

Hi Leslie

Thank you for giving Arlys and I the go-ahead to complete the assignments together. If we wish to make individual comments, we'll use our initials (AVW and SIB) throughout the assignments.

Susan

WEEK 2: OCTOBER 15 2001: LESSON 1

Arlys van Wyk and Susan Brokensha

ASSIGNMENT

1. Try to search with a keyword or an author's name from one of the web sites on this week's syllabus. Did you find any related web site materials of interest?

We decided to take a look at the Small Business Association web site. (**SIB**: I'm particularly interested in this kind of web site as I teach Business English and am forever on the lookout for interesting business texts for students. Currently, I make use of newspaper articles in the business field which I download from Independent Online/IOL. However, I was so excited when I took a look at the web sites listed in your CBI course. I think students will find activities based on the topics both stimulating and challenging.) We decided to take a look at what typing in the phrase "business reports" would yield (**AVW**: My suggestion!) and found a number of interesting and useful sites (no less than 72). A few web sites that grabbed our attention are listed below:

<http://www.sba.gov/ADVO/research/r5188tot.pdf>

http://www.onlinewbc.gov/womens_business.html

What we like about the web site materials we accessed is that they give students a global perspective of what's going on in the financial sphere. It concerns us that students often only know what's happening in South Africa, and don't really reflect on how being in a global village impacts on South Africa's economy. (**SIB**: Students in my Business English classes, for instance, had no idea to what extent the recent terrorist attacks on the United States would affect the country's economy and other world markets.)

Once we took a look at the [Small Business Association](#) web site, we were hooked, and couldn't just stop there. So we also searched for Bill Gates and found a wealth of information on him.

What we both realized after conducting our search is that we will have to refine the way in which we search, otherwise much of the materials we come across will not be useful to our students. For example, if we want our students to learn how to write a business plan, searching for "business plans" on the web won't do the trick. We also realize that it will be a good idea to use the strategies for effective web searches outlined in your course. We find that Google is one of the most user-friendly search engines to employ when looking, for example, for materials on how to guide students in their drafting of business plans.

2. Try a search with the publishing company or author's name from one of the class texts that you use. Did it lead to any useful supplementary materials/

We decided here that we would each choose an author's name from one of the textbooks we use and that we'd make use of Google and Hotbot to conduct our search. (**AVW**: I chose to search for information on Kenneth J. Pakenham who wrote a wonderful book entitled *Making Connections: An Interactive Approach to Academic Reading* (1995, New York: St Martin's Press). It was interesting to read a detailed review of this particular book by an academic from the University of Arizona (www.readingmatrix.com/book_reviews/julia_gousseva/book_review.html). It's sometimes difficult to evaluate the quality of the textbooks we use, so it's great to be able to read reviews from a reputable source. I also took a look at another site which contained background information to Kenneth J. Pakenham (www.uakron.edu/english/bios/pakenham.html). Imagine my surprise when a photo of Pakenham appeared! I can finally put a face to a name! I now have Pakenham's email address, and would love to find out more about reading instruction for second-language learners. In searching for Pakenham, I came across a couple of links that will certainly provide me with useful supplementary material).

(**SIB**: Recently, I completed my Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics. My dissertation focused on a Conversation Analytic (CA) study of business-news interview talk and on the practical implications of this study to ESP. I have designed a media studies course for post-graduate studies using my findings as a point of departure.

Many of the meta-communicative and communicative activities I've designed for learners are based on articles by the CA analysts Greatbatch and Clayman. I now need to supplement by transcriptions of South African news interview talk with authentic samples of overseas news interview talk. I'd like students to determine if the discourse features of South African news interview talk are replicated in overseas news interview talk. Using Hotbot, I decided to search for the Conversation Analyst David Greatbatch and found a number of transcripts of news interview interaction that learners may study.

3. Try a search using the name of the city or school district in which you work. Add keywords about topics or subjects that you teach. Did you discover any local resources of people that were surprising?

Using Google, we typed in Bloemfontein + academic writing. Seeing that Bloemfontein is such a tiny place compared to Johannesburg, Pretoria or Cape Town, we didn't think we'd find much – but we were wrong! What a surprise to find so many useful materials in our own city! Below are two examples:

<http://www.exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/gra0601.htm>
www.unisa.ac.za/dept/bmi/resrep96/bureaux/student/conferen.html

Arlys and Susan