Why did you …?
- Computer crashed – too busy to play
- I’d like to know …?
- What’s your favourite …?
- How many …?
- Have you any idea …?
- Working late – too busy to play
- When did you …?
- I’d like to know …?
- What’s the best thing about …?
- Could you tell me …?
- Missed a deadline – too busy to play
- Can you tell me …?
- How often do you …?
- Can you remember …?
- Colleague on holiday – too busy to play
- Do you think you’ll …?
- What’s your opinion of …?
- Do you know …?
- Have you got …?

Source: Clarke, S. (2003).]
ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

LESSON PLAN 8  BUSINESS TRIPS: HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS I

Date: 28.3. 2017
Number of students: 4
Length of lesson: 90 min

MAIN AIMS: Students will practice making reservations in a hotel
Students will practice booking a hotel via telephone

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Students can listen for specific information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Warmer-Discussion</strong>&lt;br&gt;-to get students’ focused</td>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>-Ss read a quote and have a whole class discussion (do not join unless necessary)</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>-alternative: in pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong>&lt;br&gt;-to test students’ knowledge</td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>-Ss match words with pictures and discuss in pairs</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>-worksheet 1, exercise 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Functional language-dialogue building</strong>&lt;br&gt;-to test students’ knowledge&lt;br&gt;-to introduce common expressions used when making a reservation</td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>-Ss work individually to produce a dialogue</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>At this point check errors only; do not overcorrect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>- worksheet 1, exercise 2</td>
<td>Ss T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>-whole class check</td>
<td>T Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong>&lt;br&gt;-to listen for information</td>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>-play the recording and have Ss do worksheet 1, exercise 3&lt;br&gt;- peer check</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>(Telephone English, rec. 21, 26:00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>play the recording and have Ss do worksheet 1, exercise 4</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>-whole class fb</td>
<td>T S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role-play</strong>&lt;br&gt;-to practice learned language</td>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>-Ss role-play the given situation on cards with a partner</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong>&lt;br&gt;-to practice making reservations</td>
<td>4 min</td>
<td>- Play the recording once and have Ss do worksheet 1, exercise 6&lt;br&gt;-have Ss do exercise 2, play the recording again and have them answer the question in exercise 7&lt;br&gt;-ask the question in exercise 8</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>(In Company, rec.1.29, 1.30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON PLAN 8
WORKSHEET 1

Topic: HOTELS
Warm-up

“In a survey by Worldwide Hotels, 72% of hotel business travelers said that they were not satisfied with basic conditions of rooms, followed by uncomfortable beds (64%), and rooms that were not ready. More than half of the respondents (53%) were more frustrated by a non-working Wi-Fi than waiting in line to check in and check out (47%).”

How often do you stay in hotels? Have you had any of the problems which frustrated travelers in the survey above? What things do you like about hotels?

Vocabulary check
1. Match a word on the left with a picture on the right and explain its meaning.

1. king ______
2. double ______
3. non-smoking ______
4. check in ______
5. room service ______
6. continental breakfast ______
7. credit card ______

Source: Author; Clarke, S. (2003).
2. In your own words, complete the following dialogue by filling in the blank bubs.

3. Listen to a quest booking a room at Tivoli Hotel. Complete the booking form.

![BOOKING FORM]

4. Listen again and complete receptionist’s request and offers with these phrases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Can I have</th>
<th>Can I take</th>
<th>How many</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How may I help</td>
<td>Is that a</td>
<td>Is there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When is that for</td>
<td>Would you like</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ........................................ you today?
2. ........................................ nights is that for?
3. ........................................ exactly!
4. ........................................ single or a double room?
5. ........................................ the card number?
6. ........................................ a contact number?
7. ........................................ confirmation in writing?
8. ........................................ anything else I can do for you today?

5. Role-play the given situation with your partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You are traveling alone. You would like a single room. You would like to pay with cash. You will be staying 2 nights. You would like a wake-up call for 7:00 A.M.</th>
<th>You are traveling alone. You would like a single room. You would like to pay with cash. You will be staying 1 night. You would like a wake-up call for 7:30 A.M.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are traveling with your husband/wife. You would like a single room. You would like to pay with credit card. You will be staying 2 nights. You would like a wake-up call for 6:00 A.M.</td>
<td>You are with your brother. You would like a double room. You would like to pay with cash. You will be staying 2 nights. You would like a wake-up call for 6:00 A.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are traveling with two friends. You would like a double room. You would like to pay with credit card. You will be staying 1 night. You would like a wake-up call for 6:30 A.M.</td>
<td>You are traveling alone. You would like a single room. You would like to pay with credit card. You will be staying 4 nights. You don’t want a wake-up call.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are traveling with your family (3 kids and spouse). You would like a suite (or a double if there are no suites available). You would like to pay with credit card. You will be staying 2 nights. You don’t want a wake-up call</td>
<td>You are alone. You would like a suite. You would like to pay with cash. You will be staying 1 night. You would like a wake-up call for 7:00 A.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lanternfish ESL (n.d.).
6. Listen to a conversation and answer questions.
   a) Where does the conversation take place?
   b) What does the customer want?
   c) What is the customer going to do?

7. Complete the dialogue using the phrases in the box. Then listen again and check your answers.

```
A Hello. My connecting flight, IB621, (a) ___________________________________ the flight to Caracas.
B Yes, sir. I’m sorry about that. You’re (b) ___________________________________.
A Right, but it’s not until eleven tonight, right?
B Yes. I’m afraid (c) ___________________________________.
A That’s nearly eight hours to wait. (d) ___________________________________ a hotel I could try?
B You (e) ___________________________________. It’s not far from the terminal building.
A Thanks. I really need somewhere to sleep.
B Would you (f) ___________________________________?
A No, that’s okay. I need to stretch my legs anyway. Thanks very much.
```

8. Have you ever been in this situation? What would/did you do?

9. Listen to a conversation and answer the questions.
   a) Where does the conversation take place?
   b) What special request does the guest make? Does he get what he wants?
   c) What would the guest like sent to his room?
   d) Does the room have Internet access?

10. Listen again and complete the phrases.

```
a  Good afternoon. Do you have ___________________________________?

b  Well, actually I have a flight at 11 this evening so I’ll ___________________________________.

c  ___________________________________ to pay for a room by the hour?

d  Well, never mind. I’ll ___________________________________.

e  Is there Internet ___________________________________?
```

ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
LESSON PLAN 9          BUSINESS TRIPS: HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS I

Date: 4.4. 2017
Number of students: 4
Length of lesson: 90 min

MAIN AIMS: Students will practice making reservations in a restaurant

Students will practice using comparative and superlative adjectives

SUBSIDIARY AIM: Students can read for specific information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening- warm-up</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>- remind Ss of last-lesson topic</td>
<td>T Ss</td>
<td>(In Company, rec.1.29, 1.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to practice making reservations</td>
<td>6 min</td>
<td>- play the recording once and have Ss do worksheet 1, exercise 9+10</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>- Have Ss read the article about a hotel individually and answer question in worksheet 2, exercise 1</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to practice reading for specific information</td>
<td></td>
<td>- whole class check</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>- let Ss answer follow-up questions in exercise 2</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- have students discuss in pairs exercise 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comparatives and superlatives</strong></td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>- have Ss find comparatives in the text, then present new language and have Ss do exercise 5 in pairs</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>- depending on Ss’ knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to present language and practice using comparatives and superlatives</td>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>- explain the rules and let Ss ask each other questions using comparatives, exercise 6</td>
<td>T S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Functional language, Role-play</strong></td>
<td>9 min</td>
<td>- Have Ss do individually worksheet 2, exercise 7, then play the recording to check - whole class FB</td>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>(Telephone English, rec. 24, 28:40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to test students’ knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Have Ss role play the situation in exercise 8</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to practice booking a table</td>
<td>9 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

126
TOPIC: Comparatives and superlatives

1. Read about a hotel chain called Yotel and say whether the statements are true or false
2. Would you want to stay in a Yotel room? Why/why not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yotel rooms are standard three-star hotel rooms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can’t sit down in a Yotel room.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yotel aims to provide a service for office workers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only the premium Yotel rooms have natural light.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check-in is automated but there is room service available.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yotel hopes that in any 24-hour period more guests will stay in the hotel than there are rooms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can rent Yotel rooms by the hour.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The creator of Yotel thinks that travellers like having reduced space.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goodbye Minibar, Hello Miniroom**

THE 46 ROOMS at Yotel Gatwick manage to squeeze a bed, a pull-down desk, closet space, a shower and a flat-screen TV into just seven square metres (or ten square metres for the ‘premium’ class). The rooms have all the best features of first-class air cabins. The result is clean and stylish, like the interior of a luxury yacht.

The philosophy of Yotel is to provide luxury but at an affordable price. To reduce costs, they use many of the features of budget flights such as online-only booking, self-service check-in, and a pricing policy which encourages early booking. The concept is really a Western adaptation of the Japanese ‘capsule’ hotel – ultra-cheap accommodation for office workers who sleep in coffin-like plastic modules stacked on top of each other. This is ideal for sites where space is limited, like airports and city centres.

Of course Yotel’s rooms are bigger than the Japanese capsules. They are also more luxurious than the average three-star hotel room. Each soundproof cabin contains a sofa that converts into a double bed and leaves space for your suitcase underneath. A soft white-and-grey colour scheme and lots of glass and mirrors gives an impression of light and airiness. On the other hand, there is no natural light as the ‘Premium cabins’ have only a window onto the corridor and in Standard class there is no window at all.

Yotel want to become the iPod of the hotel industry. They are hoping that tech-savvy travellers won’t mind booking into a small but well-designed box filled with electronic gadgets. There are 60 TV channels, 80 radio channels and 5,000 music tracks as well as wireless Internet to keep you entertained if you find it difficult to get to sleep. You can order food through the TV, and it is delivered promptly by the ‘cabins’ in takeaway boxes with wooden cutlery.

Any hotel in the world aims for 100% occupancy, but Yotel aims for better than 200% occupancy. There are travellers who stay the night, another group who check in for four or five hours’ rest in the morning and finally the afternoon guests looking for a more comfortable place than the airport terminal to have a siesta. The standard room costs £55 for the night or £25 for a four-hour slot (the minimum). Premium costs £40 for four hours, £80 overnight.

If you have an early morning flight, a long wait between flights or an unexpected delay Yotel offers an attractive option. At first sight it may seem a little claustrophobic but its creator, Simon Woodroffe, believes that this is compensated for by the quality of the product. ‘Ask a focus group if they would like to sleep in a ten-square-metre room with no natural light and you won’t get many takers – walk into a Yotel room and you want it,’ he says. Yotel has plans to open more Yotels at airports around the world.

3. What features do you expect a good hotel to provide? Tick the features you expect. Add your own ideas to the list.

- widescreen television
- wi-fi connection
- convenient location
- parking
- minibar
- air conditioning
- beautiful surroundings
- sauna
- bar
- restaurant
- swimming pool
- fitness rooms
- 24-hour room service
- massage service
- gym
- meeting rooms

4. Look at the sentences from the article.

   Of course, Yotel’s rooms are bigger the Japanese capsules.

   Underline any other sentences where things are compared.

COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective type</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 syllable</td>
<td>rich</td>
<td>richer</td>
<td>the richest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cheap</td>
<td>cheaper</td>
<td>the cheapest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 syllable with 1 vowel + consonant</td>
<td>hot</td>
<td>hotter</td>
<td>the hottest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>big</td>
<td>bigger</td>
<td>the biggest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 syllables ending in -y</td>
<td>early</td>
<td>earlier</td>
<td>the earliest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heavy</td>
<td>heavier</td>
<td>the heaviest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 syllables or more</td>
<td>economical</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>the most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interesting</td>
<td>economical</td>
<td>economical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>more</td>
<td>the most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>interesting</td>
<td>the most</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Make as many sentences as you can comparing a Japanese capsule room, a Yotel’s room, and an average three-star hotel room using adjectives from the article.

A Yotel room is smaller than a normal hotel room.
A capsule is more claustrophobic than a Yotel room.

6. Room prices of four different hotel chains vary from country to country. With a partner complete the information in the tables. Tell your partner about hotel prices like this:

In Frankfurt, the most expensive chain is Crowne Plaza. The cheapest chain of the four is Accorhotels. The second most expensive is Hilton International.

Student A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Chain</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accorhotels</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>Accorhotels</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New-York</td>
<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accorhotels</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Accorhotels</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>city</th>
<th>chain</th>
<th>price</th>
<th>city</th>
<th>chain</th>
<th>price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>London</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accorhotels</td>
<td>238</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>178</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankfurt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New-York</td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accorhotels</td>
<td>584</td>
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<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geneva</td>
<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Hilton International</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Crowne Plaza</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best Western</td>
<td>260</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Topic: RESTAURANTS

7. Mr. Zhou is booking a table at a restaurant called Renoir’s. Read the conversation below and complete the questions.

Hello, Renoir's. How may (1) _________________ ?
I'd like to book a table please.
Certainly. When is (2) _________________ ?
Wednesday 11th.
Can I (3) _________________ ?
Mr Zhou.
Can you (4) _________________ ?
Z-H-O-U.
How many (5) _________________ ?
A table for two.
Is that (6) _________________ ?
Smoking, please.
What time is that for (7) _________________ ?
Eight o'clock.
Fine. So that's a table for two on Wednesday 11th
at eight o'clock. Is there (8) _________________ ?
No. That's everything thanks.
We look forward to seeing you then. Goodbye.

8. You and your work colleague want to take the manager out for her birthday at Onyx Restaurant.
You telephone to book a table. Look at the picture and answer the restaurant’s questions.

ENGLISH FOR SECRETARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

LESSON PLAN 10  REVISION

Date: 11.4. 2017
Number of students: 4
Length of lesson: 90 min

MAIN AIMS: Students will practice greeting visitors
Students will practice offering
Students will practice taking and leaving messages
Students will practice common telephone expressions
Students will practice making reservations in a hotel
Students will practice making reservations in a restaurant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE AND AIMS</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PROCEDURE</th>
<th>INTER ACTION</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role-play- Greeting visitors</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-Give students different situations in which they can greet a visitor and let them roleplay them</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>Use LP 2, WS 1, ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play- Offering</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-Have Ss roleplay given situations</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>Use LP 3, WS 3, ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play- Telephoning: taking and leaving messages</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-Have Ss roleplay given situations</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>Use LP 5, WS 1, ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play- Telephoning: common expressions</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-Have Ss roleplay given situations</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>Use LP 6, WS 1, ex. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play- booking a hotel</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-Have Ss roleplay given situations</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>Use LP 8, WS 1, ex. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-play- booking a table</td>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>-Have Ss roleplay given situations</td>
<td>S S</td>
<td>Use LP 9, WS 1, ex. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>-Hand out tests and interview each student during writing to save time</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oral examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Résumé

The main aim of this thesis was to create an ESP course: English for Secretaries and Administrative Staff, and to prove the feasibility of this course in case of pre-intermediate students. The course was designed, taught, and evaluated with a special focus on future re-designing based on the experience. A detailed needs analysis was carried out which led to designing a ten-lesson syllabus focusing on four topics, accompanied by five examples of functional language and three grammatical topics. The course focused mainly on developing communicative competence and teaching functional language in a series of tasks needed for the students’ professions. The course was running once a week from February 7 to April 11, 2017.

As a part of assessing the learners, a series of tests and an oral examination were conducted. By comparing the results at the beginning and at the end of the course, the progression was measured. The students did better or received the same score in all the tested areas. Moreover, their active knowledge of vocabulary increased dramatically, as well as communication on the phone and social skills. Next, course evaluation was carried out. The students perceived the course positively, appreciated enough of student-talking time, and thought it improved their speaking skills. However, some of the students suggested using other than audio files, running the course twice a week, or adding other topics needed for their position. Finally, it was concluded that the course was successful and fulfilled the set goals and objectives. It was suggested to use this course as a template for other ESP courses aimed at teaching administrative staff, with possible topic supplementing or pace adjusting. What is more, it was proposed that a combination of ESL and ESP course would be ideal for especially lower level groups to target both general language knowledge as well as specific tasks.
Resumé
