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Some Effective Methods to Help Students to Be Much More Confident when Using Business English

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Abstract

Business English is rather complex and the need to research this is necessary. The methodology used in the paper is to survey the current status of knowledge of Vietnamese students about conversations used in companies, these sentence patterns and their difficulty and importance are made clear. Some implications are proposed to practice communication situations in the company more effectively so that when working in a company, students do not feel surprised and confused. The article has been completed from interviews, actual surveys of many English language students, and the results of comparing and contrasting other sources of documents and research. Research results show that graduating students need to learn and understand basic formal and polite sentences used in foreign companies to be more confident when working in foreign companies.

Keywords: business, Confident, Conversation, Honorific, method.

Introduction

English is popular in many ways, including a high sense of self-discipline, a high average standard of living, many laws and rituals, anime culture, robot industry, etc. Therefore, currently, the number of people studying English at home and abroad is very high, and the recruitment environment is also more and more competitive (Gorokhova et al., 2018). If a student wants to work in a foreign company, how to prepare herself well? Learning how to behave in business is extremely important (Banditvilai, 2016). Because corporate culture is the key to the development of English businesses, students must understand the standards and principles and balance between work and spirit, between individuals and organizations to devote themselves fully and be suitable for the company's development direction (Hoi, 2021). In which, mastering business English is the most important. English used in companies, also known as business English, is a very different type of word from regular use, it makes it difficult even for native speakers, so if students are not taught, they cannot know this (Alam, 2020). Currently, many universities include business English in the curriculum, but even though it has been taught, students are still quite confused and afraid to use business English (Klimenko et al., 2019). Understanding that psychology, through surveys and actual investigations, students can find the optimal learning and practice methods for situations in the company (Aslan, 2018). That will help students feel more confident about their business English and more confident working in foreign companies (Al Nakhalah, 2016).

We live in a world where English is the main language of nearly 60 countries with 1 billion speakers, so it is considered the most popular language in the world (Al Nakhalah, 2016). Because of that, it has also become the international business language for cooperation and investment in many fields such as economy, politics, culture, society, etc. From there, we can absorb information, knowledge, international integration communication ability becomes easier than ever (Gorokhova et al., 2018). Business English is highly applicable because it helps you to be able to calculate, analyze, handle situations, and solve problems when communicating in English (Klimenko et al., 2019). Especially in the business environment, business English gives you the experience of in-depth financial concepts such as accounting, exchange rates, interest rates, the changing cycle of the world economy, etc.

In addition, business English can also be applied in simple situations such as interviews, proposals to customers, even recognizing and using terms related to business. The question is that how we can find out some good methods to help our students to become more confident when making conversation, especially when using business English.

Research History

It is a fact that working in foreign companies, foreign people also need to learn business English. In the context of the growing economy, more and more companies sprung up, job opportunities also increased, and the number of business

English learners also increased (Yan & Horwitz, 2008). Because the foreign economy is growing at home and abroad, the number of foreigners learning English and business English has also increased (Al Nakhalah, 2016). Therefore, Tran (2017) has researched building a business English curriculum for international students and the effectiveness of teaching business English by assigning tasks in another foreign language environment (Hoi, 2020). Studies show that business English is complicated, however, it is essential if they want to work in a company (Mosteanu, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to include business English in the university teaching curriculum. At the same time, it is also necessary to conduct learning by practical, experiential methods so that students can familiarize themselves with the business environment (Banditvilai, 2016).

Current Status of Students' Understanding and Use of Business English

Some universities in Ho Chi Minh City have included business English in their specialized curricula (Gorokhova et al., 2018). The reality shows that graduating students are still terrified of business English, and several people do not dare to apply to English companies because they are not confident enough about their English level.

Despite being taught methodically, students lack confidence probably for many reasons (Hoi, 2020). Students go to school with a defensive attitude to pass the subject, not learning what the teacher is teaching because the teacher's way of speaking is too difficult to understand, or the curriculum is not confusing, etc. Students do not know what they have learned, do not understand the importance of the subject, and why they need to study it. With that attitude, students' knowledge of the subject is blurred, making students feel shy and afraid when talking about business English (Klimenko et al., 2019).

There are also cases where the above disadvantages can be overcome, students know a lot about business English and understand the importance of the subject (Samson, 2020). However, another disadvantage appears, after finishing the course for a while, students will forget all their knowledge (Çevik, 2018). Conversations in the company often include honorific, humble sentences that are very long and do not follow any standards, the only way is to memorize them. Students are only learning by listening to lectures, not experiencing reality, so forgetting is inevitable (Al Nakhalah, 2016). The question is how students can absorb a second language like English and especially business English in an effective way is really taken into consideration.

Methodology

The research aims to provide effective methods of teaching and learning business English for students of the English language major of universities to help students gain interest in the subject and be confident when working in companies. The study focuses on business English learning methods of English language majoring senior students, not freshmen and sophomores. There are two research methods, the first is to study the theory and role of teaching business English in the university environment. The second method is through a survey of the current state of understanding and learning of business English of students studying at university, making statistics, analyzing, and synthesizing data.

Participants in the papers are students who taking business English courses and other English courses in some universities in Ho Chi Minh City. Most of the 50 respondents are the students who are studying at FPT Universities, including male and female students at the age of 18-20 years old. Using online and face-to-face surveys, the survey questionnaires focus on a few effective ways to learn English as well as their reaction the this related issue. This has been designed in the form of multiple-choice and open questions to find out the thoughts and opinions of learners in the most accurate way. Using Likert scale ranked from 1 to 5 equivalent to "never" "rarely" "sometimes" "quite often" and "very often", the survey results are then analyzed and graphed in excel as well as compared with other research papers.

Research Results and Discussion

Figure 1 shows that students want to work in foreign companies although their business English is not good enough and this makes many students do not feel confident. This result showed that students studying English at universities in Vietnam, from low to high level think English is not good enough and this situation is common in English language teaching environments in this country (Samson, 2020). Currently, many universities only use internal English certificates as a condition for students to graduate. This certificate will be tested and issued at the school, directly converting the test results to graduation conditions. However, because this certificate is not widely used after graduation, most universities
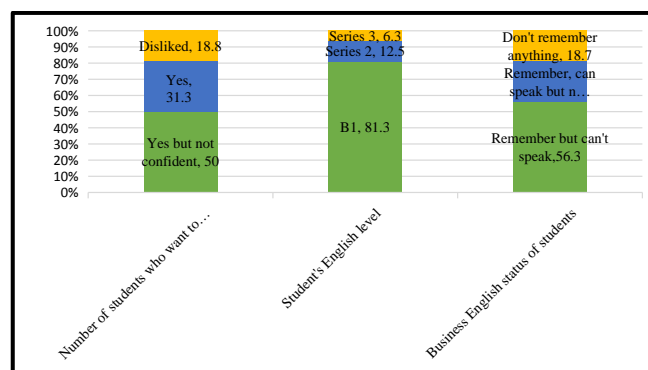

Fig. 1: Current situation of students majoring in English

now require students to take A2, B1, B2 English certificates. English majors need to have a C1 certificate as a measure of foreign language proficiency and are a mandatory condition for graduation. These certificates are widely used throughout the country, very convenient for new graduates to find jobs. However, when looking at the fact that students majoring in English, only about 30.3% have the confidence to work, while 50% like it but are not confident. This shows the teaching and standardization. output needs more attention.

In terms of the number of students who want to work at foreign companies, students "yes but not confident" about 50%, followed by "yes" about 31.3% and the lowest place could be seen in "Disliked" about 18.8%. On the other hand, the number of the student's English level, the B1 was the biggest about 81.3%, followed by B2 ones, the lowest could be seen in the C1 6.3%. Nearly 56.3% of respondents to the survey in "remember but can not speak". This was followed by nearly 25% and 18.7% of "Remember, can speak but not confident" and "Do not remember anything"

The statistic displays the University student about the acting method in three different courses. Overall each major could be seen as different. Specifically "very useful, inspring"

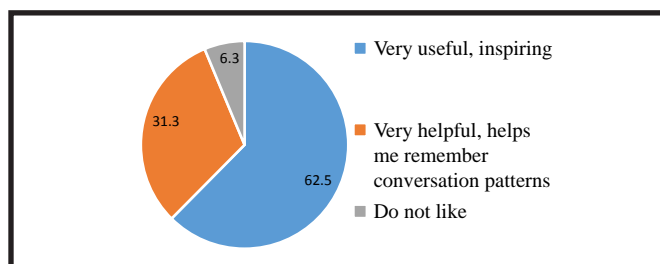and "very helpful, help me remember conversation patterns" witnessed the highest of the acting method, followed by the "do not like" respectively.

Not only that, but this method is also interesting to 62.5% of students. Given those impressive numbers, this is a pretty successful method. But no method is perfect. The survey showed that only 31.3% of students were able to memorize conversations through acting. On the other hand, the number is that 6.3% does not like with statement.

Based on Figure 3, we see that 37.5% of students choose "1 current course and add 1 speaking course only", 18.8% of students are satisfied with the current curriculum, 12.5% want to "forgo taking the test, just teach speaking" the rest are other ideas such as changing the teaching time in semesters 7, 8, and 9 because studying from term 5 to graduation is too far for students to forget all the knowledge learned. Because this is a
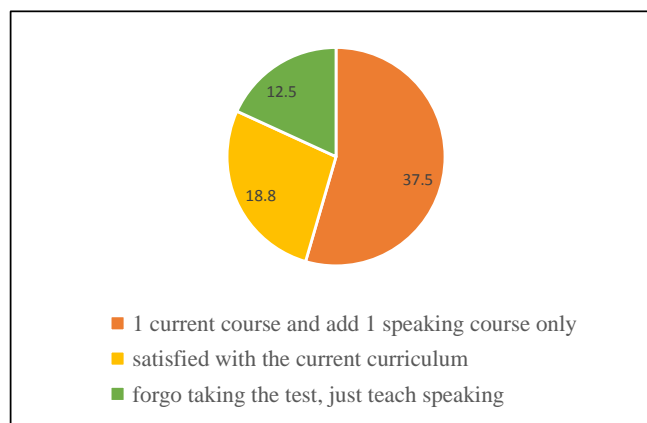

Fig. 2: University students about the acting method

Figure 3. Options University students about the time and program of teaching business English

Table 1: Methods used by university students to learn business English

The Method You Used to Learn Business Eghlish	1	2	3	4	5	Total Reply	Total Score	Average Level
1. Review what you have learned every day	0	5	8	3	0	16	46	0.11
2. Recall the learned sentences, imagine the situation, and say to yourself	3	3	6	4	0	16	43	0.11
3. Watch videos of communication situations in the company and follow them	2	6	2	6	0	16	44	0.11
4. Create situations and practice speaking with friends	3	4	6	2	1	16	42	0.1
5. Do exercises, tests on business English	0	2	9	4	1	16	52	0.13
6. English questions	6	2	6	2	0	16	36	0.09
7. Practice writing sample dialogue sentences according to the situation on paper	4	6	2	3	1	16	39	0.1
8. Practice speaking in real situations with experienced English	12	0	3	0	1	16	26	0.06
9. Create acting groups according to real situations happening in the company	1	4	5	5	1	16	49	0.12
10. Practical experience in English company	12	0	1	2	1	16	28	0.07
							405	1.00

very complicated and new subject, studying for only 1 and a half months makes students have to cram too much knowledge leading to boredom (Yan & Horwitz, 2008).

The Methods Students Use When Learning Business English

Successfully achieving something requires effort; besides teaching at school, students also need to have learning methods suitable for themselves. Students need to review what the teacher has taught and look for additional knowledge that is not taught. The following is a survey of the methods that students have used to practice business English, on a scale of 1 to 5 equivalent to "never" "rarely" "sometimes" "quite often" and "very often":

Among the 10 questions mentioned in Table 1, questions 5 and 9 show that these are the two methods that students use the most to practice, and this is also the method that universities used to teach students. From there, it can be seen that teaching at school has a great impact on students. The teaching method at university has had a significant impact on students. The two least used methods are in sentences 8 and 10, which need practical experience and direct practice with English people. The last step of the class is to visit many companies, students can visit directly and practice a little about what they studied there. There are methods that students can try on their own, the method in sentences 2, 3, 4 is also at a relatively high level of use, but the frequency is still not thorough because it is lower than the method used. In addition to the school's teaching process, students need to practice independently.

SOME IMPLICATIONS

Nowadays it's rather indispensable to be able to express yourself confidently on a variety of topics in a business environment if you intend to have an interesting and well-paid position in a multinational (Aslan, 2018). Even smaller companies, more often than not, do business with their foreign partners and, consequently, require their employees to have the ability to communicate freely both in written and spoken English (Samson, 2020).

Business English has been recognized as a difficult subject from the very beginning to help English language students have enough knowledge and confidence to work for English companies. The effort to change must come from both the school and the student. Based on the analysis from the survey, there will be two methods to help students improve their business English through this subject at university (Gorokhova et al., 2018).

After surveying the aspirations of English language students about business English, most students want to focus more on speaking practice, the course should last longer, and have practical experience (Wang, 2015). Students think that

the time of one and a half months for this subject is not enough and that the study time from term 5 is too early compared to graduation, the knowledge of how to communicate in the company no longer remembers anything to be able to apply. To summarize those two ideas, it is advisable to have a course like the present (half 1 term 5) and add a course to half 2 terms 8 or half 1 term 9. Consequently, students have time to get acquainted, enjoy and adapt to the subject, review, and refresh the knowledge that has been learned to prepare for working at an English company (Çevik, 2018).

Regarding teaching, students want to have more speaking practice, but it is clear that practice is also challenging without theory. Term 5 should still be taught with the same theoretical and dramatic form as it has done quite well for helping students understand the importance of business English and inspiring most students (Teodorescu, 2015). To meet the remaining needs of students, the course and the half 2 of semester 8 or half 1 of semesters 8 should be opened in the form of only practicing conversations according to the situation in an English company, without taking notes, books, and test is only intended to help students be able to speak fluently the sentence patterns used in the business environment (Mesidor & Sly, 2016).

In terms of practical experience, this is the step that is considered to extremely necessary step for students. It is necessary to have a session to experience the working environment at an English company and let students visit and practice handling some of the situations learned there.

The dynamism and self-discipline on the part of students are fundamental (Evans, 2013). Moreover, because currently most students just follow the school's instructions is not enough, in addition to the hours of practice at the lecture hall, when returning home, students need to review and speak for themselves (Klimenko et al., 2019). One method students can practice at home is, watching videos of situations in English companies on YouTube and speaking according to the situations in them, repeating until they can speak the lines fluently, the knowledge that they will remember longer (Kozlovska & Otroshchenko, 2021). Many films, books, and music are published and produced in English. By understanding English, the student will not need to rely on translations and subtitles anymore. By accessing these media, students will also continuously improve their English listening and reading skills (Esteban & Cañado, 2004).

Another method is to practice together with friends, both of them create a situation where they practice talking to each other until it sounds most natural, or they can also join groups, find people who are also learning the language as well as practice together (Aslan, 2018). With such self-practice efforts, when the university improves the curriculum, the change from both sides will bring greater efficiency.

Conclusion

The research results show the advantages and disadvantages of school, students, and then some solutions for the business English situation of university students are mentioned. Efforts to change to help students be much better must come from both sides including university and students to have good results. Therefore, to improve the students' level of business English, the teaching quality needs to be adjusted accordingly, the teaching methods are diversified, many factors are combined, and the subject is put into practical reality rather than just theory. Besides, the students' investment must also be taken into consideration, which means that self-effort is the most important thing. Thus, when properly taught, the knowledge gained through repeated practice and practical experience will help students become more confident when they graduate from universities and work at English companies. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are four skills that anyone learning English needs to develop, however, to achieve these four basic language skills, we need to immerse ourselves in English by making English part of our life at home, at work, in our spare time.

Limitations

Business English has always been a popular topic chosen by many people to study because of its urgency and difficulty. Because of the complexity of the problem, the article still has certain limitations that cannot be completed immediately. Hopefully, those limitations will be overcome in the not too distant future.

Acknowledgment

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