

K. O. Komiljonova

University of Journalism and Mass Communications of Uzbekistan, 2nd year student

Scientific supervisor: teacher U.X. Ibadullayeva

MODERN METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Nowadays, teaching English in higher education has become a more complex and demanding process. Traditional methods are no longer sufficient to meet students' needs in a globalized world. Modern education requires more interactive, flexible, and student-centered approaches. Therefore, it is essential to apply effective teaching methods that improve students' communication skills and increase their motivation.

Modern methods of teaching English focus on active student participation and real-life communication. These approaches help students develop not only their grammar knowledge but also their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. In this process, teachers act as facilitators, while students become active participants in the learning process.

Compared to the past, traditional teaching methods such as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and the Audio-Lingual Method no longer fully meet the requirements of today's educational environment. Modern society demands practical language use and strong communicative competence. Therefore, many teachers today prefer to use modern, interactive approaches in their teaching practice. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the most important and widely used modern methods in teaching English. The main goal of CLT is to develop students' communicative competence, which is the ability to use language effectively in real-life situations. Unlike traditional approaches, CLT does not pay much attention to grammar rules but focuses on effective communication. The activities offered by CLT include discussions, role-play games, work in pairs and groups which contribute to creating a communicative atmosphere. Such an approach makes students become active participants who will acquire better speaking skills. It also allows learners to get familiar with the practical usage of language, which is crucial in terms of higher education.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is one of the most efficient methods that concentrate on the learning process with meaningful tasks. It consists of three stages: pre-task, task cycle, and language focus. Firstly, teachers introduce a topic, assess the students' previous knowledge about it and prepare them to perform a certain task. Secondly, at the stage of a task cycle, the students accomplish the task collectively relying on their own language resources. Students' main goal is to complete a task regardless of language precision. In the third stage, teachers discuss with learners their performance and give advice on improving language skills. Thus, the main idea of TBLT is that the best way to master the language is to use it for a definite purpose. This approach encourages active engagement with a task and cooperation between the learners. It develops not only language competences but also thinking and collaborative skills.

One of the most popular and efficient methods to teach is the PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production). As its name suggests, the teaching approach consists of three phases: presentation, practice, and production. During the first stage, which is called presentation, the teacher introduces new language material (e.g., new vocabulary or new grammatical structure). After that, in the practice stage, students apply their knowledge in various exercises. Finally, in the production stage, students use language freely in their speaking and/or writing. However, besides the PPP teaching method, another interesting approach is inductive approach to teaching. While during the first stage in PPP method teachers directly explain new grammatical rules and give some examples, in inductive approach to teaching while discussing a new grammar topic it is better to start with giving students examples on the topic and asking them to notice differences among them. In addition, this approach plays an important role in modern language teaching since it fosters independence and better comprehension of the subject.

Another contemporary approach used is Content-Based Instruction, also known as CBI. It refers to learning both the subject matter and English in an integrated way and allows for the acquisition of English in academic contexts. The following models exist in CBI: the Immersion or Theme-Based Model, when the subjects taught are done entirely in English; the Sheltered Model, when the language level of students is taken into account to teach the subject matter; and the Adjunct Model, when teachers of English work in conjunction with subject teachers. They enhance students' proficiency in academic vocabulary, communication skills, and subject matter at the same time, while also equipping them to cope with the challenges of studying abroad and working in professional contexts.

A learner-centred pedagogical approach is Project-Based Learning (PBL). Students learn through projects within PBL. Within PBL, learners individually or in groups complete a project based on a particular subject. Learners obtain information on the subject, exchange ideas, and present findings in English. Through PBL, learners develop their critical thinking skills, creativity, and cooperation. Moreover, this method encourages discussion among students, thus helping students increase motivation.

Student-centered learning is an essential concept in contemporary language learning. It considers learners' requirements, interests, curiosity, and capabilities, thus transforming them from passive recipients into active subjects of knowledge acquisition. This strategy improves the quality of instruction, making learners more self-confident and autonomous. In the case of higher education, student-centered learning acquires additional value due to its ability to stimulate learners' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Within this strategy, teachers become facilitators, while students are responsible for the implementation of the learning process. Furthermore, the concept of student-centered learning may also be associated with modern language teaching techniques considered above. Finally, one should not underestimate the importance of personalized learning as one of the main components of student-centered learning. Personalization implies the adaptation of teaching strategies to learners' level of proficiency, individual characteristics of the learning process, personal interests, plans, and goals.

In order to understand the importance of the learning process, it is important to consider the role of motivation. Motivation affects learning English as it influences the

process of studying a foreign language. Motivation is regarded as the important factor that can make modern teaching process more effective. According to Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are distinguished. The former type means the inner need of individuals to learn a language due to the personal reasons (interest, curiosity, etc.). Those learners who have an intrinsic motivation are involved in English learning because they feel interested in it. They participate actively during classes, take the responsibility for their own learning and succeed. As far as extrinsic motivation is concerned, it involves the influence of some external factors, like exams, good grades, career prospects, etc. In higher education, English is often learned due to extrinsic motivation – the future profession requires mastering a new language. While extrinsic motivation is important, it becomes much more efficient when there is intrinsic motivation as well. Methods of modern teaching like CLT, TBLT, PPP, CBI and PBL contribute to intrinsic motivation greatly. Moreover, Deci and Ryan argue that the combination of these three fundamental psychological needs contributes to effective motivation: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Contemporary pedagogy takes these three aspects into account by offering learners freedom of learning (autonomy), achievable objectives (competence), and cooperation (relatedness). Implementing motivational theory in contemporary pedagogical practices is important for not only developing language skills but also increasing engagement and confidence of highly motivated students [Richards 2001:140].

In conclusion, the employment of innovative techniques in the study of English at the university level increases the effectiveness of the learning process. Techniques such as Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, the PPP approach, CBI, and PBL offer various options for the improvement of learners' skills and competencies. In addition, all the mentioned approaches make it possible to concentrate on student-centered learning rather than on teacher-centered lessons. Thus, students can become independent, self-confident, and capable of effectively using their language skills in practice. The inductive methods will allow the enhancement of students' critical thinking and will help them understand language structures independently.

Furthermore, motivation is a key element that helps students achieve positive results. Both extrinsic and intrinsic types of motivation can be used to achieve success in learning processes. However, intrinsic motivation can bring much better results since it allows learners to engage in an activity voluntarily, and to develop skills constantly. Overall, the implementation of innovative techniques, a shift from the traditional approach to the modern one, and intrinsic motivation can contribute to better results of English language studies. Such an approach meets the demands of contemporary higher education and prepares students for successful communication in a globalized world.

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