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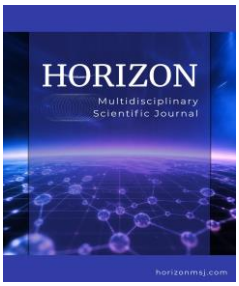

Research Paper

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH THROUGH PROFESSION-ORIENTED TEACHING IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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Abstract
In the context of globalization and the increasing internationalization of professional activities, English language competence has become an important component of vocational education. Students are expected not only to acquire general language knowledge but also to use English effectively in situations related to their future occupations. This paper examines the role of communicative competence and profession-oriented language teaching in developing students' practical English skills in vocational institutions. The study is based on a theoretical and analytical review of communicative language teaching principles, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and approaches to English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Particular attention is paid to the integration of professional vocabulary, authentic communication tasks, collaborative learning and digital resources into English lessons. A practical teaching framework is proposed to connect language objectives with occupational contexts. The paper argues that combining general English with profession-oriented communication activities can make language learning more meaningful and relevant to students' future careers.

Keywords: *communicative competence, vocational education, English for Specific Purposes, profession-oriented teaching, language skills, interactive learning*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of international relations, technology and the global labour market has increased the importance of English as a means of professional communication. English is widely used in business, banking, tourism, engineering, information technology and many other fields. Consequently, vocational education institutions have an important responsibility to prepare students for professional environments in which communication in English may be required.

Traditional approaches to language teaching often place considerable emphasis on grammar rules, vocabulary memorization and written exercises. Although these elements are essential, they do not always provide students with sufficient opportunities to use English in practical situations. A student

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may know grammatical structures and professional terms but still experience difficulties when communicating with a foreign customer, explaining a technical process or writing a professional email.

This situation highlights the need to connect language instruction with real-life communication and occupational requirements. The main purpose of this paper is to examine how communicative and profession-oriented teaching can contribute to the development of English language competence among vocational students.

The paper addresses three main objectives:

1. To examine the theoretical foundations of communicative language teaching.
2. To identify practical methods for integrating professional contexts into English lessons.
3. To propose a teaching framework that combines language development with occupational communication skills.

Theoretical Foundations of Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is broader than the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. It involves the ability to use language appropriately and effectively according to the purpose, context and participants of communication.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) explain that Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes meaningful interaction and the use of language for communicative purposes. Within this approach, learners are active participants who develop their language abilities through interaction, cooperation and problem-solving activities.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) also provides an important foundation for communicative language education. Its 2020 Companion Volume emphasizes communicative language activities, including reception, production, interaction and mediation. It also includes descriptors for online interaction and plurilingual communication (Council of Europe, 2020).

These principles are particularly relevant to vocational education. Students need to understand information, express professional ideas, interact with colleagues and customers, and communicate in different professional situations.

Therefore, successful English language teaching should develop the following interconnected competencies:

- **Linguistic competence:** knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.
- **Sociolinguistic competence:** the ability to use appropriate language in different social and professional situations.
- **Pragmatic competence:** the ability to organize ideas and achieve communication goals.

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- **Professional communication competence:** the ability to apply language knowledge to occupational tasks.

The development of these competencies requires a balanced combination of theoretical instruction and practical language use.

Profession-Oriented English Language Teaching

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an approach that focuses on learners' particular language needs in academic or professional contexts. Unlike general English courses, ESP places greater emphasis on the vocabulary, texts, communicative situations and tasks relevant to a specific field.

In vocational institutions, profession-oriented English can be adapted to different specialities.

For example:

Professional field	Relevant vocabulary	Practical communication task
Banking	deposit, loan, account, transaction	Explaining banking services to a customer
Tourism	reservation, accommodation, destination	Welcoming a tourist and providing information
Information Technology	software, hardware, network	Describing a technical problem
Engineering	equipment, maintenance, production	Explaining the operation of equipment
Telecommunications	signal, connection, device	Reporting a technical issue

This integration allows students to understand not only the meaning of professional terms but also how to use them in meaningful contexts.

For instance, banking students can participate in a simulated conversation between a bank employee and a customer. Tourism students can practise hotel reservations, while information technology students can describe common computer problems in English.

Such activities connect classroom learning with possible workplace communication requirements.

Effective Teaching Strategies and Classroom Activities

The effectiveness of profession-oriented English teaching depends on the selection of appropriate classroom strategies. The following methods can support the development of communicative competence.

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Role-play and Simulation

Role-play provides students with opportunities to practise language in situations that resemble professional communication. Students can take different roles and perform short dialogues based on occupational contexts.

For example, one student acts as a customer and another as a bank employee. They practise asking questions, giving explanations and providing information about banking services.

Collaborative Learning

Pair work and group discussions encourage students to exchange information, express opinions and solve problems together. These activities increase learner participation and provide more opportunities for meaningful communication.

Project-Based Learning

Students can prepare presentations, posters and short research projects related to their specialities. For example, tourism students can introduce historical places in Azerbaijan, while engineering students can describe modern technological developments.

Digital and Multimedia Resources

Videos, online dictionaries, educational platforms and digital presentations can enrich English lessons. Authentic materials, such as professional websites, sample emails, advertisements and short instructional videos, help students become familiar with the language used outside the classroom.

However, digital resources should be selected according to students' language levels and lesson objectives. Technology should support communication rather than replace meaningful interaction between learners.

A Practical Framework for Developing Professional Communication

Based on the principles discussed above, a profession-oriented English lesson can be organized through five interconnected stages:

Stage 1. Identification of learning needs

The teacher identifies students' language levels, professional specialities and expected communication needs.

Stage 2. Introduction of relevant language

Students learn topic-related vocabulary, useful expressions and grammatical structures in context.

Stage 3. Controlled language practice

Students complete short dialogues, sentence-building activities, vocabulary exercises and guided writing tasks.

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Stage 4. Communicative application

Students use the target language in role-plays, group discussions, simulations and professional presentations.

Stage 5. Assessment and feedback

The teacher evaluates students' performance according to language accuracy, vocabulary use, fluency, task completion and interaction. Constructive feedback helps learners identify their strengths and areas requiring further improvement.

This framework provides a practical connection between language knowledge and its application in professional situations.

Challenges and Pedagogical Recommendations

Despite the advantages of communicative and profession-oriented teaching, several challenges may affect its implementation. Students in the same group may have different levels of English proficiency. Some learners may also lack confidence in speaking or have limited knowledge of professional terminology.

In addition, teachers may face difficulties in finding appropriate teaching materials for specific vocational specialities.

To address these challenges, several recommendations can be made:

1. Teaching materials should reflect the professional needs and language levels of students.
2. General English grammar and vocabulary should be integrated with occupational terminology.
3. Speaking activities should be included regularly in the learning process.
4. Teachers should use authentic and level-appropriate materials.
5. Assessment should consider both linguistic accuracy and communicative effectiveness.
6. Students should be encouraged to develop independent learning habits through reliable digital resources.

These recommendations can contribute to a more practical, inclusive and learner-centred approach to English language education.

CONCLUSION

Developing communicative competence through profession-oriented English teaching is an important objective of modern vocational education. Students need more than theoretical knowledge of a foreign language; they need the ability to apply that knowledge in meaningful professional situations. The communicative approach, supported by ESP principles and the CEFR framework, provides opportunities to connect language learning with occupational requirements. Role-play, collaborative

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learning, project-based activities and digital resources can make English lessons more practical and engaging.

The proposed five-stage teaching framework offers a structured way to integrate professional vocabulary, language practice, communication tasks and assessment into the learning process.

In conclusion, English language teaching in vocational institutions should be designed not only to improve students' general language proficiency but also to prepare them for effective communication in their future professional environments. Strengthening the connection between language education and vocational training can contribute to the development of more confident, adaptable and professionally competitive graduates.

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XÜLASƏ

PEŞƏ TƏHSİLİNDƏ PEŞƏYÖNÜMLÜ TƏDRİS VASİTƏSİLƏ İNGİLİS DİLİNDƏ KOMMUNİKATİV KOMPETENSİYANIN İNKİŞAF ETDİRİLMƏSİ

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Qloballaşma və peşə fəaliyyətinin getdikcə beynəlmiləlləşməsi şəraitində ingilis dili kompetensiyası peşə təhsilinin mühüm tərkib hissəsinə çevrilmişdir. Tələbələrdən yalnız ümumi dil biliklərinə yiyələnmək deyil, həm də gələcək ixtisasları ilə bağlı situasiyalarda ingilis dilindən səmərəli istifadə etmək gözlənilir. Bu məqalədə peşə təhsili müəssisələrində tələbələrin praktiki ingilis dili bacarıqlarının inkişaf etdirilməsində kommunikativ kompetensiya və peşəyönümlü dil tədrisinin rolu araşdırılır. Tədqiqat kommunikativ dil tədrisi prinsiplərinin, Dillər üzrə Ümumavropa Çərçivə Sənədinin (CEFR) və Xüsusi Məqsədlər üçün İngilis Dili (ESP) yanaşmalarının nəzəri və analitik icmalına əsaslanır. İngilis dili dərslərinə peşə leksikasının, autentik ünsiyyət tapşırıqlarının, əməkdaşlıq əsaslı təlimin və rəqəmsal resursların inteqrasiyasına xüsusi diqqət yetirilir. Dil məqsədlərini peşə kontekstləri ilə əlaqələndirmək üçün praktiki tədris çərçivəsi təklif olunur. Məqalədə ümumi ingilis dilinin peşəyönümlü ünsiyyət fəaliyyətləri ilə birləşdirilməsinin dil öyrənməni tələbələrin gələcək karyeraları üçün daha mənalı və aktual edə biləcəyi əsaslandırılır.

Açar sözlər: *kommunikativ kompetensiya, peşə təhsili, Xüsusi Məqsədlər üçün İngilis Dili (ESP), peşəyönümlü tədris, dil bacarıqları, interaktiv təlim*

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