**UNIT 9. DESCRIBING TRENDS, GRAPHS AND CHANGES**

When speaking English we often need to describe trends in business and the economy. Describing changes and trends generally consists of three parts:

1. Use a verb (or an adjective and a noun) to describe movement.
2. Describe the degree or speed of the movement.
3. Explain the reason or consequence of the change.

You can describe it this way:

| **Verb +** | **degree or speed +** | **result/reason/consequence** |
| --- | --- | --- |

For example:

| Profit from fuel sales **was down** | **slightly** | **because of** a smaller margin. |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Net sales **increased** | **significantly** | **due to** the acquisitions completed in 2016. |

There are four basic trends:

* upward movement
* downward movement
* no movement (horizontal movement)
* change in direction

Here are some verbs and nouns you can use to describe change and movement:

**Table 1.** Verbs and nouns to describe upward movement

| **Verbs** | **Nouns** |
| --- | --- |
| (to) boom | (a) boom |
| (to) climb | - |
| (to) extend | (an) extension,  |
| (to) expand | (an) expansion |
| (to) go/be up | (an) upswing |
| (to) grow | (a) growth |
| (to) improve | (an) improvement |
| (to) increase | (an) increase |
| (to) jump  | (a) jump |
| (to) peak | (a) peak |
| (to) progress | (a) progression |
| (to) rise | (a) rise |
| (to) push/put/step up | - |
| (to) recover | (a) recovery |
| (to) reach a peak,  | - |
| (to) reach an all-time high | - |
| (to) skyrocket | - |
| (to) soar | - |

**Table 2.** Verbs and nouns to describe downward movement

| **Verbs** | **Nouns** |
| --- | --- |
| (to) bottom out |  |
| (to) collapse | (a) collapse  |
| (to) cut | (a) cut |
| (to) decline | (a) decline |
| (to) decrease | (a) decrease |
| (to) drop  | (a) drop |
| (to) fall  | (a) fall |
| (to) go bust | - |
| (to) go down | (a) downswing |
| (to) hit a low | - |
| (to) plunge  | (a) plunge |
| (to) plummet | - |
| (to) reduce | (a) reduction |
| (to) slump | (a) slump |

**Table 3.** Verbs and nouns to describe horizontal movement

| **Verbs** | **Nouns** |
| --- | --- |
| (to) even out | - |
| (to) hold ... constant | - |
| (to) keep ... stable | - |
| (to) level off | levelling-off |
| (to) stabilize | stability |
| (to) remain stable | - |
| (to) stay constant | - |

**Table 4.** Verbs and nouns to indicate the change in direction

| **Verbs** | **Nouns** |
| --- | --- |
| (to) fluctuate | (a) fluctuation |
| (to) flatten out | - |
| (to) remain steady | - |
| (to) stop falling/rising | - |
| (to) stop falling and start rising | - |
| (to) stop rising and start falling | - |
| (to) stand at | - |
| - | (a) change |

Here are some adjectives and adverbs to describe the degree and speed of change.

**Table 5.** Adjectives and adverbs to describe the degree and speed of change

| **Degree of change** | **Speed of change** |
| --- | --- |
| Dramatic - dramatically | Sudden - suddenly |
| Sharp - sharply | Rapid - rapidly |
| Vast - vastly | Quick – quickly |
| Huge - hugely | Abrupt - abruptly |
| Significant - significantly | Gradual – gradually |
| Considerable - considerably | Little-by-little |
| Substantial - substantially | Steady – steadily |
| Moderate - moderately | Slow – slowly |
| Slight - slightly |  |

**Task 1. Study Tables 1-5. Mark the trends the following expressions indicate (U – upward movement, D – Downward movement, N – no movement (horizontal movement), C – change in direction).**

| Remain steady |  | To soar steadily |  | Fluctuate |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fall dramatically |  | Remain stable |  | Stabilize gradually |  |
| Rise sharply |  | Decrease sharply |  | Hit a low |  |
| Decline significantly |  | Increase slightly |  | Drop considerably |  |

**Task 2. Match sentences to the graphs.**

| 1.Travel payments increased slightly, to $13.4 billion from $13.3 billion. |
| --- |
| 2.Sales of telephones have increased dramatically over the last year. |
| 3.Video game sales have increased steadily over the past 3 years. |
| 4.New York jeweller Tiffany & Co reported a significant drop in sales in Hong Kong in the first quarter. |
| 5.There has been a gradual drop in salaries. |
| 6.The financial situation of the company remains stable. |
| 7.There have been some fluctuations during the quarter. |
| 8.The general situation was bad, but it is improving slowly. |
| 9.HDD sales have been falling since 2009. |
| 10.The dividend yield for the company is hovering around 3%. |

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**Answers:**

| 1-\_\_\_ | 2-\_\_\_ | 3-\_\_\_ | 4-\_\_\_ | 5-\_\_\_ |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 6-\_\_\_ | 7-\_\_\_ | 8-\_\_\_ | 9-\_\_\_ | 10-\_\_\_ |

**Task 3. Change the following sentences to include a noun phrase. Write all possible variants.**

Example: Our sales collapsed suddenly. - *There was a sudden decrease / reduction / drop in sales.*

1. The market has expanded slightly.

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2. Salaries have been cut dramatically.

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3. Exports are increasing steadily.

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4. Profits will rise significantly.

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5. Corporate taxes rose sharply.

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6. Interest rates are steady.

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**Task 4. Complete the text describing the graphs with the words from the box.**

| **bounced back** | **came down** | **consistently increasing** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **declining** | **grew** | **growth** |

| **Apple iPhone Revenues FY[[1]](#footnote-0) 2007 to FY 2015**Apple generated $155 billion revenues from iPhone in FY 2015. That is a lot of revenues coming of a single product. The share of iPhone revenues in Apple total revenues has been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ over the past years. In FY 2015, iPhone revenue share was 66.3% of the total revenue.iPhone revenues registered strong year-on-year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the early years. As the revenue base grew, the year-over-year growth started \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as per the law of large numbers. The iPhone revenues year-over-year growth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from 93% YoY[[2]](#footnote-1) in FY’09 to 12% YoY in FY’14. It is difficult to maintain high growth rates on a large base. But, in FY’15, iPhone revenue growth rates \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ due to a strong demand for iPhone 6 and 6 Plus. iPhone revenues \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 52% YoY from $102 billion in FY’14 to reach $155 billion in FY’15. |
| --- |
| http://revenuesandprofits.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Apple-iPhone-Revenue-Share-FY-2007-to-2015.png | http://revenuesandprofits.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Apple-iPhone-Revenue-Growth-FY-2009-to-2015.png |

 (Source:revenuesandprofits.com)

**Task 5. Describe the graph showing the unemployment rate in Lithuania.**

**Use the following phrases:**

## This graph shows ...

The x axis of this graph shows ... while ... appear on the y axis.

## It may be seen clearly that ...

## Unemployment rate in Lithuania decreased to ... percent in January from ... percent in April of 2017.



**Task 6. Find and describe one graph on the internet showing trends and changes in the sales, profits, share prices, market share of a company (see the annual reports of the companies online).**

1. FY – Financial year [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. YoY – Year-over-year [↑](#footnote-ref-1)