

## SCTMG 2020

### International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism»

## BUSINESS ENGLISH DIARY AS MEANS OF BUSINESS ENGLISH ASSESSMENT FOR NON-LINGUISTIC STUDENTS

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### *Abstract*

The article reflects the problems arising among of the students concerning the way to complete the synopsis in their Business English Lesson. Future managers are aimed at choosing the most beneficial and practice-oriented language units, the information capable of helping them in future professional activity. So it's advisable to form their notebooks in such a way so that all the brightest information could just strike into the eyes. It is offered to make a Business English synopsis in a way of a special Business English Diary, which could consist of several parts: My Purposes, Learning Process, Tests and Corrections, Effective Cooperation, Business Negotiation World, National Character, Individual Reading, Discover & Share. A teacher is supposed to give the students marks for this notebook, and it is easy to use for the students, as it helps their aim-setting for the English language learning. Moreover, lexical, grammar and phonetic skills can also be developed on the basis of the Business English contents. It helps to control the following: proper use of appropriate language means with regard to the communication task; comprehension of professional situations and an ability to cope with them; effective use of non-verbal communication (pose, gestures, eye contact, etc.); keeping confidence while speaking; matching appropriate communication and Business English features (etiquette, speech genres, small talks, etc.); skills to write business letters on the given topic etc. This method was applied at the Faculty of Management, Social and Technical Services at Mining University and was really effective.

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**Keywords:** Control, business English, assessment, business conversation, profession-related skills.



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## **1. Introduction**

The Faculty of Management, Social and Technical Services at Mining University provides students with management training of such profiles as Business Management, Human Resource Management, Business and Enterprise Economics, and Technology and Management of Tour Operators and Travel Agent Services. Future managers: a) must be prepared to arrange cross-cultural communication with an English-speaking partner, b) must properly represent the interests of their country, c) take part in professional communication with foreign partners in different business situations, for example: negotiations, meetings, presentations, interviews, executions of contracts, etc. According to Shamov and Kim (2018), the concept of English for Special Purposes must be introduced into methodology. At foreign educational establishments such courses as Business English, Financial English, English for Tourism and English for Administrative Purposes were offered to adults (Shamov & Kim, 2018).

## **2. Problem Statement**

Business English must be used as the main language material for Management students at foreign language classes. The teaching process must: a) comprise language immersion into professional situations, b) form the sphere of the manager concept, and c) develop and improve language speaking skills referring to business communication. The classes based on Business English meet the professional requirements of the students, enhance their motivation for learning the foreign language, and satisfy the need for learning the foreign language with long-term career prospects.

## **3. Research Questions**

According to Smirnova and Krasikova's (2018) opinion, recently the assessment of training outcome results has been intimately associated with the quality of the education provided by the educational establishment. Due to implementing the competence-based approach, graduate students acquire not only special knowledge and skills but develop a capability to use them and, then to apply this experience in the real world. That's why modern assessment must be completely new and differ from traditional assessment methods (Smirnova & Krasikova, 2018).

While teaching the students pursuing a bachelor's degree in Management 38.03.02, we experimented with a new assessment form, namely: the Business English Diary. The students have been learning the language for many years. The training process was standard and gradual, the students got used to traditional assessment forms (individual work and tests, module tests, dictations, oral monologue and dialogues, etc.). When applying new innovative techniques, we managed to attract the students' attention and increase the level of their motivation for learning the foreign language.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The article reflects the traditional forms of assessing language speaking skills at Foreign Language classes at university. It also describes the Business English Diary as a new assessment form. It is

necessary to find the best educational and assessment means, so that each student could follow the educational process most effectively. It is desirable that the students' notebooks should keep not only some scraps of knowledge, but all the needed information, collected with the help of the experienced teacher. A good synopsis could be of great help for the graduates by the moment they start their professional activity.

## 5. Research Methods

A New Dictionary of Methodical Terms and Concepts defines the assessment as 'the process of checking the level of a student's knowledge and skills based on fulfilling oral and written tasks and further giving them a mark for a studied module of the program or course (Azimov & Shchukin, 2009). Classical Methodology states that the assessment fulfills the following pedagogical functions while teaching: 1) the educational function providing students with the system of tests and tasks to reinforce the learnt material; 2) the diagnostic function estimating learning progress or non-progress in proper time for the teacher to continue their work according to the estimation results; 3) the correcting function determining the level of skill acquisition and matching the teaching techniques and tasks and the learning purposes; 4) the managing function controlling the acquisition of the language material and speaking skills; 5) the estimating function (Arkhipova et al., 2018). The objects under control at foreign language classes are speech skills in speaking (in monologues and dialogues), in listening, in reading and writing (in both quality and quantity). The most common way to assess oral speech is oral checking, general questioning, answering communicative questions using learning tools, monologues using tools, and written discourse papers. The assessment of listening comprehension is carried out while doing tasks after listening to authentic records followed by a specific sequence of activities on the listening technology. Reading skills are usually controlled by assessing a reading technique itself and by assessing reading as an oral activity (Arkhipova et al., 2019). When checking written speech and notionally-speech tasks, the first thing a teacher assesses is the contents, then they assess lexical and grammar accuracy, and the last thing to assess is spelling. In the non-linguistic learning environment writing is just a teaching tool but not a teaching goal, that's why it's impossible to achieve language accuracy. Gez et al. (1982) claim that the type of the mistake must be taken into account: whether it prevents or enhances communication.

To further enhance regular learning the foreign language the students were asked to have a 96-page copybook to write down new information in Business English and to call it the Business English Diary. This copybook comprises the notes and summaries of several units to classify and systematize the foreign language knowledge and skills. The order of the units is the following:

1) My Purposes. This unit describes the student's purposes for the academic year, term and/or module. A person needs their individual conscious aim setting to further feel satisfaction and realize a personal profit from foreign language learning. For example: – 'My purpose for this year is to get some good expressions from Business English, as they will help me to discuss the professional situations... – I'm going to learn some useful recommendations from the psychological field that will help me to impress my business partner in the best way ...I need to learn some important information about the workflow of businesspeople in foreign countries'.

2) Learning Process reflects the current work on the subject during the academic year. This part involves the following sections: 1) mind-maps are clusters showing the work on developing business vocabulary (profession-related thesaurus trading and manufacture, producing goods and providing services, supplies and deliveries, raw material and machinery, quality management system, customer satisfaction, departments and responsibilities, employment process, career path and promotion, etc); 2) pattern texts and specific monologues and dialogues on the topic; 3) vocabulary and grammar tasks; 4) project work (The richest companies of the world; Small business in your country – is it a myth or reality?); 5) additional materials (songs, texts, illustrations, etc.).

3) Tests and Corrections refer to lexical-grammatical tests and correction work (having a checked and corrected paper, a student must realize their mistakes, must understand the rule to be followed and do correction work, namely: to formulate the rule and write the proper sentence or word several times or several lines).

4) Effective Cooperation Tips contain the information about the ways to overcome communication difficulties, for example: methods of effective listening, methods of using and interpreting non-verbal communication, tips to keep calm, self-control and friendly being under tough negotiations. At foreign language classes not only practical language training was provided but metalinguistic skills were taught to future managers. This training coincided with the formation of foreign language communicative success. The detailed information is presented in the articles of Boyko (Boyko, 2018, Boyko & Kosareva, 2019). Here are some example texts from the Business English Diary. *I like how we are taught to use spontaneous speaking. There are two main ways how to do it – a train principle and a flower principle, using them you can speak for days! I enjoy using the principle of several questions, with the help of which you can speak about every topic just answering some questions – just say what is it, when it appeared, what types of it exist, what is the most popular type, how can it be used by a person, how much does it cost – and that's it, a perfect spontaneous monologue is ready!.. – I'm crazy about non-verbal expression of a personality. I'd like to learn to control my non-verbal behavior, as it can say so much about you. It's necessary to learn to use your body in an effective way, so that your partners could like you. So I learn how to move, how to stand, how to speak, what to do with my voice, my limbs...*

5) Business Negotiation World incorporates the information concerning specific use of the language in various speech genres appropriate in Business Communication (claims, requests, proposals, etc.), the structure and rules of business talks, regular speech patterns of business etiquette. Example: *I think it's essential to be able to speak like you demand something, or ask about something, ...the schemes are as follows: a demand – the language of this genre should be strict, the verbs are to be in imperative mood, you should use expressive vocabulary, and the speech should be pronounced in a decisive demanding voice...The demand should consist of a reason for addressing, then should come some rules and obligations to follow, possible sequence of actions, and finally appeal to motivation, your feelings and senses... I like writing business letters, agendas, we learn how to make a small talk with a business partner, which makes business negotiations much easier...*

6) National Character provides data about the peculiar behavior patterns of people of various nationalities and demonstrates some effective and successful ways of communication with them. We should know that some nationalities have really distinctive features for example the French are known for

their being quite open-minded, enthusiastic and emotional, they can touch your clothes, try to hold you, while the Japanese on the contrary are known to avoid any touch and direct contact, to be mostly polite. The Germans have a reputation of being strict and punctual, keep their word, so if you told, that you would send a price offer on some day, you obligatory must do it!

7) Individual Reading offers a list of books for individual reading. The students do the variety of after-reading tasks, make up the vocabulary notes and lists, summarize their interpretations and narrations of the read stories, and draw up the timetable of individual reading for the teacher to maintain regular control over individual reading.

8) Discover & Share comprises the most valuable and captivating information they learn during the academic year and which may be interesting to share with their group mates. It may be some unusual language elements, curious words and phrases, professional vocabulary units they really liked and memorized, the ways of arranging language material in Business English terms (the structure of business talks and agitation speeches), some secrets of effective communication, etc. – I like this word combination: – Phrases like FYI, TYVM, IMHO, LOL are really important to know for a future office worker... – I noticed, having many business cards and providing a good Power Point presentation helps to provide a good impression on your business partner!

The Business English Diary was checked every other week. The particular focus was on the following criteria:

- all the units must be properly filled;
- lexical-grammatical norms must be maintained;
- the learnt material (words and grammar structures) must be properly used;
- the diary must be kept accurately;
- personal data of the diary must refer to every individual student.

Thus, the Business English Diary accumulates teaching information in different foreign language activity. Teachers' demands to properly fill all the units contribute to the students' intense learning activity. Keeping the Diary gave a chance to every student to do their best and to get extra points for receiving substantial grants.

## **6. Findings**

During the academic year a number of achievement tests was done to control the process of acquiring knowledge and skills, and to evaluate the accuracy of the chosen approach to teaching future managers. As a rule, such control forms as dialogues, monologues, discussions and business role-playing games based on the learnt material were used. At the same time, lexical, grammar and phonetic skills were developed on the basis of the Business English contents. The following speaking skills were under control: proper use of appropriate language means to deals with communication task; comprehension of professional situations and an ability to cope with them; effective use of non-verbal communication (pose, gestures, eye contact, etc.); keeping confidence while speaking; matching appropriate communication and Business English features (etiquette, speech genres, small talks, etc.); skills to write business letters on the given topic and others.

## 7. Conclusion

The Business English Diary as the assessment form has motivated the students to create an extensive, qualitative and detailed summary comprising professionally-related information obtained when doing the university course 'Business English'.

It is the first time when the Business English Diary has been used in the described way. It is new for students and promotes the development of speaking skills and the acquisition of crucial information, and moreover, enhances motivation to learn a foreign language in students.

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