The Lack of Business Experience Versus The Lack of Appropriate Linguistic Background in Business English Teaching Context

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Abstract Nowadays, in effect of globalisation, the development of international trade and need for employees with Business English background and good business communication skills can be observed. As a result, greater demand for advanced Business English courses and qualified Business English teachers can be observed. This, in turn, may be perceived as a challenge for English language teachers. In order to meet their students' expectations and fully develop their potential, the teachers do not only need to teach about "traditional" business language (e.g., vocabulary, writing, etc.), but they are also expected to teach business communication skills (Gibson, 2002) and soft skills in general (Sadaf, 2009), relevant for business purposes. The necessity to possess an appropriate linguistic background, as well as at least basic business-related knowledge, may be a great challenge for a language teacher and a school manager. The purpose of this paper is to elaborate on the dark challenges of Business English teaching in a specific context of post-graduate studies. In the paper, we call post-graduate students university's strategic customers since they bring direct income and they significantly differ from regular students when it comes to their (higher) expectations and (richer) business background, as compared to regular students. This research follows an explorative approach and we applied a longitudinal case study approach to identify specific interrelations between Business English post-graduate students and their teachers (by teachers we mean here teachers teaching Business English, as well as teachers teaching business-related subjects at post-graduate studies) and to deepen the existing knowledge on the dark side of Business English teaching.

Keywords Business English · Teaching · Post-graduate · Challenges

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1   Introduction

In the era of globalisation, employees with Business English background, experience and skills are looked for (Tang, 2015). As a result, more and more people prepare for a job in the business field nowadays and greater demand for advanced Business English courses can be observed. This, in turn, can be perceived as a challenge for Business English teachers and educators. In order to meet their students' expectations and fully develop their potential, teachers do not only need to teach about business language (e.g., vocabulary, writing, etc.), but they also need to teach business communication (Gibson, 2002), soft skills (Sadaf, 2009) relevant for business purposes (language of persuasion, stress management in business, public speaking and business presentations, business etiquette, etc.). Business English teachers are also expected to possess at least basic business-related knowledge (Tang, 2015). The teachers therefore claim that teaching Business English is much more difficult than teaching general English and they report great occupational stress due to the specificity of Business English teaching. The aim of the paper is to discuss the negative aspect of Business English teaching and propose potential solutions to the problems encountered by teachers. At first, however, Business English itself, its position in foreign language teaching and its specificity are going to be discussed.

2   The Role and Specificity of Business English Teaching

According to Zhu, Lin, and Zhu (2016), Business English at first developed from scientific English, and then (from the second half of the twentieth century) as a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Geng (2017) stresses that this area is attracting more and more attention and therefore deserves a considerate focus, especially in view of the fact that it is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary subject based on linguistics and applied linguistics (Zhu, 2010) rather than a simple addition of business and English. Geng (2017) calls it an organic integration of Business and English and an inevitable product of economic globalisation. Chuan and Zhu (2011) claim that Business English is a comprehensive subject based on linguistics and absorbing other research methods; it consists of three main elements: business background knowledge, the language used in a business context, and business communication skills. Many researchers in the field (i.e., Geng, 2017; Kustec, 2014; Mihaescu, 2013) unanimously agree that Business English is a very important and "hot" branch of ESP, but it still faces many problems and it needs a more systematic methodology of teaching (Sadaf, 2009) and, as a discipline, the development of theory system (Zhu et al., 2016). Business English teaching entails teaching business-related vocabulary, communication skills, business-related subjects, such as, for instance, marketing, sales techniques, EU funds, etc. Zhu et al. (2016) stress that:

> Business English is a system of communicative activities in which the business activity participants influenced by social elements obey the usage of trade and procedure, use

English vocabulary and grammar resources selectively, and apply pragmatic strategy and communicate orally or in writing. Now it has developed as a complete education system, including international trade, finance, marketing, management, e-commerce, cross-cultural communication, and so on. (p. 1)

It is visible that Business English teaching is much more than just foreign language teaching (Scrivener, 2005); it is, in view of Mihaescu (2013), teaching language and skills. According to Lang (1990), a demand for selecting business-related teachers who have a good or a very good command of English and willingness to teach in English, and who, at the same time, are ready to reflect on their own teaching, can be observed. Already knowing what Business English teaching is and what it entails, a question concerning the dark side of the process emerges. Is it only a problem of its complexity that teachers report, or are there some other factors contributing to teachers' negative feelings associated with BE (Business English) teaching?

3 Teachers' Dilemmas and Problems Concerning Teaching Business English

Taking into consideration the complexity of the scope of Business English teaching, it seems reasonable to assume that teaching it may trigger negative emotions of teachers. Before analysing those emotions, problems associated with Business English teaching should be discussed. First of all, the teaching goals for Business English students are not only to gain some knowledge about business (like, for instance, a business letter construction), but to learn how to use English to communicate flexibly and efficiently in a business environment and how to deal with real problems occurring in international business (Zhu et al., 2016). This is much more difficult for the teacher than teaching general English since it entails expertise in more than one field (e.g., linguistics and management).

Nowadays, according to Tang (2015), business teachers are required to have business background, and to constantly update teaching techniques, which, in turn, can offer their students a profound knowledge in this field. An average graduate of English Philology very rarely may boast about such expertise in both business and knowledge concerning modern teaching techniques that would be applicable in the context of Business English teaching. Kustec (2014; after Gibson, 2002) claims that newly-qualified teachers tend to lack a basic business awareness and an understanding of business life situations, and they are not familiar with the intercultural challenge, cultural dimensions, and the concept of business communication.

What is more, a problem frequently reported by Business English teachers is the one associated with teaching too heterogeneous groups. By heterogeneous we mean here vast differences with relation to students' linguistic background (mixed-ability groups), students' background business knowledge, their age and social status (Sadaf, 2009). Students enrolling for Business English courses that are not a part

of a regular Bachelor or Master study programme usually represent very heterogeneous backgrounds. Ringler (1997) stresses that Business English students are, in the majority of cases, non-native speakers of English and they should be taught for service purposes. Teaching for service purposes means task-based learning (Sadaf, 2009) with emphasis on the acquisition of global requirements within Business English, together with language accuracy and proficiency. Such an approach to language teaching is, according to Ringler (1997), more practical than standard lecturing and it aims at empowering students to use Business English skills in practical business situations. It is all more difficult to design and implement for the teacher than typical, general foreign language content. Besides, task-based approaches to foreign language teaching are most often associated with private sector teaching services rather than public ones. The teachers providing business courses in public schools (like, for instance universities at Bachelor or Master programmes) would need to change their teaching completely if they wanted to meet the requirements of modern Business English teaching. Mihaescu (2013) claims that such problems as the ones discussed above cause teachers' dilemmas in relation to designing a course syllabus, especially in view of the fact that there is no standard description of what a Business English syllabus should be like, and most of the existent business coursebooks present a generally-accepted common core of vocabulary, structures and functions. Geng (2017) also stresses that Business English teachers should try to constantly adjust and perfect the curriculum in accordance with the changing business environment and students' changing needs, which, in turn, appears a very time-consuming and difficult task for teachers that generally are overloaded with work (Wieczorek & Mitręga, 2017).

The greatest challenge, though, seems the necessity to combine expertise from a variety of fields (e.g., linguistics and management) as, according to Łuczak (2012), Business-English-related classes should be taught by English teachers who also possess business knowledge. It may be perceived as a challenge not only for the teachers, but for school managers as well. For that reason, we decided that it would be worthwhile to have a close look at the negative aspects of the process of Business English teaching.

4   The Dark Side of Business English Teaching: Study Conceptualisation and Context

As mentioned earlier, the necessity to possess an appropriate linguistic background, as well as at least basic business-related knowledge, may be a great challenge for a teacher and a school manager. For that reason, we decided to elaborate on this issue and investigate if Business English teachers really perceive it as something negative and, if so, what the main reason for such feelings is. Additionally, we wanted to propose coping strategies which Business English teachers can use and we would like to discuss how the whole process of education is affected by all the Business

English teaching-related issues. The study context is post-graduate studies in the field of Business English organised at a middle-size public university in Poland, where all subjects—Business English, soft skills and business-related subjects (like, for instance, marketing strategies, sales strategies, negotiations, etc.)—are taught in English, by English teachers and teachers experienced in the area of management studies. It appears to be an underdeveloped research direction since the majority of research studies in the field were generally oriented at Business English teaching, without focusing on the specific context of post-graduate teaching.

Post-graduate teaching is specific due to a few reasons. First of all, taking into consideration rapid changes witnessed by contemporary academia (like, for instance, demographic crisis in the EU, changes in the financial system of universities resulting in stronger emphasis on scholars' finding financing outside university, e.g., grants, internships, etc.), universities now compete for students and take great care of extra income sources. By extra income sources we do not mean here money provided by the government for educating regular students, but money that students bring directly to the university, for instance by paying for extramural studies. Specifically, we call post-graduate students strategic or key customers at universities for the reason that they bring direct income and they significantly differ from regular students when it comes to their expectations and background knowledge. Post-graduate students tend to have different motivations for studying; as older and already involved professionally people, they know which pieces of knowledge they need to absorb to become better employees and to boost career. Therefore, they have clear expectations towards the lecturers and the learning-teaching process. Thus, they are relatively highly motivated but they also expect more, as compared to regular students. What is more, they tend to have much wider background knowledge of the subject matter since they very often are already specialists in the field they want to explore. They are really involved in classes, which creates an advantage but, at the same time, some of them may manifest wider practical knowledge than the academic teacher conducting a class and this may be perceived by some teachers as something difficult to cope with. Post-graduate students may also significantly differ as far as age, profile of education, etc. are concerned, and, this way, it may be more difficult to teach them, especially when it comes to foreign language teaching. For all those above reasons, we think that elaborating on the dark side of post-graduate Business English teaching may be a very interesting research direction and it may shed new light on various processes accompanying it that may be important not only for the teachers, but for studies' managers and university authorities as well since post-graduate students are nowadays perceived as university's key customers.

5 Research Approach

We applied a longitudinal case study approach to explore specific interrelations between Business English post-graduate students and their teachers (by teachers we

mean here teachers teaching Business English, as well as teachers teaching business-related subjects at Business English-related post-graduate studies), and to deepen the existing knowledge on the dark side of Business English teaching. The case study method was often used in prior studies concerning business relationships (e.g., Pérez & Cambra-Fierro, 2015) and we can call the relationship between a university and its strategic customers a business-like one. Our study focuses on the dark side of a dyadic relationship between an organization and their key customers. The longitudinal case study method allowed us to observe which aspects of Business English teaching the teachers find most problematic, what is most difficult for foreign language teachers and what is problematic for teachers teaching other, business-related subjects in English to post-graduate students. The research was mostly qualitative in nature, which, taking into consideration the sensitivity of the issue under investigation (people's feelings and problems concerning Business English teaching), assured best results thanks to the closeness between the researcher and the investigated reality (Konecki, 2000).

5.1 Study Objectives

The main study objective was to explore specific interrelations between Business English post-graduate students and their teachers (teaching Business English, as well as other business-related subjects at post-graduate studies) and the dark side of Business English teaching. Detached objectives concerned deepening our existing knowledge in the area and discussion on the most problematic aspects of Business English teaching, specifically what is most difficult for foreign language teachers teaching Business English to post-graduate students with business background and what is problematic for teachers teaching business-related subjects in English to post-graduate students and how studies' managers should plan the educational process to achieve best results, taking into consideration the specificity of the student environment and expectations. Last but not least, we tried to look for benefits and threats of post graduate Business English and business teaching, and propose some solutions/coping strategies for teachers and studies' managers.

5.2 Profile of Informants

The informants were students of Business English-related post-graduate studies, their teachers and 2 study managers (heads of studies). The studies' offer was generally addressed to English Philology students/graduates who lacked business-related skills and to corporate workers who especially lacked linguistic skills in the area of Business English.

The students were, in the majority of cases, corporate workers from various business sectors who lacked linguistic knowledge with relation to Business English

vocabulary and who lacked good English communication skills, and English philology graduates (mostly English teachers) who lacked business-related knowledge and Business English vocabulary. They chose that offer mainly for two reasons: first of all, acquiring a diploma in the area of Business English studies, nicely tailored to their career, and, secondly, they were looking for new knowledge and competencies with relation to business and business-related soft-skills area. They had clear needs and high expectations, and, at the same time, some of them had really significant knowledge in the area of sales, communication and sometimes middle-level management, as they were experienced employees. This way, they were valuable and demanding customers for the university and, especially, lecturers. Most of the students really wanted to contribute to the learning and teaching process and they took an active participation in shaping the course program for the next years. They also had a substantial impact on the attitudes of prospective customers (students) since their recommendations and word-of-mouth marketing played a significant role in promoting the studies.

Two heads of Business-English-related post-graduate studies also participated in the research; one of them was an expert in the area of English linguistics and had experience in Business English teaching, whereas the other one was an expert in the field of management and had some experience in teaching classes in which the language of instruction was English. They both were scholars. The two heads of studies were the initiators of the studies and authors of the study curriculum and syllabi.

Among the post-graduate teachers that participated in the research, there were 2 teachers of English that taught Business English and some business-related soft skills and 5 teachers of business-related subjects (e.g., sales strategies and negotiations, marketing, EU funds, etc.). Six of those teachers were scholars, whereas one was a so-called business practitioner (corporate top manager) teaching some business-related classes in English to post-graduate students.

5.3   Research Method and Tools

There were three main information sources that we used in the case study. Firstly, we used a survey method in which the research tool was an anonymous student satisfaction questionnaire administered twice per an academic year at post-graduate studies. The tool was not designed specifically for the purpose of this study because the heads of post-graduate studies have to administer questionnaires in order to measure satisfaction of students concerning the services provided and then report the results to university authorities. However, we realised that such questionnaires are an excellent source of information much beyond the quality of teaching–learning process and, for that reason, they were used for the purpose of exploring the specific interrelations between Business-English-related post-graduate students and their teachers (teaching business English, as well as other business-related subjects at post-graduate studies), especially with relation to problems encountered in the process of teaching,

students' expectations towards teachers and the teaching–learning process. The student questionnaire aimed at measuring student satisfaction and extensive feedback with regard to various aspects of teaching/learning twice per academic year. This means that each group of students (each edition of studies) filled it in twice. In the questionnaire, there were close-ended questions designed in the form of a Likert scale which measured the performance of teachers in the following categories: expert knowledge, the proportion between theoretical and practical elements in each subject, the quality and usefulness of materials administered to students, the quality of teaching style of each teacher, and teachers' attitudes towards students. There were also open-ended questions that were more important for the purpose of our case study approach and there students were asked which elements of the offer and teaching they were most satisfied and dissatisfied with, and why, and who their favourite and most disliked teachers were, and why. They were also welcomed to give any suggestions concerning the concept of studies, offer and programme, and many of them provided such information. Each year, the heads of studies categorised and analysed the results and wrote down some conclusions concerning the study programme and the quality of teaching. In total, 127 informants participated in the survey within 5 years. We do not call it a longitudinal survey although the research lasted for 5 years for the reason that each year a different (new) group participated in the research.

The second method we used was a longitudinal interview carried out among post-graduate teachers. For the last 3 years, 7 teachers were asked to participate in personal unstructured interviews which concerned various aspects of teaching, including problematic situations experienced by them during the teaching process and interactions between students and themselves. The results of the anonymous student satisfaction questionnaires were also elaborated on during those interviews; the teachers got feedback and some solutions to potential problems were proposed.

The third method that we used was a longitudinal, participatory observation (Clegg, 2013; Gebhard, 2006) carried out for 6 years by two heads of studies. Every year, the heads of studies carried it out in order to make their teaching better and to improve the studies' offer, i.e.,—to adjust the syllabus and teaching methods to students' needs/expectations, and to reflect on one's own teaching. Observation included discussion on the teaching quality, study management and encountered problems and proposition of changes to be implemented in the course, if necessary, as well as changes in one's behaviour with relation to teaching and managing the studies.

In this paper, we try to analyse mostly qualitative data we gathered over the investigated time and try to interpret them in the context of the negative aspects of teaching Business English and business-related subjects in the context of post-graduate studies. The empirical material contained quantitative elements (Likert-scale-based information concerning performance of all academic teachers, usefulness of materials, teachers' attitudes towards students) and qualitative elements (open-ended questions referring to the advantages and disadvantages of the studies' programme, preferences with regard to the best and the worst academic teacher each year, etc.). In this case study, we were mostly interested in the qualitative data and only sometimes used quantitative information just to validate the qualitative results

(e.g., checking if an academic teacher described in open-ended questions as the best one scored high on the Likert scale as one having great expertise, manifesting positive attitudes towards students, incorporating a good proportion of theory and practice into classes). To a large extent, with regard to results of personal, individual interviews, the qualitative data was double coded to avoid coder's bias (Krippendorff, 2004) and then it was analysed in accordance with the principles of QDA (Qualitative Data Analysis) (Seidel, 1998) and, especially, of the process of noticing, collecting and thinking. On the basis of the emerged theory, study objectives were addressed and they are going to be elaborated on in the next section of the paper.

6 Research Results and Discussion

The qualitative data that emerged as a result of applying QDA (Seidel, 1998) principles to data analysis revealed results that may potentially contribute to the still underdeveloped area of Business English teaching, especially in the very specific context of post-graduate teaching. Our results show problematic areas in teaching Business English and business-related subjects to people having background in linguistics and in business, and give an insight into the nature of an interaction between postgraduate students and their teachers, together with students' expectations towards the teaching process. The results have been grouped and they are presented below.

6.1 Students' General Expectations Concerning Business English and Business-Related Courses

When it comes to the expectations of students concerning the teaching process and the attitudes and expertise of teachers, English Philology graduates, as well as corporate workers, expected teachers who were able to provide a valuable course content, using modern teaching methods containing fun element. The teachers that achieved the highest score on the Likert scale were the ones that were reported by the students to implement games, role-plays and brainstorming sessions into their teaching. The informants (the students) indicated that they learnt faster this way and, at the same time, practiced communication and could perfect their soft skills due to constant interaction with the teacher and fellow students. Among the best teachers enumerated by the informants, teachers with linguistic background had higher scores. The differences were not substantial, but they gave a hint that probably teachers with linguistic (English) background were more at ease while conducting classes in English; besides, they were teachers of English by profession, so they had knowledge with relation to teaching methodology. Such teaching methodology is most likely helpful in achieving higher scores for innovative teaching methods. Incorporating elements of fun into

post-graduate teaching also seems crucial in view of the specificity of such teaching—post-graduate students are extramural students and, in most cases, they have classes once per two weeks. The classes last the whole weekend (usually a given subject comprises 8 or 10 h per day) and here the entertaining element is very important to keep the students focused and motivated.

6.1.1 Differences of Expectations and Satisfaction Between Corporate Workers and English Philology Graduates

There were differences spotted in some expectations of corporate workers and English Philology graduates—both groups were generally satisfied with the quality of teaching and the studies' content, but they had contradictory expectations concerning some areas.

English Philology graduates were very satisfied with business-related subjects but expected a more advanced linguistic input. Some of them were even a bit disappointed when it comes to the scope of Business English classes. Those people were used to a very advanced linguistic input, taking into consideration their education and background knowledge, and this is the reason of their disappointment. Generally, they very rarely take it into consideration while enrolling for the studies that the group will be very heterogeneous with relation to linguistic competence. They were very satisfied with the services provided by Business English teachers but expected a broader scope.

When it comes to corporate workers, they were very satisfied with the linguistic input provided and generally satisfied with business-related subjects, but on condition that they could have fun while learning and could improve soft skills at the same time. This indicates that they were aware that they learnt best through interaction with teachers and colleagues, and that they found the development of business-related soft skills (e.g., business communication, social influence, public speaking, etc.) crucial for their overall linguistic and business development.

Corporate workers expected more case studies as a part of business-related subjects, whereas English Philology graduates found them boring and irrelevant to the course. This suggests that English Philology graduates were not fully aware of the importance of case studies within business theory and practice, whereas corporate workers were fully aware and expected more such elements incorporated into the teaching.

As far as language skills and students' needs with relation to them are concerned, corporate workers expected more speaking practice, whereas English Philology graduates—more classes devoted to written English. This shows the areas of students' needs concerning both groups: corporate workers knew that they had some lacks when it comes to speaking practice, whereas English Philology graduates, who were proficient speakers of English, needed more written practice, namely business letter and report writing practice. Corporate workers reported that they found it really difficult to spend 8 h speaking English and/or listening to teachers and colleagues speaking English.

All the differences of expectations and areas of satisfaction show that groups taught at post-graduate studies in the area of Business English are very heterogeneous. Such groups can be very problematic for students themselves and their teachers as well. Heterogeneity is not, of course the only problem observed in this context. All the problems reported by the investigated teachers are going to be discussed below.

6.2 Problems Reported by Teachers of Business English and Business-Related Subjects

The problems discussed in this section were reported by teachers of Business English and business-related subjects at Business-English-related post-graduate studies and by the heads of post-graduate studies who needed to solve some of the problems and adjust the teaching and the course content to students' expectations and teachers' capabilities. All the informants claimed that the most difficult and, at the same time, crucial thing about post-graduate teaching was to find balance between satisfying the needs of the two groups of students (corporate workers and English Philology graduates) and they all reported stress due to contradictory students' expectations and demands. This is compatible with the views of Kyriacou (2001) who discovered that student expectations, especially if they are contradictory, trigger teacher stress.

The lack of balance resulted in stress of all teachers and heads of studies, and they all stated that it was the most serious problem in the process of teaching. There were, however, other problems reported and there were some discrepancies visible between the teachers of Business English and teachers of business-related subjects. They are going to be discussed below.

6.2.1 Teaching Problems and Stressors Experienced by Business English Teachers and Teachers of Business-Related Subjects—Differences

The first problem to be discussed is an emotional one which concerns teachers of business-related subjects. Some of the teachers (and especially the so-called business practitioner) reported that they found it extremely stressful to speak English in the presence of English Philology graduates for fear of making mistakes, lacking fluency, bad pronunciation, etc. Those teachers did not have a formal linguistic background, although they had taught in English before and had produced papers in English. This suggests that the problem is rather emotional since it concerns the affective side of teaching and not real, serious lack of linguistic competence. The groups that they had previously taught were students other than English Philology graduates and they reported to have had better language skills than their students. In case of teaching Business-English-related post-graduate students, the situation was just the

opposite, especially in the case of English Philology graduates, and the teachers found it problematic.

The teachers with English linguistic background reported other significant problems. First of all, they were aware (and as a result, stressed) that, while teaching Business English, they should teach not only about the language, but explain some business phenomena and give examples—some found it extremely difficult and stressful because of the presence of corporate workers who had a deeper business knowledge and understood some of the discussed phenomena better. Furthermore, Business English teachers reported some terminology problems—a discrepancy between theory and practice concerning some business vocabulary. In conclusion, some problems of Business English teachers were also of affective nature and they were similar to the problems reported by the teachers of business-related subjects; they all were stressed by the confrontation with students who had deeper knowledge and richer background than the teachers. The teachers with linguistic background feared corporate workers and their business expertise, whereas the teachers of business-related subjects feared the linguistic competence of English Philology graduates. We are inclined to think that the problems were emotional and did not show real lack of competence since all of the teachers scored high in student satisfaction questionnaires and students did not report the lack of competence of their teachers. The discrepancies between theory and practice concerning some business vocabulary were really problematic and forced the heads of studies to implement some changes in the way of delivering knowledge to students and in formulating teaching suggestions for teachers.

7   Conclusions and Teaching Implications

As discussed earlier, there were some significant problems reported by all the informants. Some of them resulted from low self-confidence of the investigated teachers, connected with teaching students who may have greater expert knowledge in some areas than the teachers. Those problems were mainly affective and we believe that they can be easily overcome and teacher stress resulting from them can be ameliorated if the teachers understand that they cannot be experts in all fields and, if they appreciate their students' expertise, let them actively participate in the process of teaching. The main problem, however, that is really the dark side of Business English teaching at post-graduate studies is the discrepancy between theory and practice (some vocabulary-related problems) and contradictory expectations of students who have very diversified educational backgrounds. Despite all the problems reported, we believe that the process of teaching can be improved if some practical solutions and coping strategies are implemented.

When it comes to coping strategies and solutions to the reported problems, the strategies proposed below may be applicable not only to post-graduate Business English teaching, but to all courses related to business and Business English teaching

since they are universal and revolve around solving problems encountered by many teachers in the field of Business English.

First of all, the heterogeneity of business groups, especially in the context of post-graduate teaching, will always be observed and the key issue is to find balance between contradictory expectations of students and between these expectations and capabilities of teachers. The balance here means selecting an appropriate course content and teaching methods that would be suitable for all students (e.g., a little bit lowering the input for the most advanced students and increasing it for the less advanced ones). It is coherent with the suggestions of Geng (2017) who claimed that Business English teachers should try to constantly adjust and perfect the curriculum in accordance with the changing business environment and students' changing needs. In view of the fact that finding such a balance is very stressful for teachers, they should try to accept the situation and work out some coping strategies—for instance self-observation (Gebhard, 2006) followed by self-reflection (Łuczak, 2012) concerning their teaching that would help them to eliminate course content and activities which are not popular among students and improve their teaching. They should also be open to discussion and interaction with students and not afraid of those more competent ones. They should apply coaching methods of teaching which encourage student–teacher and student–student interaction, and which treat the teacher as a moderator in some teaching situations. This way, the teacher can facilitate some discussions and encourage competent students to share their knowledge with colleagues rather than treat them as competitors because of whom they may lose face.

Teachers of Business English can and, in our opinion, should gain at least basic knowledge in the field of management studies by, for instance, doing research and writing papers in the field; especially in view of the fact that Business English is a comprehensive subject, based on linguistics and absorbing other research methods, and it consists of three main elements: business background knowledge, the language used in business context, and business communication skills (Chuan & Zhu, 2011).

The studies' managers, in turn, should encourage their staff to use modern, activating methods of teaching, implement elements of coaching and case studies into their teaching. By implementing the proposed strategies, not only will the teachers feel better in their professional shoes, but the whole teaching process will improve and the image of studies will be more positive, so all the parties will get an advantage.

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