



L1 / L2 NEGOTIATIONS

Learners practise business negotiations that they need to carry out in English

Level:	Upper-Intermediate - Advanced
Target Audience:	Mono-Lingual Business English learners
Language / Skills Focus:	Negotiating / Spontaneous Spoken Translation
Activity Time:	30 - 40 minutes
Materials:	None

IN CLASS

- 1 Put learners into groups of five and assign a letter (A B C D E) to each learner in each group.
- 2 Ask your learners to think of a negotiation situation that is particularly relevant for them. Alternatively, outline a suitable situation you have thought of yourself or found in a Business English textbook if you are using one. For example:

You are a car manufacturer and you are negotiating a new deal with a components supplier.
- 3 Write the following instructions on the board:

Student A speaks only L1 (their mother tongue) and plays one of the roles.
Student B speaks only L2 (English) and plays the other role.
Student C speaks both languages so is the interpreter.
Students D and E are scribes and write only in English.
Student D writes the English version of Student A as given by the interpreter.
Student E writes everything said by Student B.
- 4 Set a reasonable time limit for the discussion and begin the activity. Remember that this is quite hard work for the scribes, so ten minutes is probably about right.
- 5 At the end of the negotiation phase, ask each group to go through the language written by their scribes. They should reformulate and edit anything they feel needs changing. They should then give you their final written versions.
- 6 In this lesson if you have time, or in the next lesson, work through this language with the class, selectively reformulating and editing where useful and appropriate.

COMMENT

Teaching Business English can be difficult as we may not have a precise awareness of the kind of language our learners need on a regular basis. If we allow learners to role-play situations that they regularly do at work they can show us the kind of language they need. Allowing a mix of L1 and L2 can help this be richer and provides useful diagnostic material for the teacher.

Sheelagh Deller is a highly-experienced teacher, teacher trainer and author. Her publications include *Lessons from the Learner* 1990 (Longman) and *High Flyer* 1996 (Longman). Her most recent publication is *Your Choice Next 1 and 2* 1999 (Richmond Press).