Textbook: Focus on Students' National Identity

The Concept of the "Scenario" Organized Business English Textbook

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the development of a business English textbook for students of an economic university using the "scenario approach". The author analyzes the existing concepts of designing English textbooks, the application of the scenario method in various scientific and practical fields. The study proposes a set of requirements for a modern business English textbook as well as a scenario-based textbook model. The author focuses his attention on the list of skills and qualities that a student acquires when mastering Business English while participating in various situational and scenario contexts of professional activity. The article shows the process of formation and development of a future professional's personal qualities while solving problematic tasks that underlie the training scenario. Practically significant are the types and examples of assignments that form a scenario in the structure of a business English textbook. Particular attention is paid to the problem of creating a context of intercultural business communication, reflecting the natural situations of interaction between business partners who communicate in English.
Keywords: Business English course, scenario-type textbook; scenario-type textbook model.

Introduction

At present, training of future professionals – specialists in various fields of production, engineering, technology, is directly related to the development of their ability for effective business interaction with a communication partner – a representative of a different linguistic society. The needs for intercultural

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professional communication are becoming more tangible, over time the intensity of such communication will only increase. There is a social order to higher professional education which is defined as development of students' intercultural professional communicative competence.

Intercultural competence is the ability of an individual to realize himself within the framework of a dialogue of cultures, in the context of intercultural communication. Communication partners – representatives of two states – have different worldviews, including professional ones. The effectiveness of intercultural communication depends on the quality of interaction of these pictures of the world. Each of the communicants should not only be aware of the peculiarities of the communication partner's culture, his national and professional mentality, but also be aware of his own culturally and professionally determined values and ideas. This will allow to understand and recognize the features of a *vis-a-vis*, to determine the features of his professional attitudes and to identify opportunities for making a mutually beneficial decision.

For the development of intercultural professional communicative competence, a special approach to teaching Business English is required – an *intercultural approach*. Its features are in considering in the learning process the obligatory interaction of contacting linguistic and conceptual systems of communication participants – representatives of two linguistic societies. A textbook that matches the parameters of this approach is intended to implement this approach when teaching students business English.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of the study is to reveal the features of the modern business English textbook, the structure and content of which is aimed at developing students' ability for business communication in English. The objective of the publication is to substantiate the potential of a scenario-based approach to a textbook design, to development of a model of such a textbook.

Literature review

A lot of works by Russian and foreign researchers are devoted to the study of the development of a textbook in Business English. Their attention is focused on the new concepts of the English textbook series (Gimenez, 2014; Yang & Coxhead 2020; Macalister, 2016; Wang 2018) to the content-structural organization of such textbooks. It has now been established that a Business English textbook should focus on the following main points:

- strengthening the social and humanitarian orientation of the foreign language training of future professionals, such an orientation will ensure the effectiveness of business interaction between two different cultural communicants;

- developing students' readiness for activities based on a high intensity of business intercultural contacts and team work;

- ensuring high adaptability of students to various areas and forms of intercultural business communication;

- development of students' knowledge about the culture of the country of the target language in general and about the culture of business professional communication in particular;

- acquaintance with the peculiarities of the professional sphere of business intercultural communication;

- study and recognition of values, norms and social attitudes, patterns of behavior inherent in representatives of another linguistic society - partners in business communication;

- assessment of foreign cultural professional reality from the standpoint of a native speaker;

- comparison of one's own and other professional pictures of the world, means and methods of conducting business negotiations.

To solve this set of tasks, a special design of the textbook is required: its structure and content. A foreign language textbook is traditionally understood as a structural and meaningful unity, including a set of functional elements and their relations, necessary and sufficient to achieve the goal – the purposeful management of students' cognitive activity in the process of forming their intercultural professional communicative competence.

Regarding a textbook on Business English, these elements include title, methodological apparatus (introductory part / explanatory note / guidelines / foreword / authors' concept), structural units (sections, topics, lessons, modules, etc.), the ratio of types and genres of authentic texts of the business sphere of professional communication, the ratio and variety of exercises. These elements enter various relationships according to the concept of the textbook organization. Such a concept can be based on a special scenario approach.

The scenario approach is well known among Foresight professionals (Bishop, 2017), who develop and share scenarios about the future in their works. The authors actively argue about the productivity / non-

productivity of scenario analysis and scenario methods during control for process execution and reacting to unforeseen events to avoid downside risks (Leseure, 2018). Simultaneously, the potential of scenario planning affects perceptions of individual emotional intelligence (Chermack, Fofonah, Balthaser, Coons, Harmon, Wichmann & Nathan, 2019). Scenarios are commonly associated with IT, where case-based scenario simulation is used (Schimpf, Barbrook-Johnson & Castellani, 2021). Scenario approach is actively used in the educational system (Glennon, Hodgkinson & Knowles, 2018; Wade & Piccinini, 2020; Holdsworth, Thomas & Sandi, 2018; Bernardi & Treventi, 2018; Song & Sparks, 2017). The studies also reveal the negative aspects of Scripted (Scenarios) instruction programs for inhibiting teacher creativity and teacher learning (Reeves, 2010).

The scenario organization of the textbook has attracted the attention of some scholars who focus their attention on the textbook as an evolving pedagogical form, as a changing medium comprised of smaller media components (Friesen, 2013). Some Russian scientists, guided by the thesis "a textbook is a kind of scenario for the future learning process", substantiate the importance of the scenario approach to the development and use of an electronic textbook at a university (Martyushova, 2017). We can see an interesting description of the scenario organization of a foreign language textbook in a master's course (Yarotskaya, 2018). In this study, the author substantiates the status of the textbook as a scenario of pedagogical modeling, a scenario for mastering the global context of a profession, a scenario for mastering professional interculture. The model of such a textbook contains a system of variable implemented heuristic scenarios "aimed at identifying, assessing, generalizing, systematizing, modeling and conscious linguo-socio-cognitive development by students of the actual global context of the professional activity of a specialist in a specific profile" (Yarotskaya, 2018, p. 95). The authors substantiate the role of the scenario in the development of cases for teaching intercultural communication (Tareva, Vikulova & Makarova, 2018), as well as a scenario approach to a textbook aimed at the personal development of students (Tareva, 2007; Tareva, 2009).

Methodology

To study the problem of developing a model of a scenario-based textbook on Business English, theoretical and practical research methods are used: analysis of literature on the problem covered in the article, analysis of various concepts of English language textbooks, theoretical modeling of the concept of scenario-based Business English textbook.

Results

Scenario type of education presupposes the use of a professional-didactic scenario designed to "immerse"

the trainee with the help of professionally oriented and didactic components in a set of national-cultural concepts that are significant for business professional communication. These concepts are expressed (verbalized) using authentic texts. The scenario combines into a single space:

- actors – participants in business communication – representatives of different linguistic societies;

- relations, social roles of participants in scenario communication;

- the subject of business communication;

- a topic or several topics in the sphere of business intercultural communication.

The scenario unity of these components makes it possible to fill both the learning activity and teaching activity with new intellectual and emotional content. Thus, the use of the "scenario" approach in determining the structure and content of the textbook allows:

1) to "immerse" students in a set of foreign cultural professional concepts (in the field of "Business intercultural communication") based on an authentic text, characters, subject of communication, social and professional roles of communication participants;

2) to "build" the course of the learning process on a scenario basis, defining: a) the sequence of presentation of the content of training, b) methods, methods and techniques of presentation, activation, training of educational material, as well as forms and methods of control of its assimilation;

3) to ensure the assimilation by students of samples of verbal and non-verbal behavior of the scenario's characters;

4) to help to realize intentions arising from the communicative needs of the implementation of a fragment of activity.

Scenario design of the textbook allows, along with the development of purely communicative competencies, in a natural way to expand the sociolinguistic, sociocultural, professional, strategic competences of students.

Discussions

The didactic material and forms of organization in the scenario-type textbook are not just a traditional system of thematic blocks, linguistic means, texts, exercises, and tasks, but also a set of pragmatically

conditioned verbal acts (communicative situations) of business intercultural communication. The didactic material and forms of organization in the scenario-type textbook are not just a traditional system of thematic blocks, linguistic means, texts, exercises, and tasks, but a set of pragmatically conditioned verbal acts (communicative situations) of business intercultural communication:

- compliance of the content with the goals of teaching professional business communication;

- taking into account the age characteristics of students and the professional specifics of their training;

- taking into account the communicative-cognitive and professional-business interests of students, their personal needs;

- taking into account a) the level of students' English language proficiency, b) their awareness of the features of business professional communication in a foreign cultural environment;

- correspondence of the topics of scenario training to the stages of professional training. For example, in training of future international economists, there can be such topics as "Management and Cultural Diversity", "Market Structure and Competition", etc.

The core of any textbook scenario is communicative situations (cases); it is around them that other components of the textbook sections are grouped. Their selection must be subject to several criteria:

- authenticity (cases must be extracted from the actual process of intercultural communication, characterized by the national characteristics of the participants in communication, special rules of the culture of business communication);

- thematic correlation (the selection of cases should be carried out in accordance with the topic of the textbook, reflecting the main stages of training a professional);

- professional orientation (cases should correspond to the main spheres and types of business intercultural communication as professionally significant for a future graduate of a non-linguistic university);

- typological diversity (cases of different types make it possible to demonstrate the peculiarities of the functioning of linguistic means of business communication, specifics of different variants of the English language).

Work with these cases presupposes the development of a certain set of skills, which are drilled through performance of a series of exercises (Table 1).

Table 1. Skills developed during work with exercises.

Exercises	Skills
- to enhance the existing knowledge and experience; - to define the features of the semantics of linguistic units, - to define the features of grammatical structures of the English language in comparison with similar structures in the native language	- to explain the meaning of certain lexical and grammatical phenomena used in the text; - to reveal the peculiarities of the use of idiomatic expressions; - to identify the features of grammatical means of expressing meaning in both cultures
- to describe prototypes, - to describe scripts / scenarios, - to define and describe foreign cultural concepts	- to define the national and cultural specifics of foreign cultural phenomena; - to describe the script / scenario of a certain business communication case as a certain sequence of actions; - to describe the foreign cultural concept
- to interpret events, phenomena, actions, - to assess the phenomena from the position of the main / secondary character of the text, - to compare the phenomena in the foreign and native cultures	- to take a different point of view, characteristic of a different culture; - to be aware of the specifics of native culture; - to compare the phenomena of native and foreign cultures.

An important component of the content of the textbook, built on a scenario basis, are *professional tasks* for business communication. This is a content-structural component of the textbook, designed to organize in linguodidactic parameters the professional situation of intercultural business communication and to provide quick and effective (using a foreign language) actions aimed at solving it. The source of the task is a problem situation arising in a professional context. According to the main provisions of problem learning, the task is always based on the initial level of students' competence but is aimed at achieving a higher level of students' knowledge and skills.

The process of forming the personality of a participant in business intercultural communication should be carried out when he is "immersed" in a real problematic professionally significant situation. In this regard, a professional task can become, along with an authentic foreign text, a unit of the textbook's scenario organization. Professional tasks for business communication:

1) should be formed because of such a professionally significant material that allows ambiguous, controversial, alternative approaches, assessments, interpretations,

2) should be based only on professional material of a high level of significance, it should not be allowed to problematize secondary material,

3) can be used only when students have the necessary "starting" level of proficiency in a foreign language,

a certain experience in professional training,

4) should not be excessive in quantity, because the complexity of their solution is rather high.

Among such professional tasks of business intercultural communication are:

1) *cognitive professional tasks* aimed at increasing, developing the professional (intercultural) outlook of the student, which is necessary to solve the professional problem of business communication. These tasks are focused on enhancing the students' experience, on assessing new linguistic (lexical, grammatical) phenomena, on initiating a search from various sources of necessary information, assessing this information in terms of its ability to influence the decision. The advantage of these tasks is the integration of various fields of knowledge, the combination of intercultural communication activities with professional and cognitive activities. This type of tasks is aimed at the dialogue of professional cultures. *Example*: the implementation of intercultural projects to describe prototypes, scripts / scenarios, to define and describe national and professional concepts that are important for the effectiveness of intercultural business communication; to compare phenomena in foreign and original cultures.

2) *variable professional tasks*: their content includes, on the one hand, a problem, on the other hand, options for solving this problem, among which the student must make his subjective choice in favor of the optimal option. *Example*: work with cases (study of specific cases / problems / situations that occur in intercultural communication) as a form of modeling professional intercultural business communication.

3) *game professional tasks* provide for the use of a system of developmental games of a professional and business nature, simulating a particular situation of intercultural communication. *Example*: business intercultural games, role-playing intercultural situations.

Picture 1. The model of a section (module) of a textbook built on a scenario basis. [†]

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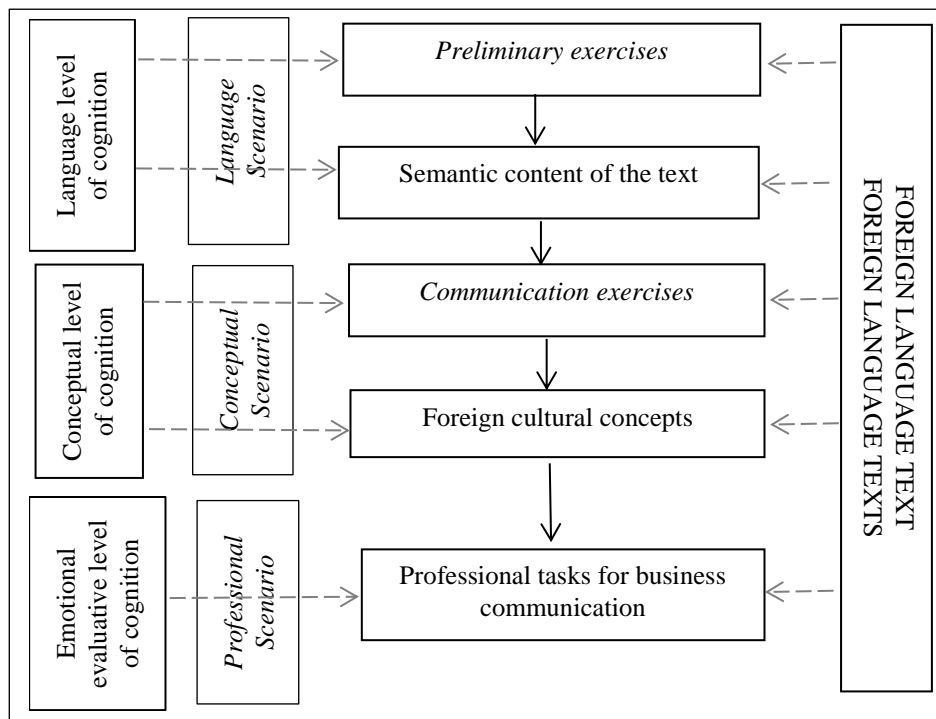
The picture shows the structure of the textbook section (module) is based on two units that are significant for the formation of the intercultural communicative competence of a linguist as his ability for secondary professional socialization:

1) a foreign language text (several foreign language texts), representing a particular fragment of intercultural communication of future professionals;

2) professional tasks.

Working with a foreign language text has several stages aimed at providing different levels of understanding of interculturally significant information (language and conceptual scenarios).

1) after presentation of the text while performing several preliminary exercises, the semantic content of the text is revealed based on the analysis of lexical-semantic units and grammatical phenomena, organized in the format of the language training scenario.

2) in the process of performing communication exercises, being grouped in the format of conceptual scenario, an understanding of the foreign cultural background and concepts of a foreign language culture,

as well as the norms and rules of behavior of a foreigner, is realized.

Further, work is organized to solve professional problems (professional scenario). They are explicitly or implicitly related to the content of the foreign text: they serve as the basis, the basis for the implementation of preliminary and communicative exercises, included in the composition of professional tasks. Work is being carried out to ensure the emotional-evaluative level of understanding not only of the foreign text, but also of the integral professionally significant situation (context) of intercultural communication. This is how the development of students' ability to interpret foreign cultural events, phenomena, actions take place, as well as the ability to assess them through comparison with native culture.

Conclusion

Innovative modeling of modern Business English textbooks is designed to reflect in their structure and content the focus on solving professional problems related to intercultural interaction with a foreign colleague. The scenario organization of the textbook maximally contributes to the formation of students' intercultural professional communicative competence. At the same time, the scenario is designed to provide students with the opportunity to be included in specific professional situations that require multidirectional work with the original text. Students' attention is consistently directed to the language side of communication (Language Scenario), the conceptual aspect of interaction (Conceptual Scenario) and to solving problematic professional tasks (Professional Scenario). The student turns out to be an actor in three dimensions of the educational scenario, actively participating in its implementation. Business English as a curriculum is thus transformed into a sequence of events related to the multidimensional nature of the discipline, represented in the scenario of the textbook.

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