English for European trade unionists

Introductory unit

Language learning strategies

The ETUI-REHS is financially supported by the European Commission
Foreword

Effective communication is an essential tool in the goal of building a European trade union identity that transcends political and geographical borders. The ability to speak a language other than one’s own is an important step towards achieving this goal, enabling trade unionists from across the European Union to exchange information and experience, and to learn about other cultural and trade union contexts.

The Education Department of ETUI-REHS (formerly ETUCO) has been involved in the promotion and delivery of foreign language training since 1993. This activity has involved a number of publications, including English for European Trade Unionists Levels 3 + 4 which first appeared in 1995 under the auspices of a LINGUA-funded project. This material has now been revised and updated, and made available as electronic files for the first time.

The new units are:

- Introductory unit: Language learning strategies for European trade unionists
- Three level 3 units (upper intermediate): Trade union organisation; Trade unions and Europe; Health and Safety
- Three level 4 units (advanced): Working Women; Workers of the World; European Works Councils

A description of the language level, a profile of the target group, advice on how to use the materials and a grid showing the full contents can be found in the Introductory Unit. Tutors will find additional advice on approaches and methodology in the Language Trainers Guide published in 2005.

My thanks to all those who have participated in the preparation and production of these materials. We hope that they will contribute to improved communications and better understanding amongst trade unionists throughout Europe.

Jeff Bridgford

Director
ETUI-REHS Education

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## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the following individuals and organisations for permission to reproduce materials within these units:

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We have tried to contact all relevant organisations and individuals but would welcome information regarding any that have inadvertently been overlooked so that permission can be sought and due acknowledgement given.
Working with these units

Background

These units are a revision of material originally produced in 1995 as the result of a LINGUA-funded project coordinated by the European Trade Union College in Brussels (now ETUI-REHS) in partnership with Arbeit und Leben (Germany), CFDT (France), FIU (Denmark), FNV (Netherlands) TU C (UK) and Northumbria University (UK).

They have been developed within the framework outlined in the Curricula Guidelines (1994) and according to methodology detailed in the Language Trainers’ Guide (2005), where a summary of the Curricula Guidelines can also be found.

Who are these language training materials for?

These units are aimed at trade union officers, representatives or members who want to improve their knowledge of English for occupational, professional, or social purposes. Activities have been designed within a trade union context with tasks that are as authentic as possible in order to respond to the specific language learning needs of the target group.

These materials will normally be used by groups on intensive courses, or who meet on a regular basis under the guidance of a tutor. Many of the activities involve interaction and collaborative learning (pair-work, discussion, presentation, etc.). The Study Guide also provides an opportunity for individual learners to use these materials, although on a more limited basis.

These materials have been specifically designed for trade unionists, and so some understanding of trade union organisation and activities is assumed, though of course this will vary from country to country and group to group.

Level

These materials have been developed for learners with an upper intermediate (Level 3) or advanced (Level 4) knowledge of English.

Level 3: at this level, the learner should already be able to deal with varied daily tasks in English.

The level 3 units are: Trade union organisation; Trade unions and Europe; Health and Safety
**Introductory Unit**

**Level 4:** at this level, the learner should already be able to deal with key work tasks in English.

The level 4 units are: *Working Women; Workers of the World; European Works Councils*.

See the *Curricula Guidelines* within the *Language Trainers’ Guide* for more details of what this entails for the four language skills.

Notes:

(i) In practice, the units can be used successfully with either level. The tutor will choose according to topics or functions that are of interest and use to the particular group, which in any case will contain learners of varied levels.

(ii) *English for European Trade Unionists Levels 1 + 2* (beginners and lower intermediate) is available online.

**Flexibility and unit contents**

*Language learning strategies* have been included to help learners develop skills and methods to help them become more effective language learners. Advice is given about ways of coping with new vocabulary, how to become more proficient at speaking, listening and viewing, reading, and writing. It also draws attention to the important aspect of cultural awareness in international encounters. This unit is intended to be used as an adjunct to the thematic units, and learners refer to it as appropriate.

The six thematic units have been designed so that they can be used with maximum flexibility. Within each unit, there are activities which provide a brief introduction to the topic(s) followed by listening, reading, speaking and writing activities. Some of these form part of a series of activities connected to a particular theme, but it is not necessary to study these in any particular order. Vocabulary exercises are included throughout to provide opportunities for learners to extend their knowledge of specialist terms.

Communication activities provide opportunities to practice several of the language skills involving learners in extended tasks which help develop teamwork within authentic contexts.

It is envisaged that the tutor will supplement these resources with further exercises and explanations according to the background and needs of the learners.

Each unit is accompanied by a *Study Guide* which provides answers to exercises, suggestions for discussions, and other material to help both the learner and the tutor working with these units.

Each unit contains sufficient material for 15-20 hours work within the group. It is envisaged that the learner will spend an equivalent amount of time on individual study and consolidation. The material in one unit can therefore be covered in approximately 30-40 hours total study time.

At these levels, there is increasing emphasis on the communicative function rather than on structural progression. The methodological approach is outlined in more detail in the *Language Trainers’ Guide*. The principles
underlying the approach, which combines best practice in trade union education and language training, are:

**Learning from each other**

The learners, as trade union officers, representatives or members will be knowledgeable about various aspects of trade union organisation, and this will provide a valuable resource within the classroom. This will facilitate authentic exchanges within the learning group, and roles may be reversed between ‘tutors’ and ‘learners’. In addition, the varieties of English spoken by other learners of English is a valid variety of the language and one that is appropriate for many of the situations in which the learner is likely to find himself or herself using English.

**Learner-centred and group-centred learning**

The activities contained within these units are designed to increase the learner’s confidence and autonomy in English, but also to promote shared responsibility and peer support within the learning group. Tutors will involve the learners in decisions about their learning, such as the order of units to be studied, the skills to be practised, and the pace of the learning. The needs of the individual as well as the group are taken into account as far as possible, and these are sometimes established by means of pre-course and on-course questionnaires, interviews, and one-to-one tutorials.

**Clear objectives**

Learners should always be aware of what they are learning, why they are learning, and how this learning can best be achieved, as well as the method by which they can check that this learning has taken place. The competence-based approach adopted in these units ensures that the objectives are usually transparent. Learning objectives are summarised at the beginning of each unit in the section *Looking ahead*. The learner can check whether all these objectives have been achieved against the checklist in the *Looking back* section at the end of each unit.

**Relevance and authenticity**

Materials in these units are drawn from a variety of authentic sources. We have tried to make the associated tasks as authentic and relevant as possible to those engaged in trade union work.
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Looking ahead

In this introductory unit, you will be invited to reflect on your previous language learning experiences, and introduced to a range of learning strategies designed to help you learn English more effectively and increase your confidence in using the language.

You will be introduced to strategies for:

- learning new vocabulary
- improving your speaking and pronunciation skills
- listening to and viewing authentic source material more effectively
- reading for different purposes
- writing clearly

You will also be invited to reflect on the importance of cultural differences, and introduced to ways of appreciating and coping with these.
Language learning strategies for trade unionists

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Introductory Unit

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As a trade unionist, your reasons for wanting to improve your English will be varied, and may include occupational, professional, as well as social considerations. You have probably had very different previous language-learning experiences, depending on your country and age, and not all of these will have been positive. But now you have decided to improve your English within a trade union context which is relevant to your working life. The methodology used here builds upon the collective and supportive traditions of trade union education, and we hope that you find the approach and the activities within these materials relevant and motivating. In this unit, we suggest a range of strategies to help you make the most of the valuable time you will spend improving your language skills.

Activity 1

*Work in pairs.*

1. Talk about a previous language learning experience.
2. Give details of the language studied, your level, where the course took place, how long it lasted, the type of course delivery and materials used.
3. Evaluate the experience:
   - Excellent / Very Good / Mixed / Bad / Very Bad.
4. Give reasons for your answer. Compare with your partner.
5. Finally, tell each other what you hope to find on this course, and anything that you hope will not take place.
6. Class discussion: find out your tutor’s thoughts on the best ways of learning; negotiate such things as time spent on homework.
What kind of learner are you?

To understand why you work better with some people than others on a language training course, or why you prefer certain activities, you need to understand what kind of learner you are.

Do you learn best when:
- being involved in new experiences, problems and opportunities?
- working with others on problem-solving, team tasks, role-playing and games?
- being thrown in the deep end with a difficult task?
- chairing meetings and leading discussions?

Do you learn less when:
- listening to long explanations?
- reading, writing or thinking on your own?
- absorbing and understanding data?

Then you are an ACTIVIST.

Do you learn best when:
- there is an obvious link between the topic and your job?
- you have the chance to try out techniques with feedback, as for example, in role-playing?
- you are shown techniques with obvious advantages such as saving time?
- you are shown a model you can copy?

Do you learn less when:
- there is no obvious or immediate benefit that you can recognise?
- there is no practice or guidelines on how to do it?
- the event or learning is 'all theory'?

Then you are a PRAGMATIST.

➢ Other kinds of learners can be identified, such as theorists, or reflectors.
Type the phrase **learning style questionnaire** in English or your own language into an internet search engine, and you will find quite a few other questionnaires to complete. They are fun to do, and they make you aware of your strengths. You can then choose language learning strategies which suit you.

Trade unionists who are learning English are willing both inside and outside the classroom to co-operate rather than compete with each other. However, to make real progress, everyone needs to plan individual regular quiet time to review what has been learnt. Developing a regular study habit will mean that even when the language course has finished, you can continue improving your English.

If you are prepared to take risks in a foreign language for the sake of communication, and not to worry at all times about being correct, then your progress is certain. There are, of course, contexts in which getting the language exactly right or understanding a document in detail (e.g. a legal contract) is important, but not often.

Many of the ideas for learning in this section have come from trade unionists themselves. Try them all, and find what works best for you.

### Special interest groups and language support groups

Consider the following ways of keeping your English up to date outside the classroom.

- **A reading and discussion group** (email, discussion board on the internet, or face-to-face meetings) which discusses a newspaper or journal article, a document being used in the workplace, or an EU directive.

- **A writing group** which emails each other, or posts their opinions on a discussion board, on current events, news and chat, latest PowerPoint presentation or promotional material, and deals with requests for help and advice on work-issues. Each member could add to their weekly email a useful word or expression they have learnt, with a definition, and use it in a sentence (after having checked it in a good English to English usage dictionary or grammar book beforehand).

- **A conversation-only group** meets in a pub or canteen or someone’s home, and they impose the rule English Only. Try and find a native speaker or someone with very advanced English who is willing to take part: a friend, colleague or a teacher of English who may appreciate the chance to socialise. Or invite someone whose native language is not yours, and then the group has to speak in English.
Activity 2

Work in groups of four.

1. Divide a large sheet of paper into three areas:
   i. Your areas of special interest in trade union activities or related topics such as pensions or migrant labour.
   ii. Your personal interests: camping, cinema, computers.
   iii. Language skills you want to improve outside the class: reading, writing, speaking and listening; or all four.
2. Put up your poster, and show it to the rest of the class.
3. In one of your next sessions, when the group knows each other better, return to the posters, and find out who is interested in taking part in a language support or special interest group as described above. Share emails and phone numbers, and make practical arrangements where to have the first meeting, or first email contact.

Activity 3

Ways of organising your studies and continuing to improve

Tick the recommendations which you will do, put a question -mark after those you might do, and an X next to those you would never do. Compare with a partner, give reasons, and discuss further ideas.

➢ Keep an English file, and revise each lesson’s work before the next
➢ Organise your lists of new words into topic groups e.g. social English, collective bargaining; and learn some each day.
➢ Use an English-to-English dictionary and copy sample sentences when you look up a new word
➢ Use a grammar book to correct your most regular mistakes
➢ Listen to or watch materials in English recorded from radio or TV, or downloaded.
➢ Record yourself speaking in English three times a week.
➢ Read a newspaper or trade union website article regularly
Some helpful terms

You will find it useful to know the basic grammar terms which will help you to understand why something is correct or incorrect in a foreign language. Look up the terms in your own language as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>... describe things, ideas and people, for example: old, big, interesting, unfair.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>... tell you more about verbs and when, where, or how something is done, for example: He tried hard. She spoke well. They start today. They can also describe adjectives, for example: really interesting; very unfair. They have many different uses. Other examples: there, tomorrow, also.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article</td>
<td>The definite article is the and the indefinite article is a or an.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary verbs</td>
<td>Words like be, have, do which are used with verbs to make tenses or passive and active forms, for example: She was writing; Where have you put it?; He was sacked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>... are joining words. They connect clauses or sentences or words in the same clause, for example: for, and, nor, but, because, yet, so, when, if.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectives</td>
<td>They link ideas in a speech or text, for example: however, moreover, despite, on the other hand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Comparatives** (or comparative adjectives) | ... compare people, things or ideas, for example:
| ➔ She is **older** than you;
| ➔ He is **more organized** than his colleague;
| ➔ This film is **less interesting** than the first one.

| **Direct speech** | see **Indirect speech**.
| **Direct Questions** | Question marks end all direct questions.
| ➔ **Are you coming** tonight?

| **Gerunds** | ... are verbs which function as nouns. They all end in \(-ing\), for example:
| ➔ I love **swimming**; He’s better at **writing** than at **negotiating**.

| **Indirect questions** | ... describe a question but do not directly ask a question. They do not take a question mark. For example:
| ➔ **He asked if he could leave early.**
| ➔ **She demanded to know if the agreement was still standing.**

| **Indirect speech** | ... occurs when what someone has said is reported and the direct words not given. Word-order and tenses change. Compare:
| ➔ He said, **“The strike’s off.”** (direct speech) with:
| ➔ He said **that the strike was off.**

| **Intonation** | The ‘music’ of a sentence or phrase, with rising and falling tones. Yes/ no questions usually end with a rising tone, for example:
| ➔ Do you want a **break** now?
| Statements or indirect questions end with a falling tone. For example:
| ➔ Take a **break** now.
| ➔ He asked if he could have a **break**.

| **Modal verbs** | ... modify (alter or add to) the meaning of main verbs, for example:
| ➔ **can do**, **cannot do**. Other modals are: **could**, **may**, **might**, **must**, **will**, **shall**, **would**, **should**, **ought**.
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| **Nouns** | ... refer to people, places, things or ideas, for example:  
| | 📌 The President, John, Brussels, a factory, employment.  
| | Concrete nouns are those which we can see or touch, for example:  
| | 📌 bird, crowd, oil.  
| | Abstract nouns cannot be seen or touched but can be discussed, for example:  
| | 📌 unemployment; equality.  
| | Proper nouns are the names of people, places, organisations, for example:  
| | 📌 Che Guevara; Liverpool; ETUI-REHS |

| **Stress** | The way in which one or more parts of a word, phrase or sentence are used to sound more important than another by giving them more emphasis, for example:  
| | 📌 Negotiation; He will NOT back down. |

| **Superlative** (or superlative adjective): | Compares people, things or ideas and shows which is the most or the least. For example:  
| | 📌 the highest building; the most definite offer; the least economical method; the best idea; the worst scenario. |

| **Object** | A noun or pronoun which is the person, thing or idea affected by the action of the verb, for example:  
| | 📌 He took the paper to the office  
| | 📌 Tell her we’re ready.  
| | It usually comes after the verb except when the verb is in the passive rather than the active form, for example:  
| | 📌 The paper was taken to the office |

| **Phrasal verbs** | Verbs made of two or more words, for example:  
| | 📌 fill up; take part; come up with |

| **Prepositions** | Words like on, off, up, into, out, in. |

| **Pronouns** | Words like he, it, yourself, theirs, which take the place of nouns |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Nouns or pronouns which come before verbs in active sentences and refer to who or what carries out the action, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→ <strong>John</strong> chaired the meeting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→ <strong>Oil</strong> floats on water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenses</th>
<th>Verb form which shows the time of an action or event, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→ <strong>He works hard</strong> is in the present simple tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→ <strong>He worked hard</strong> is in the past simple tense.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tenses also show our attitude to actions and are not only related to time for example:

I am working next Saturday, although in the present continuous tense, shows that this is a definite plan, more definite than I will work next Saturday.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Refer to actions or states of being, for example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ask, stop, drive, love, be, feel.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocabulary

Which words should you learn?

You can’t learn every word in English, which has a very wide vocabulary. So you make decisions on what you choose to learn based on how often you hear or read this word in a trade union context, or come across it in social situations connected with your work. Or the word seems to be a key word in a meeting, discussion or reading text.

What resources do you need?

A translation dictionary can help with quick understanding of its general meanings, but for how to use the word in different ways, (usage) you need an Advanced English to English dictionary, in paper or electronic version. An electronic pronouncing dictionary is useful. There are also many useful websites which give definitions and usage, such as the EMIRE database, and OneLook. The British TUC’s website Worksmart has interesting reading on many areas of the law and workers’ rights. It is excellent for vocabulary learning, as you meet new words in a trade union context, and can click on keywords to be connected to a dictionary definition. Finally, other trade unionists are always an excellent resource.

What strategies do you currently use for dealing with new vocabulary?

Busy people often just keep new words in a list, with a translation. If they have time, they read over them later. People have different ways of storing and learning new vocabulary.

Activity 1

1. In a small group, compare with each other on methods of:
   a. finding out meaning
   b. storing a word or phrase
   c. remembering it
   d. using it
2. Discuss how you can be more effective.

The following activities are not only useful on a language course, but also outside the classroom for your own personal strategy in dealing with new words.

- Word-translation-use lists
- Mind-maps
- Word-groups
- Word-partners
- Word-building

One thing is certain: The more you do things with a word, the more it will become part of your own vocabulary.

Use it or lose it!
A Word - Translation - Use lists

Look at this example, then add four words of your own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word and meaning</th>
<th>Translation into your language. NB. Note any false friends: the same word in your language but a different meaning.</th>
<th>The sentences in which you read or heard the word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agenda</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• list of items for discussion</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>➔ Who will draw up the agenda for the meeting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• important considerations or aims</td>
<td>• Tagesordnung • Vorstellung</td>
<td>➔ Management agreed so quickly to our demands that we think they might have a hidden agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• action plan</td>
<td>False friends: Agenda in German usage and in other European languages can mean diary or organizer: Notizbuch or Terminkalender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introductory Unit

Understanding the meaning of words
### A1  Trade union words in Word - Translation - Use lists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word and meaning</th>
<th>Translation into your language</th>
<th>The sentences or phrases in which you read or heard the word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ban (prohibition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective bargaining</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dismissal (of workers)</td>
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<td>Dispute (disagreement)</td>
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<td>Employee (worker)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer (company/management)</td>
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<td>Fire, to (to dismiss)</td>
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<td><strong>Introductory Unit</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Vocabulary</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grievance (problem, complaint)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lock-out (closure of plant by management)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing (subcontracting work to another company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redundancy (loss of employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep (representative, for example, of a trade union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sack, (to dismiss employees, to fire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary (payment usually on annual basis for white collar workers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement (agreement in a dispute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A2 Creating your own new list

You may have a notebook in which you jot down new words, with their meaning. Make copies of the blank chart below. Transfer new words regularly. You can store them in alphabetical order later if you wish, which is another way of doing things with words which helps you remember them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>The sentence in which you read or heard the word</th>
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Making lists is not the only way of learning vocabulary. It has one disadvantage: it does not let you make new combinations of words. The following methods B-E show you how you can do this.
B Mind-maps

Try arranging words in the form of mind-maps, sometimes known as brainstorming maps. Many of you have already used them for sharing and creating ideas with others, or for poster presentations.

The shape of the mind-map shows the way the brain adds new information to what is already stored. They are useful for ideas and planning, because they allow the mind to move freely, while a list closes down possibilities. They can also be used for storing new words, and showing the connections between things. They allow you to add new words to what you already know, in a logical or creative way.

B1. Example of a mind-map used to brainstorm and organise ideas
B2 Example of a mind-map in two languages:

Bilingual mind-map

The German trade unionists who brainstormed for a discussion on Collective Bargaining did not know all the English expressions. They did not stop to look up words, as that would have interrupted the flow of ideas. They continued the activity and later looked up the German words.

Activity 2

In a small group, create your own mind-map on a trade-union or political topic.
C  Word Groups

Word groups are ways of arranging and re-arranging words connected with a topic into different groups and under different headings and sub-headings.

C1  Word Groups for the topic *Negotiations*

**Activity 3**

*In pairs, put the following phrases (sometimes called collocations, or ‘word partners’) into the most appropriate of the five groups. Note that some expressions can be found in two or three or possibly more groups. Use disagreement for discussion!*

a. issues to be discussed in the negotiation  
b. issues to be discussed between trade union representatives and members  
c. the process and progress of the negotiation  
d. threats and strategies used by the unions  
e. threats and strategies used by the management or employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjournment</th>
<th>Pension Rights</th>
<th>All-out Strike</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal of labour</td>
<td>Clarification</td>
<td>Redundancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>Selective Strike</td>
<td>Counter-claim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit a claim</td>
<td>Mediate</td>
<td>Settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadlock</td>
<td>Work to rule</td>
<td>Wage increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opt for (something)</td>
<td>Mandate</td>
<td>Table a demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overtime Ban</td>
<td>Go-slow</td>
<td>Arbitration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conciliation</td>
<td>Impasse</td>
<td>Consult members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakdown (in talks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*After discussion, you may check your answers with those suggested in the Study Guide.*
C2 Making your own word -groups

Activity 4

Alone or with others, design two word groups on topics provided by your tutor, or according to your interests, or arising from your listening, reading or discussion.

D Word Partners
E. Word Building

It helps to know a few of the main grammar words or categories which explain the function of a word in the sentence. See the list of helpful terms at the end of the Introduction, and look up verb - noun – adjective – adverb - gerund to check your understanding.

Around the word politics below are its FAMILY MEMBERS.

Activity 5

Read the following sentences. Look at the words in bold. What grammar function does each perform? (e.g. noun, verb, etc.)

a. The board of directors are happy with the new policy.
b. A new EU directive was issued on paternity leave allowances.
c. The representatives negotiated directly with the managers.
d. The discussions are moving in a new direction.
e. The workers have decided to take direct action against the proposed redundancies.

All the words come from the root form direct. By changing the form of the word we can change its usage and the word partners it forms. Can you think of other ways we can use or change this word?
Activity 6

Word-building using grammar grids

Complete the following, and add words of your own:

Note that it is not always possible to fill in all the gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Adjective with opposite meaning</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>benefit</td>
<td>benefit/benefits</td>
<td>beneficial</td>
<td>unbeneficial</td>
<td>beneficially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrate</td>
<td>integration</td>
<td>integrated</td>
<td>unintegrated</td>
<td>integrally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-operate</td>
<td>co-operation</td>
<td>cooperative</td>
<td>uncooperative</td>
<td>cooperatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>develop</td>
<td></td>
<td>developed</td>
<td>undeveloped</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>developing</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>over-developed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>organise</td>
<td></td>
<td>organisational</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>recruit</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dismiss</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make redundant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilitate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
F. More keywords

You should now have a few ideas about different ways of working with words to make sure you use them effectively.

*Try some strategies out on some of the following.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>compulsory</th>
<th>discounts</th>
<th>quit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>progress</td>
<td>absenteeism</td>
<td>campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incentive</td>
<td>lay off</td>
<td>implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduction</td>
<td>a dispute</td>
<td>framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>across the board</td>
<td>packet</td>
<td>pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase</td>
<td>enterprise</td>
<td>infringement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocational training</td>
<td>retirement</td>
<td>competences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settlement</td>
<td>health insurance</td>
<td>merger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conflict</td>
<td>structure</td>
<td>part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claim</td>
<td>subsistence level</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>statutory</td>
<td>breach</td>
<td>relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redundancies</td>
<td>confrontation</td>
<td>homeworker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closure</td>
<td>threat</td>
<td>cuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voluntary</td>
<td>industrial injuries</td>
<td>comprehensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competitiveness</td>
<td>takeover</td>
<td>dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>security</td>
<td>review</td>
<td>commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benefits</td>
<td>natural wastage</td>
<td>risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entitlement</td>
<td>statement</td>
<td>sick leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differential</td>
<td>conflict of interests</td>
<td>shortage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arbitration</td>
<td>statement</td>
<td>flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexitime</td>
<td>bonus scheme</td>
<td>risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discrimination</td>
<td>budget</td>
<td>on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elect</td>
<td>enlargement</td>
<td>confidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requirements</td>
<td>guarantee</td>
<td>ballot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
G. Phrasal verbs

These are verbs with two or more words, for example, look out; look out for; fill in; fill up; fill out. They are used more in spoken speech and informal writing than in very formal writing, but their use is increasing. The meaning varies according to the small word or words which form part of the verb.

Examples:

- That machine is faulty. Look out! (be careful!)
- We have to look for new members all the time (try to find).
- When you sign a contract, look out for the small print. (be careful of; pay close attention to).
- My brother is coming to your company. Will you look out for him? (try to find him. It can also mean to take care of him)

The best way of learning phrasal verbs is to check their meaning in the context you meet them, or in a dictionary. Some people might like to make a list of the most commonly used and work through them. Note that each phrasal verb may have more than one meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Come on</th>
<th>be quick! Also be reasonable! as in Come on, you can’t mean that!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Come out</td>
<td>to exit. He came out of the negotiation with nothing. N.B. come out on strike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold on</td>
<td>to wait. e.g. Can you hold on for a few minutes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold out for</td>
<td>refuse to give in during a struggle or negotiation e.g. The union was holding out for no redundancies at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry on</td>
<td>continue, e.g. We can’t carry on in these conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on</td>
<td>continue, e.g. Go on, I’m listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get on</td>
<td>manage in a job/exam/difficult situation. e.g. How did the miners get on when the strike funds ran out (finished)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get on with</td>
<td>continue a task which has been interrupted. e.g. &quot;Nice talking to you, but I have to get on with my work now.” N.B. It also means to have friendly relations with someone, e.g. “I get on with some of the managers, but not Johnson.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 6

How would you use these words in talking about the work of a trade unionist?

*Using dictionaries, write sentences using all of these phrasal verbs, and compare with a partner.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>give in</th>
<th>give up</th>
<th>give out</th>
<th>give away</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>turn up</td>
<td>turn down</td>
<td>turn away</td>
<td>turn out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lock up</td>
<td>lock out</td>
<td>clock in</td>
<td>clock off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>back up</td>
<td>back down</td>
<td>back off</td>
<td>back out of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Looking out for phrasal verbs*
What makes a ‘good’ speaker of English?

The key factors are wanting and needing to communicate, and a willingness to take risks with the language, to make mistakes, and to ask for explanations when you don’t understand. As trade unionists value the communication of ideas and information, and usually want to translate words into actions, they are often excellent language students. However, if you have had a bad experience of learning a language at school, with teachers who emphasised correct grammar above communication, your confidence may need building. Using English as much as possible in and outside class is the best way to find out that communication takes place even when mistakes are made.

To increase fluency and confidence

- **Working alone**
  
  Talk to yourself in English for five-ten minutes every day on topics of interest or relevant to work, or give an account of what you have done or are planning to do that day. If possible, record it in some way on a tape-recorder or MP3 player. Don’t stop to find unknown words in the translation dictionary: use your own language and do this later. You can listen again to find where you need to improve vocabulary or pronunciation. If you keep the recordings, it allows you to create a speaking diary. Comparing an earlier recording with a recent one will show you how much progress you have made.

- **Working with others**
  
  Join in the class activities, and work with as many different people as possible in pair and group work. Outside the classroom, arrange to meet a classmate, colleague or friend regularly to talk in English (see suggestions on special interest groups and language support groups in the Introduction). Varying the topics will expand your vocabulary and range of expressions: general conversation; food; politics, news, hobbies, interests, books, sports events, family and friends, television programmes or film; and job and trade union issues. Members of your family can also be involved.
A simple way of finding a general topic to talk about

Before or after watching a TV programme, film or news item, or reading a newspaper article, write down What? Who? Where? When? Why? and How?, and then answer the questions. This can also be used following a trip, event, conference, holiday, or any activity. (See the Listening and Reading sections for worksheets which can be used to structure your notes and discussion.)

Activity 1: Interviewing

In pairs, draw up a list of questions to help you interview an English-speaking trade union representative about his or her rôle within their trade union organisation.

Questions should cover the following:

- name, age, origin
- union and position in union
- workplace and job
- number of members represented
- categories of members represented
- length of service as trade union representative
- special responsibilities or interests

Use your questions to interview a colleague. If possible, record your interview using a tape recorder or video camera, or MP3 player. Then listen and identify where you could improve: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, etc.

Use your questions to interview a colleague.
Activity 2: Pair discussion on the problems of part-time work

An increasing number of people, both men and women, work part-time today.

Study the points below, which give some of the disadvantages and problems of part-time work. List them in order of priority beginning with the most serious problem, and add others. Then compare and discuss your list with a partner.

- Many part-timers work unsociable hours
- Many part-timers are expected to work flexibly with very little notice
- Many part-time workers do not think union membership is important
- Part-timers often have little contact with each other and the rest of the workforce
- Many part-timers are on temporary contracts
- When there are problems the part-time workers often lose their jobs first
- Management often reduces the hours of part-timers without consultation
- Part-timers often feel that their work is not valued
- They may feel that they are given too much or too little responsibility

Shop workers’ union USDAW organises many part-time workers
Useful language for interviewing and discussions

Asking questions and for something to be repeated

- I didn’t understand that bit. What do you mean by……..?
- I didn’t quite catch that part. What does ......mean?
- I didn’t follow all that. What was that again?
- Could you go over that part again?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sorry, I didn’t ...</th>
<th>hear ...</th>
<th>that.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>catch ...</td>
<td>what you said.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get ...</td>
<td>the last part.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand ...</td>
<td>the part about ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asking for clarification

1. What do you mean by......?
2. Sorry, I didn’t understand when you said ...
3. I’m afraid you’ve lost me there.
4. Sorry, I don’t/didn’t quite follow you.
5. I’m afraid I don’t understand.

Checking you have understood the speaker

1. If I’ve understood you correctly...
2. Are you saying that ...?
3. If I’ve got it right, then ...

Reformulating what you said when the listener has not understood

1. What I’m really saying is ...
2. Basically, what I meant was ...
3. Sorry, let me explain in another way ...
4. Let me put it in another way ...
Activity 3: Talking about work

*In pairs, discuss one of the following subjects while the rest of the group listen and note your use of the language outlined above:*

- describe what you are responsible for at work
- explain a recent problem you have had at work
- describe the outcomes of a recent meeting you attended

**Giving opinions**

You can give your opinion in a neutral way or in a strong way or in a tentative way (with some hesitation or doubts).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Tentative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m sure that ..........</td>
<td>I think that ............</td>
<td>It seems to me that............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m convinced that .....</td>
<td>As I see it ...............</td>
<td>I’m inclined to think that....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel quite sure that</td>
<td>The way I see it is that</td>
<td>I tend to think that ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>........................</td>
<td>.....</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that ..........</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*What do you do at work?*
Agreeing and disagreeing

When you agree with another person, the language you use will show the listener the strength of your opinion. At times you neither agree nor disagree but only want to express certain doubts or reservations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strong</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neutral</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exactly!</td>
<td>I agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree completely</td>
<td>You’re right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, you’re absolutely right</td>
<td>That’s true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t agree more</td>
<td>That’s right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I couldn’t agree more</td>
<td>I suppose so</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagreement</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strong</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neutral</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I just can’t agree</td>
<td>Yes, but ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I disagree completely</td>
<td>I’m afraid I disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s out of the question</td>
<td>I don’t agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s ridiculous</td>
<td>I wouldn’t say that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can’t mean that/ you can’t be serious/you’re joking!</td>
<td>I hear what you are saying but...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expressing doubts and reservations

| I agree up to a point but ...................................................... |
| Maybe, but ................................................................. ... |
| I see your point but .......................................................... |
| I suppose you’re right but ................................................... |

Making suggestions

| I’d like to suggest that ........................................................... |
| How about _____ing ..............................................................? |
| We could ........................................................................... |
| Why don’t we .................................................................? |
| Do you think we could .......................................................? |
Note
The grammar of the verb to suggest sometimes leads to mistakes. Suggest is not used with an ‘object + infinitive’ structure as in many other languages.

He suggested me to arrive earlier for the next meeting.  incorrect
He suggested (my) arriving earlier for the next meeting. correct
He suggested that I (should) arrive earlier for the next meeting  correct

Balancing points of view

1. The advantage / disadvantage of this approach would be that ………
2. We would make a large profit, but on the other hand, it would damage our image
3. On the one hand, vaccination can prevent the disease. On the other (hand), it damages exports of cattle and sheep.
4. Although the project is interesting, it will cost a great deal of money to support it.
5. We could hold the meeting at the end of the month. However, the Finns will not be able to attend.

Reporting back from a meeting or workgroup

☐ We thought .........................
☐ All of us were of the opinion .................
☐ Some of us said .................
☐ Several people agreed/disagreed .........................
☐ One or two colleagues commented .........................
☐ Somebody/one indicated .........................
☐ No one/nobody believed .........................
Giving short talks and presentations

Remember that your listeners are not judging you on how good your English is. But they do need to understand as much as possible of what you are telling them. You are possibly used to public speaking in your own language, and know how to structure a talk to get the information across effectively. Obviously doing this in English will help both you and the audience. Focus on the question: how can I help them understand me? This has the advantage of taking the spotlight off your own performance, and will reduce your nervousness about making language mistakes. See the talk as an act of communication, not a performance in which people are judging your English. Help both yourself and your listeners by following the advice on improving pronunciation and stress given later in this section.

Activity 4: Presentation and discussion

Prepare and give a short talk on one of the following:

- A challenge that your union faces, and the effect (if any) on your work
- An achievement of yours (e.g. how you coped with a difficulty at work)
- Health, environment and safety issues in your sector
- Work/life balance

A colleague can then chair the questions and take comments from the group, which could lead into a discussion. At the end, another colleague can invite suggestions of other topics of interest for future presentations, and ask for volunteers (individuals or pairs) This will also reduce any nervousness, as these speakers will then know that the audience is interested in the topic.

Making a presentation
Worksheet: Making a Presentation

BEFORE

- Prepare a plan of your talk.

- Write down in note form the ideas you want to get across. When doing a PowerPoint or overhead projector (transparency) presentation, have only key points written down. The temptation for non-native speakers is to write down everything they will say. This is very boring for the listener and the talk loses all human impact.

- Signpost the different sections of your talk (see worksheet ‘Language for Signposting’)

- Check the stress and pronunciation of key words, and follow the advice given in the section on pronunciation.

- Mark clearly where you will pause. Pauses are very important, and can also be used to check the listeners are following.

DURING

- Before you start your talk, prepare your listeners. Write up on the board or include in your PowerPoint presentation the names of places, and people, or words your listeners may not know.

- Don’t read from a paper or a computer screen. Better to make a few mistakes than lose all eye-contact with the audience. Some people like to say “My English isn’t brilliant, so feel free to interrupt if you didn’t catch what I said, or if you didn’t get something.”

- Tell them what you’re going to do; do it; and then tell them what you’ve done. Make it clear at the start if you want them to keep all questions till the end, or if they can interrupt to ask you to repeat or explain something, or slow down.

AFTER

- Invite feedback from the audience. Ask them to write down the good points first (e.g. interesting topic/ well-structured/ used visuals very well); and then changes or improvements they would suggest (e.g. pause more often and speak more slowly/ smile sometimes /don’t use PowerPoint next time - it wasn’t needed!)
# Language for signposting a presentation

| **Introduction** | What I am going to talk about is...  
|                 | My topic today is... |
| **Explaining the structure** | I’ll cover A and B, and then C  
|                 | I’ll give an overview of A  
|                 | I’ll then bring us up to date on.....  
|                 | I’ll go into more detail on B |
| **Ordering points** | Firstly / secondly / lastly  
|                 | To begin with / next / then / finally. |
| **Transition** | I’d like to move on to......  
|                 | Turning now to.........  
|                 | O.K. Now for..... |
| **Checking understanding before moving on** | OK so far?  
|                 | Are you with me? |
| **Conclusion** | So /in short / to sum up/ what I’ve tried to show is... ...  
|                 | I’m happy to take questions, or comments. |

## The listeners’ role

(see Worksheet Making a Presentation above for advice on briefing your listeners.)

Make it clear that you don’t mind being interrupted (if this is the case)

**For example:**

‘Interrupt me if there’s something you really don’t get, but please keep big questions or comments until the end’. **OR** ‘Feel free to add information, ask questions or make comments whenever you like.’
Using pauses effectively in talks or presentations.

The more fluent you are in English, the greater the danger that you will speak too fast and forget your audience’s ability to follow. Practice your pauses, as well as pronunciation and stress, before giving the talk, and ask for honest criticism from a friend.

Activity 1

1. **Read aloud to a partner this extract from a speech.** / indicates a short pause; // a longer pause and /// a very long pause.

   This dispute is not about money alone. /// It is about /standing up for our members in the graphics department /who have been treated disgracefully// by management. //All thirty staff /// have been made redundant// with only a month’s notice.

2. **Show where you would put short (/) and longer (//) pauses and very long pauses (///) in the following talk by a union activist in a hostel for people coming to work in the UK from the new member states of the European Union.**

   Their English levels vary, and the interpreter’s English is not excellent. The speaker does her best to emphasize key words, use pauses, and check if they are following. Compare your speech markings with your partner’s, read them both aloud, and see which is easier to listen to (ask a third person or your teacher).

   Note that full stops (.) and commas (,) give some indication of pauses, but are not enough in a speech. Remember that everyone has a different style of public speaking and some speakers are more dramatic than others, so there are no hard-and-fast ‘correct’ pauses. What is important is the feedback you give each other on what works well.
“...Some of you may have already found work and money problems. Some of you are giving most of your money to a gang master or recruitment agency to pay them back for getting you here in the first place. Sorry, am I going too fast? OK, I’ll slow down. Why am I here today? To let you know your rights. Because everyone at work in the UK enjoys certain basic rights and that includes you. People coming into this country who use an employment agency or gang master to find work have some protection under the law. Everyone at work, including all agency workers, enjoys the following rights from their first day of work: the National Minimum Wage, working time rights (including breaks, holidays and holiday pay), a limit on the working week, health and safety protection, the right to join a union, and protection from unfair discrimination. All these employment rights can be enforced in law. This can be done in an employment tribunal - a special court that deals with most work-related issues or with the assistance of a trade union, if you are a member. And I am asking you today to talk to me about joining a union. I have a leaflet translated into your language which explains all this.”

Now read it aloud to your partner, and find out where s/he would do it differently.
Even if your vocabulary is very wide and you can speak fluently, it will be more difficult to understand if you do not stress the right part of a word and the right words in the sentence.

**Self-help for improving pronunciation**

- As well as the audio-visual materials produced by ETUI-REHS and other trade union organisations, especially the training departments, use your local library or British Council library to borrow general English books and tapes, CDs and DVDs.
- Find course books which have transcripts of conversations and speeches (sometimes found only in the teacher’s book).
- Don’t read as you listen, as this will not develop your listening skills. However, after listening two or three times, the transcript is useful for words you didn’t catch or understand; and, more importantly, you can use it to read aloud with the speaker, matching your pronunciation, intonation and stress patterns to theirs. This is called ‘shadowing’.
- Find a website which has short talks and speeches, such as the excellent BBC world service website.
- A quick search at the time of writing found a three-minute talk by World English expert David Crystal on the increasing use of the word euro in front of other words, as in euro-eggs and euro-speak.
- You can listen to such talks, speeches and news items over and over again on the Listen Again service on the BBC radio website and repeat key words and whole sentences.
- You can also download ‘podcasts’ (audio or video files) from this website onto your computer and even transfer them to an MP3 Player. Many of the BBC podcasts have transcripts (log on to for news items stored for seven days).
- Try also the excellent podcast world directory which has politics and world issues such as Women’s Rights and Globalization. Other useful links are Teaching English and Media Network.
- Very soon most trade union sites will have podcasts, including the UK site for the TUC (Trades Union Congress).
Using dictionaries to improve pronunciation

For help with speaking, electronic translation dictionaries with a voice function are the most convenient to carry around. There are a large number available online, and also CDROM dictionaries with speaking functions. Decide whether you want British or American English, and ask your teacher for a recommendation. Before you buy one, check that it does not just give the meaning of a word, but also how to use it in different sentences with different meanings. Here is an example, adapted from Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary:

**bully** /ˈbʌl.ɪ/ verb: to hurt or threaten someone who is smaller or less powerful than you, for pleasure or to make them do something they do not want to do.
- One in four employees is bullied in UK workplaces.
- Don't let anyone bully you into doing overtime.

**bullying** noun: the act of threatening someone.
- Bullying is a problem in many workplaces.

**bully** /ˈbʌl.ɪ/ noun: someone who hurts or frightens someone who is smaller or less powerful than them, often forcing them to do something they do not want to do.
- He is a real bully!
- Trade unionists usually find out quickly from their members who the management bullies are.

Notice the strange spelling of /ˈbʌl.ɪ/. This is the written way of showing you how to pronounce it: the phonetic transcription. Each dictionary does this slightly differently, but they are all based on the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and your dictionary will give you a pronunciation key at the start. If you don’t want to spend money on an electronic dictionary, make a friend and companion of your paperback dictionary. Spend 15 minutes a day for five days and you can learn the main sounds in its pronunciation key.

Try Stirling University’s (free) online phonology course.
Improving your pronunciation

**Vowels**

Vowels (a e i o u) are the most difficult sounds to get right.

**Activity 1**

The following is an extract from a typical pronunciation key in a dictionary. A common word comes first, followed by one useful for trade unionists. Note that the underlined part of the word is showing you the sound being taught and not where the word-stress lies.

*Read aloud the following and compare with a partner. Add your own word examples, or find words in the vocabulary section.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long vowels</th>
<th>Short vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ïː</td>
<td>ï</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep; mediation</td>
<td>ship; industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aɪː</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>car; arbitrate</td>
<td>ten; amend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uː</td>
<td>æ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cool; tool</td>
<td>hat; sack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔː</td>
<td>œ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse; call-centre</td>
<td>above; agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɛː</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first; terms</td>
<td>foot; full-time worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>done; redundant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>top; cost-cutting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 2

*Use the chart on the previous page to find the phonetic symbol for the vowel sounds indicated in bold in the following words. Then compare with your own dictionary’s symbol.*

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mobbing (noun)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Deadlock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Backlash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Allowance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 3

Consonants are all the letters which are not vowels.

*In pairs, divide the task between you: look up one of the groups of consonants below in your dictionary’s pronunciation (phonetic) key, and record the symbols and example words found there. Add your own word examples, or use the vocabulary section to find them.*

**Group A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Word Stress**

If you don’t get the word stress right, especially if you are speaking quite fast and fluently, it is very hard for the listener to understand. You may not have realised this, as someone who speaks your language or one closely related to it will often make the same stress mistakes as you. But although you understand each other, the native speaker or someone from a different language-group is lost.

Each English word consists of syllables.

*conciliate* has four: **con- cil- i- ate**

The stressed syllable is the fourth syllable, and this is usually indicated with the **high mark**: 

conciliate /ˌkɒnsɪ�ɪeɪt/

Secondary stress is indicated by the **low mark**: 

Activity 1

*Using upper case (capital letters), show the stress of the following words, as in*  

**redundancy**  re DUN dan cy
Then practise the pronunciation of each word below with your partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>issue</th>
<th>colleague</th>
<th>industrial</th>
<th>tribunal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>complaints</td>
<td>represent</td>
<td>employer</td>
<td>employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negotiation</td>
<td>negotiate</td>
<td>representative</td>
<td>economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 2**

Which method is the best way for you to record and remember word-stress?

Consider the different ways, and compare with a partner.

- Dictionary method: arbitration /ˈɑːtrɪˌtreɪʃən/
- Underlining: Arbitration
- Capital letters: ArbiTRATION or Arbi tra tion
- Using different colours: Arbi TRA tion

**Activity 3**

Talk to your partner on any topic (sport, politics, family, etc) for three minutes and ask them to interrupt you whenever you pronounce a word in a way they don’t expect. Make a note of each word, and check with the teacher or in a dictionary.
Sentence stress

When preparing to give a talk, take part in a discussion or meeting, or make a phone call, make sure you decide the sentence stress beforehand. The bad news is that native speakers give some weight to all the words carrying meaning in a sentence (content words). International speakers often move too quickly over words, and create an effect which is too regular or which follows a musical pattern in their own language.

In the sentence *She delegates most of the boring work to her assistant*, one would expect the following words to be stressed (they are shown in capitals):

**She DELEGATES MOST of the** BORING WORK to her ASSISTANT.

You can also double-stress a word: depending on the context, in the sentence above it might be *She*, thus comparing her to someone else; or *most* or *boring*.

Activity 1

*In the sentences below, underline content words. Write two sentences of your own, and do the same. Read them aloud to a partner, and compare stress.*

1. Three times we went back to the negotiating table.

2. Some people join a union for what they can get out of it, rather than solidarity.

3. Actions short of a strike would be the best tactic here.

4. 

5. 
Activity 2

After checking word stress that you are unsure about, mark the content words in the following. Then read aloud to a partner and see where you differ. In sentence stress, there are alternatives.

1. This dispute is not about money alone. It is about standing up for our members in the graphics department who have been treated disgracefully by management. All thirty staff have been made redundant with only a month’s notice.

2. We may have no alternative but to call for strike action or action short of a strike. This may be refusing to attend meetings, refusal to use email or the telephone, and refusal to work flexibly to meet deadlines.
Listening to others

The advice on listening in the speaking section includes recommendations on excellent source material, useful for imitating standard pronunciation, intonation and stress. You are likely to come across many different types of spoken English in your working and private life, including Euro-English as spoken by many people who do not have English as a mother tongue, but use the language widely in their work. Many people grow up speaking a local accent and sometimes a dialect. As they move into the world of work or higher education, they may learn to modify their accent when speaking to people from different areas, in order to be understood. They don’t lose their original dialect, but they modify it for the purposes of communication. This is very similar to what happens when “international English” is used, between native and non-native speakers, or when an Italian is talking to a Pole: both find it difficult at first, if they have strong influences from their own language. If you meet English, Irish, Northern Irish, Scottish or Welsh trade unionists, you may find that they are often more difficult to understand than other nationalities, because they are not used to making the effort required for international communication.

The European Parliament: home of “international” English

The key to being a good international communicator in terms of listening is to put communication first, and to be honest at all times: see the Speaking section for ways of interrupting a speaker when you don’t understand what someone has said. One Danish trade unionist who attended European Works Council meetings conducted in English got the whole group to adopt a system of holding up cards which said “Slow down” or “Please repeat”.
**Activity 1**

*Ask your partner to talk for five minutes on a trade union to pic, their job, or a hobby, with the teacher observing you. Interrupt whenever you don't understand. The teacher can then give advice on the speaker's stress and pronunciation. If you do this without a teacher, make a note of words which you pronounce differently, and check afterwards who is right.*

- Don't try to understand all words.
- Focus on the gist, that is, the main points being made and not the details.
- Be careful of watching TV news, as the pictures have a stronger impact than the words, which is one reason for listening to radio news (see Pronunciation section for sources of news which can be recorded).
- Make notes on what you have just heard, even if it is only answering the questions *What? Why? When? Where? Who?* and *How?* This simple format can be also used for TV chat shows, sport, films, and series.
- When you have recorded material, you can listen again for detail (see Pronunciation section for advice on using transcripts).

**Activity 2 + 3**

*Listen to the TV or radio news, and watch a film before the next class. Use the worksheets below to make notes. This will focus your listening.*
RADIO NEWS WORKSHEET

Date: ____________________________ Time: ____________________________

Category: culture, crime, disaster, economics, health, politics, science, sport.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Person(s)</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Key words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WORKSHEET: WATCHING FILMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE :</th>
<th>CATEGORY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comedy □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiction □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horror □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drama □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thriller □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adventure □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other □</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTEREST RATE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low  High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Storyline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time and place of the action</td>
<td>Give a brief summary of the story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main characters</th>
<th>Your opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe their personalities, rôles</td>
<td>State what you liked or didn’t like about the film</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| New words and expressions |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulties encountered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ accent /pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ slang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ cultural references</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ unfamiliar subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ other (please specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Take an overview

1. Don’t start by reading a document or article in detail and looking up all the words you don’t know.
2. First of all look at the title or headline and look up unknown words. What do you expect to find? Jot down a few ideas. In this way you connect with the article.
3. Do the same with the sub-headings.
4. Read the first two sentences in each paragraph. This will help you find the main idea. The first sentence may just be connecting back to the previous paragraph. Underline the main idea.
5. Now look at the last sentence of each paragraph, which often sums it up or indicates what is coming next.
6. Is there any part of the article that you don’t need to read? Is there a part that seems very relevant to you? Read it first.
7. Make very brief notes on the main point in each section.
8. Don’t look up every word. You can often guess the meaning from the context. If an unknown word turns up frequently, it may be a key-word.
10. Read the article again, or the parts that interest you.
11. Add any important details or vocabulary to your notes under the sub-headings.
12. Now represent the main ideas and key words and expressions in a mind-map (see Vocabulary section). If you are in a reading support group, you can use this as a basis for discussion.
Activity 1

Reading the news or trade union articles

The websites recommended in the Pronunciation section are a rich source of news items. Find a newspaper or trade union article that interests you. You can either skim the day’s news, or type in a key word to their search engines, most of which have excellent advice on how to find what you are looking for. Do your reading at home, following the 12 steps above.

Bring the article and your notes or mind-map to class, and exchange articles with a partner.

Read the new article and write notes on the mind-map.

Overview of article or document
Leisure reading

Reading for fun or interest widens your vocabulary range. A useful check if you can manage a book without too much difficulty is to read the first page: if there are more than ten words you don't know, find something easier.

Activity 2

Use this worksheet to make notes on a book you’re reading, and then make a brief presentation.

WORKSHEET: READING BOOKS

You can use this worksheet to write about a story you have read or to ask other learners about their books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title of book/story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Reasons for choosing this book? (famous author, unusual story, recommended by somebody....)

2. Type of story (thriller, science-fiction, detective story, romance....)

3. Describe the main characters

4. The story setting: place and time

5. Explain the main interest of the story (the relationships between the characters, the humour, the action, the suspense....)

6. Describe the ending (happy, surprising, disappointing....)

7. Note down the new words or expressions

8. Reasons for recommending or not recommending this book

9. Write one or two sentences saying what you liked and didn’t like about the story

10. Summarise the story in a short paragraph
Writing

Writing in a foreign language makes most people nervous, as mistakes seem more obvious than when speaking. Yet even with native speakers, a quickly-written email to a friendly colleague may contain mistakes which most people regard as acceptable. Much depends on your relationship with the person to whom you are writing; this also affects the level of formality, and the style. Before writing anything, you should decide:

- Who is going to read this?
- Is a formal style necessary?
- What points do I want to make?

After writing, you can use your computer spell-checker. Grammar checkers are unfortunately less reliable as they often don’t recognise incomplete sentences, one feature of informal messages.

**Writing regularly to increase fluency**

- Keep a diary. Write in English for 5 –10 minutes every day without stopping to look up words in the dictionary. Afterwards (or once a week) translate words and look up grammar points. An English -to English dictionary is essential to know how to use words.

- Find others who want to improve writing skills, form an email group, and contact each other weekly. (see Special Interest and Language Support groups in the Introduction to this unit). You can ask for their reactions to letters, articles or presentation notes that you are preparing.

- Keep in touch with international contacts via email.
Different writing styles and formats

Informal emails

Dear Maria,

Sorry I haven’t been in touch for ages - work has been crazy! Just thought I’d pass this useful website on to you, as I know you’re working on this stuff. It’s the Emire database, a glossary which explains all the different terms of the national industrial relations systems - and that’s all the EU member states. It’s http://www.eurofound.eu.int/emire/emire.html - pretty good detective work, huh? Regards to Juan. See you in June, if not before.

All the best,

Andrei.

Activity 1

1. Find examples in the above email of informal style: short or incomplete sentences; and short forms of words (e.g. I’ll not / I will; colloquial or informal English).

   Dear Maria and All the best are informal but neutral ways of opening and ending: in other words, they are not highly personal.

2. Group the following openings and endings to emails and letters according to style in the table below. Then work out different pairs of openings and endings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hi there!</th>
<th>Cheers</th>
<th>Yours sincerely</th>
<th>Take care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Dear Chairman</td>
<td>Yours</td>
<td>Hello, Pascual!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To whom it may concern</td>
<td>Warm regards</td>
<td>Yours faithfully</td>
<td>Dear Ms Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing off now</td>
<td>Yours in solidarity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Openings and Closings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Openings</th>
<th>Closings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very formal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Write brief, informal emails (on paper if necessary) to two classmates, (asking for or giving information; an invitation; a suggestion; personal comment; or question). Exchange them, and reply on the spot. Afterwards, discuss any language problems you have. Arrange to email someone about a trade union topic later. If he or she agrees, add your tutor to the circulation list.
Formal emails

To all union reps

Please forward the attached document to all members as a high priority, and post hard copies in prominent places. Many thanks. Andrew Dowson, Branch Secretary.

To all union members

At a very well attended meeting yesterday, the branch unanimously declared that it has no confidence in senior management, as a result of management failing to honour its pledge to review current shift patterns.

Activity 2

In pairs, write a formal email on a trade union matter, with an instruction, information, or request for information. Exchange emails with another pair, and write replies.

Activity 3

Rewrite the text of the letter on page 59, making it shorter, warmer and more informal.

- For example, use incomplete sentences:
  - not It would be good to hear from you by,
  - but Good if you can get back to me by.

- Also use short forms e.g. I’ve sent not I have sent.

- Try using some imperatives (Please give me your comments not I would welcome your comments).
Transport and General Workers Union
www.tgwu.org.uk

7, George Street
Newcastle
NE1 2AP
UK

10/09/2007

Juana Quevedo
UGT
Avda. de America, 25-4
28002 Madrid,
Spain.

Dear Juana Quevedo

Re: Pension rights

When we met in Latvia in June, you expressed an interest in the article which I referred to in my presentation on the above issue. I have not been able to locate the electronic version which I promised you, so please find enclosed a hard copy¹.

I would welcome your comments, and the update on the pension rights situation in Spain which you promised me. I know this is a busy time of year for you, so feel free to write comments in the margin of the article and post or fax it back. Alternatively, you could email me. It would be good to hear from you by the end of the month, as I will be giving the European perspective on pensions to a conference in London on October 10th.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Best wishes²,

Chris Bennet
chrisbennett@tgw.org.uk

Notes:
¹ For a fax: “I am sending this copy.”
² “Yours sincerely” would be too formal here, as they have met. Yours or Regards would be acceptable.
The use of the passive

A. Active:

The Hungarian delegate circulated proposals for comment and expert opinion.

B. Passive:

Proposals were circulated by the Hungarian delegate for comment and expert opinion.

- The object of the verb in A (proposals) has become the subject in B.
- The subject in A becomes the agent in B (by the Hungarian delegate).

Note that the agent can be omitted in the passive form. For example:

**Arrivals from non-European countries are required to report to the police station within a week.**

Here the request clearly comes from the police, so *by the police* is not needed.

Sometimes the agent is not given because they are unknown or unimportant. For example:

**Her laptop was stolen from the office** (the thief is not known).

The use of the passive is a common way of making a written text seem formal: a trick of style. A notice which says **You are requested to attend this meeting** seems to have more authority than one using the active form **We request you / the union requests you to attend this meeting**. In general, it is better to be direct and avoid a very formal style, but there are occasions when you may need that extra authority.
Activity 4

Check in your grammar book for the way passives are formed. Then change the following active sentences from notices and union newsletters into the passive.

1. The management requests all employees to wear the regulation protective clothing on this site.

2. The union members unanimously passed a motion deploring the activities of Reynard Bank in Iraq and Afghanistan.

3. Direct your questions about state pensions to the Financial Services Authority.

4. If there are any last-minute changes to the conference programme, we will notify you by email.
Cultural awareness

Cultural awareness in international encounters;

Trade unionists wanting to break down national barriers will understand the dangers of stereotype, whether positive or neutral (‘All Germans are efficient’ and ‘Danes are more relaxed than other Scandinavians’); or negative (‘The English never say what they really think’ and ‘The Italians and Spanish are always late for meetings’). Nevertheless, these stereotypes exist as a reaction to the different ways that people behave in their own culture which may cause problems and misunderstandings in international groups.

The dangers of culture bumps

Culture bumps are occasions when something goes wrong for one or all of the people in a situation involving more than one nationality. Bad, uncomfortable or unpleasantly surprised feelings arise when different nationalities behave in a way that is ‘normal’ only in their own culture. Because the reason for the problem is often not obvious, bumps are far more dangerous than culture shock, which involves very obvious differences, e.g. the weather, or eating and drinking habits. In ‘bumps’, people usually don’t know why something is going wrong, and they may end up blaming the other person (‘Mario's aggressive and pushy’ or ‘Ulla is cold and unresponsive’). Or they may decide to stereotype (‘They all like to jump into a discussion first, don’t they?’ or “They never say what they really think to your face.’)

Here are two examples of culture bumps.

1. Directness and indirectness

An English trade unionist is receiving a visit in her workplace from an Italian. After a time, realising she needs to prepare for her next meeting, she begins to use indirect, polite expressions to show she wants him to go. She says twice, 'Well, if that's all, Giuseppe?' with a rising intonation. He takes it as an invitation to add other points, but eventually notices she is being cool and giving shorter answers. She thinks he is being insensitive and pushy. He leaves feeling hurt, and wondering why she hasn’t offered lunch.
2. Interrupting

In an international discussion, the Germans and Finns are finding it difficult because the French and the Spanish are constantly interrupting them and each other. Afterwards the Spanish complain to each other that they can never tell from the body-language if the Finns agree or disagree with them, and also that they never smiled: it was as if they weren’t really interested.

Solutions

You can read the cultural briefings books or web articles for business people travelling abroad, or the many fascinating cultural awareness books. They are of course based on generalisations, but they can be useful to prepare you for big differences of behaviour in work and social life.

But your main strength as a trade unionist will be your willingness to be open, to discuss and to negotiate. When someone from another nationality annoys or upsets you, don’t immediately decide that they personally are the problem. Find out if it’s a culture bump. How? First of all, be honest about the way you are feeling, say what you usually do back home, and find out if they do things differently.

Some examples:

1. ‘I’m finding it hard to get a word in during these meetings. Back home, we wait until the other person has completely finished before we speak. What do you do?’

Then, after listening to the reply:

‘OK, can we meet each other half-way on this? Any ideas?’

2. (Female) ‘I notice you don’t have a problem calling me sweetie and darling. But that never happens with trade unionists back home, because the women trade unionists find it sexist (no, not sexy!) What happens in your country?’

Then, after listening to the reply:

‘So can we agree that you’ll stop? Although feel free to carry on buying all the drinks! Oh dear, there’s another culture bump danger: humour!! I’m just joking, really!’
If you are asked to explain how things are normally done, trying to explain will help you see your own culture from an outsider’s view, and to move towards an international perspective for certain occasions.

“Culture bumps are not limited to speech. Body language and actions can also cause misunderstandings”.

Activity 1  Personal experience

Take some time to think of a positive and a negative experience you have had of cultural differences when travelling, receiving visitors or colleagues from abroad, or working at an international level. With the negative experience, work out if there were different cultural norms which caused the problem. If this happened again, would you do anything differently? Then share this with a partner. Report back to the whole group.
Activity 2 Differences and solutions

Choose one of the following and discuss with a partner.

a. With a same-nationality partner:

Decide what are the changes taking place nowadays in your shared culture. Are there any other nationalities whom you have observed that have a very different attitude? Give examples of positives or negatives. Prepare a short presentation for the group, in answer to this question:

What solutions can we find for international situations or meetings?

b. With a different nationality partner:

Each of you chooses a topic and interviews the other person on what is normal in their culture, and any changes that are taking place. Report back from the group on what your partner said.

- body-language (smiling, gestures, touching, standing close or at a distance)
- ways of dressing for work and leisure
- attitudes to those above and below you at work
- gender attitudes at work and in the home
- attitudes towards older and younger people at work and in the home
- turn-taking in conversation (listening, interrupting)
- directness in expressing opinions (agreeing, disagreeing)
- formality and informality in meetings (meeting procedures)
- gift-giving and socialising (food, drink and entertainment) in work and social situations
- using humour as ice-breakers, or in difficult situations.
- different perceptions about time (punctuality, multi-tasking)

See also further activities on Cultural Awareness in units Trade Unions and Europe, Working Women, and European Works Councils.