

Inglés para fines profesionales. Grado en Turismo.

Economic and telegraphic language

<https://canal.uned.es/mmobj/index/id/17927>

ELENA MARTÍN. Hello and welcome to this video class in English for Professional Purposes. Today we are going to be talking about Economic and Telegraphic Language. This is covered in units 2 and 3 in the course. You may not know exactly what Economic and Telegraphic languages are but, hopefully, by the end of this presentation you will have a clear idea of what it is and how you should use it.

This is a table of contents. We will look at the definition of economic and telegraphic language. Then we will see some examples: adverts, announcements, meeting agendas, the minutes of a meeting, which is the recording of what has taken place in a meeting. And finally we will look in detail and how to prepare a good PowerPoint presentation.

Let's see the definition. Economic and telegraphic language is a type of language that is used in writing where space and economy are very important. So, the characteristics are the following: any long and superfluous words are omitted, we just concentrate on the key words that are essential for the understanding of the message. And also, functions are sometimes omitted. What are functions? For instance: articles, indefinite determiners, auxiliary verbs, etc. So, some examples in which economic and telegraphic language are used: adverts, in newspapers, for example, announcements, notes, when we take notes in a course, or in a conference, when we prepare the PowerPoint presentations, the meeting agendas, our diary, our professional diary, and the meetings, the record of a meeting when it takes place. Let's look at the main ones one by one.

Adverts. Classified adverts in a newspaper or online normally have these sections: they include the name of the employing company, the title of the post that is vacant, all the required details about the position, the location, where it is, the duration, if it is short-term or long-term, etc., the requirements that need to be satisfied by any successful applicant, and also the job conditions, which are very important, how much money you are going to earn, the salary, if there are any perspectives to get promoted, etc., and of course it is essential to know how to contact them, the contact procedure.

In the next slide we are going to look at one of these examples. This is taken from the internet, it's a very recent advert, and you can see that it's highlighted in the title "Career Opportunities", and then we have the name of the company, Backpackers Club, and the title of the post, they're looking for a manager. And then we have different sections that give us the details of this position. And also the requirements, the qualifications and the age they are looking for. The experience, they say that any

candidate should have a minimum of three years of experience. And finally, we look at the salary package, which they say is negotiable, so it depends on your qualifications, then you will get a better pay or a worse pay. And at the bottom we have the ways to contact them. In this case, you have to phone them on that mobile phone number.

Let's see another example of this telegraphic or economic language. An announcement. This is an announcement also taken from the internet, from a website of a university. OK? Announcing their voting system. It's very clearly stated. What, when and where. What they are announcing, the registration of new voters, and then other details. When that's going to take place. The dates and the times. And where it is going to take place. And then at the bottom again we have: "for more information please call..." and they give you different numbers. You can see that these are very short and very simple, so that we understand the information easily.

The agenda for the meeting. I have highlighted the different points or stages in the agenda. Number 1 you can see that it's the "Call to order", then number 2 is the main point: "Chairman", selection of chairman for committee. "Name change", they are choosing a new name for the committee. And then they are going to move on to talk about projects. They are going to follow what's happening already, the current projects, this "Big Sandy Park North", and then they are going to suggest projects for other areas: "Olive's Garden" or the "Community Centre Grounds". And once all that has been covered, they will finish the meeting, which is the number 5 "Adjourn".

OK, now, once the meeting takes place, it's very good practice to keep a record of the meeting. This is a template of what the minutes of a meeting look like. At the top of the page we normally put the date and the location, the attendees, the people that were present in that meeting, any partners or guests, with their name, their title, the organization they belong to... and then they write down very shortly what the agenda items were and any decisions that were made. Notes, additional discussion points and decisions. You can see that at the bottom, so it's all very brief.

Let's have a look at one of the most important examples of economic and telegraphic language. These PowerPoint presentations, you will surely have to make them at some point in your career. And it's very good practice to use PowerPoint to help you, visually. They normally have a limited time. They go from 20 minutes, you know, the usual ones are very short 20 minutes to half an hour, up to an hour. That can happen as well. You have a limited space. You cannot keep writing forever. So you have to make sure that you put the maximum information in the minimum words. It's also important to take into consideration the structure of your presentation. You will have a title page that will state the name of the company, or the name of the speaker. How to contact that person, normally with the email address, and the logo of the company. Then, in the following

slide, you will have the introduction. Now, the introduction is preferably done with a table of contents, like what I've done in my presentation, you could see that there were some bullet points which showed you what you were going to see in this video class, but it can also be done with a brief summary of the contents of this presentation. Then we move on to the main core content. And finally we wrap it up, we finish it, with the conclusions.

Let's look at it in detail. Some tips: when possible, it's good to include numerical information accompanied by graphs, pie charts, etc. It's widespread practice to use bullet points. You can see that mine has bullet points in different colours to show the different levels in the presentation. Now, main features of telegraphic language in these PowerPoint presentations: we use simple sentences, we reduce function words and words that have little meaning, for example the verb "to be", and we use symbols like arrows, the equal sign or the ampersand. We also use lots of acronyms and abbreviations: "esp." for "especially", "inc." for "included", "vs." for "versus". I'm going to show you some examples of this in the following slides. Let's look at them.

Here you have a chart. This is an example of numerical information accompanied by a visual aid. We could only say that this is a project and that we are looking at the participants' age, and we have an age range from under 25 to over 55. You could only have said that, but it's much more clear if we divide them into categories. You have them there. You have under 25, then over 55 and then between 25 and 35, 36-45, and 46-55. And then we have the pie chart with the percentages. We even have a small banner that says that their participants were mainly female. 61%. So, it's a lot of information, but condensed in only one image.

An example of simple sentences. This is taken actually from one of the video classes that you have in this course. The video class in which we explain the aims of unit 1. And if you look at the sentences, they are very short and very simple. What are the aims of unit 1? Well, "Be able to ask for personal and professional information". "Be able to make small talk with strangers". "Be able to talk about jobs". "Be able to talk about tourism and travelling". The sentences are not only short, but also, if you look at it, we have highlighted the key words. To add importance, so that they catch your eye.

Now, reduction of words, again another example from our presentation. You can see the bullet points and... there are no verbs. If you notice it. For instance, the first bullet point would read: "The global village is becoming increasingly mobile". All the key words there are "Global village increasingly mobile". Or: "The mobile technology is continuously evolving". We don't really need to use the verb "to be" there, so that it's understood. So, we have to shorten it, as much as possible.

Another example. The use of symbols. Again taken from another presentation. In this presentation we were talking about coursebooks and why they are important for language learning. OK, they are important because they promote autonomous

learning “and” self-regulation, with a symbol. And then, when we talk about the sequencing that normally takes place in a textbook for languages, the units are normally structured in the following way: we start with listening, we move on to speaking, then to reading, and then to writing. And that’s signalled only with the arrows. So it’s a much more simple way to show it. Then, also the use of acronyms and abbreviations. Again another PowerPoint presentation. This unit was called “ESL vs. CLIL. Latest trends in English language teaching”. What’s ESL? ESL stands for “English as a Second Language”, versus, Content and Language Integrated Learning, so this unit is about just learning the language, or following bilingual education. All that is shortened into “ESL vs. CLIL”. OK?

So, this is the end of this video class. I hope that by now you have a much more clear idea of what Economic and Telegraphic Language is, and why it is useful in English. Thank you.

Transcript: Tomás Costal