

Professional Business English

Module 7
AY 2024-25

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Course description

The course is aimed at developing the rhetorical competence of professionals who work in global business or academia, and is designed as a series of practical in-class sessions followed by recorded homework. The homework is submitted to the professor for gaining individual feedback. The duration of the course is one module/28 academic hours.

By the end of the course students will learn how to present their ideas clearly, confidently and with style; how to use their voice with impact; they will also refine pronunciation.

The course sessions will focus on developing the following two competences:

1. Refining English pronunciation and diction, namely, the five key English accent features that need to be built on a Russian accent to further prevent the most common pronunciation challenges for Russian speakers that may impact intelligibility.
2. Developing voice. The exercises will teach how to use volume, pitch range, tempo, pauses, and inflection to communicate ideas clearly and with impact.

Course requirements, grading, and attendance policies

Attendance

Regular attendance (80% of the sessions), preparedness for classes and active in-class participation are crucial for making progress in this course. Excessive tardiness will also affect students' final grades and progress.

Home assignments

Recorded home assignments must be submitted to the professor two days before the next class to receive the professor's feedback. In case a student fails to submit the recording by the deadline without prior notification, the home assignment is graded as failed. If a student misses a class, s/he should inform the professor about it in advance and submit the completed assignment to the professor before the next class. Later submissions are accepted only if the professor is informed about it before the due date. The delayed recordings submitted at the end of the course are graded 0.5 grade lower.

Grading

The course grade:

To complete the course, students are required to prepare:

- a short professional text (150 words) for reading

- a one-minute delivery of a professional presentation or an extract of a professional presentation.

The grading breakdown comprises:

Class attendance and participation	20%
Homework	50%
Final test	30%

Grade conversion table

Grade	%
5+	> 95%
5	90% - 95%
5-	86% - 89%
4+	80% - 85%
4	76% - 79%
4-	70% - 75%
3+	66% - 69%
3	60% - 65%
3-	56% - 59%
2	< 56%

Make-ups

Make-ups of the final assignment at the end of the course are allowed during the first two weeks of the next module only in the following circumstances:

- if a student could not take the final test for extenuating reasons
- if a student has got a “2” for the final test (in this case the student’s make up mark for the final test will not be higher than 4)

Course contents

The overall course duration is 28 contact academic hours throughout module 7, October – December. Students attend classes once a week, and each session lasts 4 academic hours.

The themes of the course:

- Theme 1. English and Russian accents compared. Challenges of Russian speakers.
- Theme 2. English vowels.
- Theme 3. English consonants (word-endings; consonant clusters).
- Theme 4. Pitch range and pitch change for intelligibility and establishing rapport.
- Theme 5. Tempo and pause for highlighting high-key and low-key information.
- Theme 6. The 4 P’s (pitch, power, pause, pace) used for impact.
- Theme 7. The concordance of the segmental (vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental (intonation) units for orchestrating ideas.

Description of course methodology

The course will emphasize interactive teaching and learning practices that facilitate the development of both public speaking and communicative competence. Every class is followed by a recorded home assignment which ensures student progress through the course. Students improve their public speaking skills by gaining individual feedback from the professor.

Course materials

Required textbooks and materials

1. Materials designed by the professor.
2. Powell, Mark. *Dynamic Presentations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
3. Powell, Mark. *Presenting in English*. Hampshire: Heinle Cengage Learning, 2010.
4. www.americanrhetoric.com.

Additional materials

1. Baker, Ann. *Ship or Sheep*. CUP. 2010.
2. Hancock, Mark. *English Pronunciation in Use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
3. Hancock, Mark, and McDonald, Anna. *Authentic Listening Resource Pack*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
4. Hewings, Martin. *English Pronunciation in Use (Advanced)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
5. Lucas, Stephen E. *The Art of Public Speaking*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012.
6. Smith, Jeremy and Margolis, Ann. *English for Academic Study: Pronunciation*. Garnet Education: University of Reading, 2012.
7. News media resources (BBC, CNN, Bloomberg).

Academic integrity policy

Cheating, plagiarism, and any other violations of academic ethics at NES are not tolerated.