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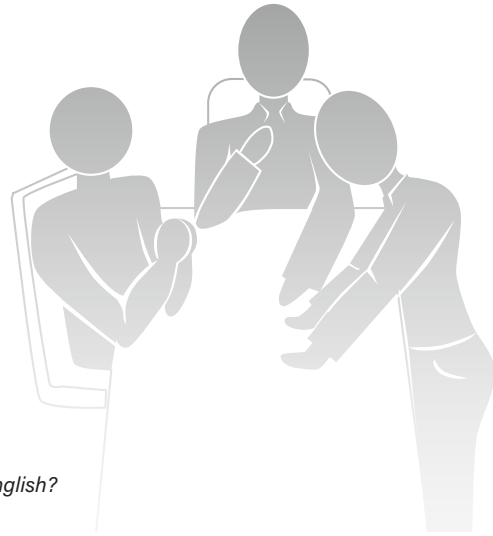


(<https://www.harimasyoin.com/BookContents/TheDayYouDoBusinessinEnglish/Character/>)

Chapter 1

Mission 3

Business English as a Lingua Franca






Pre-reading task: Think about these questions

Q1: Define Business English. How is it different from general English?

Q2: Please compare your answers in pairs. Find similarities and differences?

Q3: Now, English is considered as the standard common language for global business. Think about what has made English become so dominant in global business.


Task 1: Read the following email and answer the question

 Chern Jia Herr To: Kevin Zhang	 
Dear Kevin Zhang,	
Hi. My name is Chern Jia Herr, and I was referred to you by Riku Ando (Andy), the CEO of Rawfield. Today, I'm writing to you to consult you as to how we should proceed with our organizational linguistic restructuring, which we call Englishnization. Andy highly trusts your expertise as a corporate language policy adviser, and...	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Sincerely,	
Chern Jia Herr	

Question 1: Think about how you should fill in the blank of the above email and complete the inquiry. Please compare your answers in pairs.

Question 2: If you received this inquiry and you wanted to accept it, how would you reply?

Task 2: Read the following email reply and answer the questions

 Kevin Zhang
To: Chern Jia Herr

Dear Chern Jia Herr,

Many thanks for your inquiry. My name is Kevin Zhang. Andy and I used to work together about a decade ago. We were involved in quite a few global business projects, and many of them resulted in success. I understand that many of our successes resulted from our close communication.

To decide on how you will proceed with the English-mandate policy, you might want to refer to the theory of Business English as a lingua franca, or BELF, as per the attached. This business language ideology was originally developed in the North European context, and now is well-received in a myriad of global business contexts worldwide. According to BELF philosophy, we are all communicators that use English according to our own right, and thus none of us would claim to be either native speakers or learners of the English language.

In today's world, English is mostly spoken by non-native speakers, and I am also one of them. To proceed with your Englishnization policy, I strongly recommend that you be highly aware of the notion of BELF. Also, I offer a lot of business communication workshops to help people acquire the necessary mindset of business communication. Please refer to the associated attachment if you are interested in learning more about such training.

If you have any other inquiries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Kevin Zhang

Q1: What is indicated about the sender and Andy?

- A) They used to work together on the same projects.
- B) The sender used to report to Andy.
- C) Andy is now a legal client of the sender.
- D) The sender is a consultant of Andy.

Q2: What is suggested in the text about the sender's responsibility?

- A) He is often referred to by many executive officers.
- B) He frequently deals with the company's financial concerns.
- C) He is an incumbent executive officer at Rawfield.
- D) He organizes business workshops.

Q3: Which of the following is NOT true about this email?

- A) The sender wishes to advertise his business workshops.
- B) The sender is willing to offer a discount if the company purchases his service.
- C) The sender can possibly be of the company's assistance if needed.
- D) The sender believes that the company can benefit from BELF theory.

Task 3: Listen to two opinions retrieved from possible workshop attendees. Take notes while listening

Note A

Note B

Q1: Read the above two comments from employees. Which of them do you agree/disagree with? Please compare your answers in pairs.

Q2: Do you have another opinion? If so, please write it down.

Q3: Use your own experience of learning English and provide some insights into how learning English is different from using English.

Learning	Using
• Focus on forms	• Focus on meaning
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

Task4: Further reading

An attached article on BELF

Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) is a practical application of the idea to use English as a neutral and shared code of communication in intercultural business discourse. The users of BELF are supposed to use English in order to get the job done with evident interactional purposes.

This research tradition of BELF is deeply rooted in the globalization movement in the North European context, especially in Finland. The notion of BELF was first proposed by some European business researchers (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005). According to their definition:

BELF refers to English used as a neutral and shared communication code. BELF is neutral in the sense that none of the speakers can claim it as her/his mother tongue; it is shared in the sense that it is used for conducting business within the global business discourse community, whose members are BELF users and communicators in their own right – not non-native speakers or learners. (pp. 403-404).

By proposing BELF, Louhiala-Salminen et al. (2005) challenged the traditional ^[1]L1-L2 hierarchy which is often seen in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) paradigm. They asserted that, as a key to establishing BELF, the L1-L2 distinction of interactants should be abandoned for the sake of neutralizing English. To do so, L2 English speakers should be more aware that the ownership of English also belongs to themselves, not only L1 speakers. This argument is also supported by a number of applied linguists (e.g., Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006, 2010; Seidlhofer, 2009).

What makes BELF clearly different from EFL is the difference in successful interaction criteria. In EFL, speakers are expected to accommodate and/or acculturate themselves by following the L1 standard. In BELF, however, communication success is normally assessed in terms of whether interactants can or cannot get the job done. Handford (2010) also supported their argument by stating:

[T]he most important issue in business is not language ability, but the experience and ability to dynamically manoeuvre within the communities of practice which business people inhabit. (p. 145).

Therefore, BELF can be seen as a discipline of de facto lingua franca research, where group dynamics and discourse ecology within a community of practice in business are taken into account in order to overcome the drawback of native-speaker-centered communication norms of the English language.

*1) L1: first language

L2: second language

Post-reading tasks



1. Do online research and find out some synonyms/similar ideas of BELF, such as World Englishes, English as an international language, and Globish. Find their definitions.
2. Think about how they are similar to/different from each other. Compare your answers in pairs.