

Course Outline

Course number	RBE157
Course title	Diplomatic English
Credit points	2 CP (3 ECTS)
Total hours	30
Lecture hours	7
Seminar and other hours	23
Course level	Bachelor
Prerequisites	None

COURSE TEACHERS

No.	Name	Academic degree	Academic position
1	Karapetjana Indra	Dr. Philol.	Visiting Professor

COURSE ABSTRACT

The course aims at developing students' English language competence for use in professional communication in the field of diplomacy and foreign affairs. The students acquire field specific terminology and language diplomacy in spoken and written discourse, considering the linguistic and pragmatic norms of politeness and cooperation principles in transactional and interactional discourse. The course facilitates the development of students' meeting skills and the competence of writing diplomatic and official correspondence using the relevant conventions. The students become aware of linguistic resources for conveying particular speech acts, e.g. questions, opinions, proposals with an appropriate rhetorical force. They learn how to make diplomatic small talk at official meetings and receptions using contextually appropriate language.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, the students will be able to demonstrate:

knowledge

- of generic conventions by producing well-structured official and diplomatic correspondence, as well as spoken discourse showing a controlled use of organizational patterns, cohesive devices, and constructing the relevant register and style;

skills

- in using a broad range of vocabulary and appropriate critical terminology in applied contexts;
- in qualifying opinions and statements in relation to the degrees of certainty, uncertainty, belief, doubt, likelihood, etc.;
- in arguing a formal position convincingly, responding to questions and comments and answering complex lines of counter argument fluently, spontaneously and appropriately on a range of topics pertaining to foreign affairs;

competence

- in selecting appropriate information, analysing problems and offering sound arguments when proposing solutions using the acquired expressions and the linguistic and pragmatic norms of politeness in applied contexts,
- in chairing and participating in meetings on a range of topics pertaining to foreign affairs,
- in responsiveness to the central role of language in diplomacy.

GRADING CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting
Exam: a meeting- simulation	25%
Class and home assignments	15%
Course paper: 2 written assignments	20%
2 achievement tests	40%

COURSE PLAN – MAIN SUBJECTS

No.	Subject	Planned hours
1	Language of meetings. Speech acts.	9
2	Official and diplomatic correspondence.	8
3	Topic related lexis, expressions and terminology.	6
4	Linguistic politeness strategies. Modality in written and spoken discourse.	7

COURSE PLAN – SESSIONS

Session	Subject	Lecture/seminar
1	<i>Foreign policy</i> . Speech acts: introductions, greetings. Honorifics: the use of appropriate forms of address. Registers and style.	L (1), S (1)
2	<i>The European Union</i> . Meetings. Speech acts: giving arguments, expressing opinions, asking for an opinion. Modality in discourse. Official correspondence: invitations and their types.	L (1) S (3)
3	<i>Topical foreign affairs issues</i> . Speech acts: agreeing and disagreeing. Official correspondence - letters of thanks.	L (1) S (1)
4	<i>Relations with third countries: Russia</i> . Diplomatic language to express criticism and resolve conflicts. Use of hedges in on-record and off-record statements. Official correspondence: letters of congratulations. Achievement test 1.	S (4)
5	<i>Relations with third countries: the USA</i> . Interrupting and dealing with interruptions. Linguistic repair strategies: paraphrasing and clarifying. Official correspondence: letters of request, apology and regret.	L (1) S (1)
6	<i>Diplomacy and war</i> . Linguistic means of hiding information: euphemisms. Official correspondence: letters on illness, letters of condolences. Written assignment 2.	L (1) S (3)
7	<i>Terrorism</i> . Positive politeness strategies: asking questions, asking for further information, playing for time, saying nothing. Modality in discourse. Diplomatic correspondence: letters of credence and letters of recall.	L (1) S (3)
8	Speech acts: proposals, expressing support and opposition. Linguistic means of making positive suggestions. Diplomatic correspondence: Note Verbale and first-person note. Written assignment 2.	L (1) S (1)
9	<i>Human rights issues</i> . Speech acts: persuading, challenging, expressing reservation, reassuring. Achievement test 2.	S (3)
10	Chairing a formal meeting. Ending a meeting. Speech acts: compromising, confirming decisions and actions. Minutes. Aide-memoire. Modality in discourse.	S (3)

COURSE LITERATURE

No.	Author, title, publisher
1	Gore, S., Smith, D.G. (2007). <i>English for Socializing</i> . Oxford: OUP
2	Karapetjana, I. (2010). <i>Handbook of Diplomatic Correspondence in English</i> Riga: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Latvia, ISBN 978-9984-39-954
3	McCaffree, M.J. and Innis, P.(1989) <i>The Complete Handbook of Diplomatic, Official and Social Usage</i> . Washington D.C.: Devon Publishing Company, Inc.
4	Thompson, K. (2007). <i>English for Meetings</i> . Oxford: OUP
5	Course compendium with additional materials