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GAME TECHNOLOGIES AND BUSINESS GAMES IN PROFESSIONALLY-ORIENTED RUSSIAN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

The article examines the scientific, methodological, cognitive, and communicative foundations of integrating gaming technologies and business games into professionally-oriented instruction of Russian as a foreign language (RFL) and as a second language. The limitations of traditional academic approaches are analyzed, and the effectiveness of Scenario-Based Learning is substantiated. The author outlines the key stages of designing professional business games (preparatory, procedural, and reflective/debriefing) and develops an integrated communicative competence model for specialists. It is proven that simulating a professional environment reduces language barriers, accelerates the acquisition of professional terminology, and fosters critical thinking skills.

Keywords: Professionally-oriented instruction, Russian as a foreign language, gaming technologies, business game, professional communication, simulation, language barrier, debriefing.

Introduction

The modern paradigm of higher professional education is undergoing a large-scale transformation driven by dynamic changes in the nature of professional practice, the integration of interdisciplinary knowledge, and the widespread implementation of digital technologies. Under these conditions, fundamentally

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new demands are placed on the language training of students in non-linguistic disciplines – **military, legal, medical, engineering, and economic**. Within the higher education system, the Russian language serves not merely as a general education discipline or a means of everyday communication, but as a strategic tool for professionally-oriented activity, a vital channel for the intercultural transmission of specialized knowledge, and the foundation for the future specialist's professional socialization [1].

Despite the clear rationale for fostering active communicative competence, the traditional practice of teaching **Russian as a foreign language** (RFL) and as a second language in non-linguistic universities continues to be dominated by an academic, knowledge-centered (reproductive) approach. This tradition is characterized by a focus on:

The isolated memorization of grammatical rules and syntactic structures;

The mechanical acquisition of highly specialized vocabulary lists (glossaries);

The passive reading and annotated translation of educational, professionally-oriented texts.

The primary deficiency of such a methodological system lies in its detachment from the real-world conditions of a specialist's speech behavior. Passive academic text analysis forms what is known as an “inert” (passive) vocabulary in learners: students demonstrate a high level of linguistic awareness when completing written tests, yet find themselves functionally helpless in situations of real professional interaction [2]. They experience high levels of emotional stress, fear of making mistakes (the language barrier), and disorientation when required to engage in spontaneous dialogue under conditions of time constraints, information uncertainty, and acute stress.

In this regard, there is a pressing methodological necessity for a fundamental transition from passive-reproductive learning models to active, interactive, and contextual technologies. Modern linguodidactics focuses on methods capable of

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recreating not only the subject content of a future specialty but also its social and psychological context.

Simulation business games and gaming technologies occupy a special place among such innovative tools. Possessing powerful potential for Scenario-Based Learning, the business game serves as a flexible bridge between abstract academic theory and actual professional practice. It allows the process of mastering professional Russian to transform from merely reproducing external texts into generating one's own meanings, decisions, and speech acts [3].

In the framework of professionally-oriented instruction, the Russian language functions not as an isolated academic discipline, but as a didactically mediated form of professional activity. Consequently, gaming technology is viewed not as an auxiliary, hedonic, or optional entertainment element of the educational process, but as a rigorously verified, multi-tiered didactic system. Within this system, the acquisition of linguistic and terminological material occurs continuously through the learner's immersion into a system of professional roles and quasi-professional (simulation-modeling) situations.

The methodological foundation of this approach is contextual learning theory, according to which the transformation of a student's academic activity into a specialist's professional activity is achieved by sequentially replacing academic work formats with quasi-professional ones. Within this paradigm, the business game creates a natural motive for speech utterance: language ceases to be the “goal” of instruction and becomes the “means” for solving operational, official, or scientific tasks [4].

The architecture of a professionally-oriented business game relies on three core foundational components that form a unified linguodidactic framework:

1. Professionally-Oriented Scenario and Context. The game scenario represents a valid model of a real professional environment with high demands for linguistic accuracy. It recreates the operational logic of a specific institutional domain:

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- **Military Profile:** “Conducting Command and Staff Exercises,” “Assessing the Operational Situation and Issuing a Combat Order,” “Emergency Response and Disaster Relief.”
- **Legal Profile:** “Court Hearing,” “Conducting an Investigative Experiment,” “Drafting and Defending Procedural Documents.”
- **Medical Profile:** “Interdisciplinary Medical Board,” “Taking Medical History and Making a Diagnosis Under Time Constraints,” “Defending a Medical Case History.”
- **Engineering, Technical, and Economic Profile:** “Defense of a Scientific and Technical Project,” “Tender Negotiations,” “Enterprise Safety Management System Audit.”

The context establishes strict parameters for the use of terminological apparatus, stylistic registers (official-business, scientific-technical style), and documentation standards [5].

2. Differentiated Role Structure and Status Hierarchy. The game architecture provides a clear distribution of social and professional roles among participants (e.g., supervisor / subordinate, expert / applicant, investigator / defense attorney / defendant, physician / patient / relative).

Each role possesses a defined **communicative profiling**:

Status Constraints: Determine the vector of speech intention (command, request, expert opinion, objection, argumentation).

Lexico-Syntactic Repertoire: Requires the use of highly specialized vocabulary, professional jargon, and established speech clichés (“Based on the foregoing...”, “Visual inspection revealed...”, “Permit me to object on the merits...”).

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Status Dynamics: Forces the learner to vary speech strategies depending on the interlocutor (vertical communication “supervisor – subordinate” vs. horizontal communication “colleague – colleague”).

3. Gaming Intrigue, Cognitive Problematicity, and Conflict of Interests.

Without a problem or a clash of perspectives, a business game degenerates into a rehearsed staging. A conflict of interests serves as the primary driver of spontaneous speech and encompasses:

Information Asymmetry: Different game participants possess only a fraction of the overall information (the Information Gap principle), forcing them to enter into dialogue, request data, and clarify details in Russian.

Time Constraints and the Element of Uncertainty: The introduction of unexpected injects (“emergency scenario updates”) that alter the progression of the game, requiring instantaneous cognitive processing and rapid speech decision-making.

Necessity of Reaching Consensus: Participants must not merely state their viewpoint, but actively persuade their opponent using linguistic suggestion, evidence-based argumentation, and counter-argumentation.

Core Components of a Business Game (Table-1).

Scenario and Context: Modeling a real-world operational, official, or scientific situation (e.g., “Conducting Command and Staff Exercises,” “Defense of a Technical Project,” “Medical Board Consultation,” “Court Hearing”).

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Role Structure: Distribution of functional roles among participants (supervisor, expert, opponent, subordinate, client), requiring the use of specific speech clichés and specialized vocabulary.

Gaming Intrigue and Problematicity: The presence of a contradiction or conflict of interest taking the form of negotiations, structured debate, or emergency decision-making.

Table 1. Structure and Stages of Conducting a Business Game

Game Stage	Operational Content	Linguistic and Communicative Objectives
1.Preparatory (Introductory)	Familiarization with the scenario, role distribution, case study analysis, and instruction review.	Introduction of specialized terminology, activation of thematic vocabulary, and comprehension of written instructions.
2.Procedural (Execution)	Performance of role-based actions, structured debate, decision-making, and document drafting.	Spontaneous speech production, defending a stance, and delivering monologic and dialogic utterances.
3.Analytical (Debriefing)	Evaluation of decisions made, assessment of linguistic accuracy, and analysis of speech and factual errors.	Reflection, critical analysis, self-evaluation, and correction of grammatical structure

The implementation of business games in the system of professionally-oriented instruction of Russian as a foreign or second language leads to a qualitative transformation of the learners' speech-thinking activity structure [6]. The transition from passive assimilation of pre-packaged linguistic units to their active construction within a simulated professional environment provides a comprehensive didactic, psycholinguistic, and pragmatic effect.

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1. Psycholinguistic Deconstruction of the Language Barrier. Traditional instructional formats foster a state of “hyper-monitoring” in learners – a condition where the focus of attention is biased toward formal grammatical accuracy, thereby inhibiting spontaneous speech production. During a business game, a shift in dominance occurs from the form of speech (avoiding grammatical and phonetic errors) to the communicative outcome (solving an operational task, executing an agreement, or issuing a command).

Reduction of the Affective Filter: Emotional engagement in the game narrative lowers anxiety levels and mitigates the fear of making errors.

Activation of Latent Lexicon: Learners begin to freely operationalize the linguistic arsenal that remained passive under traditional academic conditions.

2. Contextual-Situational Intensification of Terminology Acquisition. Rote memorization of specialized vocabulary lists (glossaries) outside of a professional context leads to rapid attrition. A business game ensures the cognitive grounding of terminology (Embedded Cognition):

Repeated Situational Activation: Highly specialized terms, set phraseological collocations, and syntactic structures of professional discourse are acquired naturally – as the sole viable means to achieve a domain-specific goal.

Formation of Semantic Networks: A term is acquired not as an isolated token, but within the system of its syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations with other elements of professional language.

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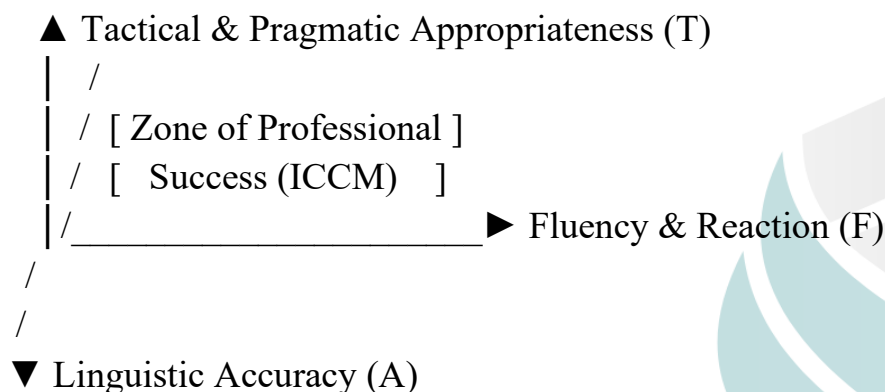
3. Development of Trans-Professional Competencies (Soft Skills). The simulated professional-communicative environment acts as a catalyst for the formation of soft skills essential for a modern specialist:

Teamwork and Coordination: Role distribution and the integration of participants' efforts to solve a unified task in Russian.

Argumentation and Debate: Cultivation of evidence-based speech skills, parrying opponent objections, and employing techniques of rhetorical persuasion.

Speech Adaptability Under Stress: Decision-making and formulation of speech responses under conditions of time pressure, rigid protocols, and information asymmetry (Information Gap).

The level of professional Russian language proficiency within a simulated environment cannot be evaluated solely by traditional academic grading scales. Frame worked within the **Integral Communicative Competence Model (ICCM)**, a specialist's speech mastery is conceptualized as a balanced system of three functional vectors:



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Model Components:

1. Linguistic Accuracy (A — Linguistic Accuracy): The degree to which speech production conforms to the grammatical, lexical, and stylistic norms of standard literary Russian and professional discourse [7]. This encompasses the correct deployment of specialized terminology, proper construction of syntactic structures, and adherence to official-business or scientific-technical registers.

2. Fluency and Tempo-Rhythmic Reaction (F — Communicative Fluency & Reaction): The speed of spontaneous speech formulation during dynamic dialogue. It is characterized by the absence of non-standard hesitations or unnatural pauses, speech tempo, and a minimal latent period when formulating responses to sudden situational injects.

3. Tactical and Pragmatic Appropriateness (T — Tactical & Pragmatic Appropriateness): The learner's capacity to flexibly select and adjust speech strategies based on interlocutor status (vertical/horizontal communication), situational context, and communication goals. It is evaluated by the degree to which functional communication objectives are achieved (e.g., persuading an opponent, issuing a precise command, or defending a legal/medical stance).

The conducted study on the theoretical, methodological, and practical dimensions of integrating gaming technologies and simulation business games into professionally-oriented instruction of **Russian as a foreign (RFL)** and second language yields the following key conclusions:

Transformation of the Didactic Paradigm: The traditional knowledge-centered approach, focused on passive memorization of grammatical rules and vocabulary lists, demonstrates limited efficacy under contemporary language training standards. Transitioning to **Scenario-Based Learning** converts academic

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knowledge into active communicative skills by reconstructing the domain-specific, social, and psychological context of the target profession.

Psycholinguistic and Cognitive Effects: Implementing business games shifts the learner's focus from formal linguistic self-monitoring to achieving pragmatic communication outcomes. This effectively deconstructs the language barrier, reduces anxiety, activates latent vocabulary, and embeds specialized terminology through repeated situational application.

Multidimensional Competence Assessment: The developed Integral Communicative Competence Model (ICCM = (A, F, T)) proves that professional Russian proficiency is determined by a balanced interplay of linguistic accuracy (A), speech fluency and reaction (F), and tactical-pragmatic appropriateness (T). This framework enables flexible differentiation of instructional pathways tailored to specific professional profiles (military, legal, medical, or technical).

Role of Reflective Debriefing: A systematic debriefing phase is established as a critical prerequisite for converting simulated communicative experience into stable linguistic norms. The debriefing stage consolidates professional vocabulary, rectifies speech errors, and fosters metacognitive awareness of effective communication strategies.

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