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ANALYSIS OF CURRENT TRENDS IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN UKRAINE

ANÁLISE DAS TENDÊNCIAS ATUAIS NO ENSINO DE INGLÊS NA UCRÂNIA

ANÁLISIS DE LAS TENDENCIAS ACTUALES EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS EN UCRANIA

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ABSTRACT: The article aims to study the latest trends used in teaching English in Ukraine. The comparative and systematic analysis methods were used, and the work is based on the principles of scientificity and objectivity. The results show that the English language teaching system has undergone significant changes in recent decades due to historical development. It is indicated that current trends in English language teaching in Ukraine include a competency-based approach that emphasizes developing speech skills and effective communication in real-life situations (practical use of English). Current trends also include the use of technology, such as interactive programs, mobile applications, and websites. As a result of the use of Flipped classrooms, Task-Based Learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning, and Blended Learning, the use of contextualized learning is widely articulated. The conclusions emphasize the importance of communication, which has become the main goal of learning English.

KEYWORDS: English language teaching. Trends. Ukraine. Europe. Digitalization.

RESUMO: O objetivo do artigo é estudar as últimas tendências no ensino de inglês na Ucrânia. Foram utilizados os métodos de análise comparativa e sistemática, e o trabalho é baseado nos princípios da cientificidade e da objetividade. Os resultados mostram que devido ao desenvolvimento histórico, o sistema de ensino da língua inglesa passou por mudanças significativas nas últimas décadas. É indicado que as tendências atuais no ensino da língua inglesa na Ucrânia incluem uma abordagem baseada em competências que enfatiza o desenvolvimento de habilidades de fala e comunicação eficaz em situações da vida real (uso prático do inglês). As tendências atuais também incluem o uso de tecnologia, como programas interativos, aplicativos móveis e websites. Como resultado do uso de sala de aula invertida, aprendizagem baseada em tarefas, aprendizagem integrada de conteúdo e linguagem, aprendizagem combinada, o uso da aprendizagem contextualizada é amplamente articulado. As conclusões enfatizam a importância do uso da comunicação, que se tornou o principal objetivo do aprendizado do inglês.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ensino de língua inglesa. Tendências. Ucrânia. Europa. Digitalização.

RESUMEN: El propósito del artículo es estudiar las últimas tendencias utilizadas en la enseñanza del inglés en Ucrania. Se utilizaron métodos de análisis comparativo y sistemático, y el trabajo se basa en los principios de cientificidad y objetividad. Los resultados muestran que, debido al desarrollo histórico, el sistema de enseñanza del inglés ha experimentado cambios significativos en las últimas décadas. Se indica que las tendencias actuales en la enseñanza del inglés en Ucrania incluyen un enfoque basado en las competencias que hace hincapié en el desarrollo de las destrezas orales y la comunicación eficaz en situaciones de la vida real (uso práctico del inglés). Las tendencias actuales también incluyen el uso de la tecnología, como programas interactivos, aplicaciones móviles y sitios web. Como resultado del uso de Flipped classroom, Task-Based Learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning, Blended Learning, el uso del aprendizaje contextualizado está ampliamente articulado. Las conclusiones destacan la importancia del uso de la comunicación, que se ha convertido en el objetivo principal del aprendizaje del inglés.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Enseñanza del inglés. Tendencias. Ucrania. Europa. Digitalización.

Anton IVASHCHUK; Valentyna MALYK; Iryna TRUBENKO; Nataliia VARHA and Iryna ZHALINSKA

Introduction

Globalization and total digitalization create new challenges for modern society. In particular, the information society, which requires constant data exchange and communication, has partially agreed to use English as the language of international communication in many areas, according to the theory of the "social contract." First and foremost, we are talking about political, economic, intercultural, and interpersonal interaction at many levels, from the private to the transnational. A specific privileged position of the English language has become essential in developing national education systems where English is taught alongside local languages.

As a developing country, Ukraine has also emphasized introducing English in its educational system. As a result, it has gained certain advantages in school and university courses, which are generally in line with modern pedagogical paradigms around the world. At the same time, in connection with the desire to give English an additional state status, to equalize it with Ukrainian, there is a need for further research into the methods and features of its teaching. The article's main focus will be identifying and researching the latest trends in pedagogical practices of teaching English. It is planned to trace a certain evolution in the use of digital technologies and platforms that significantly improve and facilitate teaching English as a foreign language in the Ukrainian context.

The purpose of the article is to analyze current trends in English language teaching in Ukraine. The realization of this goal involves consideration of the following issues: 1. An analysis of the integration of the Ukrainian teaching system with global trends based on the study of Task-based learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning, and Dogme style. 2. Characterization of other trends in teaching English: from flipped classroom to blended learning. 3. Analyzing the Importance of the Competency-Based Approach in Teaching English.

Methodology

The research was realized in several stages. The first stage defined the research problem and characterized the main focus of the study. The second stage identified the main trends in English language teaching in Ukraine, considering the digital transformation of the Ukrainian educational system. The third section compares the results with the work of other scholars and concludes. The study is based on theoretical, pedagogical research methods. The study uses a systematic analysis, the main purpose of which is to examine the object of study (the process of teaching English) as a complex system through the prism of considering the

interrelationships of its constituent elements. Based on a corporate analysis, the main trends in English language teaching in Ukraine are compared, and their advantages and main characteristics are identified. Moreover, the article is based on the principles of scientificity and objectivity.

Theoretical framework

The Ukrainian education system in general (and English language teaching in particular) is closely integrated with global trends in teaching practice. The path to this unification was quite long and is still being implemented, but the results of the transformations in the field of foreign language teaching have been tangible.

Task-based learning in English language teaching is an approach that focuses on completing tasks aimed at achieving a specific goal or solving a real-life communication problem. Instead of the traditional focus on grammar or a list of vocabulary, learners are engaged in active tasks that require them to use the language to communicate and solve real-life situations. *Tasks* in *task-based learning are* embedded in a specific context or situation (KUPCHYK; LITVINCHUK, 2020). This helps learners understand how and when to use the language in real life. They learn to use English in practical situations such as shopping, traveling, discussing problems, etc.

When using *Task-based learning, the* main focus should be on planning flexibility. Teachers should take into account the interests, language proficiency level, and other characteristics of learners, creating tasks that meet their needs and develop the skills they need (JALILBAYLI, 2022). The *Task-based learning* methodology demonstrates that, when learning a new topic, considerable attention should be paid to the context of word use, taking into account phrases, sentences, and contexts in which words are used (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Word and sentence usage chart
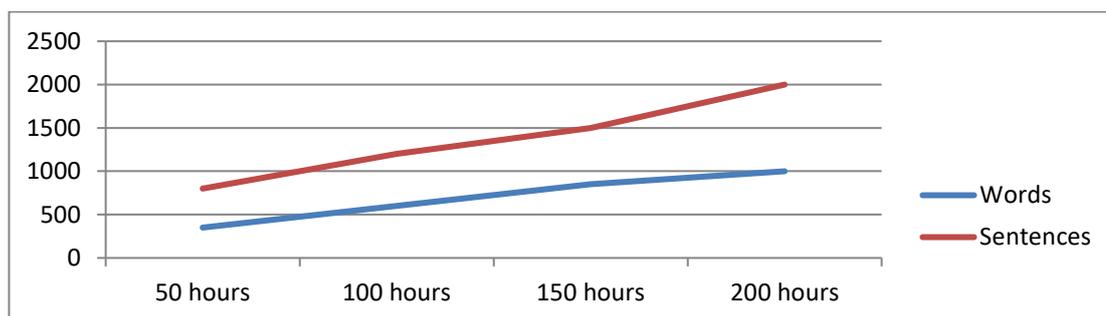
Source: Compiled by the authors

Another modern method called *Content and Language Integrated Learning* helps solve several problems at once: for example, learning the history and culture of the country whose language is being studied (KOVTUN; KOVTUN; IHNATENKO, 2019). In this approach, the language is a kind of means of obtaining information. This approach involves using the language to learn academic content, i.e., teaching subject knowledge and skills through a foreign.

The advantage of using this approach is that it allows students to develop both language skills and subject knowledge at the same time. They learn to perceive, understand and use a foreign language in real-life situations related to subject knowledge. In Ukraine, modern educators, especially those who promote *Lifelong education*, often use an approach called *Dogme style,* which is a kind of communicative approach to teaching a foreign language. It is a kind of pedagogical philosophy and methodology for teaching English that focuses on minimizing the use of textbooks and materials with a predefined structure, instead prioritizing activity and the use of real-world materials in context.

Therefore, Dogme-style can help to create an authentic and communicative learning environment in which learners can actively communicate and develop their language skills. It stimulates learners' creativity, motivation, and individual development, making the English language learning process more effective and engaging (SPILLERE; MEDEIROS; CORDIOLI, 2018; RAJAB, 2018). The teacher's role is to optimize the language learning process.

Researchers believe that it is important for students with high motivation to learn and *Intermediate* level to use *Flipped classroom*. In the pedagogical approach of the *Flipped classroom,* the traditional order of the lesson is changed: homework and information transfer are carried out before the lesson, and students' classroom activities are used for active

collaboration, practical tasks and group work. The essence of this method is that students receive assignments before class to study the material (a video lecture, for example) and do not spend time studying theoretical aspects during the lesson, but rather devote time to active language practice.

The main idea of the flipped classroom is to use the lesson time more efficiently. Students can study the material at their own pace at home and, in class, learn to apply the knowledge gained and develop critical thinking and language skills. The flipped classroom can be beneficial in teaching English for several reasons (see Table 1).

Table 1 – The main advantages of using the inverted classroom technique

Advantages	*Explanation*
Implementation of individual learning pace	Each learner has their own pace of learning. Students can watch video tutorials or presentations at home and learn basic rules, grammar, and vocabulary at their own pace. This allows slower learners to spend more time learning the material, while fast learners can move on to more challenging tasks and additional exercises.
Development of practical skills	In a traditional classroom, much of the time is spent on transferring new information from the teacher. Since students learn theoretical material independently in a flipped classroom, more time can be allocated to practical exercises, communication, tasks, and developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
Interaction and cooperation	The flipped classroom promotes active interaction between students and teachers. Classes can include discussions, group projects, partner work, role-playing, and other forms of collaborative activities that help students improve their communication skills and comprehension of English in real-life situations.

Source: compiled by the authors

In general, the flipped classroom helps to make the English language learning process more active and interactive. It promotes in-depth learning, skill development, and increased student motivation. Thus, the teacher can cover more material, and students learn to work independently.

Results

English language learning in Ukraine is also based on a communicative approach, with the ability to express thoughts and communicate at its core (YABLOKOV, 2020). In general, the educational process is based on the formation of language competence - meaningful communication in different life situations. The main principle of the communicative approach

is to teach language as a means of communication, with a focus on real-life communication situations (YAKUSHKO *et al.*, 2022) (See Table 2).

Table 2 – Main characteristics of the communication approach

Contextual learning	The approach is based on the use of language in real-life contexts and situations. Students acquire the language skills necessary for effective communication, such as the ability to understand and use language in different situations.
Functional use of language	Students learn to use the language to perform real-life communicative functions, such as communication, discussion, dialog, presentation of information, etc.
Focus on reality	The main emphasis is placed on using real materials such as texts, audio and video recordings, games, and situational tasks, which contribute to authentic language learning.

Source: Compiled by the authors of the article

The lexical approach, which Ukrainian foreign language teachers actively use, is also important. The point is that the student does not learn individual words but so-called *chunks* (phrases) that contribute to developing better communication skills. In the realities of the crisis and the Russian-Ukrainian war, blended learning, combining face-to-face (teacher-student) and online learning, is a significant trend (MAULINA *et al.*, 2022). Blended learning is an effective form of English language learning that combines traditional teaching methods with the use of ICT technologies (see Table 3).

Table 3 – The main features of blended learning

Features.	Explanation
Use of digital and video learning resources	Teachers can use various online resources, such as interactive exercises, websites, e-textbooks, and other materials to supplement classroom instruction (NURDIANA *et al.*, 2023). This, in turn, also allows students to study the material independently and get additional practice. Teachers can use video lessons that they create or find online to explain grammar rules, vocabulary etc (ERLANGGA, 2021).
Using platforms for learning	Teachers can use digital platforms to organize web conferences where students can participate in live discussions, complete group projects, and use English in communication (LISNYCHENKO *et al.*, 2020).
Implementation of interactive exercises and programs in the educational process	Teachers can use interactive exercises based on various computer programs to help students learn English. These resources can include exercises on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, reading, and other skills.

Source: Compiled by the author

Given the digitalization trends that are actively flooding the Ukrainian educational space, digital resources play an important role in the English language learning system (PAZIURA *et al.*, 2021). They are a tool for conducting and organizing innovative learning to update the system of training future specialists. Accordingly, the main emphasis in English language teaching is now on using digital resources, both directly in pedagogical, educational, and research work and organizational and methodological work (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Scheme of using digital resources in the training of language specialists
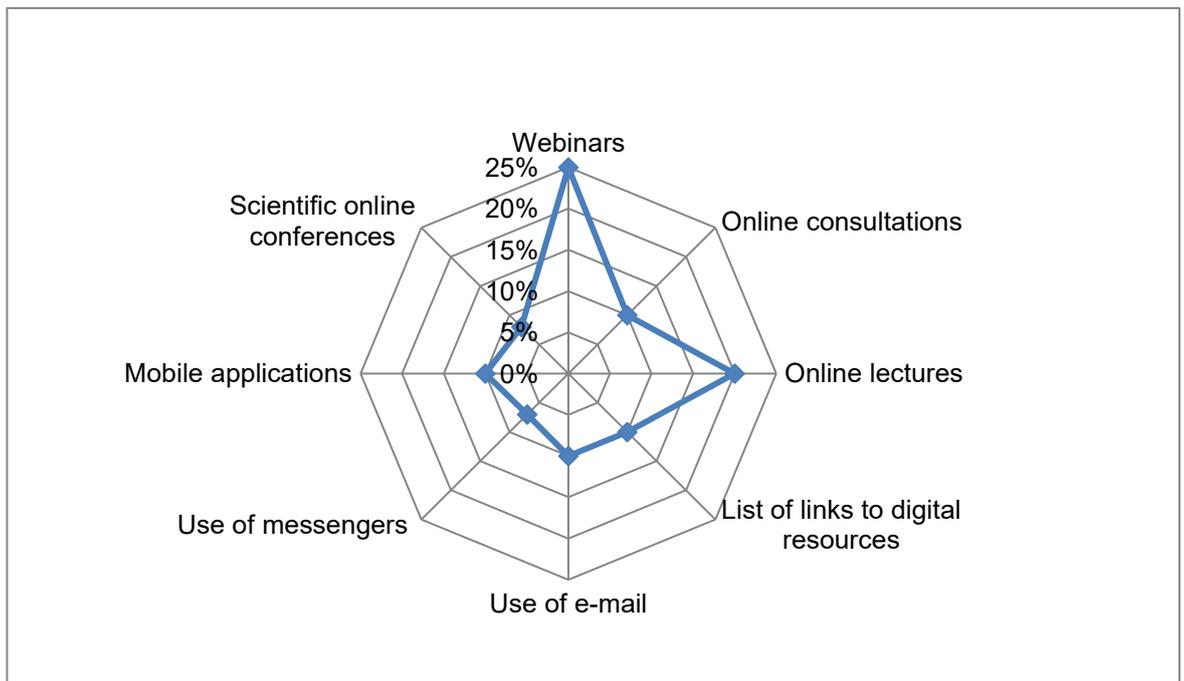
Blended learning based on digital resources gives teachers more flexibility and opportunities for innovation in the English language teaching process (HONTARENKO, 2021). It is important to take into account the needs of students and find the best combinations of classical methods and the latest technologies to achieve the best results.

Discussion

The mainstreaming of new trends in English language teaching in Ukraine is primarily the result of paradigm shifts as a basis for using innovative potential in teaching. It is worth agreeing with researchers that harmonization with global changes in English language teaching

has become a positive phenomenon for the Ukrainian educational system (ROMANIUK, 2020; YAKUSHKO *et al.*, 2022). Obviously, the further evolution of English teaching will also be influenced by global (including European) trends.

After Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, outdated approaches to teaching English that existed in Soviet pedagogical methodology and practice continued to influence the formation of the new national educational system for some time. Their main problems were the superficial study of English in general (focus on reading and grammar using a dictionary), and insufficient skills of students in applying grammar in practice. Similar trends have been noted in other Central European countries (ANDERSONE, 2020). Instead, the Ukrainian reality was characterized by a phenomenon where learning was mainly focused on reading and translating outdated texts with questionable usefulness in real life.

Traditionally, the classroom was dominated by the teacher-student, where the teacher acted as the main source of information and a strict controller whose role was mainly to identify mistakes and shortcomings in students' speech. The teaching material was disconnected from real-life situations and the needs of language users. Learning outcomes assessment was often subjective due to the lack of clearly defined criteria for assessing English proficiency. The lack of practical experience of internships in English-speaking countries also had an impact. The latter aspect has been repeatedly emphasized in the research of modern scholars (YABLOKOV, 2020).

However, it has become extremely "painful" for Ukrainian realities. The lack of opportunities to establish real communication and language practice among native English speakers has been felt for a long time. In fact, the experience of introducing distance education, which has created new opportunities for live communication and relevant online courses, has been underestimated (PYLYPENKO; KOZUB, 2021).

Reducing the cost of such training for teachers has also become an extremely tangible positive factor. In general, as noted by Rajab (2018); Khan and Vuopala (2019); Akhmad, Mikhnenko and Cmel (2021), digitalization has had a positive impact on the development of the language space and related learning. The tendency to increase the level of knowledge and skills of teachers will lead to further development of this area of knowledge.

At the same time, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the emphasis has been on harmonizing pedagogical training and English language learning with European standards. Curricula were also developed to meet the new requirements. The Common European

Framework of Reference for Languages defined the directions of transformation in teaching foreign languages at all levels.

According to the CEFR, there are 6 main levels of language proficiency: A1 and A2 (elementary level), B1 and B2 (independent user), C1 and C2 (advanced level). To reach each level, you need to complete at least 100 hours of training. These innovations have had a positive impact on future changes in English teaching schemes in Ukraine. At least, according to researchers, unification has made it possible to borrow relevant teaching experience from other countries (KUPCHYK; LITVINCHUK, 2021; PYLYPENKO; KOZUB, 2021).

Despite the arguments of supporters of national classification systems for English language learning, the example of Ukraine shows positive changes precisely as a result of the abandonment of such systems (YAKUSHKO *et al.*, 2022). Although this issue remains controversial, the latest methods and trends in English teaching have much greater prospects when integrated into globally unified systems, at least until the opposite is proven.

The introduction of innovative European methods of teaching English has significant advantages and deserves a more detailed analysis. One of the key achievements of harmonization in English language teaching is compliance with modern European educational standards. The unification of the levels of education has ensured the unity of the purpose, content and methods of teaching English in Ukraine and has led to adaptation to modern requirements for teaching English in the world.

Based on this, a decision was made to abandon the outdated practices of creating exclusively internal, purely Ukrainian standards for learning English. The system of writing textbooks by non-native speakers who had limited experience of living and working in an English-speaking environment and who did not have sufficient knowledge of global trends in English language teaching was also revised.

These results (along with the analyzed *Content and Language Integrated Learning, Blended Learning, Task-based learning,* and other modern trends in English teaching) have become important consequences of the educational reforms of the XXI century, which correlates with the conclusions of other authors about the importance of the modern integration process in teaching education (BIELIAIEVA *et al.*, 2023). It is also confirmed that distance learning has opened up new opportunities for language education, which has had a significant impact on new trends in teaching English based on digital methods.

The use of foreign experience in Ukrainian education has shown that the most effective approach to teaching English is the competency-based approach (ALMÅS; BUEIE;

AAGAARD, 2021). The peculiarity of its use is the focus on the development of practical skills, the formation of abilities, and the acquisition of experience in using theoretical knowledge in practice.

According to this approach, English is transformed into a specific means and tool used in solving practical problems, establishing cooperation with foreign partners, and does not remain an unspecified goal with vague objectives, which corresponds to the European understanding of the use of the competency-based approach, as interpreted, for example, by Rajab (2018). As the Ukrainian experience has shown, knowledge of English remains at the level of a textbook or a classroom, gradually degrading if it is not used in real life.

Based on modern teaching and learning materials, textbooks (*student's book* or *course book)* and *workbooks with* audio files for students (*workbook with audio)*, separate software packages (applications, Internet resources, CD and DVD sets, etc.), books for teachers with in-depth methodological recommendations covering both the entire course and each specific lesson have become effective in the Ukrainian context. The effectiveness of these trends is evident in the analysis of international experience in teaching English (PURNAMA; RAHAYU; YUGAFIATI, 2019).

Other important elements of modern training are recommendations for assessing students' performance, interactive digital tasks for developing spontaneous oral and written communication, sets of tests (written and remote) for each topic, sets of creative tasks for ongoing monitoring and final tests at the end of modules, separate forms for students' self-assessment, programs for tracking their personal progress, digital tools for self-study, etc. The latter element has repeatedly been the subject of research attention (NIFRIZA; YENTI, 2021; BIELIAIEVA *et al.*, 2023), but it is currently impossible to study it entirely, as digital technologies are changing quite dynamically.

Conclusions

Therefore, this instructional approach strongly emphasizes competency, particularly in honing students' oral communication skills for effective real-world interactions. Rather than fixating on intricate grammar rules and rote learning, the focus is practical English usage. This approach is increasingly intertwined with the utilization of technology, thanks to the influence of modern English teaching trends like Content and Language Integrated Learning, Blended Learning, and Task-based learning.

Another noteworthy global trend integrated into the Ukrainian educational landscape is the contextualization of English language learning. This approach enables learners to expand their language proficiency by engaging with authentic English-language materials, such as articles, videos, songs, and movies that reflect real-life scenarios and cultural contexts. This methodology harmonizes with the pedagogical principles of the Flipped classroom, where students are assigned preparatory tasks, such as watching video lectures, before class. In-class time is then dedicated to active language practice rather than theoretical discussions. The overarching objective of teaching English is now centered on fostering effective communication, which has gained prominence in the Ukrainian educational context.

Simultaneously, the potential impact of digitization on English language learning represents a promising avenue for further investigation. Given the rapid development of modern technologies, the continuous emergence of new resources, mobile applications, and learning systems will necessitate ongoing evaluation and adaptation.

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CRediT Author Statement

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, normalization and translation.

RPGE – Revista on line de Política e Gestão Educacional, Araraquara, v. 27, n. esp. 2, e023048, 2023.   e-ISSN: 1519-9029

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22633/rpge.v27iesp.2.18749   15