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Education Catering for Professionals' Communication Needs on the Global Labour Market

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Abstract

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This article focuses on the modalities in which education could improve the specific functioning of language in business engineering communication contexts, on the global labour market. The research investigates students' skills and English resources used in business actions. The spectrum is wide and includes: discourse in economics; managerial communication; tech-mediated dialogues in business; professional sublanguages in advertising and marketing, public relations, sales techniques; business rhetoric (leaders' speech, argumentative or persuasive strategies for presentations, conducting meetings and negotiations, as well as the application of idiom resources in motivating, problem-solving, brainstorming, teambuilding, staff selection and appraisal. Preparing students as future professionals for the global labour market requires building the adequate skills for coping with the challenges posed by the business speech and its delicate feedback; with drafting business correspondence and contracts; and with the strategies of exploiting the resources of the business media. Both undergraduate and graduate education will facilitate the acquisition of the academic language of business, economics and management, used in textbooks and research, lectures, case studies and training, as well as in consulting on business topics. The intercultural dialogue is encouraged, including the study of foreign languages for business purposes at the workplace in multinationals.

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Keywords: Entrepreneur communication; global job market; intercultural business dialogue; corporate formal styles; multinationals.



1. Research design

The current research was designed as a 75-item questionnaire analysed by SPSS. The target group was made out of 237 third-year students of the Faculty of Management and Economics Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development within the University of Agronomic Studies and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest, Romania. Those included in the investigation envisage an entrepreneur career and opted for a major in Management Engineering in Catering and Agri-Tourism. The aim of the study was identifying improvement modalities for entrepreneur education in specific areas of English communication functioning in business engineering contexts, on the global labour market.



Fig. 1. Teacher education facilitating entrepreneur communication on the global labour market

For successful entrepreneurship on the global job market, as fast-evolving and ever-changing as it is nowadays, professors keep in step with the latest developments in attractive, active and modern teaching-learning communication skills in business engineering for the aspiring trainees in tertiary education.

2. Questionnaire structured on key investigated areas

Skills cultivation in academic entrepreneur education must primarily focus on business discourse, corporate and managerial communication; tech-mediated dialogue in business; professional sub-languages (those of banking, trading, accounting, manufacturing, and administration); advertising and marketing, public relations, special techniques in sales (including methods of psycho-verbal manipulation); business rhetoric (leaders’ speech, argumentative-persuasive strategies for carrying out presentations, conducting meetings and negotiations, as well as implementing idiom resources in motivating, problem-solving, brain-storming, teambuilding, staff selection and appraisal as core domains in the economic life.

Table 1. The questionnaire implemented in this research

Skills Inventory	I have the skill	Wish to improve
Written communication: able to express yourself clearly in writing		
Thinking through in advance what you want to say		
Gathering, analysing and arranging information in logical sequences		
Developing your argument in a logical way.		
Able to condense information/produce concise summary notes.		
Adapting your writing style for different audiences.		

Avoiding jargon		
Oral communication: clearly& confidently expressing ideas in speech		
Listening carefully to what others are saying.		
Able to clarify and summarise what others are communicating.		
Helping others to define their problems. Not interrupting.		
Being sensitive to body language as well as to verbal information		
Making the right impression by making effective use of dress, conduct and speech.		
Keeping business phone calls to the point		
Thinking up an interesting way to put across your message to groups.		
Successfully building a rapport with your audience when speaking to groups		
Flexibility: adapting successfully to changing situations and environments		
Keeping calm in the face of difficulties		
Planning ahead, but having alternative options in case things go wrong		
Persisting in the face of unexpected difficulties		
Persuading: able to convince others, to discuss and reach agreement		
Putting your points across in a reasoned way.		
Emphasising the positive aspects of your argument.		
Understanding the needs of the person you are dealing with.		
Handling objections to your arguments.		
Making concessions to reach agreement.		
Teamwork: working confidently within a group using tact and diplomacy.		
Working cooperatively towards a common goal.		
Contributing your own ideas effectively in a group.		
Listening to others' opinions.		
Being assertive - rather than passive or aggressive.		
Accepting and learning from constructive criticism. Giving positive feedback.		
Leadership: able to motivate and direct others.		
Taking the initiative.		
Organising and motivating others.		
Making decisions and seeing them through.		
Taking a positive attitude to failure: persevering when things are not working out.		
Accepting responsibility for mistakes/wrong decisions.		
Being flexible - prepared to adapt goals in the light of changing situations.		
Planning and organising: able to plan activities and carry them through effectively		
Setting objectives which are achievable.		
Managing your time effectively/using action planning skills		
Setting priorities- most important/most urgent.		
Identifying the steps needed to achieve your goals.		
Being able to work effectively when under pressure.		

Completing work to a deadline.		
Investigating, analysing and problem solving.		
Gathering information systematically to establish facts and principles		
Clarifying the nature of a problem before deciding action.		
Collecting, collating, classifying and summarising data systematically.		
Analysing the factors involved in a problem & being able to identify the key ones.		
Recognising inconsistencies in reasoning.		
Using creativity/initiative in the generation of alternative solutions to a problem.		
Differentiating between practical and impractical solutions.		
Numeracy: able to carry out arithmetic operations/understand data		
Multiplying and dividing accurately.		
Calculating percentages.		
Using a calculator.		
Reading and interpreting graphs and tables.		
Using statistics.		
Planning and organising your personal finances effectively. Managing a limited budget.		
Computing skills.		
Word-processing skills.		
Using databases (e.g. Access)		
Using spreadsheets (e.g. Excel)		
Using the Internet and email.		
Designing web pages.		
Programming skills.		
Developing professionalism.		
Accepting responsibility for your views and actions.		
Showing the ability to work under your own direction and initiative.		
Making choices based on your own judgement.		
Paying care and attention to quality in all your work.		
Taking the opportunity to learn new skills.		
Developing the drive and enthusiasm to achieve your goals.		

3. Results and interpretation

The questionnaire intended to reveal distinctive characteristics in these areas, namely in logical thinking traits (Adler, 1983) conveyed in clear discourse, persuasive-motivational talk, adapting speech to the envisaged audience, keeping dialogues to the point, within negotiated limits and achievable objectives, enhancing teamwork, getting and prioritising data for decision-making, actively seeking opportunities to build responsibility and initiative (Beamer, 2008).

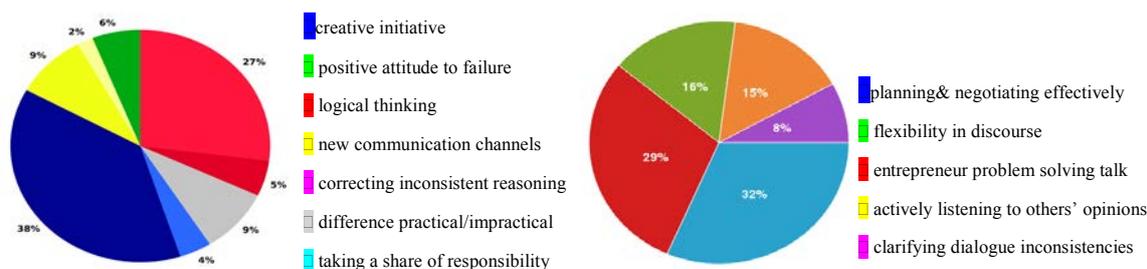


Fig. 2. Correlations between entrepreneur abilities (left) and communication skills (right) on the studied sample

Fig. 2 illustrates the marked correlation observed between logical thinking traits conveyed in clear discourse (left, red, 27%) and entrepreneur problem solving (right, red, 29%). Using creativity and initiative in alternative solutions is in step with planning and negotiating effectively, both in blue, 38% to 32% respectively. In point of discourse flexibility in adapting goals to changing situations (right, green 16%), it emerges as commensurate with the cumulated 17% (green + yellow, left) representing a positive attitude to failure and exploring new communication channels, persevering in delivering the message. The 9% (grey left) stand for differentiating between practical and impractical solutions, a positive correlation with the 8% in purple (right) representing the skill of handling objections to arguments and making concessions to reach agreement.

Fig. 3 explores further connections between clear self-expression in written communication 37.8% (blue, right) and entrepreneurs' gathering, analysing and arranging information in logical sequences blue, left (consistent with Cismas et al, 2015, p. 78). Entrepreneurs' ability to prioritise information for producing concise summary notes (11% pink, left) confirms related skills of clarifying and summarising interlocutors' speech (17.5% yellow, right). Helping others identify problems (8.5% purple, left) is in step with the ability to clarify and summarise (Cismas et al, 2015, p. 134) what others are saying (8.9% green, right). Setting achievable goals (Cismas et al, CESC2015), managing time effectively by using action planning skills (Cismas et al, CESC2015), setting priorities as most important/urgent and identifying steps to meet goals cannot exist without entrepreneurs communicating effectively under pressure (Cismas et al, SIM2015).

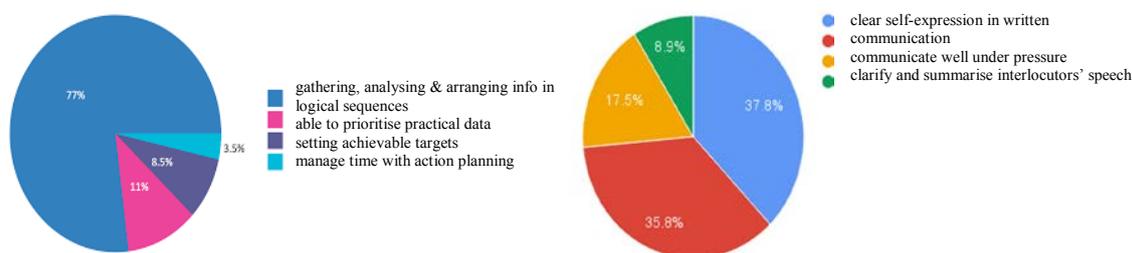


Fig. 3. Entrepreneur abilities (left) impacting communication skills (right) on the studied sample

In the light of these results professors seek compliance with EU CEFR Competence standards. Digital literacy together with professional communities of hands-on practice in this area will perfect relevant abilities (Livesey, 2002) to be mastered by all categories involved in the contemporary dynamic study process targeted at constantly shifting realities in the economic field. Testing and assessment enhance responsible and efficient autonomous learning for holistic career development,

aiming at enforcing pluri-lingual, inter-cultural and inclusive approaches for all the staff members and the entrepreneurs we are preparing.

4. Conclusion

The intercultural business dialogue is encouraged, including the teaching and learning of foreign idioms for business purposes, as well as language at the workplace in multinationals. Preparing students as future professionals for the global job market requires building the adequate skills for coping with the formality and indirectness of the business speech and its delicate feedback; with drafting business correspondence and contracts; and with the strategies of exploiting the resources of the business media.

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