

# Business English Reading to Develop Intercultural Communicative Competence of College Learners of Korea

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## Abstract

The present study is aimed at revisiting Business English Reading (BER) to develop the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) of college English learners of Korea. In the study, the BER instruction was designed on the basis of Capstone Design and the 24-item intercultural sensitivity questionnaire developed by Chen & Starosta (2000) was administrated to 31 students enrolled in the course of BER. In the results, the degree of ICC was significantly increased and it was confirmed that the instructional design, which is based on the Capstone Design, has a critical role to decrease the gap between the target and native cultures of English learners of Korea.

## Keywords

Intercultural Communicative Competence, Business English reading, Capstone Design, Intercultural Business Communication

## Introduction

In the era of globalization, the importance of being competence in intercultural communication is crucially increased and several studies on the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) were found in the area of English learning (Byram, 1997; Kramersch, 1993; Paige, Lange & Yershova, 1999). According to Kramersch (1993), acquiring the target language culture (i.e. C2) is considered as the background competence in English learning, since, without C2 acquisition, a successful communication is not fully expected at the set of intercultural communication. Furthermore, the Intercultural Business Communication (IBC) attracts the attention from business-related studies, and Wang (2009) introduced the teaching objective of Business English (BE), which is to train business professionals with linguistic knowledge and skills,

business knowledge and intercultural communicative competence. Regarding the needs on the development of ICC, the present study proposed the alternative instructional design, which regards the ICC for BE learners and implemented Capstone Design in the study. Capstone Design is defined as the problem solving based learning for engineering students (S-K Kim, 2011) and applied to the humanities as a concept of creative thinking skill (S-Y Kim, 2011). For EFL learners, Capstone Designed based English learning shares the fundamental approach with Problem-based Learning, Task-based Learning, and Content-based Learning. The present study is formed with research questions; 1) How can Capstone Design be implemented in the BER instruction and 2) What is the effect of Capstone Design on the development of ICC for BE learners

## 1 Capstone Design in the Business English Reading Instruction

In the study, the Capstone Design based BER instruction was designed on the basis of three-stage procedure; 1) Diagnosing the problem, 2) Analyzing the problem and 3) Solving the problem (revised from the research by Bound & Felitti, 1997; S-Y Kim, 2011). At first, students were asked to find the salient problem among IBC, and then they were encouraged to participate in the group discussion to report and share the problem with other students. Lastly, the participants make a presentation to report the solution for each problem. The following Table 1 shows the details of the Capstone Design based BER instruction.

Table 1: Capstone Design based BER

	<i>Module</i>	<i>Capstone Design (Problem solving questions)</i>
1	Orientation	Finding topics and needs in

& Diagnosis Test		English in Business
2	Email	How can you manage and deal your inbox?
3		
4		
5	Doing Business	Can you... understand the business organization?
6		manage schedule and budget?
7		read agenda and minutes?
8		read CVs and covering letters?
9	Marketing & Advertising	How can you... browse advertisement?
10		read product and service brochures?
11		explore company website and social media?
12		
13	Business media & books	Can you... browse business media website?
14		
15		read business blogs?

## 2 The Degree of Intercultural Sensitivity

After 15-week of instruction, participants showed the increase of intercultural sensitivity degree in accordance with items of ‘respect for cultural difference (t=2.472, p=.016),’ ‘interaction confidence (t=-4.424, p=.000),’ ‘interaction attentiveness (t=-3.250, p.002). The following Table 2 shows the details of paired comparison.

Table 2. Paired Comparison of Intercultural Sensitivity

Items		Mean	N	Std.D	t	p
1	Pre	3.5493	31	.27164	-1.381	.172
	Post	3.6761	31	.27135		
2	Pre	4.1268	31	.27463	2.475	.016**
	Post	3.8451	31	.47256		
3	Pre	2.6338	31	.36044	-4.424	.000*
	Post	3.0845	31	.35112		
4	Pre	3.1408	31	.26108	-1.040	.302
	Post	3.2676	31	.50960		
5	Pre	3.0423	31	.21960	-3.250	.002*
	Post	3.3521	31	.33870		

\*<.01, \*\*<.05

Note: 1=Interaction Engagement, 2=Respect for Cultural difference, 3=Interaction Confidence, 4=Interaction Enjoyment, 5=Interaction Attentiveness

## 3 Discussion & Conclusion

For the research question 1, the study implemented

the concept of Capstone Design to the instruction of BER and proposed the Capstone Design questions, which allow participants to keep the pace with three stages, finding and analyzing problems and reporting the solution. During the semester, students showed the several solutions to deal with business problems which proposed by business reading context (i.e. email, doing business, marketing & advertising and business media & books). For the research question 2, the degree of intercultural sensitivity was measured and the study found that the significant increase of respect for cultural difference, interaction confidence and interaction attentiveness. The implementation of Capstone Design allows learners to solve the business problems by decreasing the gap between target and native culture and strengthening the interaction confidence and attentiveness.

## 4 References

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