

CREATIVITY and INNOVATION  
in  
LANGUAGE STUDIES  
1<sup>st</sup> International CILS Conference

From reality television to reality performance

Claire Wallis

Abstract

This paper aims to analyze how two business-related reality shows can aid language development in university Business English courses.

The hugely successful reality television show *The Apprentice*, billed as "the ultimate job interview", sets contestants with diverse business-related tasks with the eventual aim of securing a very profitable job within the highly competitive business world. In *Dragons' Den*, another television show of the same genre, contestants have to pitch what they believe to be an achievable business plan with the hope of obtaining financial backing.

Both of these shows, which often fall under the heading of undesirable programs due to the reality tag, can be nonetheless considered as excellent teaching tools in university Business English courses, due to their clarity, lexical accuracy, conciseness and variety.

The aim of the present paper is to highlight the varying ways in which the said materials can be used in an innovative way, offering students the opportunity to learn through observation and appraisal whilst avoiding the traditional ex-cathedra teaching dynamics (Argondizzo, 2002).

Secondly, this paper aims to delve deeper into the language of persuasion, which is a key feature in both shows, and question the techniques, patterns and authenticity performed (Bamford, 2007).

Creating innovative material to inspire, motivate and encourage students, in addition to meeting their needs in a continually changing environment (Widdowson, 2003) is an extremely challenging task for any language teacher. With this paper we hope to highlight the flexibility and effectiveness of this material and show how it can be integrated into Business English courses at all levels.

Università della Calabria - Italy  
December 14th - 16th, 2009