



BOOK REVIEW

## *Business English 3.0: Hands-on Online and Virtual Collaboration Tasks*

Reviewed by María Victoria Soulé   
Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus

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[mariavictoria.soule@cut.ac.cy](mailto:mariavictoria.soule@cut.ac.cy)

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### Business English 3.0: Hands-on Online and Virtual Collaboration Tasks



Ana Sevilla-Pavón  
Anna Nicolaou

EDITORIAL COMARES



*Business English 3.0: Hands-on Online and Virtual Collaboration Tasks*

By Ana Sevilla-Pavón and Anna Nicolaou

Editorial Comares ([website](#))

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172 pages

The book *Business English 3.0: Hands-on Online and Virtual Collaboration Tasks* offers a unique and informative guide to language educators who seek to explore and implement virtual exchanges for language learning for specific purposes through collaborative tasks. Drawing on their knowledge and expertise in the domain of Virtual Exchange, Ana Sevilla-Pavón and Anna Nicolaou set out this volume to describe the results of a collaborative effort born out of the iTECLA (Innovative Telecollaborative Environments of Languages for Specific Purposes Acquisition) project. The project itself stemmed from the realisation that learners need to be provided with learning opportunities that empower them by participating in telecollaboration tasks, tasks that do not only allow learners to learn beyond the classrooms' four walls but also foster their 21st century skills, in particular, creativity, teamwork, and digital, linguistic, communicative and intercultural competences.

The book has been structured in two parts. The first part comprises three chapters. The introductory chapter presents the book's content and acknowledges the influence of O'Dowd and Ware (2009) in the design of three different types of tasks included in the volume: information exchange tasks, comparison and analysis tasks, and collaborative tasks. In the second chapter, the authors thoroughly define three main concepts that are the foundation of the book: Virtual Exchange, Digital storytelling, and Problem-based learning. The third chapter describes how a Virtual Exchange project can be integrated in a Business Communication course. This chapter is organised according to a weekly planning of fifteen weeks whereby eight units covering theory sessions, practice sessions and laboratory sessions are embedded.

The second part consists of four sections. The first three sections provide a detailed description of the stages that learners will go through to complete three different Virtual Exchange projects. Section 1, entitled "A Virtual Exchange Project around Entrepreneurship: BEGIN", introduces the readers to the different steps that need to be followed in order to complete the project. The section is carefully organised by thoroughly listing and describing key concepts that guide language instructors in the implementation of the project: language configuration, linguistic level, communication mode, communication and task completion tools, pedagogical implications, study types and goals, target competences, and task types, to name some of them. The section also includes suggestions for assessment of individual outputs, telecollaborative artefacts, and work processes. Furthermore, the authors suggest the time needed to complete each activity and provide numerous examples of tasks and digital resources, including links to digital stories, that can be integrated in the learning process.

Section 2, "A Virtual Exchange Project around Social Entrepreneurship: Youth Entrepreneurship for Society (YES)", also provides a comprehensive depiction of the different steps, key concepts, tools and stages that guide both educators and learners in their journey throughout the YES project. In the first activities of this section, learners are required to exchange information, compare and analyse pre-tasks to get started and to know their telecollaborative partners in the project. The next activities focus on creating a new product/service/app and presenting it in the form of a digital story and an oral presentation. The section concludes with a series of reflection and evaluation activities, including a focus group interview where participants are asked to examine their experience with their foreign partners in the project.

Section 3, "A Virtual Exchange Project around Problem-based learning: iTecla Forum Discussions", continues in the same line as the previous sections with extensive guidelines on the stages and steps required to complete the Virtual Exchange project. However, what distinguishes this section from the previous ones is its focus on a number of current social topics connected to UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (i.e., gender violence, corruption, poverty, xenophobia, unemployment, LGBT rights, smart cities, among others) that are discussed through online forums. Another innovation in this section is the introduction of different roles (discussion leader, moderator, and regular student) that might be swapped among learners on a weekly basis. Following a problem-based methodology, learners are invited to propose initiatives to deal with different social challenges through a series of synchronous exchanges with their foreign counterparts. The final stage of the project entails the proposal of solutions in the form of business

pitches by the learners to an investor or group of investors as well as an investors' report stating the reasons for funding a particular initiative. Instructions for pitch as well as different pitch structures are rigorously presented towards the end of the section.

While the previous sections looked at three Virtual Exchange projects in detail, the last section, "Hands-on tasks and resources", offers a list of activities with resources to be incorporated in telecollaborative practices. Eight scenarios are provided to the learners as an introduction to a specific context that leads them to solve intercultural communication issues, the identification and description of a problem, and possible explanations and solutions. The book ends with six Annexes where the reader will find very useful information for the assessment of digital stories and presentations, a questionnaire template on Virtual Exchange, a needs analysis survey template, and examples of Kahoot questions that can be used to enhance intercultural competence.

Throughout this volume, Sevilla-Pavón and Nicolaou never fail to take into account both the educators and the learners' perspective: they provide an up-to-date view into the world of Virtual Exchange with clear examples that guide the readers who seek pedagogically appropriate ways of integrating technology. I cannot agree more with the prologue writer, Prof. Ana Gimeno, who declares that "the book is particularly useful in higher education contexts where learners are traditionally stimulated to become autonomous learners, capable of actively setting the foundations of making sound and meaningful progress in their learning goals" (p. XII). While the book has been deliberately written for courses on business English, its structure and the ideas that emerge from it can undoubtedly be adapted to any second language course for specific purposes.

## References

O'Dowd, R. and Ware, P. (2009). Critical issues in telecollaborative task design. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 22(2), 173-188.  
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