

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Teodora Popescu**, *We're in Business! Part 1*. Alba Iulia: Aeternitas, 2011. Pp. 275. ISBN 978 606 613 016-5; ISBN 978 606 613 017-2.

Reviewed by Crina Herteg, 1 Decembrie 1918 University of Alba Iulia

The book published by senior lecturer Teodora Popescu is a practical and valuable instrument for all the students who study business English. It comes in a sequence of books related to business English topics, authored by Dr. Teodora Popescu: Popescu, Teodora & Toma, Mariana (2009). *Dictionary of Business Collocations. With Romanian translation and practice section*, Alba Iulia: Editura Aeternitas, Popescu, Teodora & Toma, Mariana (2003). *Reading and Vocabulary for Business Students*, Cluj-Napoca: Editura Casa Cărții de Știință. The focus on business vocabulary, on teaching business English, on finding, exploiting and improving her teaching techniques has always been one of the author's major concerns and preoccupations. The author has been teaching business English for more than 15 years.

*We're in Business* represents the result of hard work, careful selection and accurate analysis of texts for reading purposes. The book will be analysed from two perspectives: as an instrument used in the teaching/testing process and from a content-based perspective.

The book is in line with the author's constant preoccupations in the teaching of business English. It also represents the result of many years of theoretical and practical investigations in the field of pedagogy, English language teaching, teaching English for business purposes, teaching English as a foreign language. For teachers, the author reveals some of her teaching techniques based on her rich and varied teaching experience, for the students the author provides an updated and efficient learning instrument. With this book, Dr. Teodora Popescu proves once again that she is not only a good theoretician in pedagogy and foreign language teaching, but she can also apply her theoretical knowledge in designing valuable teaching material. The references emphasise the fact that the book was published after a long and continuous work which characterizes all the books published by Dr. Teodora Popescu.

The book addresses to independent users who need English in a business-related professional environment, as well as to students from specializations Business Administration, Tourism and Services Industry, Accounting, Finance and Banking, Marketing, who need to be guided by the teacher in the learning process. The book is suitable both for class work as well as for individual work. In the first

situation the teacher can easily monitor students' progress and evolution, can test their feedback in the learning of business English. As regards the second situation the students' learning is facilitated by the answer key at the end of the book.

The book covers all the skills necessary in learning a foreign language: reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. Each chapter encompasses one or two sections which cover all these skills. The texts selected for reading and vocabulary practice are taken from authentic and updated online sources: economic newspapers, magazines and websites. The speaking activities involve interactions and presentations, the teacher can evaluate students' ability to interact with other students on business-related topics, as well as students' ability to speak freely on the same topics. These tasks are supplied with a list of standard formulae used in oral interactions and presentations. The book includes a CD with audio tracks to be used for listening practice. The audio files are skillfully exploited by the author, multiple choice tests were designed so as students can check and improve their listening comprehension. The transcripts of the audio tracks are also provided. Students can also acquire and improve their writing skills. The writing tasks require the elaboration of extended pieces of business writing, different types of business correspondence. The author supplies students with sample letters.

As an instrument in testing students' business English skills and knowledge, the book is accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning and Teaching of the Council of Europe. Students' knowledge acquired after studying this book can be measured through their capacity to interact within a business English environment, to understand specialized magazine and newspaper articles, to write business letters or business reports.

From a content-based perspective, the book is divided into six units, each one focusing on a large variety of topics ranging from business communication, information technology, employment, company structure, management to business travel. The topic based units consists of six main parts and the activities and the activities and exercise items are similar to those of Cambridge BEC Higher examinations. Each unit is designed so as to cover the following sections: reading, vocabulary, grammar, listening, and writing. The novelty it brings lies in large variety of topics tackled, in the professional selection of the texts and not in the least in the corpus-based approach which the author resorted to in designing vocabulary practice. Another element of novelty is the fact the book encompasses a grammar component which represents a helpful practical instrument and a necessary theoretical input. Each of the six units of the book includes a grammar section, *Focus on Grammar* and a selection of grammar problems is operated: the present tenses, the past tenses, ways of expressing future, if clauses, the passive voice, phrasal verbs. Mention should be made of the author's accuracy in leading in and explaining grammar problems. To facilitate a better understanding of grammar issues the author chose to select the examples supplied from specialized newspapers and magazines.

The vocabulary section *Focus on Vocabulary* includes the following types

of exercises: lexical cloze, structural cloze, error correction task based on a text, multiple choice, word-formation task, matching tasks. While grammar is led in traditionally, vocabulary is introduced in a more modern manner. The author shows a preference towards designing vocabulary exercises based on the use of collocations, either clustered around the key topic of the unit, or around a key word in the topic. The creation of vocabulary tasks which rely on the use/(re)construction of collocations is not an easy job; it involves the incorporation of large specialized texts which are used by the author as basis for pedagogic and linguistic investigations.

Nowadays business English is more and more used in professional environments, in business travels, more and more demanded on the labour market and even more present in the syllabus of Romanian universities. These must be enough reasons for recommending this book as a valuable tool for the students who intend to embark upon learning business English and for those who intend to improve their business English skills.

The modern design of the book, its attractive layout and the extra audio material turn the book into a precious instrument which every business English student and teacher must own and resort to in their teaching/learning process.