

## METHODS, INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES, AND TEACHING AIDS FOR DEVELOPING ENGLISH DISCOURSE COMPETENCE

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### Abstract

This article explores the importance of developing discourse competence in foreign language education for students. In the context of growing international collaboration and the global labor market, medical professionals are expected to communicate effectively in foreign languages. The study distinguishes between the concepts of "competence" and "competency," emphasizing the need for not only knowledge but also practical communication skills. It also defines discourse as a communicative phenomenon that includes both verbal and non-verbal aspects, contextual factors, and cultural appropriateness. Special attention is given to the integration of discourse-based approaches in foreign language instruction, highlighting their effectiveness in training competent medical specialists capable of participating in international academic and professional settings.

**Keywords:** Discursive competence, non-philological education, competence, competency, communicative approach.

### Introduction

In the context of non-philological higher education, English language instruction, particularly within the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), requires the application of discourse-oriented analytical approaches that enable students to construct and interpret meaning in accordance with the sociolinguistic conventions of their professional fields [1:24]. From this perspective, the development of a methodology for enhancing discourse competence among future specialists should move beyond the use of stereotypical language patterns and instead incorporate interactive pedagogical technologies in a systematic manner. Such an approach promotes the logical organization of ideas in both spoken and written communication, while also preparing learners to meet the requirements of national and international language proficiency assessments. Consequently, discourse-oriented instruction serves as an essential conceptual foundation for improving the quality and effectiveness of foreign language education in non-philological programs.



### **Main part**

The modernization of higher education and the growing demand for effective professional communication have increased scholarly interest in discourse competence as an essential component of foreign language education. Contemporary researchers emphasize that successful language learning requires not only grammatical and lexical knowledge but also the ability to organize ideas coherently and use language appropriately in various communicative contexts.

One of the significant contributions to discourse-oriented language teaching was made by Thornbury[2], who argues that language instruction should focus on discourse as a meaningful unit of communication rather than on isolated sentences. According to the author, learners need to master the principles of cohesion, coherence, thematic progression, and contextual appropriateness in order to participate successfully in real-life communication.

Recent studies have increasingly examined discourse competence within the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Larsen-Freeman and Anderson note that language instruction should prepare learners to use English in authentic professional environments by integrating communicative tasks and contextualized learning experiences[3]. In a similar vein, Wong and Wong argue that students in higher education must develop the ability to participate effectively in academic and professional discourse communities, which requires advanced discourse management skills[4].

The effective development of discourse competence among students of non-philological higher education institutions requires the implementation of learner-centered, communicative, and professionally oriented instructional approaches. Since discourse competence involves the ability to produce coherent, cohesive, and contextually appropriate spoken and written communication, language instruction should provide opportunities for learners to engage in authentic communicative practices that reflect real-life academic and professional situations. Contemporary foreign language pedagogy emphasizes the integration of interactive teaching methods and digital technologies to facilitate discourse construction and enhance communicative performance:

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) - Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is widely recognized as one of the most effective approaches for fostering discourse competence. The primary objective of CLT is to develop learners' ability to use language meaningfully and appropriately in various communicative contexts rather than merely mastering grammatical structures. Through role-plays, simulations, information-gap activities, pair work, and group discussions, students are encouraged to negotiate meaning, exchange ideas, and construct coherent discourse. Such activities help learners develop the ability to maintain thematic continuity, employ cohesive devices effectively, and adapt their language use according to communicative purposes and audience expectations. Moreover, CLT creates a supportive environment in which students can actively participate in communication and gain confidence in expressing their ideas;

Project-Based Learning – represents another powerful pedagogical approach for developing discourse competence. This method requires learners to investigate authentic problems, conduct research, collaborate with peers, and present outcomes through oral presentations, written reports, and multimedia products. The process of planning, organizing, and presenting



project results promotes the integration of all language skills while encouraging students to construct extended discourse. Furthermore, project-based activities foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, enabling learners to communicate information in a logical and coherent manner. In ESP classrooms, projects can be designed around professional topics relevant to students' future careers, thereby increasing both motivation and communicative relevance;

**Case Study Method** - The case study method provides students with opportunities to analyze realistic professional situations and apply their knowledge in solving practical problems. By examining authentic cases, learners engage in discussions, evaluate alternative solutions, justify decisions, and present recommendations. Such tasks require students to formulate arguments, establish logical relationships between ideas, and support opinions with evidence. Consequently, the case study method contributes significantly to the development of argumentative and professional discourse skills while simultaneously strengthening learners' analytical and decision-making capacities.

**Interactive Educational Applications** - Interactive applications such as Padlet, Kahoot, Quizlet, Mentimeter, and Nearpod provide opportunities for active learner participation and collaborative knowledge construction. These tools encourage students to exchange ideas, respond to prompts, and engage in communicative tasks that require discourse production. Additionally, immediate feedback mechanisms help learners identify strengths and weaknesses in their communication, promoting continuous improvement.

The findings of contemporary research and pedagogical practice indicate that discourse-oriented instructional approaches significantly enhance the effectiveness of English language teaching in non-philological higher education programs. The integration of communicative methods, project-based learning, case studies, discussions, debates, and digital technologies creates a learning environment in which students actively construct and negotiate meaning. Such experiences contribute to the development of coherent and contextually appropriate communication skills that are essential for academic and professional success.

## **Conclusion**

The study has demonstrated that the development of discourse competence is an essential component of contemporary English language teaching in non-philological higher education institutions. In the context of increasing globalization and professional communication demands, students are expected not only to possess linguistic knowledge but also to communicate effectively in academic, professional, and intercultural environments. Therefore, discourse competence should be regarded as a key indicator of successful foreign language learning.

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