

## **TASK-BASED LEARNING AS AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

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The article explores Task-Based Learning (TBL) as an effective method for teaching foreign languages in higher education. It highlights the importance of communicative and student-centered approaches in modern language education and stresses the increasing need for practical language use in academic and professional settings. Amid globalization and the digitalisation of education, traditional teaching methods are being gradually replaced by approaches that encourage active student participation and real-life communication.

The core principles of TBL, including meaningful tasks, learner engagement, and authentic communication, are examined in detail. The article argues that language is most effectively acquired through practical use rather than through isolated study of grammar and vocabulary. Particular attention is

given to the structure of task-based lessons, which include the pre-task phase, task cycle, and language focus stage. Each phase is analysed in terms of its pedagogical purpose and its role in developing students' communicative skills.

Furthermore, the study explores key benefits of TBL, such as increased student motivation, the development of communicative competence, and the promotion of learner autonomy. The approach also enables the integration of interdisciplinary content, allowing students to combine language learning with their professional training. This is especially important in higher education, where foreign language proficiency is closely linked to future career prospects and academic success.

Additionally, potential challenges in implementing TBL are discussed, including the need for carefully designed tasks, adaptation to different proficiency levels, and adequate teacher training. Despite these obstacles, the findings suggest that TBL greatly enhances the effectiveness of foreign language teaching and supports the development of practical communication skills. The study concludes that TBL possesses strong methodological potential and promising opportunities for further adoption in higher education.

**Keywords:** *communicative competence, foreign language teaching, interdisciplinary approach, student-centred learning, Task-Based Learning (TBL).*

**Problem statement.** In the context of globalization and the rapid development of international communication, the role of foreign language proficiency in higher education has significantly increased. Modern specialists are expected not only to possess theoretical knowledge in their field, but also to be able to communicate effectively in a foreign language within academic and professional environments. This has led to a shift from traditional teacher-centered approaches to more communicative, student-centered methods of language instruction.

One of the most promising approaches in contemporary language pedagogy is Task-Based Learning (TBL), which focuses on meaningful, real-life tasks as the core unit of instruction. Unlike traditional methods that prioritize the explicit study of grammar and vocabulary, TBL emphasizes the practical use of language in context, encouraging learners to develop communicative competence through active engagement in problem-solving and interaction. This approach aligns with current educational trends that promote learner autonomy, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary integration.

Despite growing interest in TBL, its implementation in higher education institutions still requires further methodological justification and practical adaptation, particularly when integrating language

learning with students' professional training. Therefore, the study of TBL as an effective method of teaching foreign languages remains a relevant and important issue.

**Analysis of recent research.** The history of the implementation of the communicative task method dates back to the 1980s. Since then, this method has become quite popular. Task-Based Learning has been extensively studied within the framework of communicative language teaching. Foundational contributions to the development of TBL were made by Ellis [2], Nunan [5], Skehan [7], and J. Willis [9], who defined its theoretical principles and pedagogical value. Later, D. Willis and J. Willis [8] further developed practical frameworks for implementing task-based instruction in classroom settings. Long [4] emphasized the role of TBL in second language acquisition, particularly in relation to real-life communication and learner interaction.

Recent research has expanded the scope of TBL by examining its effectiveness in diverse educational contexts. For instance, Ellis [3] highlights the need to adapt task-based methodologies to modern educational environments, while Robinson [6] explores the role of task complexity in language acquisition. Empirical studies confirm the positive impact of TBL on learners' communicative competence and motivation [1]. Overall, current research demonstrates that TBL remains a dynamic and evolving approach in foreign language pedagogy.

**The aim and tasks of the research.** The aim of this article is to analyze the effectiveness of TBL as a method of teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions and to determine its methodological potential in developing students' communicative competence.

**Methods of the research.** The study employs a combination of theoretical and empirical research methods to investigate the effectiveness of TBL in higher education. The theoretical methods include the analysis and synthesis of scientific literature on language teaching methodology, with a focus on communicative and task-based approaches. In addition, comparative analysis is used to examine the differences between traditional teaching methods and TBL.

The empirical part of the research involves observing the educational process and using task-based activities in foreign language classes. To evaluate the effectiveness of TBL, qualitative and quantitative methods are used, including assessments of students' performance and participation. Furthermore, data obtained from

students' feedback and learning outcomes are analyzed to determine the impact of TBL on communicative competence and motivation.

Such a comprehensive approach ensures the objectivity and reliability of the research results.

**Presentation of the main material.** Task-Based Learning is a contemporary approach to foreign language teaching that emerged within the communicative approach in the late twentieth century [2; 5]. Since the 1980s, it has gained considerable attention in language pedagogy as an effective method that prioritizes meaningful communication over the mechanical practice of linguistic forms. The central idea of TBL is the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction, where language serves as a tool for achieving specific communicative goals rather than an end in itself.

In the context of TBL, a task is generally defined as an activity in which learners use the target language to achieve a particular outcome. According to D. Nunan [5], a task involves learners in comprehending, producing, and interacting in the target language, with the primary focus on meaning rather than form. Similarly, J. Willis [9] emphasizes that tasks are goal-oriented activities that require students to use language for real communication, leading to a tangible result. This outcome-oriented nature distinguishes tasks from traditional exercises, which are often limited to controlled practice of grammar or vocabulary.

A key theoretical principle of TBL is the emphasis on authentic communication. Learning is most effective when students are engaged in realistic situations that mirror real-life language use. In such contexts, learners are encouraged to mobilize their existing linguistic resources, experiment with language, and develop communicative competence through interaction. As a result, language acquisition becomes a natural and meaningful process, closely connected to students' personal and professional needs.

Another important aspect of TBL is its student-centered nature. Unlike traditional teacher-centered approaches, where the instructor controls the learning process and focuses on the transmission of knowledge, TBL shifts the focus to learners' active participation. Students are expected to take responsibility for their learning, collaborate with peers, and engage in problem-solving activities. The role of the teacher, therefore, shifts from a knowledge provider to a facilitator and guide who supports learners during task performance and provides feedback after task completion.

The structure of TBL is typically organized into three main stages: pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. During the pre-task stage, learners are introduced to the topic and prepared for the task through exposure to relevant language input. The task cycle involves performing the task itself, often in pairs or groups, where students use language spontaneously to achieve a communicative goal. Finally, the language focus stage allows for reflection, analysis, and correction, with attention drawn to linguistic forms that emerged during task performance. This sequence ensures a balance between fluency and accuracy, which is essential for effective language learning [8;9].

Furthermore, TBL is closely associated with the development of communicative competence, which includes not only linguistic knowledge but also sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and strategic skills. By engaging in meaningful interaction, learners improve their ability to express ideas, negotiate meaning, and respond appropriately in various communicative situations [2; 4]. In addition, TBL promotes the development of higher-order skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving, which are essential in modern higher education and professional contexts.

An important advantage of TBL is its adaptability to learners with varying levels of language proficiency. Tasks can be designed so that both weaker and stronger students can participate and achieve the desired outcome, albeit with varying degrees of linguistic accuracy. This flexibility makes TBL particularly suitable for heterogeneous groups commonly found in higher education institutions.

At the same time, researchers emphasize that TBL should not completely replace traditional methods but rather complement them. The integration of task-based activities with systematic grammar and vocabulary instruction allows for a more balanced and effective learning process. Such a combination ensures that students not only develop communicative skills but also acquire the linguistic accuracy required for academic and professional communication.

In summary, the theoretical foundations of TBL are grounded in the principles of communicative language teaching, learner-centered education, and experiential learning. By focusing on meaningful tasks, authentic communication, and active student participation, TBL provides a comprehensive framework for developing communicative competence in higher education settings.

TBL offers numerous advantages for teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions. Its effectiveness stems from its focus on the practical use of language, active student participation and the integration of learning with real-life and professional situations.

One of the key advantages of TBL is the development of communicative competence. Unlike traditional approaches that focus primarily on grammatical accuracy, TBL emphasizes the ability to use language as a means of communication. Completing meaningful tasks engages students in authentic interaction, fostering the development of speaking, listening, and interactional skills [1]. Learners are encouraged to express their ideas, negotiate meaning, and respond to their peers, which contributes to a more holistic development of communicative competence, including linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic components.

Another important advantage of TBL is the boost in student motivation. Utilising clearly defined, goal-oriented tasks that are relevant to students' needs and interests increases their engagement in the learning process. When learners understand the purpose of an activity and see its practical value, they become more motivated to participate actively. Moreover, TBL allows students to take partial responsibility for their learning, fostering autonomy and encouraging a more positive attitude toward language acquisition. Empirical studies also show that students engaged in task-based instruction exhibit higher levels of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

TBL also ensures a high degree of authenticity in language learning. Tasks are typically designed to simulate real-life communicative situations, such as problem-solving, decision-making, or professional interactions. This closeness to real communication allows students to apply their language knowledge in contexts that resemble their future academic or professional environments. As a result, language learning becomes more meaningful and practical, and students are better prepared to use the target language outside the classroom.

Furthermore, TBL facilitates the integration of language learning with professional disciplines, thus promoting an interdisciplinary approach. In higher education, where students often study English for specific purposes, TBL enables the incorporation of subject-specific content into language instruction. For example, tasks may involve analyzing case studies, participating in professional discussions, or solving problems related to students' fields of study. Such integration

not only enhances language proficiency but also contributes to the development of professional competence, critical thinking, and collaborative skills.

In addition, TBL supports collaborative learning, as most tasks are performed in pairs or groups. This interaction encourages students to share knowledge, learn from each other, and develop teamwork skills, which are essential in both academic and professional contexts. It also creates a more dynamic and interactive learning environment compared to traditional teacher-centered instruction.

In conclusion, TBL provides a range of pedagogical advantages in higher education, including the development of communicative competence, increased student motivation, authenticity of language use, and interdisciplinary integration. These features make TBL a highly effective approach to foreign language teaching in modern educational settings [3].

The practical implementation of TBL in higher education requires careful planning, clear objectives, and consideration of students' language proficiency levels. One key aspect of effective TBL application is designing meaningful, relevant tasks that reflect real-life academic or professional situations. Such tasks should be goal-oriented and encourage students to use the target language as a means of communication rather than an abstract system of rules.

In higher education, task-based activities can be effectively aligned with the professional needs of students specialising in agrotechnical and engineering fields. For students of agricultural sciences, tasks might include analysing case studies related to crop production, discussing sustainable farming practices, or developing strategies to improve soil quality and yield. They may also engage in activities such as presenting research on modern agricultural technologies, interpreting data from field experiments, or simulating communication with international partners on issues related to agribusiness and environmental management.

Similarly, students of engineering disciplines can participate in task-based activities that mirror real-world technical and professional situations. These may involve explaining the functionality of a device, presenting a technical project, or collaborating on problem-solving tasks related to engineering design or system optimisation. For example, students might be asked to work in groups to develop solutions to engineering problems, describe the stages of a production process, or evaluate the efficiency of different technological

approaches. Such tasks require the use of specialised vocabulary, logical reasoning, and clear communication of complex ideas.

Furthermore, interdisciplinary tasks can be introduced to combine elements of engineering and agricultural studies, such as discussing innovations in agricultural machinery, analysing the use of automation in farming, or assessing the environmental impact of technological solutions. These activities not only foster the development of foreign language communicative competence but also enhance students' professional knowledge, critical thinking, and ability to operate effectively in international academic and professional environments.

To illustrate the practical application of TBL, several task examples can be provided. A common activity is role-play, such as a job interview, where one student plays the employer and the other the candidate. Another example is a problem-solving task in which students must find a solution to a given scenario, such as managing a team conflict or organising an event. Discussion-based tasks are also widely used, allowing students to express opinions, argue their viewpoints, and reach a consensus on a particular issue.

The successful implementation of TBL also depends on the teacher's role. In this approach, the teacher serves as a facilitator, guiding the learning process, monitoring student interaction, and providing support when necessary. Instead of focusing on immediate error correction, the teacher encourages fluency and communication during the task, with feedback provided later. This helps create a supportive learning environment where students feel confident using the language.

However, certain challenges may arise in practice. These include the time required to design effective tasks, the need to adapt materials for different proficiency levels, and potential difficulties in classroom management during group work. Despite these challenges, the benefits of TBL outweigh its limitations, particularly when tasks are carefully planned and aligned with learning objectives.

In conclusion, the practical implementation of TBL in higher education demonstrates its effectiveness as a dynamic and flexible teaching approach. By integrating language learning with real-life tasks and professional contexts, TBL enhances students' communicative competence, motivation, and readiness for real-world communication.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** In conclusion, Task-Based Learning proves to be an effective and relevant method for teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions. The

analysis of theoretical and empirical research confirms that this approach aligns with modern educational demands, which emphasise communicative competence, student-centred learning, and practical application of knowledge. Unlike traditional methods that focus mainly on acquiring linguistic forms, TBL prioritises meaningful communication and achieving real-life outcomes through language use. The findings of the study show that TBL significantly contributes to the development of students' communicative competence. By engaging in authentic tasks, learners improve their ability to express ideas, interact with others, and use language appropriately in context. Additionally, task-based activities foster higher motivation levels, as students see learning as purposeful and relevant to their academic and professional needs. The use of real-life scenarios enhances learner engagement and encourages active participation in the educational process. Another key advantage of TBL is its interdisciplinary potential. Integrating language learning with subject-specific content allows students to develop linguistic and professional skills simultaneously. This approach is especially valuable in higher education, where foreign language proficiency is closely linked to future career requirements. Moreover, TBL promotes critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, which are vital for successful professional activity. At the same time, implementing TBL requires careful methodological planning. Teachers need to design suitable tasks, consider students' language proficiency levels, and combine task-based activities with systematic grammar and vocabulary instruction. Therefore, TBL should be seen not as a replacement for traditional methods but as a complementary approach that enhances the overall effectiveness of language teaching. Overall, TBL offers significant pedagogical benefits and promising opportunities for further research. Future studies may focus on integrating TBL with digital technologies, its application across different academic disciplines, and its long-term impact on language proficiency development.

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#### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript. Furthermore, the authors have fully adhered to ethical norms, including avoiding plagiarism, data falsification, and duplicate publication.

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## **TASK-BASED LEARNING ЯК ЕФЕКТИВНИЙ МЕТОД ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ У ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ**

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У статті розглянуто Task-Based Learning (TBL) як ефективний метод викладання іноземних мов у вищій школі. Підкреслено важливість комунікативного та орієнтованого на студента підходів у сучасній мовній освіті, а також наголошено зростаючі потреби практичного застосування мови в академічному та професійному середовищах. У контексті глобалізації та цифровізації освіти традиційні методи навчання поступово замінюють підходи, що заохочують активну участь студентів у навчанні та реальне спілкування іноземною мовою.

Детально розглянуто основні принципи TBL, зокрема змістові завдання, залучення студентів та автентичне спілкування. У статті стверджується, що мову найефективніше засвоюють через практичне використання, а не через ізольоване вивчення граматики та лексики. Особливу увагу приділено структурі занять, орієнтованих на завдання, виконання яких поділяється на фази підготовки до завдання, цикл виконання завдання та етап мовного фокусу. Кожна фаза проаналізована з точки зору її педагогічної мети та ролі в розвитку комунікативних навичок студентів.

У дослідженні розглянуто ключові переваги TBL, такі як підвищення мотивації студентів, розвиток комунікативної компетентності та сприяння автономії студентів. Цей підхід також дозволяє інтегрувати міждисциплінарний зміст, що дає студентам можливість поєднувати вивчення мови з професійною підготовкою. Це особливо важливо у вищій освіті, де рівень володіння іноземною мовою тісно пов'язаний із майбутніми кар'єрними перспективами та академічним успіхом.

Крім того, проаналізовано потенційні виклики впровадження TBL, зокрема необхідність ретельно розроблених завдань, адаптація до різних рівнів володіння мовою та належна підготовка викладачів. Незважаючи на ці перешкоди, результати дослідження свідчать, що TBL значно підвищує ефективність викладання іноземної мови та сприяє розвитку практичних комунікативних

навичок. У висновках зазначено, що TBL має значний методологічний потенціал та перспективи для подальшого впровадження у вищій освіті.

**Ключові слова:** викладання іноземної мови, комунікативна компетенція, міждисциплінарний підхід, студентсько-орієнтоване навчання, *Task-Based Learning (TBL)*.

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Автори заявляють, що конфлікту інтересів щодо публікації цього рукопису немає. Крім того, автори повністю дотримувались етичних норм, включаючи плагіат, фальсифікацію даних та подвійну публікацію.

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