

25-november 2025

APPROACHES AND PRACTICES IN PROFESSIONALLY ORIENTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: MODERN TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract. This article discusses the growing importance of professionally oriented foreign language teaching in higher education, a field that aims to prepare students for real communication tasks in their future careers. The study analyzes several contemporary approaches that support this goal, including competency-based instruction, task-based learning, and the integration of digital technologies. It also highlights current challenges and outlines possible directions for improving professional communication training in foreign language classrooms.

Key words: *professionally oriented language teaching; communicative competence; competency-based instruction; task-based learning; digital technologies; ESP (English for Specific Purposes); higher education; professional communication; methodology; innovation.*

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Introduction

Nowadays, with every aspect of life becoming more globalized, the academic and professional worlds similarly require an ever-increasing number of specialists who can communicate effectively in a foreign language. Thus, it is expected that higher education institutions will offer language classes not only for developing general linguistic competence but also for preparing students to communicate in specific professional contexts. Professionally oriented foreign language teaching aims to enable learners to perform practical, professionally related activities in a foreign language. This demands the integration of linguistic, communicative, and analytical competencies according to workplace standards. Recent research underscores that traditional approaches to language teaching are increasingly inadequate, and that a more innovative practice-oriented approach is badly needed. The purpose of this article is to review the main methodological approaches used in POFLT and analyze the modern trends shaping its development today.

1. Competency-Based Instruction in Professional Language Learning

Competency-based instruction is currently one of the leading approaches within modern foreign language education. In professionally oriented courses, this approach focuses on the development of particular skills that learners will need in their future careers, such as presenting information, writing reports, or discussing topics. It contributes to the students' understanding of what outcomes they are expected to achieve and how these outcomes relate to real professional tasks. As an example: A law student might be required to draft a legal document in English or

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participate in a mock negotiation. Similarly, a business student may be asked to prepare a financial report and present it to the class in English. Such tasks provide clear goals and measurable outcomes, which help students understand how language skills apply to real-life professional scenarios. Besides, competency-based instruction promotes independent learning, critical thinking, and the ability to apply knowledge of language in unfamiliar situations.

2. Task-Based Learning and Professional Communication

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) plays a significant role in developing professional communicative competence. This approach requires students to complete meaningful tasks that resemble real workplace activities—for example, analyzing case studies, preparing business presentations, conducting interviews, or negotiating solutions to problems. Task-based learning encourages active participation, collaboration, and the use of professional vocabulary in context. ESP principles are often applied here, so that tasks focus on terminology and communication styles relevant to specific fields.

3. The Role of Digital Technologies in POFLT

Digital technologies have been increasingly deployed in foreign language teaching. Online platforms, virtual simulations, and multimedia and AI-assisted tools give students additional opportunities to practice professional communication. It has been proven that digital tools increase learner motivation, enable personalized learning pathways, and provide direct feedback on the language performance of students. For example, AI-based writing tools help students practice report writing, while virtual discussion platforms give them practice in professional speaking.

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situations. However, technology can only be used effectively with digitally competent teachers and the right technological infrastructure in institutions.

4. Authentic Materials and Interdisciplinary Integration

Authentic materials, such as professional journal articles, workplace documents, emails, and interviews with specialists, help students establish connections between language learning and the real-life professional context. These authentic materials expose students to realistic language usage, professional terminologies, and discipline-specific communication styles. Furthermore, collaboration between language teachers and subject specialists helps ensure that the language instruction will meet the specific needs of particular academic programs, such as law, business, diplomacy, or engineering.

Conclusion

Professionally oriented foreign language teaching is in continuous development stimulated by changing conditions of educational settings and labor markets. Competency-based instruction, task-based learning, and digital technologies provide effective means for enhancing students' professional communicative competencies. Further enhancements of the relevance of language courses to real workplace situations are accomplished through the integration of authentic materials and interdisciplinary collaboration. The prospect of continued improvement for POFLT remains optimistic, despite challenges such as variable levels of digital literacy and resource limitations. Future developments will most likely involve adaptive learning, AI-driven feedback systems, and more flexible teaching formats.

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