

М.Д. Черезов, М.П. Демьяненко
Национальный исследовательский
Томский политехнический университет

Organising A Student's Language Club

This article is dedicated to organisational and educational aspects of hosting an English club at a university. The material for the work was gathered during sessions of such a club at Tomsk Polytechnic University. This study resulted in listing some of the meeting formats and practical recommendations.

Key words: English language; language club; students union; education; teaching; communication.

This work, describing the experience of organising an English Language club by means of students and student unions, has mostly practical significance. Universities' teachers might find it useful in terms of new ways to interact with those who learn English language, and students might use aforementioned experience to make a club like that of TPU at their home university.

The methods used in this work include survey, interview, descriptive research, deductive method.

This work is based on the analysis of the club's meetings in the 2021/2022 studying year and half of the autumn semester of 2022/2023 studying year, resulting in more than twenty-five meetings total. Some statistics, feedback and survey results were obtained via the club's chat in social network VKontakte (145 members so far) [2].

The results of the research include a description of various sessions held by organisers of the club, a survey on students' attitude to learning English and participating in the club's events, in particular. Moreover, some recommendations on how to manage this kind of activity were given.

At Tomsk Polytechnic University there is a number of student unions covering many fields of students' lives, from sports to studies, from entertainment to volunteering. One of such unions is a so-called Commission on the quality of education [1]. The English club is an ongoing project of the Commission, established more than three years ago, and the whole staff has changed since then as students graduated or left the club for some reasons. Correspondingly, different types of meetings were tried, including lesson, movie club, book club, PowerPoint Party, quest and others. Still, the general formula of the club stays the same with the main idea being to let people talk in English as much as they need in a friendly environment, therefore breaking down the language barrier. According to the survey, these are the features that students value the most (Fig. 1).

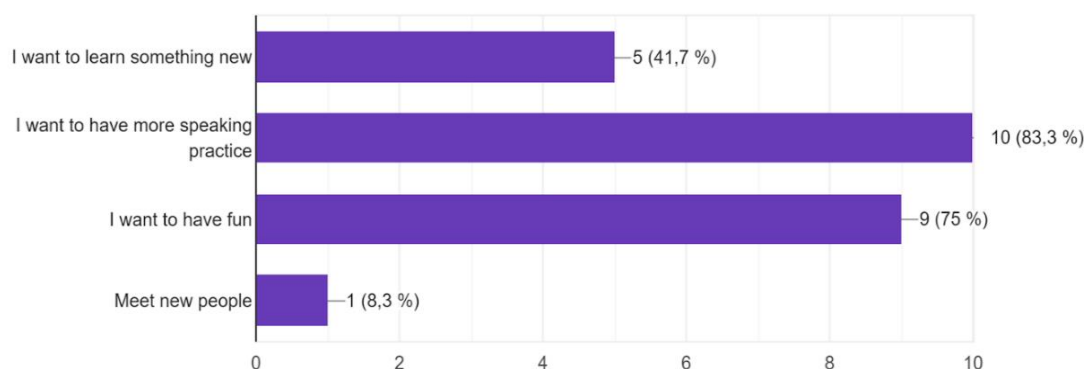


Fig. 1. Results of the survey on why students visit the club

The meetings of the club are held in coworking spaces at TPU and some classrooms of the university. Nonetheless, students from other universities of Tomsk visit the club's events, too. Most visitors are first-year students (58,3%) or masters (25%), and the average level of English is Intermediate (Fig. 2).

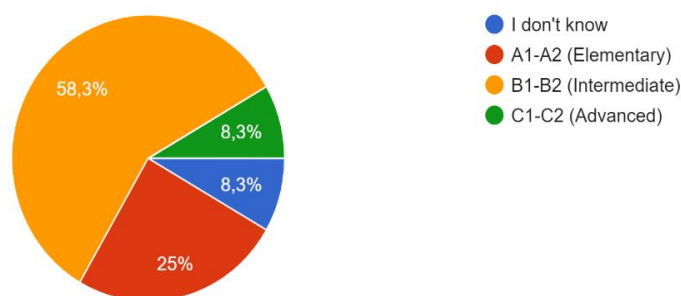


Fig. 2. Results of the survey on what is students' level of English

In 2022/2023 autumn term club's staff consists of seven organisers, six of whom study as bachelors and one as post graduate.

The following part describes different activities performed by the English Language club. They are divided into three logical and chronological parts since every semester new ideas were brought to the club and put in action.

The first format of activity is the most traditional one, being basically lessons, yet held in informal style. Students were divided into groups by their level of English – no entry tests were held to prove that level, it was up to students to decide what group to attend – and each group had its tutor chosen among the student union's members. Each of them prepared their own plans for lessons, therefore they varied a lot. The common thing for every student-

teacher was that they had to make presentations and explain some topics or give useful information and expressions. Some tutors aimed to prepare students for upcoming tests they were obliged to take at regular classes. As for the club itself, students did not have to take any exams and they got no marks. It matches with the idea to give people freedom from strict control, which is appreciated by the members of the club [3]. However, this form of work turned out to be unsuccessful due to several reasons.

To begin with, it appeared that even though meetings were held in atypical informal style, the fact that they still looked like lessons with grammar rules and expressions made them unattractive to some students. According to the survey, the second most popular reason for students to come to the club is to have fun (Fig. 1), which does not match with the idea of attending lessons in any form.

Another key problem was the size of the groups. Students were divided into parties of up to seven persons in each, which is fine for regular lessons with teachers and tutors but not sufficient for the club. As it was mentioned, students want to have fun and, also according to the survey, meet new people. For these reasons, bigger groups are preferable.

As a result, by the end of the term the attendance dropped so low that occasionally meetings had to be cancelled.

Given that, it was decided to change the approach to the meetings next semester. For instance, a new form was brought into action – a plot-based quest. This event consisted of a number of smaller activities, which included educational exercises along with entertaining tasks, all tied together by a story about spies and mafia. Students were divided into several teams and offered to solve riddles, spell tongue-twisters, go through an obstacle course and decipher a message leading them to prizes. In addition to involving every member of a team into play, a competitive element was brought by setting time limits and prizes. In the end, despite the positive feedback received from attendants, there still were two problems. The event was amusing, but it was not as useful for learning language as it could be because of the format itself. Moreover, due to the irregular character of meetings during that term, the number of students participating in such a laborious event was lower than the predicted one.

In order to avoid these deficiencies in the autumn semester of the 2022/2023 studying year, it was decided to reorganise the club, and preparations started in August. A structured lesson plan has been drawn up for the whole term. The plan included meetings of a formal nature (preparation for the TPU Certificate Exam in English, Rules of English Communication, Debates in English) as well as of an entertaining nature (Book club, Movie club, PowerPoint Party) in order to meet the needs of each of the English club members. Despite the presence of formal classes in the plan, they were «very funny» and

equally interesting for the students, according to the chat [2]. A lesson called the Debate club, where students were divided into «pros» and «cons» teams and argued different points of view on a particular topic, is a good example. This activity is best suited for students with a high level of English, as they are given tasks of increased complexity and a sufficiently large vocabulary is required. However, as experience has shown, even students with lower English level (Elementary, 25% of the survey participants) were able to take part in the debate process and were fully satisfied.

As for entertaining activities, which are at the top of the list according to the English club members, the most memorable meeting at the time of writing this article is «PowerPoint Party». The format of this event requires students to come with their presentations on various topics, demonstrate them and answer questions from the audience. It sounds simple enough, yet amusing and easy to implement. The advantage of this kind of event is that the students prepare their own presentations on topics appealing to them, speak to the public and interact with others in English. Moreover, it pays off to give visitors opportunities to express themselves creatively – this way the club becomes more participant-centred and students feel themselves as a part of it [3].

To sum up, a well-structured plan of activities yielded a positive result. Students started to attend the club's meetings more regularly (the average number of participants increased by 47% in comparison to the previous year), there were dedicated members who did not miss any meeting. Such students are awarded with a giveaway every month. Additionally, more positive feedback was sent to the chat. According to the quantity of the chat's members, it can be said that the popularity of the English Language club has increased twice since the last year (from 73 to 145 members) [2], bringing in more new students and various collaborations with other universities' organisations.

In brief, there are several recommendations to follow when organising a language club. It is important to set the main idea right from the start, deciding whether the club will be more entertaining or educating. In any case, the club should be a place with an informal atmosphere, where students can express themselves, likely in a creative way. However, coming up with a structured plan and a regular schedule proves to be effective. In addition, awarding students who have visited all scheduled meetings and shown themselves active participants might become an encouraging tradition.

To conclude, organising a language club at university provides great learning and social opportunities. It allows tutors to try new and promising formats, inspiring students to learn a new language or develop their skills.

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Науч. рук: Аксёнова Н.В., к-т филол. н., доц.

Ю.Е. Чехарова

Томский государственный педагогический университет

Соблюдение принципов эквивалентности и адекватности при переводе терминов региональной пищевой промышленности

В статье рассмотрены особенности перевода терминов в научно-технических текстах, в т.ч. определены параметры эквивалентности и адекватности при переводе. Определены основные типы переводческих решений при передаче терминов региональной пищевой промышленности на материале текстов пищевой продукции компании ООО «Созвездие Сибири», г. Томск).

Ключевые слова: термины пищевой промышленности; переводческие трансформации; эквивалентность, адекватность.

Научно-технический стиль возник и начал развиваться с появлением техники, а также с формированием разнообразных областей науки. С деятельностью человека появилась необходимость развития и осуществления перевода научно-технической лексики и терминологии в различных языках. В этой работе речь пойдет о русском и английском языках. Для того чтобы осуществлять качественный перевод научно-технических текстов, необходимо не только иметь достаточное владение терминологией, но и иметь обширные познания из разных областей и быть достаточно подкованным.

Терминологическим словам характерны следующие критерии: отсутствие экспрессии, безэмоциональность и однозначность [ср. 3]. В России научный стиль начал зарождаться в XVIII в., когда авторы начали развивать русскую систему терминов. Именно М. В. Ломоносов дал толчок