Inglish for Business
Communication

全方位

商多獎簡口語

王艳 编著

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前 言

作为北京外国语大学国际商学院的一名英语教师,笔者在多年的英语教学中深深体会到,英语学习者普遍感觉说好英语很难,能在商务活动中灵活地运用英语更难。随着中国加入世界贸易组织和经济全球化进程加快,社会急需一大批高层次复合型的国际商务英语人才。较高的商务英语交际能力,熟练的商务英语沟通技巧,已成为新经济时代商务人员必备的专业技能之一。为满足广大教师、学生和从事商务活动人员的需要,笔者编写此书,力图使大家通过全方位、综合性的商务英语交际训练,培养在各种商务环境下熟练运用英语知识与技能的能力,学习涉外商务活动中的交际技巧和方法,从整体上提高商务英语交际能力。

本书有鲜明的时代感,体现出"实用性、全面性、话题式、趣味性"等特点,希望有益于从事外经贸和其他涉外行业人员以及相关专业的学习者。本书根据各种商务活动的具体情境,商务交际的不同内容和商务活动的不同环节,为学习者提供了语言规范、内容新颖、通俗易懂、层次分明、集科学性、教育性和趣味性于一体的互动式商务英语交际训练场景。全书共分 18 个单元,每个单元由 4~5 个部分组成,基本包括: Warm-up, Read and Talk, Act It Out 和 Self-evaluation 等。每个部分都有针对性的交际活动设计,各部分活动间由浅入深,循序渐进,尽可能体现活动的全面性和可操作性,并突出以小组或项目活动为核心,充分发挥学生的创造性和自主性。

笔者在教学实践中不断发现和总结英语口语课堂教学的规律和特点,认为英语口语教学的开展应充分体现"一个中心和四个要点",即:以学生自主参与为核心,以广泛的信息输入为出发点,以多样的情景操练为根本点,以深入的话题拓展为重点,以发展创造性思维为延伸点。而这一规律和特点同样可以体现在商务英语口语教学中。笔者在编写本书时,不论从材料的选择、内容的编排,还是活动的设计组织等方面都尽可能体现口语课堂教学的规律和特点,突出"实用性、全面性、话题式、趣味性"。本书的主要特点体现在以下几个方面:

- 1. 以商务交际情景为核心:活动的设计强调交际功能的重要性,突出口头操练和深入的思维相结合,全面提高学生在不同商务情景中的交际能力。力图使学生使用规范的语言,得体地从事商务交际活动。
 - 2. 选材广泛、内容新颖:每个单元精选最新的商务文章,力图体现时代性和广泛性、交

际性和知识性,要求学生在阅读的基础上熟悉最新的商务知识,掌握相关的词汇和表达法,了解商务交际特定的社会文化环境,从而从整体上提高学生的语言欣赏能力和语言运用能力。

- 3. 实用性强:话题紧扣商务活动的某一方面,交际活动基于某个模拟的商务交际情景,使学生在了解相关商务知识的同时,操练商务交际技能。根据外贸业务的基本环节和商务活动的情境,设计了询价、报盘与还盘、价格、包装、保险、支付、装运、签订合同以及不同商务场合的接待、商务洽谈或不同商务情境的演说等交际场景,供学生进行模拟操练。
- 4. 交际情景丰富、形式多样:笔者在反复的教学实践基础上,挑选并编排以学生为中心的活动设计。话题力求丰富、新颖,并体现实用价值,便于引发畅谈和交流。活动形式多样,注重提高学生从不同的角度阐述见解的实际交际能力,如商务场景对话、角色扮演、案例分析、会议发言、演讲、访问、模拟谈话节目以及辩论等活动。
- 5. 集科学性、教育性和趣味性于一体:内容的编排力图调动学生个人感性经验的介人,既激发学生说英语的兴趣,又训练他们自如地应对不同交际场合的能力。充分发挥他们的想象和创造性思维,培养他们在口语表达中做到言之有物,言之有序和言之有理,在真实的交际情境中提高语言运用的实际能力,从而全面提高学生的语言运用能力。使学生不仅能提高外贸业务实用英语口语,还可以丰富他们的社会知识,端正生活态度,提高思想素养。

本书适宜商务英语专业、对外经贸、工商管理等专业的学生,英语专业二、三年级学生或非英语专业中等程度以上的学生使用,也可供商务英语自学者、涉外商贸工作人员参考使用。在使用本书时,笔者建议应充分发挥学生参与的自主性和能动性;教师在教学中要注意引导学生触类旁通,加强引导和总结辨析,根据学生的特点和实际交际情景的需要,有的放矢地选择和提炼教学内容。

本书在编写过程中参考了一些国内外近年来出版的有关资料,特向这些作者致以衷心的感谢。并承蒙美籍专家 Marie Johnson 对本书提出了宝贵的修改意见,在此一并致谢。

由于时间仓促,编者水平有限,书中疏漏谬误之处在所难免,恳请各位专家、同行和广大读者批评指正。

王艳 2005 年 1 月 北京外国语大学

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Unit 1

Improving Oral Communication Skills

ral communication is an important business communication skill. It includes listening, conducting interviews and meetings, and giving speeches and presentations. Good communication skills are highly important in assessing an individual's chance of success.

Part I Warm-up

Situational Practice

Hosting Business Guests

Sample Dialogue 1

(At the airport)

- A: Excuse me. Are you Mr. Johnson from Britain?
- B: Yes, I am.
- A: My name is Zhang Lan. I'm from China Chemicals Imp & Exp Corporation. This is Wang Ning, from Ever Bright Trading Company. We've come to meet you.
- B: How are you, Mr. Zhang? I'm very pleased to meet both of you. Thanks for coming to meet me.
- A: Welcome to Beijing.
- B: Well, I'm sorry I'm so late. You see, there was a certain delay in Manchester and we were late for 30 minutes. I hope you haven't been waiting long.
- A: No, no, it's OK. I was able to catch up on some of my notes.
- B: Oh, good.
- A: It's a great pleasure to meet you, Mr. Johnson.
- B: Yeah, I've been looking forward to meeting you too, Mr. Zhang.
- A: How was your flight?
- B: Great service and nice food! Thanks. Where are we heading now?
- A: Oh, good. I think it is best if we go to your hotel to check in first if that's OK. If you don't mind, we'd like to accommodate you at the Holiday Inn. This way, please.
- B: Terrific.
- A: Can I take one of your bags?
- B: Oh, thanks, here you are.

(On the way)

- A: You'll be here for three days, right?
- B: That's right. I'll attend the Trade Fair tomorrow and then I'll go to Guangzhou.
- A: Is there any place you'd like to visit in particular? I could help you arrange that.
- B: Well, the schedule is a bit tight but I'd like to make a field tour to a car manufacturing

factory, if possible.

- A: Ok. I'll have it set up for you and let you know this evening.
- B: That will be terrific. Thank you.
- A: My pleasure.

(At the hotel)

- A: This is your room. How do you find it?
- B: Oh, what a nice room! Thank you for everything you've done for me.
- A: It's a pleasure to be of help. If you should have any inconvenience, don't hesitate to let me know and I'll be glad to help you out. And I hope you will enjoy your stay in Beijing.
- B: I'm sure I will. By the way, can I get a city map in the hotel?
- A: Yes, you can get one at the service counter downstairs.
- B: I see.
- A: Mr. Johnson, if there's nothing else, I think I will be leaving now.
- B: I think that's all. You've thought of everything.
- A: Good-bye, then. Have a good rest. I'll be seeing you tomorrow morning.
- B: Right. See you tomorrow. I'll be ready for business.

Sample Dialogue 2

- A: Good morning, My name is Rick Wadeson. I'm from Britain. Here is my card.
- B: Thank you. I'm pleased to meet you, Mr. Wadeson. My name is Liu Feng, the representative of China National Arts & Crafts Import and Export Corporation.
- A: Pleased to meet you, too, Mr. Liu. I travel a lot every year on business, but this is my first visit to China. I must say I have been much impressed by your friendly people.
- B: Thank you for what you said. Have you seen the exhibition halls? On display are most of our products, such as cushions, table cloths and luncheon sets.
- A: Oh, yes. I had a look yesterday. I found some of the exhibits fine in quality and beautiful in design. The exhibition has successfully displayed to me what your corporation handles. I've gone over the catalogue and pamphlets enclosed in your last letter. I've got some idea of your exports, I think I'm interested in importing your cushions.
- B: Our cushions are known for their good quality. They are one of our major exports. The cushions are brightly colored and beautifully designed. They've met with great favor overseas and are always in great demand.
- A: I like the traditional Chinese design. Now I've a feeling that we can do a lot of trade in

this line. We wish to establish long-term relations with you.

- B: That's great!
- A: Concerning our financial position, credit standing and trade reputation, you may refer to our bank, or to our local chamber of commerce.
- B: Thank you for your information. As you know, our corporation is state-owned, we always stick to the principle of equality and mutual benefit in our trade with foreign countries. Establishing business relations between us will be to our mutual benefit. I have no doubt that the mutually beneficial relations will bring about closer ties between us.
- A: That sounds interesting. I'll send a telex home. As soon as I receive a definite answer, I'll place orders.
- B: We'll then make an offer as soon as possible. I hope a lot of business will be put through between us.

A: So do I.

Practice

Build up a dialogue with your partner based on the following situation.

You are Assistant Manager of Hope Computer Corp. Ltd. You are asked to go to the airport to meet an important customer of your company, Mr. Darren Miller from the Silicon Valley, California, the U.S. You have never met this Miller before, and now you're at the airport waiting for him with a sign board. When you meet each other, you identify yourself, greet him and start an informal talk about his flight, about the weather in Beijing; give a brief introduction to Beijing and draft an itinerary for him.

Language focus

Useful patterns and expressions

- ✓ Mr. Smith, I'd like to introduce you to...
- ✓ Mr. Smith, I'd like you to meet...
- ✓ Mr. Smith, please allow me to introduce my colleague... and...
- ✓ I don't think we've met each other before. My name is. ...
- ✓ I'm happy to have the pleasure of meeting you.
- ✓ I've been looking forward to meeting you.
- ✓ It's a great pleasure to have you here with us.

- ✓ You must be our long-expected guest, President Green from the Trade Delegation!
- √ Thank you very much for coming all the way to meet me in person.
- ✓ I'm delighted to make your acquaintance.
- ✓ Thank you for coming all the way to our company.
- ✓ Welcome to Shanghai General Motors.
- ✓ It is a great pleasure to have such an enthusiastic group to participate in our project.
- ✓ We appreciate very much that you have come to visit our city in spite of the long and tiring journey.
- ✓ I would like to show you our tentative itinerary.
- ✓ We have a tight schedule for your short/brief visit. I hope you don't mind.
- ✓ May I ask what line of business are you in exactly?
- ✓ You can talk the business out with Mr. Smith who is in charge of this line.
- ✓ I'm sure our business dealings will develop productively.

Part II Test Your Communication Skills

What do you want from your career? Money? Respect? Achievement? Freedom? Stimulation? All of the above?

Most of us want it all, but very few of us get it. Why does one person succeed and another fail? No doubt the reason is complex. But one factor is surely the ability to communicate—the knack of understanding other people, predicting their probable reactions, and expressing ideas to influence them in desired ways.

In almost every occupation, your success will depend, at least to some extent, on your ability to work with other people. And that means you will need to communicate. If you can do it well, you will have an advantage. The ability to communicate is highly valued by employers.

Consider this: Out of 120 job descriptions appearing in one issue of the National Business Employment Weekly, almost every listing included this requirement: "The persons we seek must have strong oral and written communication skills."

Perhaps the best way to improve your ability is to practice. Establish some realistic goals for yourself. Now we'll guide you through some communication practice, teach you how to build



up your communication skills and prepare you for whatever may come along later in your life and career.

Are you an effective communicator? Now try to find out what kind of communicator you are. Please answer the following questions honestly.

Questions Yes No

- 1. I often try to put myself in the speaker's shoes.
- 2. I feel comfortable when I speak, even if others disagree with me.
- 3. I can comfortably talk about my feelings in front of the public.
- 4. I know how to ask for an additional explanation if I do not understand.
- 5. I think it is not good to interrupt the speaker.
- 6. I can detect the mood of the listeners while speaking.
- 7. I do not jump to conclusions.
- 8. I can confront someone who is against me.
- 9. I can voice my disagreement with others.
- 10. The audience usually can understand what I say.

(The more "Yes" answers, the better communicator you probably are.)

Exchange your opinions with your partner. What kind of communicator are you? Do you share some similarities? When you've finished, you may share your ideas as a class.

Part III Read and Talk

1. To Be a Good Conversationalist

Have you ever wished you were better at making conversation? A great conversationalist is someone who connects with people and makes them feel important. When they talk to you, they make you feel like you're the only person in the room.

Becoming a good conversationalist requires knowing three things: first, how to start a conversation; second, how to keep it going; and third, how to end it.

Starting a conversation usually means coming up with an opening line or icebreaker. The best kind of icebreaker is one that's positive. The last thing people want to hear from a stranger is



how noisy the party is, how awful the food is, or how ugly the people are dressed.

A compliment is always a good icebreaker and will usually be appreciated. Any news event is a good icebreaker. Read the newspaper because it's so important to know what's going on in the world. The fact is, any opening line will do, as long as it's not negative. The best way to entice a person to have a conversation with you is by being sincere and respectful, and letting them know that you are interested in talking to them.

Once you've got a conversation going, the best way to keep it going is by asking the other person questions that don't require just a yes or no answer or questions which show genuine interest on your part. For example, if someone says, "I'm from Miami," you may respond with, "I've been to Miami!" and continue with, "How long have you lived there?" then, "I was born there, and I've lived there all my life." You might say, "I've never met anyone who is a Florida native. Is your family from Miami as well?"

You keep asking questions based on the last thing a person says. This is called the "elaboration technique." Choose questions that will get the other person to elaborate on what they're saying. Ask questions similar to those a reporter might ask to draw a person out: who, what, when, where, and why questions.

Once you hit on something you find interesting, keep asking questions in order to get the person to elaborate about the topic as much as possible. A good conversationalist elaborates on the experiences they've had. Instead of saying the party was fun, tell why it was fun. Describe why you had a good time — who was there, what happened, where it was, and how people arranged the party. Go into detail. Description is the best form of communication because it keeps people's interest up and stimulates them. Use words to create images and paint pictures so that the other person can get a visual as well as an auditory image of what you're describing to them. If you use the description effectively, you can make the person feel as though they were actually there. Here are seven tips that can help you be an excellent communicator:

- ◆ Be aware of your own body and facial language. Make good facial contact when you speak, and be physically expressive without being excessive.
- ◆ *Don't gossip*. You run the risk of offending the person you're talking to. It also makes you look small.



- ◆ Cultivate a wide range of topics.
- ◆ Have a sense of humor. Everyone enjoys a humorous story or joke. Sexual and ethnic humor, however, are not worth the effects that jokes may have on your total image. People may be offended.
- ◆ **Don't interrupt.** People hate being interrupted. Fight the impulse to interrupt and give the person you're talking to the time they need to complete what they're saying to you.
- ◆ Be enthusiastic and upbeat. Don't be afraid to show enthusiasm. It allows the other person to feel that you're interested in what they're saying to you.
- ◆ Be flexible in your point of view. Try to be as open as possible, and try to see things from the other person's point of view.

There are also some signals that you can send to the other person that will bring the conversation to its close without hurting anyone's feelings. Breaking eye contact is a discreet signal that the conversation is about to end. Another way to signal is to use transition words like well or at any rate. You may want to recap all that was said. Whatever you do, don't lie to the other person. If you're not interested in talking to them again, don't mention the possibility of a future meeting, just to be polite. Instead, you may want to say, "Nice meeting you." And then, leave.

Finally, be sure to give the other person a good firm handshake. The final impression you make can be just as important as the initial one you made.

- > Read the above article out aloud.
- ➤ Work in pairs. Exchange opinions with your partner on "How to be a good conversationalist?"

2. What Characterizes a Good Communicator?

Communication is a two-way street. If someone is communicating with you, then you are understanding the message that they are giving. Invariably we remember a person who is a good communicator, but unless their approach is analyzed we usually will not understand exactly why they are such a good communicator. What then characterizes a good communicator?

Be an active listener. To listen carefully is to try to understand what the message is. A person needs to listen to the obvious message and also see if there is another, more indirect

message being delivered. The active listener will give appropriate signs and body language to indicate the high level of involvement in the listening process (nodding, uttering appropriate sounds). Importantly, a good listener does not interrupt someone when they are speaking. Difficult though it may be, it is better to wait until the speaker has finished.

Clarify a point if it is not clearly understood. To do this, the listener should wait for an appropriate juncture in the conversation and then request further information. There are various ways to do this: rephrase what has been said ("So what you are saying is that...?") or to ask for additional explanation ("What exactly did you mean by...?") For the message to be clearly understood, the listener must indicate the level of understanding.

Give your listener undivided attention. This is shown by limiting outside influences, by eye contact and by concentrating on what is being said. No doubt you have all experienced the uncomfortable situation in which you are talking and the listener's eyes wander to something else. The message is no longer being clearly received. This registers with the speaker and usually affects the communication.

Be able to deal with topics that are often delicate or sensitive. Some people find it a strain to talk about their emotions or feelings, a situation, which often causes problems in a relationship or marriage. Even if the subject is particularly sensitive, an individual has the right and the power of communication to express what is being felt. Sometimes for complex matters it is advisable to break the information up into categories to facilitate clearer understanding. If there are three things to be communicated, deal with them, one at a time and check understanding of each one before moving on to the next.

For most of us mere mortals it is difficult to talk about touchy topics and more often than not we tend to avoid them. But this is denying the communicative ability that each of us has. Usually it is much better to talk about the issues, to communicate what and how you are feeling. Talking over matters can hone your communication and lead to better understanding all round. After all, human communication is a remarkable ability — we need to use it well.

Checklist for effective communication

- O With whom am I going to communicate?
- O What are my objectives in doing so?
- O What is likely to be the receiver's view of the subject matter of the communication?
- O What is likely to be the receiver's view of me?
- O What are the likely barriers to effective communication?
- O Who else do I need to involve, inform, get ideas and information from?
- What is likely to be the most effective medium and channel of communication in order to achieve my objectives?
- > Read the above article out aloud.
- ➤ Make a list of advice on being better communicators what are the things to remember and what to avoid.

3. Safe and Unsafe Topics of Conversation

Lots of factors may contribute to becoming an effective socialiser, such as the ability to behave appropriately in different cross-cultural situations; the ability to start conversations; the ability to reply appropriately; the ability to select safe topics for conversation; the ability to develop conversations around different topics.

But remember: every culture has certain "safe and unsafe topics" or even "taboo topics". Taboo means improper and unacceptable. In the United States, the following topics are usually not brought up in general conversation because they are considered very personal and private: money (a person's income, the price paid for possessions, monthly rent or mortgage); age, religion, marital status and political affiliation. Close friends would probably discuss these topics, but even they might avoid personal topics about money. Would these topics be considered taboo in your native country?

Remember there are obviously no universal rules about this kind of things. The range of acceptable topics of conversation will depend on "Where you are, who you are with and your relationship with the people". The following is a list of safe topics for conversation with Britons:

- ♦ House and home
- Life at home

- ♦ Education and career
- ♦ Work
- ♦ Free time and entertainment
- ♦ Travel
- ♦ Art & fashion
- ♦ Health and welfare
- ♦ Shopping
- ♦ Food
- ♦ Geography of the country and the places to visit
- ♦ Weather
- ♦ The economy

There are also some do's and don'ts in socializing with Britons.

Do: Be punctual for social meetings.

Bring a small gift if you are invited to someone's home.

Use "please" and "thank you" for requests and services.

Don't: Make too much physical contact.

Be aggressive and loud.

Be over-enthusiastic.

Ask too many personal questions.

Call the Welsh, Scots and Irish "English".

Since communication is an activity that has a consequence, we must continually ask ourselves if we are behaving in a way that harms our communication partner. Beware of these guidelines and train yourself to be an effective communicator in intercultural communication.

- > Read the above article out aloud.
- > Do you agree with the above suggestions? What are some of the safe and unsafe topics in the Chinese culture?

Part IV Act It Out

Task 1 Making Conversations

Imagine that you're at the scene of a party and need to talk with people whom you don't know well.