
Mastering Business English through business world projects

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Abstract

Kazakhstan's policy of integration into the global EFL community has brought about a radical change from traditional teacher-centered approach to learner-centered, content- and language-integrated, task-based language teaching and learning. The paper describes the variety of students' independent study (SIS) tasks in the Business English courses of EFL program at the International IT University designed to create a learner-centered environment, foster the self-study skills, meet the students' future professional needs, provide close cross-curricular links and make BE instruction meaningful for learners.

One of the ways in which such pivotal principles of modern methodology are synergetically realized in the BE instruction at IITU is students' engagement in business oriented large-scale tasks called SIS (students' independent study) projects. Such projects are tailored to the future professional needs of students majoring in IT. Some examples of professionally-oriented semester-long BE projects include:

- 1. Writing up local business success stories.*
- 2. Designing business ethics quiz-shows.*
- 3. Setting up a mock-up company in the students' professional field.*
- 4. Exploring a company a student would like to work for.*
- 5. Designing an advertising campaign for an invented IT product.*

Work on such projects provides students with exposure to business world realities, fosters their team building skills while integrating their individual inputs into an umbrella group project. For instance, business success stories of individual students have been combined into Kazakhstani Book of Business Success Stories; the imaginary companies established by individual students have been jointly presented in a mock up exhibition catalogue. What adds value to such projects is classroom presentation of the outputs in the form of educative interactive games (for instance, Business Ethics Quiz Show) which enrich the bulk of student-generated academic materials.

Implementation of the above tasks brings BE instruction closer to real life and makes it truly relevant for students.
