Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

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Bachelor Thesis

Use of e-learning in language education in a selected company

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BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Use of e-learning in language education in a selected company

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Objectives of thesis

Evaluate the efficiency of implementing e-learning for English language education within a corporate setting, emphasising its impact on employee language proficiency, cultural awareness, and the company's overall competitiveness.

Methodology

The theoretical part will be based on the study of selected secondary sources, namely studying the scientific literature, corresponding journals as well as relevant Internet sources.

The practical part will be processed on the basis of outputs from quantitative and qualitative research.

The proposed extent of the thesis

30 – 40 pages

Keywords

e-learning, language education, corporate English, evaluation, benefits

Recommended information sources

DRESSMAN M., SADLER R.W., The Handbook of Informal Language Learning. Wiley-Blackwell, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-119-47244-5

HILL, Charles W. L. *Global business today.* New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2022. ISBN 978-1-266-10314-8.

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Use of e-learning in language education in a selected company" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 15. 3. 2024   _____

Use of e-learning in language education in a selected company

Abstract

This bachelor thesis evaluates the effectiveness of implementing e-learning for English language education in a corporate context, focusing on employee language proficiency, cultural awareness, and company competitiveness on the global market. Methodologically, qualitative insights were gathered through an employee interview, while quantitative data was obtained via surveys. Statistical analysis was applied to survey results. Findings highlight the importance of language training in corporate settings and the potential of the e-learning program within the workplace. The study underscores the necessity of live communication for maintaining company culture, suggesting a hybrid approach blending e-learning with traditional methods to accommodate diverse learning preferences and demographic factors.

Keywords: e-learning, language education, corporate English, evaluation, benefits.

Využití e-learningu ve vzdělávání v jazykové oblasti ve vybrané společnosti

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce hodnotí účinnost implementace e-learningu pro vzdělávání anglického jazyka v korporátním kontextu, zaměřuje se na jazykovou zdatnost zaměstnanců, kulturní povědomí a konkurenceschopnost společnosti na globálním trhu. Metodologicky byly kvalitativní poznatky získány prostřednictvím rozhovoru s zaměstnancem, zatímco kvantitativní data byla získána prostřednictvím průzkumu. Statistická analýza byla aplikována na výsledky průzkumu. Zjištění zdůrazňují důležitost jazykového školení v korporátním prostředí a potenciál e-learningového programu na pracovišti. Studie podtrhuje nutnost živé komunikace pro udržení firemní kultury a navrhuje hybridní přístup, který spojuje e-learning s tradičními metodami, aby vyhověl různým preferencím v učení a demografickým faktorům.

Klíčová slova: e-learning, vzdělávání v jazyce, korporátní angličtina, hodnocení, výhody.

Table of Content

1 Introduction

This work consists of two primary sections: a theoretical part and a practical part. The theoretical part focuses on assessing the corporate learning of English within companies. Additionally, it evaluates the significance of cultivating an English-speaking company culture, emphasizing benefits such as building comfortable workplace communication among all employees, enhancing company reputation on an international level, and staying attuned to ever-changing market trends. Furthermore, the thesis provides an examination of the company expenses associated with e-learning platforms and on-site courses, evaluating and comparing the effectiveness of both. The globalized business landscape has heightened the need for effective language education within corporate environments, with English emerging as the lingua franca. As companies try to compete on an international scale, the proficiency of their employees in English becomes one of the critical factors for success.

In the realm of corporate language education, understanding the evolution and significance of language training is crucial. This involves a shift from conventional methods to more adaptable approaches. Moreover, the economic and marketing implications of English proficiency for companies was observed, showing its influence on entering global markets, communicating with customers, and overall business competitiveness.

Despite the recognized importance of English proficiency in corporate settings, traditional face-to-face language education methods may not always align with the dynamic and fast-paced nature of modern businesses. This study aims to explore the potential of e-learning as a viable alternative in language education within a selected company, investigating its economic benefits and impact on fostering an English-speaking company culture. The establishment of it goes far beyond linguistic competence, and to be able to understand its formation, this work also delves into cultural aspects that contribute to effective communication, collaboration, and a shared identity among employees.

2 Objectives and Methodology

Objectives of thesis

The aim of the thesis lies in the comprehensive evaluation of the efficiency of implementing e-learning for English language education within a corporate setting. This evaluation places particular emphasis on identifying its impact on various facets, including employee language proficiency, cultural awareness, and ultimately, the company's overall competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study encompasses a multifaceted approach to gather comprehensive insights into the efficacy of the language program within the corporate environment. Firstly, an interview was conducted with a participating employee to obtain firsthand perspectives and experiences regarding the program. This qualitative data offers valuable qualitative insights into the language program's structure, impact, and effectiveness. Secondly, a survey was administered among employees actively engaged in the language program, comprising multiple-choice and scale questions. This quantitative data collection method allows for a broader understanding of participant perceptions and preferences regarding various aspects of the program. Lastly, the survey results were subjected to statistical analysis using various techniques such as Descriptive Statistics, Hypothesis testing utilizing Chi-Square, and Correlation Analysis. These analytical methods enable the examination of relationships between variables and the identification of significant patterns or trends within the data, thereby facilitating a comprehensive evaluation of the e-learning program's effectiveness and its implications for corporate language education.

3   Theoretical Part

3.1   Multicultural Workplaces

Multicultural workplaces represent dynamic environments where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together to collaborate. They present numerous advantages and obstacles, the equilibrium of which relies on effective management. Disagreements and misunderstandings within the workplace caused by cultural differences must be handled promptly and swiftly as to not decrease productivity (23, p. 349). Effective management strategies in multicultural workplaces prioritize fostering trust, promoting open communication, and creating a supportive environment where all employees feel valued and respected. The process of achieving these goals becomes less complicated and more time-effective when all team members share a common language for communication.

3.1.1   Business English as a Lingua Franca

In today's globalized and ever-changing world, effective communication plays a pivotal role in the success and overall performance of businesses. Among the various languages used in professional settings, Business English has emerged as the dominant lingua franca. Business English as a lingua franca refers to the use of English as a shared language for communication among individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the business world (1, p. 181). It serves as a bridge which helps businesses overcome language barriers, reduce misunderstandings, and ensure effective communication among employees, clients, and stakeholders. An estimated 85% of international organizations have English as at least one of their official languages (2, p. 905).

The origins of its common use can be traced back to the British Empire's expansion during the 18th and 19th centuries. As the empire's influence spread, English became a vital tool for trade and diplomacy. The British Empire's economic dominance and the spread of its language through colonization laid the foundation for English to become an international language of commerce. The worldwide adoption of Business English as a lingua franca can be attributed to factors such as the United States' post-World War II economic dominance, which elevated English language's status in international business (3, p. 2263). Additionally, technological advancements, notably the internet, facilitated the global

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dissemination of English, making it the common language for multinational corporations' internal communication and collaboration across borders. This convergence addressed the need for a universal language, transcending cultural and linguistic differences, and established Business English as the lingua franca in international business settings. In specific situations, English's role as a lingua franca is relatively recent. This means that many employees did not learn English in a formal setting and often encountered it for the first time at work (5).

Nowadays, English is the most-spoken language globally, with an estimated number of 1.5 billion speakers around the globe, of whom over 1 billion are non-native speakers (4). Given this remarkable prevalence of non-native speakers, the integration of language education within corporate settings becomes imperative, as it often turns out to be more than a pedagogical effort; it's a comprehensive strategy. It invests in the overall development of the workforce, empowering employees to communicate effectively and understand diverse cultural contexts. Language proficiency also contributes to shaping an organization's global brand image. Companies with employees proficient in Business English convey an impression of professionalism, competence, and trustworthiness among their allies and competitors.

3.1.2 Modern Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

Workplace diversity, commonly referred to as WPD, is a comprehensive concept that describes the distinctions among employees in an organization. It covers a range of characteristics, including physical, sociological, or psychological traits like gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religious or political beliefs, that define individuals or groups (23, p. 347). The concept of workplace diversity and inclusion has emerged as one of the fundamental principles for progressive and forward-thinking organizations. Recognizing the inherent strength in embracing differences, companies are increasingly prioritizing diversity and inclusion initiatives to foster a dynamic and harmonious workplace. Understanding the multifaceted dimensions of diversity not only reflects ethical values but also aligns with strategic business imperatives.

Opportunities

Workplace diversity offers numerous advantages to organizations. First and foremost, it brings together individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Such conditions offer various opportunities such as improved critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and conflict resolution (14, p. 39), or creative insights, better product delivery, effective marketing, and better sales promotions (50, p. 593). It stimulates employees' personal development and fosters a unification of diverse strengths for better performance and productivity. Additionally, WPD provides possibilities for strengthening customer orientation, improving target marketing, and advertising, leading to innovation, profit maximization, and workplace attractiveness. Furthermore, a diverse workforce enhances cultural competence, promoting understanding and respect among employees of different backgrounds. Such an inclusive environment fosters collaboration, teamwork, and overall employee satisfaction.

According to recent research, companies ranking in the quartile for racial and ethnic diversity demonstrated a 36% higher likelihood of outperforming and achieving superior financial returns (9, p. 4). The researchers acknowledge that implementing a Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy demands substantial commitment from company leadership, and often necessitates certain financial investments.

Another excellent opportunity that inclusion provides is expanding the recruitment funnel by creating an environment that attracts a diverse pool of candidates. An inclusive workplace cultivates a sense of belonging, making individuals from various backgrounds feel welcomed. This positive atmosphere serves as a magnet for talent, encouraging a broad spectrum of candidates to consider opportunities within the organization. Conversely, a lack of inclusion narrows the recruitment funnel and leads to a diminished pool of potential candidates. Some people find this approach controversial, stating that there's a thin line between the company's sincere desire to create a multicultural team and forced diversity. This happens when organizations compel the inclusion of individuals from diverse backgrounds instead of naturally fostering an inclusive environment. However, as shown on Figure 1, there are many benefits coming from the inclusive talent management. For instance, an extended pool of candidates benefits a company by bringing

supplementary qualifications, expanding the leadership capabilities, and strengthening the pipeline of successors (10, p. 11).

Figure 1. Organizational benefits from ITM.
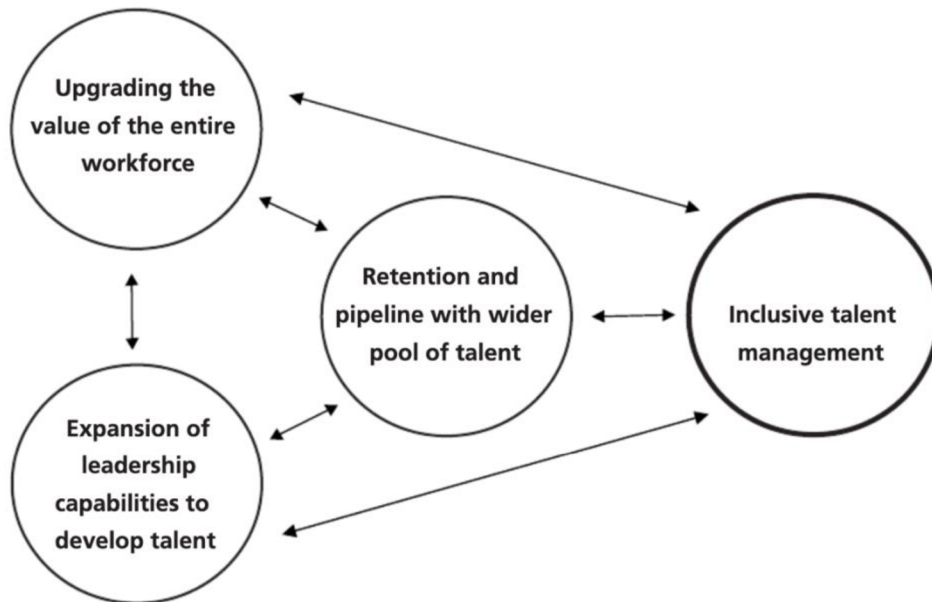
Source: 10, p. 15

This approach to talent management attracts and retains qualified employees, often helping the organization to increase overall profit and enhance business administration.

Possible Challenges and Solutions

In addition to the considerable opportunities it brings, workplace diversity presents challenges that organizations must proactively address. A prominent obstacle is the process of overcoming unconscious biases and stereotypes that may exist within the multicultural workforce. Preconceived notions about certain groups can hinder fair evaluations and create barriers to growth opportunities for individuals. One of the available solutions organizations may consider in solving this challenge is implementation of diversity training programs and policies. The most common outcome of such programs is that employees gain awareness of bias and self-efficacy to address bias, and the organizational climate gradually shifts towards a more favorable and comfortable atmosphere (8, p. 409). These changes can be explained by enhanced understanding of how stereotypes can affect judgments in professional settings, as well as learning about cultural differences and how to embrace them.

Another primary challenge faced by multicultural companies is the potential for misunderstandings and miscommunication due to language differences. When team members speak different native languages, there is a risk of messages getting lost due to inaccurate translation, leading to confusion and inefficiencies in workflow. Moreover, language barriers can create obstacles in fostering a cohesive company culture. Many employees must engage in various tasks in which they need to perform in English, their second or even third language, in order to maintain job security and form positive relationships with colleagues at workplaces (11, p. 32). Effective communication is essential for building strong interpersonal relationships, trust, and a sense of team spirit among employees. When language becomes a barrier, these aspects may be compromised, affecting team dynamics and employee morale. To address these challenges, multicultural companies must implement strategies to promote effective communication. Providing language training programs for employees can enhance language proficiency and boost confidence in expressing ideas. Additionally, leveraging technology, such as translation tools and communication platforms with multilingual support, can facilitate smoother interactions among team members. Research showed that participation in language learning programs yields positive transformations in employees across various aspects, including enhanced customer feedback, increased confidence, and improved job performance as the top three changes (12, p. 11).

3.2 English-Speaking Company Culture

In the context of collaborative projects and tasks, individuals unfamiliar with one another in daily life may face challenges in communication and problem-solving due to mutual misunderstandings. In such situations, the established corporate culture within the company plays a crucial role in preventing and resolving such situations. Hampden-Turner defined term "company culture" as "a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct" (13). It encompasses the unwritten rules, traditions, and the overall work environment that influence how employees interact, make decisions, and contribute to the company's mission and goals. Corporate culture is a fundamental aspect of an organization's identity, impacting employee morale, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance.

An English-speaking corporate culture specifically emphasizes the use of English as the primary language for communication within the organization. In multicultural teams or global companies, adopting English as the lingua franca fosters a common means of communication, enabling individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds to collaborate effectively. This cultural dimension goes beyond language proficiency; it encompasses the norms and practices associated with English communication, ensuring that all internal and external communications, meetings, and official documentation are conducted in English.

Language constitutes a fundamental element of culture, playing a crucial role in shaping cultural development. Language can be defined as a learning of guidelines and principles and of the methods for saying and getting things done with sounds, words, and sentences, rather than just a set of sounds, words, and sentences (7, p. 2). This demonstrates that having a specific common language within a company not only facilitates clear verbal communication among employees but also influences the way they perceive and process information related to their work most of the time.

3.2.1 Importance of English Proficiency in Various Business Aspects

Understanding Consumer Behavior and Preferences

In a globalized market, where English often serves as the common language, understanding customer needs, conducting effective market research, and tailoring products or services to diverse consumer bases become significantly more accessible with accurate understanding of how English is used among different segments of consumers. This linguistic proficiency facilitates clear communication with consumers, enabling businesses to obtain insights into their preferences, ultimately enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Language features influence consumer choice and can guide behavior, with language shaping consumer perceptions, evaluations, and decisions. (15, p. 228) Structural features of language, as well as lexical and phonological features are important in influencing how consumers perceive and respond to certain marketing stimuli. Additionally, second-language proficiency influences language-based consumer effects, given the increasing number of bilingual speakers in many key markets.

Digital Marketing and Social Media Engagement

In the digital age, the online presence of any business is critical, and proficiency in Business English is indispensable for effective digital marketing and social media engagement. Creating compelling content, crafting impactful marketing messages, and engaging with audiences on social platforms require a command of the language. As mentioned before, roughly 1.5 billion people worldwide speak English, of which 1.2 billion are internet users (16). Implementing online campaigns in English is essential for business promotion as it allows reaching a broader audience, increasing the likelihood of successful product sales.

Social media managers must stay attuned to the ever-evolving trends of each platform to effectively engage audiences. For instance, understanding the nuances of content creation on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook has become integral to tailoring marketing strategies that resonate with diverse audiences. In this context, a strong command of English serves as a valuable asset for navigating the dynamic landscape of social media and leveraging these platforms to maximize business visibility and customer engagement.

Brand Localization

Proficiency in Business English serves as a foundation for successful brand localization. While adapting products or services to local markets, businesses need to maintain a coherent and consistent brand image. Business English proficiency enables effective communication and collaboration with local teams, ensuring that the brand's essence is preserved during the localization process. Bridging cultural gaps and conveying the brand's identity accurately in different markets is most frequently done using English as well as the country's local language.

Operating in international markets also entails navigating diverse regulatory landscapes. Interpreting and complying with international regulations, agreements, and legal requirements often offer bilingual contracts, including English as one of the languages. Clear communication with regulatory bodies, legal counsel, and stakeholders is the key for ensuring compliance.

3.2.2 Remote Work and Virtual Collaboration

The emergence of remote work and virtual collaboration has revolutionized the way teams operate. With advancements in technology, teams can collaborate seamlessly across borders and time zones. However, these changes also pose challenges to company culture in multicultural teams. Remote work can lead to a sense of disconnection and isolation among team members. Building a strong company culture becomes even more critical in this context.

Cultural diversity in virtual teams requires leaders with intercultural competence who can realize the potential of cultural differences and use them as a source of competitive advantage (17, p. 165). Organizations should prioritize regular communication, foster virtual team-building activities, and provide opportunities for cross-cultural collaboration to maintain a cohesive and inclusive work environment. Furthermore, adapting to virtual collaboration requires effective communication strategies. Language barriers, cultural differences, and varying time zones can hinder effective communication in multicultural teams. Employing tools that facilitate clear and concise contact, providing language support, and promoting cultural understanding will help narrow the gaps.

3.3 Traditional Language Education in Corporate Settings

Individuals possess the perpetual capacity to acquire new knowledge, regardless of their current qualifications. Learning is a continuous process that allows each person to expand their skills and adapt to dynamically changing realities. Some of the possible reasons for leaving work are attributed to the lack of management support and absence of developmental and educational opportunities. The findings suggest that Human Resource Development professionals can improve organizational commitment and decrease turnover intention by establishing a positive organizational learning culture and considering managerial support and employees' differences (18, p. 487). The statistical analysis' results indicate a strong link between an organization's emphasis on learning and training programs and the commitment of its employees, with approximately 42% to 53% of the variation in organizational commitment explained by these factors solely.

When integrating educational training programs into the workplace, businesses are presented with several options to explore and implement. The selection of an appropriate

approach depends on the specific needs, goals, and dynamics of each organization. Understanding the preferred learning styles of employees, the program's flexibility and compatibility with employees' schedules should be taken into account. Ultimately, the strategic choice of an educational training approach should align seamlessly with the organization's unique context to optimize learning outcomes and enhance the overall skill set of the workforce. The program's effectiveness can be evaluated through reviews, trial periods, or feedback from employees who have previously participated in similar language learning initiatives.

3.3.1 Face-to-face Continuous Learning

Face-to-face learning remains a traditional yet highly effective method of language acquisition in the workplace. This approach involves direct interaction with instructors or language experts, enabling real-time feedback, personalized guidance, and opportunities for immediate clarification. Face-to-face learning fosters a dynamic environment for language practice, emphasizing verbal communication skills and building a strong foundation for effective workplace communication.

Benefits of Traditional Learning

The findings indicate that students derive greater benefits from a language class when actively engaged in face-to-face experiences and events (19, p. 117). This involvement includes learning from peers, exchanging information, and collaboratively working towards shared goals. Additionally, face-to-face language instruction enhances the learning experience, making it both enjoyable and memorable. This is attributed to the subject matter being not only comprehended but also visually and experientially conveyed. Being proficient in English encompasses more than just the capability to construct grammatically accurate sentences: it requires other related skills for effective communication, such as presentation skills, convincing and negotiation skills and interpersonal skills using that language (27, p. 341). The interpersonal dimension fosters communication, allowing students to connect informally before, during breaks, or after class, potentially leading to the development of fellowships beyond the classroom and corporate settings.

In addition to verbal communication skills, face-to-face learning places a strong emphasis on non-verbal cues, body language, and interpersonal dynamics, which are crucial

components of effective workplace communication. Participants not only learn to articulate ideas clearly but also develop the ability to interpret and respond to non-verbal cues, fostering a well-rounded communication skill set. A study on non-verbal communication within organizations suggested that effective communication in advertising and sales heavily relies on non-verbal cues to enhance message impact and elicit desired customer responses (21, p. 809). This entails adeptly identifying emotions, detecting deception, and interpreting the nonverbal behaviors of customers. Such nonverbal signals provide more precise insights into customers' sentiments, offering valuable information about their emotions and reactions. In a workplace with a diverse workforce and bilingual clientele, it is essential to accurately interpret and apply these cues in a manner that is universally acceptable, especially among individuals whose native language is not English. The social practice view of language proposes that language develops during interactions, influencing the organization through daily exchanges redefining the context (22, p. 983).

Challenges of Traditional Learning

Despite its merits, like any approach, this method has its drawbacks. As previously noted, employees' hectic schedules should be one of the priorities considered when selecting an educational program, and it becomes imperative to introduce flexibility to facilitate and motivate their learning eagerness. Traditional, in-person training programs present a hurdle for remote workers who might face difficulties attending offline sessions due to their geographical locations, potentially leading to feelings of exclusion. It is essential to strike a balance that caters to the diverse needs of the workforce, ensuring that learning opportunities are accessible to all team members, regardless of their location or work arrangement.

Another consideration for companies is the cost associated with face-to-face programs, which is typically perceived as higher (20). Budget constraints may pose a challenge, and organizations need to weigh the benefits of in-person interaction against the financial implications. However, it's essential to recognize that investing in face-to-face language programs can yield significant returns in terms of improved communication, collaboration, and employee satisfaction.

3.3.2 Alternatives to Continuous Learning

An alternative to extensive in-person learning is the organization of workshops and seminars, whether conducted on-site, within the company's workplace, or off-site, at the educational organization's location. This approach accommodates employees with busy schedules, promoting a better work-life balance while ensuring they can still attend and benefit from valuable training opportunities, as much as the rest of their teammates.

Language workshops offer employees the chance to participate in courses tailored to their specialization and field-related requirements. These workshops often concentrate on industry-specific vocabulary and techniques, enhancing learner motivation by addressing their unique professional needs. By narrowing the focus to industry-specific language, employees gain practical knowledge that directly aligns with their daily tasks and responsibilities. The results of specialized workshops for employees in different areas often show a significantly increased interest in specialized training and recognition of cultural aspects within the workplace (24, p. 90).

Business English workshops frequently employ needs analysis to establish a structured, comprehensive, and time-efficient learning environment for learners within an organization. Through the needs analysis, the staff feel more empowered and as a result become better at coping with organizational changes, more skilled, and have an increased sense of self-worth and confidence (25, p. 402). In language education, this approach involves systematically identifying the language requirements, preferences, and proficiency levels of participants. Through careful needs assessment, educational organizations can tailor the content, focus, and delivery of the workshops to address specific business communication challenges and goals. The needs analysis serves as a foundational step in designing workshops that resonate with participants, fostering a more impactful and targeted learning experience.

These language workshops are available in various formats, with many being offered online. This not only provides flexibility for employees with busy schedules but also opens up opportunities for those working remotely due to various reasons. As the modern workforce continues to embrace remote and flexible work arrangements, the availability of virtual language workshops becomes increasingly essential for fostering effective communication skills.

3.4 Evolution of E-learning in Corporate Language Education

If traditional language learning, also known as formal learning, exists, then there must also be an informal counterpart. Informal language learning encompasses all activities undertaken by learners outside of a formally organized program of language instruction (26).

3.4.1 The Rise of Technology in Language Education

Historical development of e-learning

The rise of technology in education, specifically in the context of e-learning, has transformed the landscape of learning methodologies. The term "e-learning" itself, with its uncertain origin, began gaining prominence around 1980, experiencing a notable surge in usage and attention, particularly with the widespread adoption of the Internet (6, p. 51). This marked the beginning of a paradigm shift from traditional classroom-based learning to a more accessible and flexible form of education. E-learning can be viewed as the natural evolution of distance learning, leveraging modern technology to reshape educational frameworks continually.

The concept of e-learning started actively evolving by the end of the 20th century, as the Internet and personal computers became more accessible within both corporations and households. In 1996, the first web-based Learning Management System (LMS) named Cecil was launched, marking a significant milestone (28, p. 604). Modern online LMSs simplify the hosting and distribution of varied learning materials, enabling seamless access to reading materials, video and audio content, online conferencing, chats, forums, blogs, educational games, testing, grading, and more. This web-based infrastructure enhances the overall learning experience by providing a versatile platform for learners to engage with diverse educational content and interactive tools.

In a span of a little over two decades, the online education market has witnessed remarkable growth, establishing itself as a prominent force in education. Between 2011 and 2021, the number of learners enrolled in massive open online courses surged exponentially, escalating from 300,000 to 220 million users (29). This phenomenal

expansion underscores acceptance and popularity of online education, signifying a transformative shift in the way people access and engage with learning opportunities.

COVID-19 influence on e-learning market growth

The global e-learning market experienced a sudden escalation, accelerated by the unexpected challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The outbreak compelled educational institutions and businesses worldwide to adopt digital solutions to ensure continuity in learning and professional development. With lockdowns, social distancing measures, and the closure of traditional educational spaces, there was an urgent need for remote learning alternatives. As a result, the demand for e-learning platforms, online courses, and virtual collaboration tools grew.

The adoption of e-learning in European countries varied: individuals with sufficient resources and experience found alternative learning options within a short period of time since the start of lockdown, while those who valued and preferred traditional ways of learning often faced exclusion and frustration (41, p. 3). Strategies to bridge the digital gap between these groups were implemented, but e-learning had both advantages and disadvantages.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning contributed to the development of digital proficiency and productivity among students and professionals across various fields. Many education organizations and businesses provided online courses during the pandemic, with some choosing to maintain this approach. In 2022, participants in a research study highlighted flexibility and convenience as their top motivations for online language courses (31, p. 2). Many expressed that traditional face-to-face courses imposed limitations on their learning preferences, especially for those who had commitments such as a large amount of work tasks. While weekend and night courses were also options, they were usually not preferred. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic introduced online learning options, providing those participants with similar opportunities as learners engaged in traditional on-site learning.

3.4.2 Gradual Implementation in Businesses

The gradual implementation of e-learning in businesses has been a transformative journey marked by gradual yet swift advancements in technology and shifts in organizational

learning models. Over the years, the adoption of e-learning methodologies within the corporate sector has evolved, reflecting a strategic response to the changing landscape of education and training.

In the early 2000s, the rise of general e-learning practices prompted numerous companies to adopt LMSs for training their employees and strengthening overall operations (47). This marked a significant shift in the approach to employee development and organizational learning. The implementation of LMS became instrumental in shaping modern workplace learning strategies, offering a centralized platform for delivering, managing, and tracking training initiatives. As organizations recognized the potential of e-learning, LMS played a pivotal role in fostering continuous learning, skill development, and adaptability within the workforce.

These days, e-learning systems, such as Canvas, Blackboard and Moodle, are widely adopted by various organizations to support organizational learning and enhance knowledge flow and training processes (33, p. 621). These platforms provide innovative services tailored for employees and managers. They can be classified according to their features and capabilities, encompassing LMS and social media environments, which organizations use to reinforce their learning potential.

3.4.3   Employees' Learning Preferences

One of the main steps in the successful implementation of a certain training program for employees is considering preferable styles within a workforce. Some individuals enjoy continuous day-to-day learning, whereas others would rather join a workshop once in a while. To address the unique needs of the majority of employees, Human Resource managers must often conduct comprehensive surveys or assessments beforehand. The findings of a recent study indicated that informal learning tools play a more significant role in workplace development compared to traditional learning. In informal learning, employees independently pursue knowledge at their own discretion and pace, making it a preferable way (34, p. 608).

3.5 E-learning Processes in Corporate Language Education

In recent years, e-learning has gained remarkable attention in the language education field as companies increasingly recognize the efficiency and flexibility it offers. Many companies often choose e-learning for cost-effectiveness, eliminating the need for extensive travel and physical training materials. Not only does this approach conform to budgetary constraints but also allows employees to learn on their own whenever and wherever they want to, offering supplementary online materials and resources for additional practice. The same way as with traditional learning, educational centers and independent educators offer a variety of programs which could last from as little as a couple of hours to a few months.

3.5.1 Ways to Implement E-learning

Continuous E-learning

Extended online educational programs designed for the workforce operate without specific time constraints, offering continuous learning. Although necessitating a consistent and larger budget allocation, these programs prove to be more cost-effective compared to their face-to-face equivalent (20). These programs allow employees to maintain concentration in their study process and establish specific routines associated with language learning.

Hybrid Learning

Hybrid learning combines face-to-face and distance learning using technology to reduce space limitations within the team and offer more flexibility in the learning process. This approach addresses the evolving needs of the workforce by combining most of the advantages of traditional in-person instruction with the availability and flexibility of online learning (35, p. 240).

Intensive Language Courses

Intensive learning courses are designed to immerse individuals in an accelerated language learning experience. These courses often involve concentrated, focused training sessions that aim to rapidly enhance language proficiency. This form is particularly beneficial for those seeking a quick and concentrated learning experience. The heightened focus can lead

to increased confidence in language use, making intensive learning courses an effective strategy for employees looking to rapidly enhance their language proficiency in a workplace setting. The results of a study investigating the advantages of intensive mode teaching propose that utilizing intensive delivery methods improves student satisfaction with the course (36, p. 5214).

Virtual Workshops

Similarly to intensive language courses, virtual workshops concentrate on the quick delivery of certain information. However, the difference between the two is that virtual workshops are interactive sessions conducted in a collaborative online environment, emphasizing practical skills and real-time engagement (37). While intensive language courses focus on fast-delivered in-depth knowledge acquisition, virtual workshops prioritize active participation, fostering communication and application of language skills in practical scenarios. Hosting workshops in an online setting offers the option to record any session, a feature commonly found in the majority of web conferencing systems, which can be useful for participants to take another look at their discussions and reduce any concerns about potential missed information (38, p. 3).

3.5.2   Recognized Language Training Programs for Companies

By 2024, many language institutions specializing in Corporate and Business English programs have been found. Every online course comes with distinct conditions and follows a unique curriculum. As for the past few years, the following organizations are ones the most widely recognized in the field:

The British Council

The British Council, as an official partially government-owned entity, is known for its high relevance and professionalism. Given its official status, it is a quite credible organization which has existed for over eight decades. In 1940, King George VI granted the British Council a Royal Charter for promoting a wider knowledge of the English language abroad and developing closer cultural relations between the UK and other countries (39). As for corporate English education, the program is offered to individuals at every proficiency level who can choose either self-guided study or participate in online group classes, accessible 24/7 from any location worldwide (40). The organization also offers globally

recognized English tests, business qualifications, and a large number of free sources for self-learning.

Coursera

Founded in 2012 by Stanford University computer science professors Andrew Ng and Daphne Koller, Coursera Inc. is a prominent U.S.-based provider of massive open online courses (30). With a distinctly academic approach, Coursera collaborates with the world's leading universities and companies, such as Yale, Stanford, Princeton, Google, and others (42). The platform extends valuable opportunities for workforce development, offering options like virtual training sessions led by instructors, available in both live and asynchronous formats, as well as a variety of virtual courses and lessons.

Preply Business

Established in November 2013, Preply is an online platform specifically specializing in online language learning (43). The company provides businesses and organizations with a customized program Preply Business, which is designed for corporate language training. Users, including learning employees and managers, benefit from the support of an account management team, guiding them through the learning process. The program's duration and format are adaptable to suit the language learning preferences of the company. Whether opting for intensive workshops, regular sessions, or a combination of both, the primary goal is to create a schedule that minimizes disruption to daily operations (44).

Udemy

Udemy, Inc. is an edtech firm offering an online learning and teaching platform, established in May 2010. Its primary focus is on students seeking to enhance job-related skills, with certain courses contributing to technical certification credits (45). Additionally, Udemy serves as a platform for corporate trainers aiming to develop specialized coursework for their company's employees.

3.5.3 Independent E-learning Practices in Language Education

Language Learning through Mobile Technologies

As of 2024, the global count of mobile phone users stands at 6.93 billion, which is nearly 85.68% of the world's population (46). Based on another recent study, an average adult spends over 4 hours on the phone daily (32, p. 2). To make this use more beneficial, companies may consider implementing mobile-learning (m-learning) platforms for their employees. Mobile technologies offer convenient and accessible platforms for workforce language learning, such as Duolingo for Business, Promova, Quizzlet, and many others.

Additionally, the convenience of accessing lessons "on the go" fosters a consistent and casual language learning environment, empowering individuals to progress at their own pace without experiencing any pressure or time constraints.

Pre-recorded Lectures and Courses

Even more cost-effective solution some companies may consider is the purchase of online lectures and courses for their team. While this approach could be economically advantageous, it might be less effective if adopted as the only one. Numerous language students express the need for a supportive figure, like a mentor, to address any questions or concerns that may arise during the course (19, p. 122). Such lectures are offered by many credible educational organizations, such as the British Council, Oxford English, or Coursera, as well as by less renowned organizations and educators.

Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Language Learning

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a machine's ability to perform the cognitive functions typically associated with human minds (48). In recent years, there has been a large increase in the integration of AI in education, as evidenced by a number of studies that explore the potential advantages and challenges associated with incorporating AI-based technologies into educational curriculum. In language education, AI can mainly be used as a tool to personalize learning processes and help students navigate language learning independently. For instance, AI platforms can provide personalized feedback, create tasks based on specific preferences, and increase overall engagement (49, p. 78). Although AI can serve as a valuable instrument for independent learning, it is not currently able to substitute teachers and mentors, and in some instances, may even contribute to the inaccurate information intake.

4 Practical Part

4.1 Introduction of the Organization

Slotegrator is a leading business solution supplier and software aggregator for the iGaming industry. The company operates internationally, with one of the two head offices located in Prague. Despite its diverse and international team, comprising over 300 employees worldwide, English is not the native language for the majority of team members. The same applies to the team working in Prague, where some employees are non-native Czech speakers. Consequently, the company provides its team with both Czech and English language courses, depending on the employees' needs.

4.1.1 Overview of the English Language Program

The English language program was introduced in 2020, a few years after the establishment of the company, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its primary objective was initially to support and enhance English language communication skills among employees during the lockdown. Now, the program remains in the same format of online sessions. Participation in the program is voluntary, with no financial obligation for employees.

The program consists of weekly classes taught by instructors proficient in English, Czech, Russian, and Ukrainian languages, who work independently and do not belong to any educational organizations. Online sessions are held via the ZOOM platform, and class materials are stored and accessible through a Telegram group chat, facilitating ongoing communication between students and instructors. The curriculum includes various topics such as principles of communication within the multicultural team, global business culture, or Business English.

Overall, the language program serves as a vital tool for fostering effective communication skills within the diverse workforce of the company. Its implementation underscores the organization's commitment to enhancing employee development and promoting cross-cultural understanding in the workplace.

4.2 Interview with an Employee

An interview was conducted with a company employee who actively engaged in the language program offered by the organization for over one year (Appendix A). The interview delved into various aspects of the program, including its curriculum, lesson structuring, and the participant's overall assessment.

As mentioned by the employee, the program primarily focuses on commercial communication and Business English, delving into diverse cultural norms, mainly within the business realm. When asked about professional terminology, the interviewed employee responded: "There are also regular workshops offered for specific specializations, for instance, English for Sales, or English for IT. Those are usually held by request and seem to be quite useful for people in different departments."

While participants appreciate the opportunity to learn about different cultures and enhance English skills, those with higher proficiency levels, such as the interviewee, may find the curriculum less challenging, mainly reinforcing their knowledge. However, participants with lower proficiency levels may struggle to keep pace, experiencing occasional confusion. Overall, the program appears successful and engaging for those with intermediate language skills.

4.3 Survey among the Employees

To assess the effectiveness of the program, a survey was conducted for participants enrolled in the company's language program. This survey gathered data on various aspects, including demographic information such as age groups, as well as participants' opinions regarding satisfaction levels and perceived improvements.

4.3.1 Data Collection

The survey was held online using a web-based survey software Google Forms to collect the data (Appendix B). This survey gathered insights from employees regarding their experiences with e-learning processes and overall satisfaction with the language program. 42 responses were collected out of the total number of participants of the e-learning program. The sample size is relatively small, which can be explained by the fact that the

number of total participants varies throughout the year. Some individuals consistently engage in the program, and others join from time to time.

Responders were asked to answer multiple-choice and scale questions, results of which were used for the further analysis. Additionally, participants to add any comments regarding the topic.

4.3.2 Survey Results

Age Groups and English Proficiency

Two crucial factors analyzed in the research are the diverse age range of participants and their language proficiency levels. These factors could potentially impact other variables such as preferences for traditional or e-learning formats, overall improvements, and satisfaction with the program. Notably, the language program does not categorize students based on their proficiency levels, which may potentially lead to challenges or certain complications.

Table 1 shows the total number of respondents who participated in the survey, along with their Age Groups and Language Proficiency:

Table 1: Age Groups and English Proficiency of the respondents.

Proficiency Level	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
A1-A2	0	1	3	1	0	0	5
B1-B2	6	11	5	4	0	0	26
C1-C2	2	8	1	0	0	0	11
Total	8	20	9	5	0	0	42

Source: Own Processing, 2024

It also indicates a predominance of Intermediate Proficiency (B1-B2) learners in the course, along with a significant representation of individuals in the 25-34 age group.

Previous Experience

Figure 2 presents Previous Experience with English learning prior to the program offered by the company. Respondents were asked to select as many options as apply.

Two options chosen by the majority of the participants were Secondary school lessons (78,6%) and Self-taught (71,4%). The remaining indicators turned out to be less common, ranked from most to least popular as follows: University courses (47.6%), Individual classes with a tutor (40.5%), Group classes or meetings (33.3%).

*Figure 2: Previous Experience in language learning.*

What is your experience with English learning prior to the program offered by the company? Select as many as apply.
42 responses
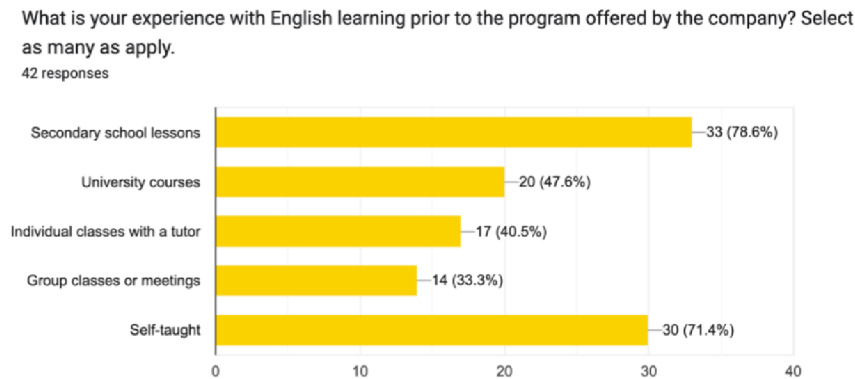
Source: Own Processing, 2024

Motivation Factors

Figure 3 illustrates the primary motivation factors of the participants. Similarly to the previous section, participants had the opportunity to select multiple options. Top three factors which motivate employees to enhance their language proficiency are Improved communication skills (85.7%), Better cultural awareness (61.9%), and Career advancement opportunities (57.1%).

Figure 3: Motivation Factors in language learning.

What motivates you to improve your language skills? Select as many as apply.
42 responses
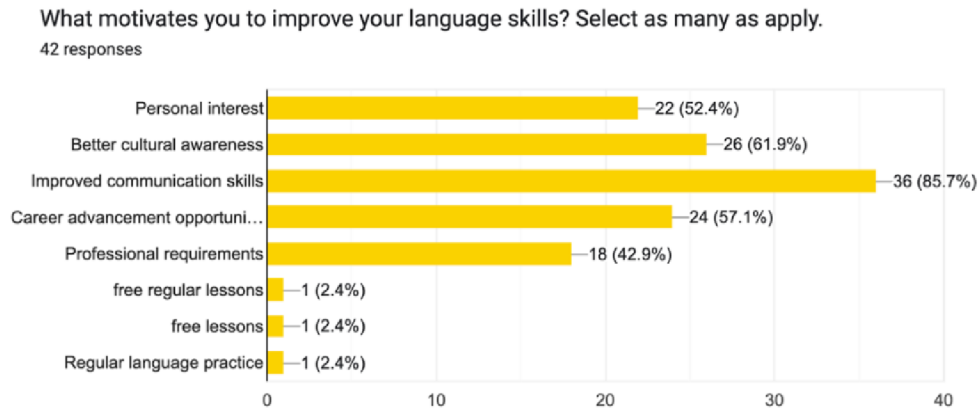
Source: Own Processing, 2024

Additionally, participants were able to select "Other" and specify their own motivation factor. Notably, two out of three responses submitted under this option highlighted the significance of availability of free lessons within the company as another important factor.

Length of Study

The majority of participants fall into the B1-B2 Proficiency Level across all Lengths of Study, with 8 participants for "less than 1 year", 9 participants for "1-3 years", and 9 participants for "3+ years". A1-A2 and C1-C2 Proficiency Levels fall into the groups with shorter Length of Study, both accounting just 9,1% in the "3+ years" group. These findings suggest that participants at these proficiency levels may tend to complete their language studies within shorter timeframes, potentially due to varying learning trajectories or program structures.

Table 2 shows the amount of people with different Proficiency Levels and their Length of Study within the current language program.

Table 2: Proficiency Levels and Length of Study of the participants.

| Proficiency Level	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	3+ years	Total
A1-A2	2	2	1	5
B1-B2	8	9	9	26
C1-C2	6	4	1	11
Total	16	15	11	42

Source: Own Processing, 2024

When asked about any additional comments regarding the language program, one of the respondents wrote: "The program offers great opportunities for those who learn at the Intermediate level. It also gives a lot of information about cross-cultural communication and how to interact with colleagues in a multicultural team." This observation, along with the data shown in Table 2, suggests that individuals belonging to the B1-B2 Proficiency Level category might demonstrate a stronger inclination to prolong their participation in the program.

E-Learning Format Satisfaction

Participants were asked to rate E-learning Preference on a scale from 1 to 10, where "1" is "Prefer traditional learning, such as printed materials and face-to-face lessons" and "10" is "Prefer e-learning, such as virtual classrooms and online sessions". On this scale, responses ranging from 1 to 5 indicate a preference towards traditional learning, whereas responses from 6 to 10 signify an inclination towards e-learning. The second group includes 32 out of 42 respondents, which roughly equals to 76,1%. This result could be caused by various factors, including Age Groups, Program Satisfaction, and Language Proficiency and Cultural Awareness Improvements.

Figure 4 demonstrates employees' preferences regarding traditional and e-learning formats.

*Figure 4: Traditional Learning and E-learning Formats Preferences*

What do you prefer more: traditional learning, such as printed materials and face-to-face lessons, or e-learning, such as virtual classrooms and online sessions?
42 responses
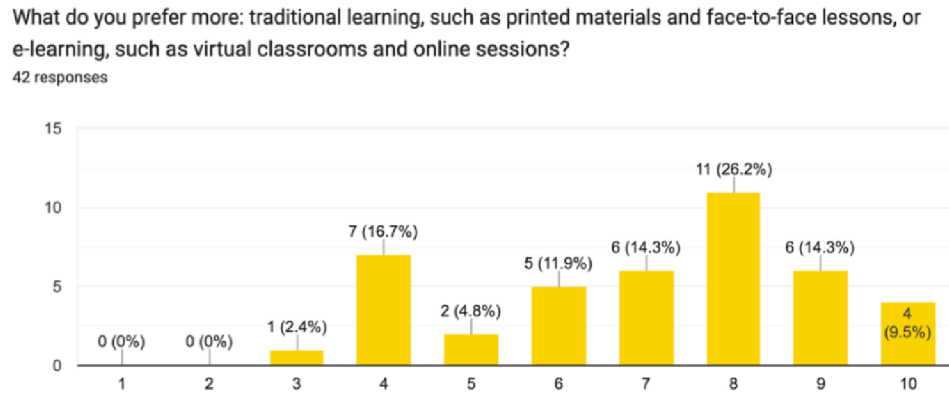
Source: Own Processing, 2024

Satisfaction with the Program

In this question, participants were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the current language program on a scale from 1 to 10, where "1" is "Very dissatisfied" and "10" is "Very satisfied". Out of all the respondents, only one individual rated this program with a "4," a score closer to "Very dissatisfied." Conversely, the remaining participants appear to be more content with the program.

Results obtained from the question responses are presented in Figure 5:

*Figure 5: Satisfaction with the Language Program.*

How satisfied are you with the current program offered by the company for language education?
42 responses
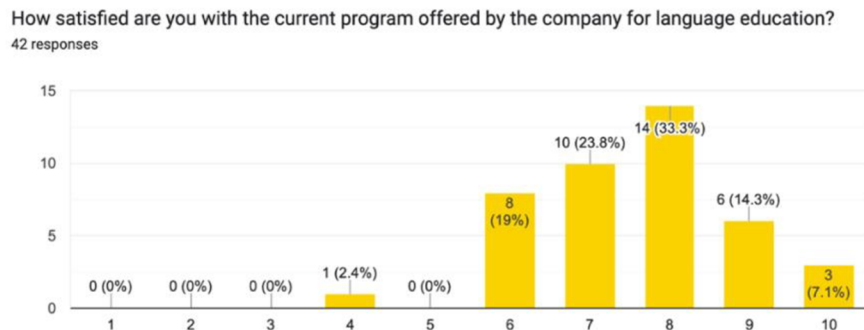
Source: Own Processing, 2024

Language Proficiency and Cultural Awareness Improvements

The survey included two distinct questions regarding students' progress: one concerning language proficiency and another regarding improvements in cultural awareness. These questions were posed separately to delve deeper into whether the program is effective in fostering both linguistic skills and cultural understanding, or solely focused on language development, and how this may affect overall Satisfaction with the Program. The extent to which the current program impacted employees' knowledge and skills is defined by a scale from 1 to 10, where "1" is "No improvements" and "10" is "Significant improvements".
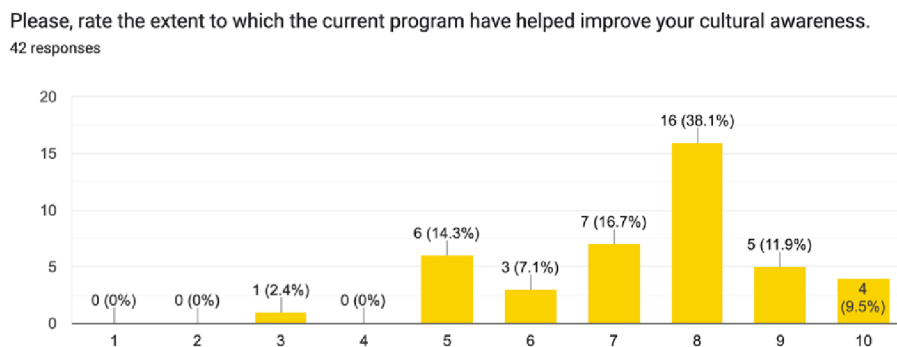
Figure 6 and Figure 7 show results obtained from the survey for Language Proficiency Improvements and Cultural Awareness Improvements, respectively:

Figure 6: Language Proficiency Improvements.
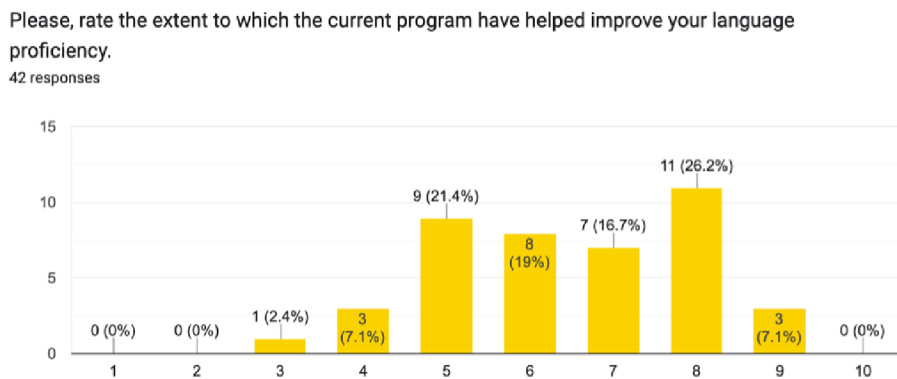
Source: Own Processing, 2024

Figure 7: Cultural Awareness Improvements.

Source: Own Processing, 2024

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

Further analysis involved calculating descriptive statistics to examine the central tendency of several variables. These variables encompassed Satisfaction with the Program, Language Proficiency Improvements, and Cultural Awareness Improvements. For each of the listed, Mean, Median, Mode, Range, and Standard Deviation were calculated.

By quantifying these measures, the study aimed to gain a clearer understanding of the overall perceptions and experiences of the respondents regarding the language program provided by the company.

Results of the calculations were put together into Table 3 for better visual representation:

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Satisfaction with the Program, Language Proficiency Improvements, and Cultural Awareness Improvements.

Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	Range	Standard Deviation
Satisfaction with the Program	7.57	8	8	6	1.29
Language Proficiency Improvements	6.48	6.5	8	6	1.55
Cultural Awareness Improvements	7.45	8	8	7	1.61

Source: Own Processing, 2024

The results indicated a generally positive sentiment among participants regarding their Satisfaction with the Program. The average satisfaction rating is 7.57, with the majority of respondents reporting satisfaction levels between 7 and 8. However, there was variability in satisfaction levels, as indicated by the range, which spanned from 4 to 10. A standard deviation of 1.29 also implies that there is some moderate diversity in how satisfied participants are with the program, with a few participants rating their satisfaction lower or higher than the average. By looking at Figure 4, it appears that this diversity may be caused by a dissatisfied participant.

As for Improvements, it appears that participants gained more knowledge in Cultural Awareness compared to Language Proficiency, as the mean of the first one is higher by nearly one point. While the average improvement ratings for Language Proficiency and Cultural Awareness are slightly different, their individual ratings may also vary by approximately 1.55 and 1.61 points on either side of the mean, respectively. Yet, it is reasonable to find out why Cultural Awareness Improvements are higher than Language Proficiency Improvements.

4.5 Other Statistics

The relationships observed between various other variables were used in identifying specific trends and patterns within the obtained data. These insights were subsequently leveraged to optimize and enhance the program, ensuring that it better catered to the needs and preferences of the participants.

4.5.1 Chi-Square Test for Age Groups and Learning Format Preference

According to Figure 3, there are different opinions when it comes to choosing between Traditional Learning and E-learning formats. One of the factors that could possibly influence it is different Age Groups of participants. This potential influence was examined using a Chi-Square test under the following hypotheses:

H0: There is no association between Age Groups and Learning Format Preference.

H1: There is an association between Age Groups and Learning Format Preference.

Significance Level = 0.05

Survey data was uploaded to Microsoft Excel, and further analyzed using SAS OnDemand Software, as shown in Figure 8:

Figure 8: Age Groups and their Satisfaction with the program's format.

Table of AgeGroup by FormatSatisfaction									
AgeGroup(AgeGroup)	FormatSatisfaction(FormatSatisfaction)								
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
18-24	0	0	1	0	2	2	3	0	8
	0.00	0.00	2.38	0.00	4.76	4.76	7.14	0.00	19.05
	0.00	0.00	12.50	0.00	25.00	25.00	37.50	0.00	
	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	33.33	18.18	50.00	0.00	
25-34	0	0	1	2	2	8	3	4	20
	0.00	0.00	2.38	4.76	4.76	19.05	7.14	9.52	47.62
	0.00	0.00	5.00	10.00	10.00	40.00	15.00	20.00	
	0.00	0.00	50.00	40.00	33.33	72.73	50.00	100.00	
35-44	1	4	0	2	1	1	0	0	9
	2.38	9.52	0.00	4.76	2.38	2.38	0.00	0.00	21.43
	11.11	44.44	0.00	22.22	11.11	11.11	0.00	0.00	
	100.00	57.14	0.00	40.00	16.67	9.09	0.00	0.00	
45-54	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	5
	0.00	7.14	0.00	2.38	2.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.90
	0.00	60.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	0.00	42.86	0.00	20.00	16.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total	1	7	2	5	6	11	6	4	42
	2.38	16.67	4.76	11.90	14.29	26.19	14.29	9.52	100.00

Source: Own Processing, 2024

Figure 9: Chi-Square Test results.

Statistics for Table of AgeGroup by FormatSatisfaction

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	21	35.9560	0.0221

Source: Own Processing, 2024

Figure 9 presents the outcomes of computations conducted using SAS OnDemand. Since the p-value (0.0221) is less than the chosen significance level (0.05), the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is evidence to suggest that there is a statistically significant association between Age Groups and Learning Format Preference. The value of the chi-square statistic (35.9560) indicates a relatively strong association between Age Group and Format Preference. These findings on individuals' preference for certain formats may be explained by the fact that younger employees, who from a dominant group in the age category, might be more inclined towards e-learning due to their familiarity and comfort with technology, while older individuals might prefer traditional learning methods.

4.5.2 Correlation Analysis for the Overall Program Satisfaction

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the presence of any correlations between Satisfaction with the Program and additional variables, including Format Preference, Language Proficiency Improvements, and Cultural Awareness Improvements. The analysis was also performed using SAS OnDemand. Figure 10 shows results obtained from the analysis:

Figure 10: Correlation Analysis results.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 42			
	LanguageImprovements	**CulturalAwareness**	**EFormatSatisfaction**
OverallSatisfaction OverallSatisfaction	0.68987	0.63518	0.00406

Source: Own Processing, 2024

The correlation analysis reveals several key findings regarding overall Program Satisfaction and its relationship with various factors. Firstly, the correlation coefficient between Overall Satisfaction and Language Improvements stands at 0.68987, indicating a moderately strong positive correlation. This suggests that as language proficiency improves, participants tend to become more satisfied with the program. Similarly, the correlation coefficient between Overall Satisfaction and Cultural Awareness is 0.63518, also indicating a moderately strong positive correlation. Conversely, the correlation coefficient between Overall Satisfaction and E-Format Satisfaction is 0.00406, suggesting a very weak positive correlation. This near-zero value indicates that preference for the e-learning format has almost no relationship with overall satisfaction with the current language program.

5 Discussion of Results and Recommendations

Based on the findings gathered from the study, there are several significant observations that could be used to improve the language program within the company. Nonetheless, the relatively small sample size may not provide the most accurate observations, emphasizing the importance of considering this factor when implementing any serious program changes.

Firstly, the data indicates a predominant preference for online learning among younger participants, potentially posing challenges for older individuals who tend to lean towards traditional learning methods. To address this problem, one potential solution could involve implementing a hybrid training approach, allowing individuals to choose between online and offline classes based on their preferences. Such flexibility is essential for ensuring engagement and effectiveness across varying age groups and learning styles within the program. Even though hybrid learning combines online and face-to-face modes, which seem to complement each other, in some instances, online participants may encounter lack of motivation (35, p. 243). In the case of this company, satisfaction with the online format is predominant, and transitioning to a hybrid model could potentially benefit the rest of participants who may prefer face-to-face interactions. However, it is essential for instructors to be adequately prepared to deliver high-quality classes in such format, ensuring seamless integration of both online and offline components to maintain overall satisfaction and effectiveness.

Additionally, insights acquired from the survey responses and information from the interview suggest a stronger emphasis on cultural awareness within the program rather than language proficiency. While this approach can enrich language learning experiences, it may not fully accommodate individuals with lower proficiency levels who feel less prepared to engage in such discussions. To address this imbalance, instructors are encouraged to adopt a more balanced approach by integrating a diverse range of topics into class sessions. This strategy involves alternating between foundational language components and deeper cultural discussions, ensuring that all participants have opportunities to engage at their respective proficiency levels. By offering a combination of various content, advanced learners can reinforce their understanding of basic concepts while less proficient learners can access more challenging material if desired.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that satisfaction with the program is not heavily influenced by the format of instruction, but rather by the outcomes achieved. Managing classes with participants from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can present challenges but considering other factors such as the approximate average proficiency, common language learning goals and topics of interest can lead to a more effective program.

It is noteworthy that a substantial proportion of participants have maintained their engagement with the program since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating a genuine demand for the program among employees. This sustained interest underscores the program's effectiveness and its ability to meet the evolving needs of the workforce, even though e-learning often requires more self-regulation and discipline. However, numerous language students who participated in e-learning programs during the lockdown expressed their desire to persist with the online education format even beyond the pandemic's conclusion (31, p. 11). This suggests that online education has become an integral component of the educational landscape, offering flexibility and convenience that resonate with learners. The sustained interest in the program and the preference for online education underscore the importance of leveraging digital tools to meet the diverse learning needs of the company's employees.

6 Conclusion

In today's globalized landscape, numerous companies function on an international scale and often employ individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. While this fosters the exchange of languages and cultural insights, effective communication necessitates a common medium, such as a shared language. English has long served as the lingua franca of international business, facilitating seamless communication across borders. To enhance inter-employee communication within multinational corporations, the implementation of a language program may be considered a common solution. Such programs commonly offer not only language instruction but also courses on cultural diversity and cross-cultural communication, further enriching the employee experience and communication with international partners.

Ultimately, it can be affirmed that e-learning represents a contemporary educational paradigm. Considering the prevailing preference for the e-learning format among the younger demographic, it's evident that its evolution and expansion are imminent, prompting companies to consider its broader integration to remain relevant. However, while e-learning offers undeniable advantages, fostering live communication remains essential for preserving company culture and facilitating effective employee interaction. Therefore, to accommodate the diverse learning preferences of employees, a hybrid education model may prove most conducive.

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8 List of Tables and Figures

9   Appendices

Appendix A   Transcript of the interview with an employee

Appendix B   Structure of the survey

1. Could you give a brief rundown of what the company does and where it is based?

Participant: This company basically deals with business solutions and software for the iGaming industry worldwide. It operates internationally, all over the globe, and has two physical offices: here, in Prague, and another one in Kyiv.

2. How would you describe the company's team?

Well, the team is super diverse. Like, more than half of the employees aren't even living in the Czech Republic, many work remotely. I think there are about 300 people hired now, which is much more than what we had a year ago.

3. Let's talk about the language program. When did it start, and why?

It started in 2020, with the whole COVID situation, they wanted to help us to keep our English skills. Many people were already working from home, but for those who worked in the office, and that's a significant number of people, were a bit lost when they were not able to practice throughout the day. We had group calls, but you know, we practically lost simple day-to-day and face-to-face communication.

4. Are employees required to participate in the language program, and does it cost anything?

No, no pressure at all to join the program. It's all totally optional, I think there are about 100 people now. It is hard to tell the exact number, because some people join regularly, and some may skip several classes in a row. As for the price, it doesn't cost a dime for us, which is very nice, because before the program was introduced, some of my colleagues were taking classes somewhere else, like with a tutor.

5. Could you explain the structure and format of the program? How often do you have classes, and who teaches them?

So, our classes are online only, once again, because the program started when we were in the middle of a lockdown. We've got these classes once a week, and they are currently taught by a woman who knows English, Czech, Russian, Ukrainian… Maybe some other languages too.

6. Where do these classes take place, and how do you stay connected?

We all hop onto ZOOM for the classes, and the teacher usually has some material prepared on her computer, so she shares her screen. And for homework, materials, and all that,

we've got this Telegram group chat where we can share stuff and discuss whatever we want in English.

7.   And what kind of topics do you learn in the language program?

Well, it's mostly about commercial communication, and Business English. We're diving into how things are held in Western culture, especially in the biz world. Personally, I joined it mainly because of the opportunity to learn more about other cultures, and practice English too, but I think my English is a bit better than the average in our group.

8.   Lastly, how would you personally rate the program?

I would say it is quite effective for those who already have some knowledge and can already discuss some topics such as behavior, culture, or business. However, I would rate my level as a bit higher, maybe around B2-C1, and vocabulary given in the course was not new for me. I definitely reinforced my knowledge of grammar and got to know a lot about other cultures and communication differences. As for others, I think that people with lower proficiency were a little behind others, and generally confused at several moments. But as I noticed, our classes seem to be successful engaging for the most part.

E-learning in Corporate Language Education Survey

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of e-learning in language education within the organisation. This survey seeks to gather insights from employees regarding their experiences with e-learning processes and overall satisfaction.

You will be asked to respond to multiple-choice and scale questions, all responses will be used solely for research purposes.

Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and your input is highly valued and appreciated!

timofeyevaval@gmail.com Switch account ☁

✉ Not shared

* Indicates required question

Please, select your **age** group *

○ 18-24

○ 25-34

○ 35-44

○ 45-54

○ 55-64

○ 65 and over

What is your experience with English learning prior to the program offered by the company? Select as many as apply. *

- [ ] Secondary school lessons
- [ ] University courses
- [ ] Individual classes with a tutor
- [ ] Group classes or meetings
- [ ] Self-taught

How long have you been learning English within the company? *

- ( ) Less than 1 year
- ( ) 1-3 years
- ( ) 3+ years

How would you rate your current English **proficiency level**? *

- ( ) Beginner, A1-A2
- ( ) Intermediate, B1-B2
- ( ) Advanced, C1-C2

What do you **prefer more**: traditional learning, such as printed materials and face-to-face lessons, or e-learning, such as virtual classrooms and online sessions? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Traditional learning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	E-learning

How **satisfied** are you with the current program offered by the company for language education? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Very dissatisfied	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Very satisfied

What **motivates** you to improve your language skills? Select as many as apply. *

☐ Personal interest

☐ Better cultural awareness

☐ Improved communication skills

☐ Career advancement opportunities

☐ Professional requirements

☐ Other: _____

Please, rate the extent to which the current program have helped ✱
improve your **language proficiency.**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
No improvements	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Significant improvements

Please, rate the extent to which the current program have helped ✱
improve your **cultural awareness**.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
No improvements	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Significant improvements

If you have any **other comments** regarding the program which might be useful, please, write them here.

Your answer

If you have any **other comments** regarding the program which might be useful, please, write them below.

Your answer

Submit   Clear form

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