THEORETICAL APPROACH TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH LEARNING: CONCEPTUAL HOLISTIC LANGUAGE LEARNING MODEL

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Annotation

In today's globalized environment, proficiency in English is not just an advantage but a necessity for professional fields. Traditional language learning methods often do not prepare individuals for the subtleties required in professional communication, highlighting the need for innovative teaching, and learning models. Despite the availability of English language resources and institutions, many learners lack the practical skills needed for their professional fields, creating a significant gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

The problem spans education, linguistics, and professional development, encompassing issues like the lack of personalized learning, insufficient focus on practical application, and inadequate real-world immersion and feedback. The article aims to present the holistic conceptual model that addresses these shortcomings by integrating practical experiences, individualized learning plans, and real-world context into the curriculum, emphasizing the importance of ongoing assessment and feedback, and aligning language learning with learners' professional specialties to enhance motivation and relevance.

Key words: *professional English, language learning, conceptual holistic language learning model*

Introduction

The conceptual model of purposeful teaching and learning of professional English language should set the stage for a deep dive into the intricacies and methodologies that enhance the acquisition and application of English language skills in professional settings. The theoretical framework of this model is rooted in the idea that language learning, particularly for professional purposes, must transcend traditional classroom boundaries to incorporate practical, effective learning strategies tailored to individual needs and real-world applications.

Purpose of the article: The theoretical section of this article aims to lay a solid foundation by delineating the model's components, which include practical effective learning, an individualized approach, the importance of practice and repetition, the immersion in real situations and context, ongoing assessment and feedback, and the integration with specialty subjects. These elements collectively contribute to a holistic and effective framework for professional English learning.

Relevance of the Topic: In today's globalized world, the command of the English language in professional arenas is not merely an advantage but a necessity. As the lingua franca of international business, science, and technology, English proficiency opens doors to countless opportunities. However, the traditional approaches to language learning often fall short in preparing individuals for the nuanced and dynamic demands of professional communication. Thus, exploring innovative teaching and learning models is of paramount importance.

Problem Statement: Despite the ubiquity of English language learning resources and institutions, many learners emerge without the practical skills needed to navigate their professional fields confidently. This gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application presents a significant challenge, underlining the need for a teaching model that bridges this divide.

Problem Field: The problem extends across various domains, including education, linguistics, and professional development. It encompasses issues like the lack of personalized learning, insufficient focus on practical application, and the need for continuous feedback and real-world immersion. Some studies explore effective teaching and learning activities in distance learning programs, including foreign language courses, highlighting the importance of practical exercises in achieving learning effectiveness (Alipichev et al., 2016). The rest of the papers discuss the potential benefits of corpus use for language learners, focusing on the effectiveness of specific training approaches that include

practical exercises to make some learners particularly effective users (Kennedy, Miceli, 2017). Next research identifies several factors influencing the effectiveness of technology-enhanced language learning, including practical exercises and their role in increasing students' technology acceptance for language learning (Zhang, Zou, 2022).

Objectives of the article:

1. To illustrate the significance of integrating practical experiences, individualized learning plans, and real-world context into the curriculum.
2. To highlight the role of continuous assessment and feedback in fostering language acquisition and proficiency.
3. To explore the benefits of aligning language learning with learners' professional specialties, thereby enhancing motivation and relevance.
4. To present a comprehensive model that addresses the shortcomings of traditional English language teaching methods, especially in professional contexts.

Therefore, this article embarks on a critical exploration of a conceptual model dedicated to the purposeful teaching and learning of professional English. By addressing the current challenges in language education and proposing a multifaceted approach, it seeks to pave the way for more effective, engaging, and practical language learning experiences that are directly applicable to professional environments.

Designing the conceptual holistic language learning model

Recently English for specific purposes has become one of the most prevailing forms of teaching English as a foreign language. The concept underlying the term language for specific purposes is closely associated with the teaching of language for professional purposes where students must learn how to use language in their future professional setting. In this context, specific linguistic features of the language used in different specialized fields are emphasized (Milosavljevic et. al., 2015). The language courses for specific purposes are based on vocabulary set and unique language skills that will be indispensable to learners in a specialized field. There is no single approach for all pedagogical situations; there is no curriculum and set of activities that are applicable in all contexts. Therefore, it is of crucial importance in professional English teaching to determine the unique features of teaching and learning and apply them in the development of the curriculum, syllabus, and assessment (Milosavljevic et. al., 2015). Thus, having already oriented a students' education towards a specific area, they should start from **practical effective learning** allowing them to immediately apply the learned knowledge in real life situations. This method helps students master the language skills in a way that they can use them successfully applied in real life or work environment. Professional English language teaching emerges as the dominant approach in line with contemporary priorities such as communicative competence and learner-centered methods (Qasserras, 2023).

Practical effective learning includes:
- ✓ *Communication* expressed through acting, discussion, debate, or even everyday situations such as going to a store or being served at a hotel reception.
- ✓ *Project work* by encouraging working in groups and creating projects or solving together task, e.g. students can present a specific topic followed by collaboration write an article about its study and present a specific professional problem decision.
- ✓ *Specialty lectures* that give students the opportunity to study a specific subject specialist vocabulary and terms that will be relevant in their professional field. That would help them to master the terminology that they would have to use in real life in their work.
- ✓ *Practical exercises* that encourage regular application of acquired knowledge and skills in practice through daily activities, discussion clubs, etc.
- ✓ *Context and situations* learned through real language learning experiences situations and contexts, such as office situations, conferences, or conversations with customers.

Thus, we naturally come across the **individual approach** enabling students to learn according to their individual needs.

It's worth admitting the advantages of small group work include enhanced identification of the needs of the students and development of responsibility and interpersonal skills. According to this approach, teachers need to demonstrate a positive attitude, confidence, and respect for their students, as well as express understanding of students' way of learning. Teachers cannot teach students the thinking process, but they can increase the awareness of their own inner potential through practice of the so-called sub-skills. These sub-skills include analytical thinking, problem solving, deduction, and use of imagination. For these skills to be improved, teachers are expected to adopt the attitudes and approaches of students in various activities in class (Milosavljevic et. al., 2015).

Moreover, every student has his/her own strengths and weaknesses, so it's important to choose teaching methods that meet the needs of each specific student and learning style. A personalized approach helps to get the most out of each student's potential. An individual approach allows the teacher to adapt teaching content and methodology to meet the needs of a particular student, including his professional field, competencies and learning style. By providing an individualized approach, the student can be better considered interests and personal *motivations* for learning. When learning is tailored to the needs and interests of the student, increases his motivation and desire to learn, which helps achieve better learning outcomes.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), many linguists have proven that motivation and attitude are closely related in determining the success of second language learning. Higher levels of motivation and positive attitude will produce more successful language learners and vice versa. To follow Abadi and Darani (2015), literature supports a relationship between attitudes towards language learning and achievement in the language (Masgoret, Gardner, 2003) even more than that of other subjects of the curriculum (Jordan, 1941). Furthermore, gender differences in attitudes towards second language learning have been repeatedly witnessed, positioning gender as an important issue. Povel and Batters study (1985) found that female students had more positive perceptions on the foreign language (Abadi, Darani, 2015).

An individual approach allows more *efficient* use of learning time and resources. When training content is tailored to the needs of the student, it can do a lot to absorb new material and skills faster, because they are directly related to his daily life or professional activities.

An individual approach allows the teacher to create a reasonable and accessible learning environment that helps each student feel at home appreciated and supported. When students feel that their individual needs are understood and appreciated, it increases their self-confidence and promotes success learning.

Previous research has considered the effects of content familiarity and task **repetition** on the second language performance, but few studies have looked at the effect of these factors on learners' engagement in task performance. It was proved that repeating the tasks, however, negatively influenced behavioral and cognitive engagement, although the students felt more relaxed and confident. In addition, the students are more motivated to repeat unfamiliar topics, although they demonstrate more noticeable declines in their frequency of self-repair (an indicator of cognitive engagement) for these topics. These results provided empirical evidence for the relationship between task design and implementation factors and the second or professional language task engagement. Teachers might base repetition decisions partially on learners' familiarity with the topic (Qiu, Lo, 2016).

Repetition is common in language use. Similarly, having students repeat is a common practice in language teaching. After surveying some of the better-known contributions of repetition to language learning, it is proposed an innovative role for repetition from the perspective of complexity theory. It is argued that we should not think of repetition as exact replication, but rather we should think of it as iteration that generates variation. Thus, what results from iteration is a mutable state. Iteration is one way that we create options in how to make meaning, position ourselves in the world as we want, understand the differences which we encounter in others, and adapt to a changing context (Larsen-Freeman, 2018).

Task repetition, defined as *repetition of a given configuration of purposes, and a set of content information* (Bygate, 2001, p. 2) is one of the methodological options in task-based language learning. It is effective for improving aspects of speaking ability such as fluency (Li, Rogers, 2021). Despite the accumulating evidence confirming benefits of task repetition, some teachers are reluctant to use it in their classrooms for fear of its negative impact on learners' perception toward the task (Larsen–Freeman, 2018). Because classroom studies in general suggest that repetition tends to induce boredom (Kruk, Zawodniak, 2020).

Whatever the subject or topic, much of the process of learning relates to accurately recalling and reusing learned information. For anyone trying to learn a new language, there's always lots to remember – grammar structures, word order, vocabulary, pronunciation etc. The list goes on and on. Unsurprisingly, much attention has therefore been given to understanding how students can best retain and recall information. In language learning, the process of spaced repetition has been proven to be highly effective. Frequent practice and repetition are essential to acquire new knowledge and skills. Repetition helps ensure that the skill becomes automatic, and the language is much more natural. It includes:

    ✓ *Reinforcement of skills* that help consolidate skills that students have already mastered. It is not enough to simply learn a new word or grammar rule; need them often use them to become skills that can be relied upon in speaking or writing.

    ✓ *Automation.* Repetition allows students to become more efficient and faster speaking or writing in English because the skills become automatic and no longer required great effort.

    ✓ *Self-management*. Practice and repetition help students understand what specific things they haven't yet understood or mastered enough, allowing them to focus on certain areas in which they should improve.

    ✓ *Maintenance*. The learning process is continuous, and knowledge and skills can lose meaning if they are not regularly practiced and repeated. Repetition helps maintain and strengthen already acquired knowledge.

    ✓ *Correction*. Through repetition and practice, students can spot their mistakes and deficiencies and correct them. This helps them improve and improve their language skills.

Thus, practice and repetition are essential in adult English language learning process, as they help consolidate skills, automate language use and retention continuous learning process, which leads to the successful achievement of learning outcomes.
The following configuration of professional English learning – **task-based language teaching –** puts pedagogic tasks as the core unit of planning and language teaching practice. Task-based instruction emphasizes classroom interaction, learner-centered teaching, and authentic language use (Ellis, 2009). Various definitions have been proposed for task. Ellis (2009) refers to the following as the common key features:

• The primary focus should be on meaning, which means that learners should be mainly concerned with processing the semantic and pragmatic meaning of utterance.

• There should be some kind of gap, i.e. a need to convey information, to express an opinion, or to infer meaning.

• Learners should largely have to rely on their own resources (linguistic and non-linguistic) to complete the activity.

• There is a clearly defined outcome other than the use of language, i.e. language serves as a means for achieving the outcome, not as an end in its own right) (Baleghizadeh, Derakhshesh, 2012).

It's essential to engage in **real-life conversations** to truly become proficient in a language. By immersing yourself in realistic situations, you can really boost your English skills through:

✓ *Everyday conversations.* Engaging in day-to-day dialogues is an effective way to acquire colloquial language, idiomatic expressions, and authentic English.

✓ *Job interviews.* If you're looking to improve your performance in job interviews or looking for a job within an English company, it can be incredibly helpful to practice various possible scenarios beforehand, giving you time to practice your language skills. This way, you'll be better equipped to communicate your experiences, skills, and future aspirations in a clear and concise manner.

✓ *Role-playing debates*. It enhances a student's ability to use persuasive language and sharpen his critical thinking skills by engaging in debates on topics that challenge your thoughts and beliefs.

✓ *Travel simulations.* Practicing travel scenarios can assist a student in improving his ability to ask for directions, book accommodation, and communicate with locals.

✓ *Storytelling practice.* The form of personal stories or fictional tales can greatly enhance one's linguistic skills and aptitude for storytelling.

- ✓ *Academic presentations.* It enhances a student's ability to communicate in English effectively and coherently in public, consider taking part in academic-style presentations.
- ✓ *Negotiation.* It improves a student's language skills in a business context.

Practicing real life speaking is important for adult English learners because it allows them to develop and enhance their language skills in a practical and meaningful way. While grammar exercises and vocabulary drills are necessary for building a foundation, they do not fully prepare learners for real-world   communication.
Additionally, real life speaking practice exposes learners to a wide range of topics and vocabulary, expanding their knowledge and understanding of the English language. It helps learners develop fluency and the ability to think and respond quickly, as conversations often require spontaneous thinking and responses. Thus, learning in real situations and contexts is an important enabling factor for adults to effectively learn English as a major because it gives them an opportunity to practically apply their knowledge and skills in a real life or work environment. Further component of professional English learning could be defined as a continuous **assessment and feedback**, important to regularly assess students' progress and provide them with clear feedback to monitor their development and identify areas where they need to improve.

Continuous assessment allows teachers to *monitor each student's progress* and individual learning process. It helps in identification learning difficulties, strengths and needs and adapt the teaching content accordingly needs of each student.
Feedback gives students an idea in which area they have already achieved good results and in which areas there are still opportunities for improvement. This helps students *feel valued and motivated* to continue to improve their language skills.
Through feedback, teachers can get information about what students understand better and what subjects they struggle with. Based on this information, the teaching methodology or content can be adjusted so that these better suit students' needs and learning styles.

Feedback encourages *collaboration* between faculty and students as they evaluate progress together and look for ways to improve the learning process. It creates a conducive learning environment where students feel comfortable support and understanding.
Lastly continuous assessment and feedback help students understand what they need to achieve and how to improve their language skills. This gives a clear goal and direction in the learning process. Therefore, continuous assessment and feedback are important skills for adults for learning English, because they help optimize the teaching process, help students feel motivated and supported and enable teachers to meet the needs of students more effectively and aspirations.

Finally, learning must be *integrated with specialty subjects,* i.e. students' major or with their planned career goals. The more the teaching is related to the students' real areas of interest, the higher the level of motivation and efficiency can be reached.
Integration of specialty subjects allows students to learn English, depending on their specific professional field or career goals. It helps them learn language skills faster and more efficiently because the learning content is related to their real life and work.
When the learning content is related to the students' major or professional interests, it increases their *motivation to learn*. Students feel more involved and related to the content of the teaching because they see a direct connection between what they learn and how it can be applied in their daily life or work.
The integration of specialty subjects helps students assimilate faster language skills as they learn to apply language in real situations that are available to them familiar and understandable. This allows them *to learn* faster and *more efficiently* because the learning process is focused on their specific needs and goals.

Integration with major subjects helps students understand how language is used in a specific professional field or activity. This *realistic learning* helps them understand how language skills can be applied in practice, not just at a theoretical level.

Finally, when learning a language that is related to the students' major, they *become more confident* in themselves and their abilities in their professional field. This gives them more confidence when speaking and interacting with colleagues or clients in their professional context. Thus, the permanent integration of specialty subjects into adult English majors learning helps students master language

skills more efficiently and motivated so that they be able to use the language successfully in their daily activities or professional activities.

After defining and discussing the components of professional English learning here could be presented the conceptual holistic language learning model (fig.):
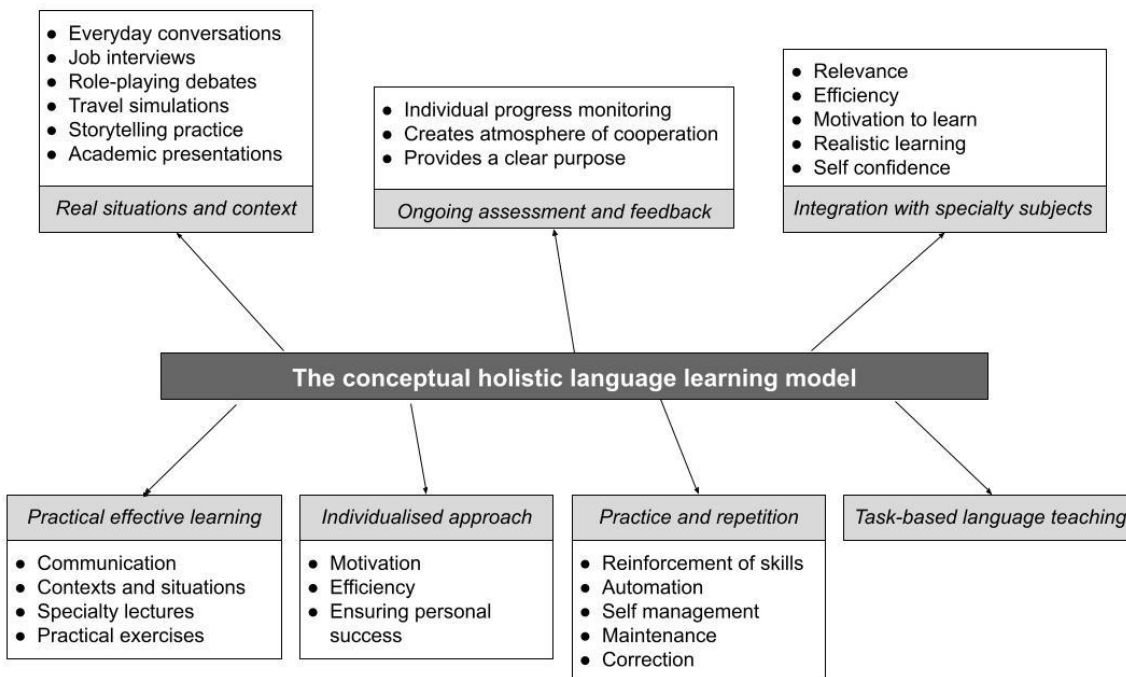

Figure. **The conceptual holistic language learning model**

Conclusions and / or recommendations

The article is dedicated to developing a conceptual model for teaching English for Specific Purposes effectively, particularly focusing on adult learners in a professional setting. The relevance of this topic is underscored by the increasing global integration of markets and the widespread use of English as the lingua franca in professional contexts. As professionals from diverse fields find themselves in situations where English is the primary means of communication, the need for specialized language learning tailored to specific professional needs has never been more critical. The problem addressed by the article lies in the traditional approaches to language teaching, which often neglect the specific needs of adult learners in professional environments. These conventional methods may not fully equip learners with the practical language skills required in their specific fields of work. Hence, the article identifies a problem field in the gap between general English language education and the specialized demands of professional communication. To bridge this gap, the article proposes a comprehensive model focusing on practical effective learning, an individualized approach to teaching, the importance of practice and replication, the significance of real situations and context, ongoing assessment and feedback, and the integration with specialty subjects. This model aims to make language learning more relevant, efficient, and aligned with the learners' professional objectives. The objectives of this theoretical part are manifold. Firstly, it seeks to provide a clear understanding of how practical exercises and real-life applications can enhance the learning process, making it more dynamic and applicable to professional contexts. Secondly, it emphasizes the need for an

individualized approach in teaching professional English, recognizing the diverse backgrounds, learning styles, and professional requirements of adult learners. This personalized strategy ensures that the learning experience is tailored to meet each learner's unique needs, thereby maximizing learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the model underscores the importance of consistent practice and repetition in language learning, which helps solidify the acquired skills and makes their application more automatic and fluent in professional settings. Additionally, it highlights the role of real-life contexts and situations in teaching professional English, arguing that engaging with genuine professional scenarios can significantly enhance the relevance and applicability of language skills.

Ongoing assessment and feedback are identified as critical components of the proposed model, providing learners with regular insights into their progress and areas requiring improvement. This continuous evaluation fosters a supportive learning environment, motivating learners and enabling adjustments to the teaching process to better meet their needs. Lastly, the integration of specialty subjects within the professional English learning framework is advocated to align language learning with the learners' professional fields or career aspirations. This approach not only enhances the relevance and motivation behind learning but also contributes to the learners' confidence and efficiency in using English within their specific professional domains.

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