

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **BEC to the future**

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Skype and Podcast technology could be an essential part of the business English classroom of the future – according to two award winning English teachers who recently won a competition organised by a department of Cambridge University. Hundreds of people from all over the world submitted ideas on how technology can be used to teach a business English activity. China’s Sun Yi Nan and India’s Revathi Viswanathan’s were awarded the top prize in the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations’ Business English Certificates (BEC) competition for their creative teaching ideas in the classroom.

By drawing on their experience of teaching business English, their creative ideas won them a two-week residential Teacher Development Course at Homerton College – part of the University of Cambridge in August. Dshini Chetty - Global Manager for Workplace Assessment at Cambridge ESOL who helped judge the competition said: “The high quality of the entries made it very difficult to decide the winners. Revathi and Sun Yi Nan’s ideas were particularly inspiring as they used real-life scenarios which are key to being successful in using English for the workplace”.

Chennai-based Revathi Viswanathan’s winning entry drew on her experience of using podcasts in the classroom to recreate corporate scenarios for business English students. By introducing them to the type of transactions and vocabulary used in the business environment, she was able to motivate students to develop their listening and speaking skills.

“I couldn’t believe I won a global teaching competition”, said Revathi who has just returned to India from the course: “I entered the competition so I could share my experiences with other teachers around the world and I’m already using my new skills in the classroom. Podcasts

provide an authentic way for students to interact in real situations which can help them to develop their English skills for the work place.”

*“Using Skype to Teach Business English”* was the winning entry from China’s Sun Yi Nan. In her proposal she explained how she had used Skype Technology to facilitate corporate role-play amongst her students. By putting her class into two groups she organised a web-based conference with the students representing different offices in an international organisation. The scenario involved an English discussion between Group A representing a European head office and Group B representing an Asian office. They discussed how the business plan for how the organisation can break into the Chinese market.

“This was a wonderful opportunity which allowed me to share my experiences of business English with other teachers. Skype provides a real setting for my students to practise their language learning and as a result they became more confident in speaking English in their daily lives. The advanced teaching skills I have learnt are already being put to good practice.”

By enhancing their skills on these courses, the teachers will be able to use their new knowledge to pass on to others and improve the learning experience of students in their countries.

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