

Bottoms Up

Business English course for Russian learners - last update: 20170428

draft by D.Potter

Executive summary

- Developing a Business English course targeting the needs of Russian entrepreneurs

The promise

Would you be able to argue the pros & cons of sanctions against the Russian Federation in your line of business over dinner? After this course, you will.

- 120 academic hours (ca. 4/5 months depending on frequency)
- Business English and lexical material satisfying Russian needs
- use of language (grammar at upper intermediate level B2+)
- various registers (formal, informal, colloquial, assertive, tentative...)
- case studies with consultants' feedback on video

Rationale

How Russians are perceived to be doing business is controversial.

- Bottoms up (Пей до дна / на здоровье) is meant to be an amusing reference to the way entrepreneurs would supposedly strike a deal and raise a toast to future partnership. Today's Russia, however, is quite different and many business people as well as government officials would rather conclude a negotiation without the prejudices which may accompany their country's history.
- In this business English course book, a team of English and Russian teachers strive to provide the language and communication tools that will help Russian business people pitch their joint ventures in social and economic terms relevant to their reality (i.e. of a developing economy with a pan European-Asian mindset).
- There are no books on the market catering for the needs of this niche featuring such degree of localisation.

Contents relevance

What would you say if your business counterparts enquired about the Magnitsky case or business opportunities in Crimea during a coffee break?

- The range of topics covers aspects tackled in successful business English courses such as The Business (MacMillan) and Market Leader (Pearson & Longman) with a focus on the Russian perspective.
- Compliance, fair trade and sustainable business development, for instance, are concepts that are often ignored by CEOs, local brand & marketing managers because the market may not be mature yet, due to the absence of government (de)regulation, or as a result of an omnipresent demand and little need for competition... Role plays encourage learners to explain in English such specifically Russian disparities and how to address them.
- Import substitution is now a priority of the Russian Federation's government. Such policy should have a significant impact on SME (small and medium sized enterprises) and consequently is examined in detail.
- This course aspires to a para-documentary approach to understanding & expressing the Russian identity. Presenting both sides of a conflict of interest is perceived as an opportunity to practise communication strategies such as win-win, batner, etc.

Sources

Russia Today, Kommersant, press releases by the Kremlin, Euronews, The Economist...

(to be confirmed depending on costs of authors' rights)

- Material is based on authentic interviews, articles and reports by established sources.
- Text, audio and video material selected for the course are occasionally graded to facilitate recycling.
- Case studies at the end of each unit may feature exclusive interviews with some prominent actors of the business & political scene.

Release formats

Digital book featuring innovative tools

(from mindmaps and space repetition software to audio recording of presentations)

- The course book is available in hardcopy as well as various e-formats to facilitate reading & navigation on a mobile device
 - pdf
 - e-pub

(An EPUB file is a ZIP archive that contains, in effect, a website—including HTML files, images, CSS style sheets, and other assets. It also contains metadata. EPUB 3 is the latest version. By using HTML5, publications can contain video, audio, and interactivity, just like websites in web browsers - src: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EPUB>)

 - [html5](#)
- Word lists ([sample](#))
 - available per lesson in *txt and *csv formats for completing with student's personal notes, translation and/or own examples
 - compatible with leading space repetition software such as Anki (iPhone, Linux) and AnyMemo (Android, Linux)
- Mindmaps [sample](#)
 - grammatical overview of the use of language on a plan to give a broader perspective and better see & understand the correlation between structures
 - riddled legend, the completion of which is designed to help remember visually and kinesthetically
- [Live GNU Linux Debian CD](#) 📀 (instead of a traditional DVD - to be confirmed)
This is a full operating system that can be run off a CD or usb stick without installation on your computer and which has been customised to feature additional software specially for the needs of language learners (reminiscent of the open source [Debian Edu / Skolelinux project](#))
 - [Goldendict \(dictionary\)](#)
 - dictionary files
 - [Anki](#) 📱 (space repetition software for reviewing word lists)
 - [LibreOffice](#) 📄 equivalent of MS Office with PowerPoint compatible module (for practising presentations) and Writer (for tracking of revisions in graded, writing tasks)
 - [Audacity \(for audio recording of presentations\)](#)
 - [LAMP \(linux apache mysql php\) server](#) running in the web-browser a presentation builder and correspondence facilitator (php dropdown selection of fixed expressions)

Agenda

Pilot project: November 2017 / Final release: September 2019

1. 201705-201707 Draft preliminary contents
Objectives:
 - match response to needs
 - topics
 - lexical material

functional language
grammar
case studies

2. 201705-201706 HR
Objectives:
 - shortlist co-authors
(at least 1 English & 1 Russian qualified teacher)
 - find one part-time secretary in charge of dealing with sources (English needed)
 - shortlist engineers - technicians for feedback
 - check expected wages
3. 201708-201709 Kick-off meeting with main participants of the project
Objectives:
 - team building
 - review agenda & feasibility
 - review contents
 - consider new options
4. 201709 Target budget
Objectives:
 - check viability
 - see [budget](#) below
5. 201709-201710 Managing sources
Objectives:
 - check viability
 - contact respective publishers, TV broadcasters...
 - request preliminary authorisation
 - request price quote per page / # words / minutes of audio and/or video footage
 - possibly negotiate discount if given sources cited as 'in partnership with'...
6. 201709-201711 Pilot project with mock-up of the course book - 2 units
Objectives:
 - check feasibility with a pilot project
 - validate css / html / pdf layout
 - validate target level & audience
 - release on-line for feedback
7. 201801-201903 contents editing (8-12 Units)
Objectives:
 - write full-blown version (after pilot project validation)
 - complete material for target contents 120 academic hours
 - update contents depending on actuality
8. 201802-201810 shooting of interviews
Objectives:
 - shoot 3-4 interviews for case studies with prominent figures of the business & political scene
(needed as a marketing selling point)
9. 201803-201808 recording of audio tracks
Objectives:
 - complete support material that can't be provided by video
 - complete support material that is not available from sources
10. 201808-201811 post-production of multimedia material
Objectives:
 - select & match footage to contents
 - audio mastering
 - video editing (compositing, sub-titles...)
 - generate DVD iso pre-release for feedback

11. 201809-201811 formatting Live GNU Linux DVD (instead of a traditional DVD)
 - Objectives:
 - check feasibility
 - (authors' rights, software stability, lamp solution)
 - test portability on various OS
 - (e.g. can MacOS Intel read a Live GNU Linux DVD?)
 - check viability

12. 201903-201906 Finalising
 - Objectives:
 - outsource feedback re contents editing
 - (1 English teacher + 1 Russian teacher + 1/2 engineers-technicians representative of target audience)
 - outsourced feedback re webmastering & DTP
 - 1 IT webmaster + 1 DTP agency
 - proof-reading
 - (1 English + 1 Russian professional proofreaders)
 - update DVD iso pre-release after feedback (if required)

13. 201904-201907 Making of on-line promotional material
 - video trailer featuring
 - extracts of individual & group lessons
 - extracts of interviews with prominent figures
 - teachers & consultants talking about the book & project in general
 - short youtube demos describing
 - how to use space repetition software in conjunction with the book
 - how to use mindmaps & edit or create your own mindmap
 - how to use the presentation builder from the Live GNU Linux DVD
 - how to use Audacity on the Live GNU Linux DVD for recording presentations

14. 201907-201908 Printing & pressing

15. 201909 On-line release
 - web-mastering (incl. on-line ordering & payment) + dedicated domain name
 - to be confirmed
 - web-hosting
 - launch a weekly buzz on social networks (e.g. LinkedIn)
 - point to video trailer + 1 new demo each week

16. 201909 Dissemination
 - RTB
 - to be completed

ESP - English for Special Purposes

Some areas of business may be too marginal to justify publishing a book. These are covered in modular units to satisfy individual needs.

how to purchase machinery abroad
 technical order / request / task
 technical requirements

hold preliminary negotiations
 collect commercial proposals
 scrutinise offers
 choose from 2-3 proposals rather than a public tender
 final negotiations

- price negotiations
- protocol
- sum up procedures
- take decision based on analysis of technical ppl & price ppl

conducting diligence
visiting plants
running a tender
drafting a contract
installation of machines
maintenance & servicing
final agreement

area of expertise
select the best strategy for the customers
(e.g. review design & possible built-in flaws, to include
maintenance or not, life cycle ...)

Grammar (to be confirmed)

Articles

it - this / that

so / neither (nor)

Nouns & quantity expressions

Phrasal verbs with objects

Order of adjectives in a sentence

Adverbs - place in the sentence

Verbs of the senses (stative vs dynamic meaning)

Future forms & future clauses

Future as seen from the past

Future as seen from the past (events that didn't happen)

Relative clauses

Participle clauses

Reduced passive clause (or 'reduced relative clause')

Further usage of past participle in clauses

Comparative structures

Adding emphasis (cleft sentences - auxiliary do)

Modals of deduction

Hedging expressions

Fronting

Have / get something done

Conjunctions, adverbs + adjectives

Passive report structures

Word formation - prefixes & suffixes

Pronunciation of numbers

(cardinal, ordinal, fraction, decimal, date, telephone, zeros, years)

Passive

Discourse markers in writing

Present perfect vs present perfect continuous

Verb patterns (infinitive + ing / + to)

Will to describe expected actions & habits in the present

Would to describe expected actions & habits in the past

Future continuous, future perfect

Position of adverbs in future, affirmative & negative clauses

Word formation (self-, -able, -ible)

Narrative tenses

Past participle of 'go' (gone vs been)

Elision + connected speech (linking)

Substitution & ellipsis to avoid repetition

Zero, first, second & third conditional

Regrets & past conditionals (I wish, but for, it's a pity)

Concessive clauses and adverbials

Inversion after neither/nor, so/such

Reported speech

Reported speech without shifting tenses

must meaning polite encouragement / request

Verb patterns

Direct & indirect questions (embedded questions)

Word order in embedded questions
Verb structures (simple, continuous, perfect)
State verbs
Verbs of stative vs dynamic meaning
Present perfect vs present perfect continuous
Imminent events in the past
Past participle of 'go' (gone vs been)

Budget

- contents editing
(at least 3 teachers with relevant qualification, 1-2 English + 1-2 Russian)
- outsourced feedback re contents editing
(1 English teacher + 1 Russian teacher + 1/2 engineers-technicians representative of target audience)
- webmastering & DTP (desktop publishing)
- outsourced feedback re webmastering & DTP
1 IT webmaster + 1 DTP agency
- proof-reading
(1 English + 1 Russian professional proofreaders)
- authors' rights
- part-time secretary in charge of dealing with sources (English needed)
- audio recording
audio equipment
5-6 actors
3 days recording
2 days post-production
- video recording
shooting equipment
1 camera assistant
4-5 guests
2-3 days shooting
3 days post-production
- printing
(# copies - discount if above a certain number)
- DVD pressing
(# copies - discount if above a certain number)