

industry brief

Innovative methods of learning languages

- American Fund for Czech and Slovak Leadership Studies
- Channel Crossings
- CMC Graduate School of Business
- SPĚVÁČEK vzdělávací centrum
- Wall Street Institute
- WIFI CZECH REPUBLIC





English for the Exceptionally Talented

Mastering English is indispensable for anyone who wants to study abroad, do research, or be involved in business or finance. It helps when travelling the world for pleasure. Good progress has been made but much more could and should be done to bring the level of English in the Czech Republic to a level such as in Scandinavia, where most people are nearly bilingual.



Our purpose is to help exceptionally talented students develop their talent. English is a vital component. We asked the Center for Talented Youth (CTY), Johns Hopkins University, a recognized leader in the education of the gifted, to help us create an engaging and motivating English learning environment for exceptionally talented and ambitious Czech youth.



Two years ago we started with top gymnasium students who were two to three years before graduation. Now in our third year, we are expanding to cover 6 - 15 year old children. Recently, we tested a variety of weekend courses for these age groups, which we plan to offer in a pilot version starting September 2013. While some courses in Czech may be offered to the very young, the objective is to offer courses on a variety of subjects (e.g., inventions in engineering) in English. This summer, we will test CTY International Summer Programs in the Czech Republic. Soon we want to establish CTY Central Europe and become part of the CTY global network for talented youth.



The program has been a great success and is steadily gaining popularity. For older gymnasium students we offer CTYOnline courses in math, science and English essay composition throughout the year, and CTY Summer Programs at several top universities in the United States and CTY centers around the world.



In the last two years, over 200 students used CTYOnline to boost their knowledge of math and science, and in the process become comfortable in English, including technical English. CTYOnline courses offer challenging academic course work throughout the year. CTY brings together the best resources for each course, which may include multimedia, interactive whiteboard, web-based classrooms, texts, student guides, and CDs. Each student works with a CTY faculty member who provides guidance, feedback, encouragement, and evaluation. Most have achieved terrific results. Some ranked in the top one percent of all CTY students worldwide.



Over 400 students have competed for and over 30 succeeded in winning scholarships to CTY Summer Programs. The scholarships offer Czech students an opportunity to join their peers from all over the world sharing exceptional abilities and love of learning. The focus is on rigorous academics and learning while studying a single topic. Perhaps as valuable is the opportunity to meet and to exchange experiences with their peers over a three week period of the program. For English, a good foundation topped by three weeks in an English speaking environment gives students a strong confidence booster.



Czech teachers also benefit. They “shadow” their American colleagues gradually getting familiar with CTYOnline and increasing their level of involvement. It boosts their English skills and also gives them inspiration to teach their regular classes. Last year some Czech instructors took over the responsibility for leading CTYOnline courses from their American colleagues.

www.afcsls.org | www.uptoyou.cz | www.facebook.com/AFCSLS | <http://cty.jhu.edu>



Best Practices in Language Training & Development for both SME and Corporations



From a social and economic point of view, the general level of foreign language knowledge in the Czech Republic still remains an important question, even almost a quarter of a century after the fall of communism. In a global market, language training and development of workers is a key success factor, so many companies try to tackle the issue. However, with the recent economic slowdown, a key question arises – what could they do to cost-effectively achieve what they really want and need?

In our short article, we would like to briefly outline the decision-making process of the company management before launching a language training programme, and then offer a possible solution to perhaps the commonest objection to any training – “it was too general and not 100 % relevant”.

First of all, in the decision-making process, there are three particular questions the company management need to ask themselves:

- **What do we need our workers to speak the foreign language(s) for?**

This is the very heart of the matter. If the company management realize that there is no need for foreign languages, then there is of course no point in organizing language training. Unless there has been a long tradition of having language training as part of company benefits and abolishing it would cause too much of a stir among the workers to make up for the saving. Nonetheless, involving the workers to share the cost might be a wise decision here.

- **What benefits will the language training bring to our company?**

The practical impact on company’s business is absolutely essential (and extremely difficult

to determine). Even if the company does not have a competency model, it is useful to think about the desired language level for a particular position (e.g. Assistant, Executive, etc.) The actual benefits may then appear in various forms ranging from an increase in revenues from new international clients to better satisfaction of workers.

- **And how shall we measure the practical impact?**

Measuring benefits of language learning and expressing the practical impact in “hard” figures is the most difficult part as it requires a lot of “soft” input data, but it is worth trying. Despite appearance, translating “soft” quantities into “hard” is not impossible and a quality language training provider can help.

Having now decided to start a language training project, the company will think of its design and will most likely require a tailor-made (and pertinent) programme.

A possible solution may be EnglishPRO, a flexible module-based language training programme focused on English for professional use. The original idea behind this training program was inspired by feedback from clients who complained that they were spending quite a lot of money on expensive soft-skills workshops in English, but at the end of the day, the participants somehow did not seem to grasp everything, and although their English was advanced, they felt frustrated. Having analyzed a few such cases, we realized that there was a language problem. The participants were actually trying to absorb 2 skills at the same time, hence dividing their concentration and, logically, found the whole experience overwhelming. They could not simultaneously grasp the intended soft skill and the foreign language, or, better said, the specific functional language related to the soft skill. That is why we decided to develop a programme that gives the participants the initial functional language training they need, regardless of their level, in order to be able to fully concentrate on the soft skill at a later stage. The trainees do not learn any “dead wood”, the modules can be combined across topics and coaching is available after the programme. Over the past three years, the most popular topics have been EnglishPRO Presentations, EnglishPRO Meetings and Discussions or EnglishPRO Negotiations.

Ondřej Douša, Language School Manager,
Channel Crossings
www.chc.cz



DynEd - a Method which Allows for the Effective Measuring of Investments into HR Development



Objectively determining the degree of English language knowledge in real time – an effective tool for HR managers

The ability to measure results is one of the fundamental parameters by which we judge all fields of human activity. In the field of HR it is very difficult to accurately measure the development of staff, mainly due to subjective assessment. One of the common problems in HR is objectively determining the level of English language proficiency of particular staff.

In language education today, there are clearly defined standards when achieving a certain level of linguistic knowledge (TOEFL, TOIC, Cambridge exams, CEFS, etc.). After attaining a certain level of linguistic knowledge, a key consideration is how much time has passed from the examination. In the event that the exam was taken more than 5 years ago and the person does not use English on an everyday basis, it is almost certain that the practical validity of the certificate is low. So the question is: „What is the person’s real level of knowledge in this area (English language)?“

The DynEd system which is linked to the above mentioned standards enables students, instructors and HR managers to regularly monitor progress in language proficiency and allows more accurate goal targeting than other metrics. The B2 degree of linguistic knowledge corresponds to the DynEd 2.5 level. The average English speaker does not have to reach this level in practice and can agree on a lower level with his employer. This can be anything between the B1 and B2 levels (DynEd metric eg 2.2).

The DynEd system can accurately determine the required number of

hours that a student needs to achieve this goal, because a placement test specifies the starting level and all participants of the process—staff—student, teacher and HR managers are able to allocate the necessary time and financial resources to effectively achieve the set goal. At the same time the current level of English language proficiency of the individual can be accurately and objectively measured.

Transparent monitoring of the study process and its evaluation in real time – a fundamental change in education investment management

At present there is a lot of pressure to invest effectively in any field. As mentioned above, the area of human resource development is not only influenced by personal evaluation, but also by the inability to measure the intensity of study.

The DynEd system allows for an absolutely accurate measurement of the amount of study time, the efficiency of its use and the success rate of evaluation tests. This way you can objectively measure the amount of time invested by staff—students on one side and the financial investment by the employer.

At present the only way to measure the intensity of study is the number of hours spent in the classroom. The DynEd system enables easy and continuous monitoring of a person’s ability to use the resources provided. An important factor is also the possibility of instant feedback that is provided regularly after the end of each calendar week (or. each calendar month). The HR manager is given comprehensive

information about the number of hours spent in active study, the accuracy of the learning method and success in written tests, which allows for a evaluation of the investment.

The DynEd system reports provides information about the given courses and its different parts (modules).

The information from reports is sufficient for the effective management of investments into human resource development within the area of language learning. It allows HR managers to easily manage the learning process of selected employees. It also provides a comprehensive argument when securing the budgets of the HR department.

Measurement, efficiency, transparency – current requirements for the development of HR

The DynEd system brings fundamental changes to human resource development. It allows you to clearly define the current situation and goals, prepare a realistic plan to achieve set targets and monitor the entire procedure. For HR managers this product finally provides transparent access to the (financial and time) investments of a company which promotes human resources development at this level of technical sophistication. This is a completely revolutionary approach that caters to the current requirements of any company.

Tomáš Janča, Director
CMC Graduate School of Business
DynEd Licensed Training Partner
www.cmc.cz

Effective Language Study Cuts Aviation Training Costs – A Case Study

Cadet pilots typically require a total of 250 hours of flight training to receive an FAA Commercial license. International students attending TransPac Aviation Academy in the US were often exceeding their programmed training hours due primarily to their lack of English skills. Training scenarios frequently had to be repeated due to poor English communication between cadets and instructors, cadets and air traffic controllers, etc. These extra hours of flight training translated into substantial Overage Costs for Transpac Aviation Academy. In a study with 3 different airlines that consistently had high overage costs, Transpac used DynEd’s Aviation English program for 3 months before the cadets’ arrival in the US, and again during their on-site training in the US. As the figure shows, with the DynEd training cadets from all three airlines successfully completed their flight training with few or no additional training hours, a significant reduction from the average of 46 overage hours without the training. This translated into a savings of over \$9,500 per cadet in flight training hours alone. When other factors such as living costs are added in, the savings was much greater.

Lance Knowles, President and Head of Courseware Development DynEd International (www.dyned.com)

Mr Knowles has pioneered the development and use of CALL for more than 25 years. His innovative learning theory, RHR, is based on neuroscience, and his award-winning programs are used by students in over 70 countries.

For more information please contact DynEd’s Country Management Partner for the Czech Republic, at www.dyned.cz or phone +420 222 317 101.

Innovative Methods for Learning Languages



I believe you've been in the same, or a similar, situation: a client asked me what the future is likely to bring in my field. "Well", I wanted to say, "That's what I've been trying to figure out every minute of every day". I decided to give her, as an example, information about several projects that might indicate what language education will be like in five or ten years.

However, before I could even start talking, she said: "Everyone will study languages online, right? It's been so popular."

It has, but mostly with directors and HR. People in offices, sitting at their desktops, lack the motivation to use the same tool for their language studies as they do for work.

Blended learning seems to be the answer. If there is a real person behind the course, people are more motivated to undertake the virtual part. "So any e-learning focused on language", I told her, "should be started by a face-to-face meeting. To keep them going, the students should meet their teacher once a month and practice what they have learnt online."

"Ok," Eva replied, "but some of our people are in the field most of the time, and cannot fix their schedules." Fortunately, we have Skype, which nowadays enables screen sharing. Teachers can also use Google Docs to store their materials and share them with the students. To personalize the course, it pays off to start with a one week intensive, face-to-face, and then to continue with individual Skype lessons at flexible times. A client holds an intensive course at least once a year, and tries to complete an intensive programme every time their target people have several days without a project.

"Hmm, interesting," I heard her saying. "On another note, my colleagues keep playing with their smart phones and tablets at our meetings. You've thought of that?" Smart phones provide an endless supply of authentic materials, so the trainer's key task is to recommend the right sources and study applications both for iOS and Android. If you have a dedicated meeting room/classroom available, you can even use a flat screen and an Apple TV, and mirror the screen of everybody's smart phone or iPad.

"Alright," Eva said, "so what's trendy nowadays?" Naturally, all businesses have become cost-conscious. However, the clever ones have

realized it is cost-effectiveness that will win the day, not cost-cutting. So there are more Language for Specific Purposes training courses. These are very focused, either on a field of expertise (e.g. The Language of Contracts), or a specific part of a job (e.g. Negotiating in English). The narrowed focus means clearer goals and easier measurement of the outcomes. Such training courses are either done on weekly basis (two hour sessions for 3 to 6 months) or organized in several shorter sessions (one-day, 2-3 days, or half-day sessions once a month for several months, etc.). The ultimate advantage lies in the high motivation levels of the participants and the clear expectations of all parties involved.

"Sounds reasonable," Eva commented, "but how will I find out if they have mastered what I needed them to? Are pen and paper tests still popular?" They are, but innovative approaches to testing can be found as well. Training institutions can be asked to develop a set of tests for language courses which are available directly through a client's LMS. And then people like Eva can see all of the results in one place.

Eva seemed to be satisfied and ordered some Skype sessions for her technical staff. You can find more information here www.spevacek.info/innovative-learning

Martin Hejhal
Academic Director
SPĚVÁČEK vzdělávací centrum s.r.o.
www.spevacek.info



English is Increasingly the International Language of Business

Understanding English is essential to succeed in today's business environment. But successfully learning a new language can be difficult, especially for employees who need to focus on their increasing job responsibilities. Wall Street Institute offers a different way to learn English - a way that guarantees success.

Books only provide information. Wall Street Institute provides a comprehensive and totally engaging way to learn. We use the power of the Internet, multimedia resources, paired with plenty of human interaction to deliver our unique English program.

Through our English Anytime online resource, students can access their coursework from home or the office, anytime day or night, whenever their schedules allow. After having completed their online unit, they meet to use the newly acquired knowledge with their teacher.

The Wall Street Institute Blended Learning Method

The Wall Street Institute Acquisition Cycle

Wall Street Institute's Acquisition Cycle is the core to learning English at Wall Street Institute.

The Acquisition Cycle is a multi-stage learning process based on academically proven English as a Second Language techniques.

Students start the Wall Street Institute Acquisition Cycle with an Interactive e-Lesson, which teaches new

vocabulary, grammar, and idioms through dramatized real-life situations. Students develop their speaking skills through listening, repeating, and reading new language. These lessons also have regular checkpoints where students confirm what they have learned. The interactive online lessons take the form of state-of-the-art multimedia presentations, which can be accessed anywhere, anytime.

Students then participate in small core classes called Encounters led by native English-speaking teachers. These small classes have students who are all at the exact same learning level, so students feel comfortable practicing and applying their new language skills. Encounters are focused on building speaking skills and self-confidence using English.

Language Skills for Business Needs

Why pay more to train your employees on how to use English in typical business situations? Wall Street Institute offers three levels of English designed to teach your employees how to use their new language in the business world as part of our standard course offering. These courses teach students the language skills necessary for success in today's business environment.

Using our Blended Learning Method, students learn the language the same way they do with our standard courses. We offer three levels of training - WaystagePro, Upper WaystagePro, and ThresholdPro Courses - that are designed to reinforce newly learned

language while introducing increasingly complex, real-world business tasks. The language skills and business situations increase in complexity as the students progress through the different levels.

RESULTS – the power to track ROI

We know that training your employees to speak English is an investment. That's why we created an advanced tracking program that gives you the ability to track your return on investment by monitoring your employees' progress.

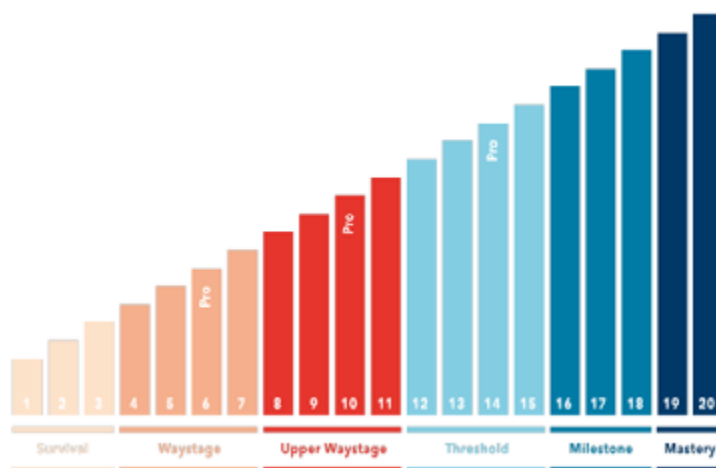
Each month we'll provide you with a report that shows each student's attendance and performance. If an employee isn't reaching the expected fluency level, we'll provide you with a detailed study record along with recommendations and comments from our instructors so the situation can be adjusted accordingly.

Your satisfaction is guaranteed! Because we pre-test each employee to ensure proper course level assignments, offer monthly progress reports, and constantly guide your employees, we believe Wall Street Institute is the most worry-free and fail-proof English language program you can use. And if your employees do not reach the agreed level of language fluency, your company will receive a 100% refund of course fees, guaranteed. That is money well invested!

www.wallstreetinstitute.cz



The Level Chart



The Acquisition Cycle



E-learning: an Innovative Way of Studying foreign Languages Online



"E-learning courses are a Europe-wide phenomenon. However, the problem is that high quality online courses are often missing in the range of trainings offered by Czech educational agencies. We aim at overcoming this gap by providing sophisticated product called Tell Me More 10 which was fully developed in Austria," comments on the trend of e-learning spread Martina Honsova, the Project Manager of WIFI Czech Republic, the branch office of one of the biggest educational providers in Austria - WIFI International.

These days, most customers require flexibility. Attending expensive courses at a language school twice to three times a week may not have the same outcomes as studying every day at home while being highly self-motivated. One saves time and what more – a lot of money.

"Tell Me More is a product that offers wide range of activities. It can simulate a real conversation which is a great advantage. Except for that, it includes thousands of language exercises. One does not need to meet a real lector; the computer does all the work. However, it naturally does not mean that the traditional ways of studying foreign languages would face their total down-climb," closes the topic Tomas Zdechovsky, the Managing Director of WIFI Czech Republic.

Hradec Králové – A significant growth of interest in studying foreign languages online was noticed by WIFI Czech Republic – the educational provider based in Hradec Kralove. This fact underlines the trend of methodology change that happened recently in the field of language studies. Nowadays, regular lessons in a language school may seem outdated. Most people want to decide themselves when to work on their language skills, define what to study and last but not least – how much money to invest.

Martina Honsová, Project Manager,
WIFI Czech Republic,
honsova@wifi-cz.cz, + 420 724 317 937
www.wifi-cz.cz

