

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TASK-BASED LEARNING APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT MEDICAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract. This article addresses issues related to improving the process of teaching English at medical higher education institutions. In particular, the content and didactic potential of the task-based learning (TBL) approach, as well as its role in developing the professional communicative competence of medical students, are analyzed. The study demonstrates that classes organized on the basis of TBL contribute to the development of students' oral and written communication skills, independent thinking, and the practical use of professional medical terminology. The results of the experimental study confirm that this approach is more effective than traditional teaching methods.

Keywords: task-based learning, English language, medical students, professionally oriented education, communicative competence, innovative teaching methods.

Introduction.

Today, the rapid development of the medical field, the expansion of international cooperation, and the exchange of scientific information require a high level of English language proficiency. For medical professionals, English serves as a key tool for working with foreign scientific sources, participating in international conferences, and communicating with foreign specialists. Therefore, improving the quality of English language teaching in medical higher education institutions is considered an important pedagogical issue.

Traditional teaching methods are mainly focused on memorizing grammatical rules and translating texts, which does not sufficiently prepare students for real professional communication. Modern educational concepts, on the other hand, emphasize placing students at the center of the learning process by applying communicative and competence-based approaches.

From this perspective, task-based learning (TBL) is recognized as one of the most effective approaches that meets the professional needs of medical students. This approach brings the language learning process closer to real-life and professional situations.

The purpose of this study is to improve the methodology of teaching English to medical students through the task-based learning approach and to scientifically substantiate its effectiveness in the educational process.

Research Methods. The study was conducted during the 2024–2025 academic year among second-year students of a medical higher education institution. A total of 60 students participated in the research, and their level of knowledge and language proficiency was taken into account to ensure uniformity. The students were equally divided into an experimental group and a control group.

In the experimental group, English language classes were organized based on the task-based learning approach. Each lesson consisted of the following stages:

1. **Pre-task stage** – introduction of topic-related vocabulary and problem-based questions;
2. **Task cycle** – working with clinical cases, doctor–patient communication, and medical documentation;
3. **Post-task stage** – discussion of results, analysis, and error correction.

In the control group, lessons were conducted using the traditional grammar-translation method. During the research, pedagogical observation, diagnostic tests, oral speech assessment criteria, and questionnaire methods were employed.

Results. The data obtained at the end of the experimental study clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of English language classes organized on the basis of the task-based learning approach. While the initial diagnostic test results showed that the language proficiency levels of the experimental and control groups were nearly identical, significant differences were observed in the final assessment.

Students in the experimental group were found to be more actively engaged in professional communication in English. They were able to independently construct doctor–patient dialogues and correctly and appropriately use medical terminology when describing clinical cases. In addition, students demonstrated skills in logically justifying their opinions and proposing solutions to problematic situations.

According to the questionnaire results, the majority of students in the experimental group noted that TBL-based classes increased their interest in learning English and fostered a sense of confidence and freedom during lessons. In contrast, students in the control group showed lower levels of communicative activity and tended to rely more on prepared patterns when responding.

Thus, the experimental results indicate that the TBL approach contributes not only to the development of linguistic knowledge but also to the enhancement of professional competencies.

Discussion. The findings confirm that the task-based learning approach is particularly effective in teaching English to medical students. The main advantage of this approach lies in its ability to link students' learning activities with real professional situations. As a result, the language learning process moves away from artificial exercises and becomes closer to practical application.

The study revealed that task-based activities encourage students to engage in communication, as completing tasks requires interaction in English. This leads to the natural development of communicative competence. This aspect is especially important in medical education, as it lays the foundation for effective communication with patients and colleagues in future professional practice.

Moreover, the TBL approach promotes independent thinking, analysis of problem situations, and decision-making skills among students. This has a positive impact on the development of clinical thinking, which is one of the key objectives of medical education. While traditional methods position the teacher as the central figure, task-based learning transforms students into active participants in the educational process.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the task-based learning approach serves as an effective pedagogical tool for improving the methodology of teaching English in medical higher education institutions. This approach facilitates the development of students' professional communicative competence, enhances practical language use skills, and improves the overall quality of the educational process.

The results of the study demonstrate that TBL-based instruction plays an important role in preparing students for real professional activities. This method increases students' motivation, enhances their communicative activity, and encourages independent learning. In the future, it is advisable to systematically integrate the task-based learning approach into English language curricula at medical higher education institutions and to combine it with digital technologies.

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