

DOI:10.46991/FLSP.2026.26.096

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TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL CONTEXTS: CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES IN FLSP INSTRUCTION

ABSTRACT

This article examines contemporary methods for teaching English in Foreign Language for Specific Purposes (FLSP) classrooms, emphasizing approaches that integrate language instruction with professional content. The study reviews key pedagogical frameworks, including Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning (TBL), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), the case study approach, role-plays and simulations, the Lexical and Genre-Based Approaches, and Project-Based Learning (PBL). Drawing on literature from English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and applied linguistics, the article highlights practical strategies for adapting these methods to diverse professional domains, such as medicine, law, business, and engineering. A qualitative, descriptive methodology was employed, combining theoretical analysis with

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Received:09/06/2026

Revised: 19/06/2026

Accepted: 30/06/2026

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classroom-based insights. Findings indicate that a blended, needs-driven approach, which incorporates authentic materials and task-focused activities, is most effective in developing both professional communicative competence and disciplinary knowledge. The study underscores the importance of learner-centered instruction, contextual adaptation, and careful needs analysis for optimizing FLSP teaching outcomes.

Key words: foreign language for specific purposes (FLSP), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), professional communication, communicative language teaching, task-based learning, content and language integrated learning, project-based learning, genre-based approach, lexical approach, needs analysis

ԱՍՓՈՓՈՒՄ

ԱՆԳԼԵՐԵՆԻ ԴԱՍԱՎԱՆԴՈՒՄԸ ՀԱՏՈՒԿ ՄԱՍՆԱԳԻՏԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՏԵՐՈՒՄ. ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿԱԿԻՑ ՄՈՏԵՑՈՒՄՆԵՐ ԲԼՏՔ ՈՒՍՈՒՑՄԱՆ ՄԵՋ

Այս հոդվածը քննության է առնում անգլերենի դասավանդման ժամանակակից մեթոդները հատուկ նպատակներով օտար լեզուների դասավանդման (FLSP) շրջանակներում՝ շեշտը դնելով այն մոտեցումների վրա, որոնք ինտեգրում են լեզվի դասավանդումը մասնագիտական բովանդակության հետ: Ուսումնասիրությունը վերլուծում է մանկավարժական հիմնական մոդելները, այդ թվում՝ հաղորդակցական ուսուցման մոտեցումը (CLT), առաջադրանքների վրա հիմնված ուսուցումը (TBL), բովանդակության և լեզվի ինտեգրված ուսուցումը (CLIL), դեպքի ուսումնասիրության մոտեցումը, դերային խաղերը և սիմուլյացիաները, բառապաշարի և ժանրերի վրա հիմնված մոտեցումները, ինչպես նաև նախագծերի վրա հիմնված ուսուցումը (PBL): Հատուկ նպատակներով անգլերենի (ESP) և կիրառական լեզվաբանության գրականության վրա հիմնվելով՝ հոդվածը ընդգծում է այս մեթոդները տարբեր մասնագիտական ոլորտներում, ինչպիսիք են բժշկությունը, իրավունքը, բիզնեսը և ճարտարագիտությունը, հարմարեցնելու գործնական ռազմավարությունները: Ուսումնասիրությունը կիրառել է որակական, նկարագրական մեթոդաբանություն՝ համատեղելով տեսական վերլուծությունը լսարանային դիտարկումների հետ:

Արդյունքները ցույց են տալիս, որ խառը, կարիքներին ուղղված մոտեցումը, որը ներառում է բնագիր նյութեր և առաջադրանքակենտրոն գործունեություն, ամենաարդյունավետն է ինչպես մասնագիտական հաղորդակցական կարողությունների, այնպես էլ առարկայական գիտելիքների զարգացման գործում: Ուսումնասիրությունը ընդգծում է ուսանողակենտրոն ուսուցման, համատեքստային հարմարվողականության և կարիքների ուշադիր վերլուծության կարևորությունը՝ օտար լեզուների դասավանդման արդյունքները և գիտելիքների գործնական կիրառումը օպտիմալացնելու համար:

Բանալի բառեր՝ օտար լեզու հատուկ նպատակների համար (FLSP), անգլերեն հատուկ նպատակների համար (ESP), մասնագիտական հաղորդակցություն, հաղորդակցական լեզվի դասավանդում, առաջադրանքային ուսուցում, բովանդակության և լեզվի ինտեգրված ուսուցում, նախագծերի վրա հիմնված ուսուցում, ժանրային մոտեցում, բառապաշարային մոտեցում, կարիքների վերլուծություն

РЕЗЮМЕ

ПРЕПОДАВАНИЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА ДЛЯ КОНКРЕТНЫХ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНЫХ КОНТЕКСТОВ: СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПОДХОДЫ В ОБУЧЕНИИ FLSP

В данной статье рассматриваются современные методы преподавания английского языка в рамках обучения иностранному языку для специальных целей (FLSP), с акцентом на подходы, интегрирующие языковое обучение с профессиональным содержанием. В исследовании анализируются ключевые педагогические модели, включая коммуникативный подход (CLT), обучение на основе задач (TBL), интегрированное обучение содержанию и языку (CLIL), кейсовый подход (анализ конкретных случаев), ролевые игры и симуляции, лексический и жанрово-ориентированный подходы, а также проектное обучение (PBL). Опираясь на литературу в области английского языка для специальных целей (ESP) и прикладной лингвистики, статья освещает практические стратегии адаптации этих методов к различным

профессиональным областям, таким как медицина, право, бизнес и инженерия.

В исследовании использовалась качественная, описательная методология, сочетающая теоретический анализ с наблюдениями, полученными в учебной аудитории.

Результаты исследования показывают, что смешанный, ориентированный на потребности подход, включающий аутентичные материалы и задания, направленные на выполнение конкретных задач, наиболее эффективен для развития как профессиональной коммуникативной компетентности, так и предметных знаний. Исследование подчеркивает важность обучения, ориентированного на учащегося, адаптации к контексту и тщательного анализа потребностей для оптимизации результатов преподавания иностранных языков и практического применения знаний.

Ключевые слова: иностранный язык для специальных целей (FLSP), английский язык для специальных целей (ESP), профессиональная коммуникация, коммуникативное обучение языку, обучение на основе задач, интегрированное обучение содержанию и языку, проектное обучение, жанровый подход, лексический подход, анализ потребностей.

Introduction

The growing demand for English as a medium of professional and academic communication has significantly increased the importance of Foreign Language for Specific Purposes (FLSP) instruction. Unlike General English, FLSP focuses on equipping learners with the linguistic resources and communicative strategies required to perform effectively in clearly defined professional and disciplinary contexts. As a result, FLSP teaching prioritizes not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to use language appropriately for professional interaction, problem-solving, and decision-making.

In contemporary FLSP classrooms, learners are expected to engage in discipline-specific communicative tasks such as writing reports, participating in professional discussions, negotiating with clients, and delivering presentations. These demands require pedagogical approaches that integrate language development with subject-matter knowledge and professional discourse conventions. Consequently, the selection of appropriate teaching methods becomes a central concern in FLSP course design.

Research in English for Specific Purposes and applied linguistics has consistently emphasized the importance of needs analysis and learner-centered instruction as the foundation of effective FLSP pedagogy (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Basturkmen, 2010). Scholars argue that no single method can adequately address the diverse communicative requirements of FLSP learners across different professional domains. Instead, a flexible combination of approaches is required to ensure relevance, authenticity, and practical applicability.

Against this theoretical background, the present article examines current methods of teaching English in an FLSP classroom, with particular attention to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), case studies, role-plays and simulations, and Project-Based Learning (PBL). The article aims to demonstrate how these methods can be adapted to meet the communicative needs of learners in various professional fields and to argue that a blended, needs-based methodological approach offers the most effective framework for FLSP instruction.

Foreign Language for Specific Purposes (FLSP) teaching aims to equip learners with both linguistic competence and professional communicative skills required for functioning in specific academic or

occupational contexts. Teaching English in an FLSP classroom demands methods that integrate content knowledge with targeted language instruction. This article reviews key teaching methods commonly employed in FLSP instruction and evaluates their effectiveness through both theoretical discussion and empirical insights. Findings indicate that a blended approach, tailored through needs analysis, offers optimal results.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive research design combining a targeted review of relevant literature with classroom-based observations in FLSP contexts. The literature was selected according to three main criteria: **(a)** relevance to Foreign Language for Specific Purposes and English for Specific Purposes pedagogy, **(b)** theoretical and methodological influence within applied linguistics, and **(c)** frequency of citation in established ESP research. Priority was given to seminal and widely recognized works addressing Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning, experiential learning, and project-based instruction.

In addition to the literature review, the analysis was informed by systematic classroom observations conducted in undergraduate FLSP courses across several professional domains, including law, business, engineering, medicine, and tourism. These observations focused on learner engagement, communicative effectiveness, task authenticity, and the practical applicability of each method in profession-specific settings. The combined use of theoretical analysis and classroom observation enabled a contextualized evaluation of teaching methods and supported the identification of pedagogical practices most suitable for FLSP instruction.

Teaching Methods in the FLSP Classroom

Foreign Language for Specific Purposes (FLSP) instruction aims to develop learners' ability to use English effectively within specific professional and academic contexts. Unlike General English courses, FLSP programs are designed around clearly defined communicative needs related to learners' future careers or fields of study. Consequently, FLSP pedagogy requires teaching methods that integrate language development with professional content, discourse conventions, and real-world communicative practices.

Research in English for Specific Purposes and FLSP methodology emphasizes the importance of needs-based course design and the integration of language with subject content (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Coyle et al., 2010). Key teaching methods, including Task-Based Learning (TBL), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), case studies, role-plays, and Project-Based Learning (PBL), are grounded in established theoretical frameworks. TBL promotes meaningful communication and functional language use (Ellis, 2003; Long, 2015), closely aligning with Communicative Language Teaching by encouraging learners to use English as a tool for completing professional tasks. CLIL, originating from bilingual education research, provides a dual-focused approach in which subject matter is taught through the target language (Coyle et al., 2010; Marsh, 2012), enabling learners to acquire both content knowledge and academic language. Experiential methods, such as case studies and role-plays, support knowledge acquisition through authentic problem-solving scenarios (Kolb, 1984). Project-Based Learning, rooted in constructivist theory, allows learners to develop collaborative, integrated skills while engaging in sustained, real-world projects (Thomas, 2000). Despite the proven effectiveness of these approaches, scholars highlight the necessity of adapting methods to local contexts and

conducting thorough needs analyses to ensure relevance and learner-centered outcomes (Basturkmen, 2010).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching is central to FLSP instruction, as it emphasizes meaningful language use in realistic professional scenarios. In FLSP contexts, CLT activities are designed to mirror workplace communication, promoting fluency, pragmatic competence, and confidence.

Typical classroom practices include:

- Role-plays (e.g., doctor–patient, lawyer–client, engineer–manager interactions)
- Simulations of professional situations
- Pair and group tasks requiring collaborative problem-solving

Challenges and solutions: Learners often fear making mistakes, which can inhibit participation. According to Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) and Horwitz et al. (1986), anxiety can limit language acquisition. To address this, instructors should create a safe, supportive environment and employ practical strategies such as:

- Starting with pair work to reduce anxiety
- Using small-group tasks to share responsibility
- Gradually increasing task complexity
- Prioritizing meaning over form in early stages
- Integrating authentic materials to enhance relevance and motivation

Classroom Illustration

In a Legal English course for third-year law students, learners participated in a simulated lawyer–client consultation. Working in pairs, one student assumed the role of a legal advisor while the other presented a contractual dispute. The task required the use of professional questioning strategies, clarification

techniques, and appropriate register. Observations indicated increased learner confidence and fluency, as students focused on conveying legal meaning rather than grammatical accuracy. This supports the effectiveness of CLT in developing pragmatic competence in FLSP contexts.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

TBLT is highly effective in FLSP instruction because it mirrors the communicative demands of professional environments. Learners complete goal-oriented tasks where language is a tool to achieve specific outcomes rather than an object of study.

Examples of FLSP tasks:

- Writing professional emails or reports
- Delivering oral presentations
- Analyzing case studies
- Solving profession-specific problems

TBLT encourages learners to negotiate meaning and use English authentically, promoting both linguistic and professional competence (Ellis, 2003; Long, 2015).

Classroom Illustration

In an Engineering English class, students completed a task requiring them to explain a technical process using visual diagrams. The task outcome was a short oral presentation describing system functionality. Language input was provided only after task completion, allowing learners to notice gaps in their linguistic resources. Students demonstrated improved accuracy in technical vocabulary and greater fluency, illustrating how TBLT promotes authentic language use aligned with professional tasks.

Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CBI and CLIL involve teaching subject-specific content through English. This approach allows learners to acquire disciplinary knowledge while simultaneously developing professional language skills.

Key characteristics:

- Use of authentic professional texts
- Integration of reading, writing, listening, and speaking
- Focus on terminology and discourse patterns

CLIL has proven effective in medicine, business, and engineering, where language and conceptual understanding are closely linked (Coyle et al., 2010; Marsh, 2012). Successful implementation often requires collaboration between language instructors and subject-matter experts.

Classroom Illustration

In a Medical English course, students studied a short module on cardiovascular diseases delivered entirely in English. Authentic materials, including simplified journal abstracts and patient charts, were used. Students then summarized diagnostic procedures in small groups. Results showed improved comprehension of subject content alongside increased command of medical terminology, highlighting the dual benefits of CLIL in FLSP settings.

Lexical Approach

The Lexical Approach is particularly effective in FLSP contexts, where professional communication relies heavily on formulaic language, collocations, and discipline-specific phraseology rather than isolated grammatical structures. Research has demonstrated that fluency and accuracy in professional settings depend largely on the learner's command of recurrent lexical patterns (Lewis, 1993; Nation, 2001).

In FLSP classrooms, lexical instruction focuses on high-frequency professional collocations, institutionalized expressions, and semi-fixed phrases

commonly used in workplace discourse. Rather than memorizing single terms, learners analyze how lexical items function within authentic professional texts.

Classroom

illustration:

In a Business English course, students worked with authentic financial reports to identify recurrent collocations such as *market volatility*, *revenue growth*, *cost efficiency*, and *risk assessment*. Learners then completed tasks requiring them to incorporate these lexical chunks into executive summaries and oral briefings.

Language outcomes:

- Increased accuracy in professional vocabulary use
- Improved fluency through reduced processing time
- Greater confidence in spoken and written professional communication

This approach enables learners to produce language that sounds professionally appropriate and contextually natural, which is a core objective of FLSP instruction.

Genre-Based Approach

The Genre-Based Approach addresses the need for FLSP learners to understand and produce professionally recognized text types that follow established rhetorical and structural conventions. Drawing on systemic functional linguistics (Swales, 1990; Hyland, 2004), this approach emphasizes how language choices are shaped by communicative purpose, audience expectations, and disciplinary norms.

In FLSP settings, genre-based instruction typically follows a scaffolded sequence:

1. Analysis of model texts
2. Identification of rhetorical moves and language features

3. Guided practice
4. Independent production

Classroom illustration:

In an Academic English course for economics students, learners analyzed research article abstracts to identify standard rhetorical moves (background, purpose, methodology, results, implications). Students then compared abstracts across journals before drafting their own abstracts based on small-scale research projects.

In Legal English courses, students examined formal complaint letters and legal opinions, focusing on modal verbs for obligation, hedging strategies, and impersonal structures typical of legal discourse.

Language outcomes:

- Enhanced awareness of disciplinary discourse conventions
- Improved coherence and organization in professional writing
- Greater ability to adapt language to audience and purpose

By making genre conventions explicit, this approach equips learners with transferable writing and reading strategies applicable across professional contexts.

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

PBL engages learners in extended, collaborative tasks that reflect real-world professional workflows. Typical FLSP projects include designing business plans, preparing medical case presentations, or conducting small-scale professional research.

Advantages:

- Encourages autonomy and teamwork
- Integrates language skills with professional knowledge
- Allows sustained engagement with authentic tasks

Rooted in constructivist theory, PBL mirrors professional practice while promoting integrated skill development (Thomas, 2000).

Classroom Illustration

In a Tourism English program, students worked in teams to design a sustainable tourism marketing project. Over six weeks, they conducted research, prepared written promotional materials, and delivered a final oral presentation. The project integrated reading, writing, speaking, and professional collaboration. Learners reported increased motivation and autonomy, while instructors observed sustained language development across skills.

Needs-Based and Learner-Centered Approach

Effective FLSP instruction begins with a thorough needs analysis to identify learners' goals, professional contexts, and communication requirements. Teachers then select relevant methods, materials, and tasks, adapting them to learners' levels and specializations.

Benefits:

- Personalizes instruction
- Ensures maximum relevance and effectiveness
- Supports learner engagement and motivation

The integration of theory and practice in FLSP teaching demonstrates that no single method is sufficient. A blended approach, guided by needs analysis and adapted to professional contexts, offers the most effective framework for developing professional language competence and communicative skills.

Classroom Illustration

In a mixed-discipline FLSP course, instructors conducted a needs analysis questionnaire at the beginning of the semester. Based on learner responses, tasks were adapted to include profession-specific scenarios. As a result, student

engagement increased, and learners reported greater perceived relevance of classroom activities to their future careers.

Table 1. Teaching Methods and Their Application in FLSP Classrooms

Teaching Method	Typical Contexts	FLSP Classroom Tasks	Primary Learning Outcomes
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	Law, business, tourism	Role-plays, simulations	Fluency, pragmatic competence
Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)	Engineering, business	IT, Presentations, reports	Functional language use
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)	Medicine, engineering	Content lectures, summaries	Academic and professional literacy
Lexical Approach	Business, medicine	law, Collocation analysis	Lexical accuracy
Genre-Based Approach	Academic and professional writing	Research articles, emails	Discourse competence
Project-Based Learning (PBL)	Tourism, sustainability	Group projects	Collaboration, integrated skills
Needs-Based Approach	All domains	FLSP Needs analysis tasks	Relevance, engagement

Conclusion

Teaching English in FLSP classrooms requires a deliberate combination of methods that bridge the gap between general English proficiency and profession-specific communication skills. The review and analysis presented in this study demonstrate that no single approach is sufficient; rather, integrating communicative, task-based, content-driven, experiential, and project-based methods yields the most effective outcomes.

Key insights for FLSP instruction include:

- *Needs-driven course design:* Instruction must be tailored to learners' professional goals, occupational contexts, and communication requirements.
- *Blended methodological approach:* Combining CLT, TBL, CLIL, case studies, role-plays, lexical and genre-based strategies, and PBL enhances relevance and engagement.
- *Use of authentic materials:* Real-world texts, recordings, and scenarios improve motivation and prepare learners for professional communication.
- *Scaffolded and learner-centered activities:* Gradually increasing task complexity, promoting collaboration, and prioritizing meaning over form foster confidence and skill development.

Future research should focus on empirical studies measuring the impact of individual methods on professional performance and evaluating blended approaches in diverse FLSP contexts. Overall, effective FLSP instruction demands a dynamic, context-sensitive, and theoretically informed methodology that equips learners with the practical language skills and professional literacy necessary for their fields.

ԳՐԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

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