

# An Innovative, Task-Based Digital Technology for Enhancing Students' Professional Communicative

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**Received:** 15 February 2025; **Accepted:** 16 March 2025; **Published:** 14 April 2025

**Abstract:** This article examines technologies for developing communicative competence in technical higher education, focusing on engineering. Communicative competence, crucial for technical professionals, extends beyond technical language to encompass effective interaction and clear articulation of ideas. The article reviews common methods: integrated English instruction, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), collaborative learning, and educational technologies (e.g., LMS, MOOCs). The role of professional communication courses and experiential learning is also discussed. While beneficial (contextualized learning, engagement, diverse resources), these technologies have limitations: overly general English courses, TBLT logistical challenges, unequal collaborative participation, the digital divide, and inconsistent experiential learning access/quality. The article concludes by emphasizing the need for future initiatives to address these shortcomings and enhance existing methods, preparing students for evolving communication demands in engineering. Further articles will present a new technology to address this.

**Keywords:** Communicative Competence, Language Learning, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Internships, English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

**Introduction:** General information about existing technologies used in technical higher education for the development of communicative competence. Communicative competence is considered an important component in the training of personnel in technical fields, particularly in the field of engineering. This refers to the ability of students not only to understand and correctly use technical language, but also to communicate effectively with different groups, interpret and respond to different communication cues, and express their ideas clearly and convincingly. To facilitate the development of these skills, various mechanisms have been used in the technical higher education sector.

As the global lingua franca of science and technology, English, which is widely spread, is often considered a core component of the curriculum of technical higher education programs. These courses are designed to enhance students' ability to understand and use technical terminology, comprehend written texts, and express ideas in English, especially ideas related to their specific fields of study.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has frequently been used as part of these courses. This approach involves students in communicative tasks that simulate real-world scenarios, such as presenting technical information, participating in meetings, or discussing engineering projects. TBLT aims to provide a practical context for students to use the language, thereby promoting communicative competence by encouraging meaningful interaction and active participation in the language learning process.

Another common technology is the use of collaborative learning strategies. Technical higher education is gradually focusing on team projects and activities. These activities are designed to require communication between team members, thereby giving students the opportunity to practice and improve their language skills in a collaborative learning environment. Collaborative learning has been proven to be beneficial for developing both the effective (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) dimensions of communicative competence.

Educational technologies also play an important role in the formation of communicative competence. The proliferation of digital platforms for education, such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and web resources, is on the verge of revolutionizing the landscape of teaching and learning. These tools create new opportunities for communication practice. For example, online forums and chats allow students to engage in written communication, while video conferencing tools enable real-time oral communication.

In addition, professional communication courses are becoming part of the curriculum of technical higher education. These courses are designed to equip students with the essential skills to communicate effectively in professional settings, including public speaking, technical writing, negotiation, intercultural communication, and the use of professional software tools. They focus on the pragmatic aspect of communication – the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts, which is a crucial element of communicative competence.

Finally, internships and cooperative education programs are also considered an important technology for the development of communicative competence. These experiential learning opportunities immerse students in real professional environments, where they can apply and improve their communication skills. By communicating with experienced engineers and other professionals, students can better understand the communicative demands of their future careers and develop the necessary skills to meet those demands.

There are many mechanisms for developing communicative competence among students in technical higher education. From integrated English language learning, task-based learning, and the use of educational technologies such as collaborative projects, to professional communication courses and internships, each technology offers its own unique advantages. However, as the communication needs of the engineering field continue to evolve and become more complex, there is a constant need for innovative technologies that can effectively address these changes and better prepare students for their future careers. In the following sections, we will explore this need in more depth and attempt to propose a new technology for enhancing communicative competence in technical higher education.

A comprehensive evaluation of the current technologies for the development of communicative competence in technical higher education reveals both positive aspects and shortcomings.

#### **Positive Aspects:**

One of the positive aspects is the increasing recognition of English language instruction in technical higher education. As the global lingua franca of science and technology, proficiency in English is considered an important asset for technical professionals, and the integration of English language learning into the curriculum serves as an important foundation.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a powerful pedagogical tool, offering a contextualized and meaningful approach to language learning. This teaching method establishes language use in practical scenarios and enhances students' ability to apply English in their professional fields (Ellis, 2003). By encouraging active participation in communicative tasks, TBLT helps develop effective language skills (speaking and writing) and receptive language skills (listening and reading).

Another of the existing technologies is collaborative learning strategies, which create conditions for practicing and improving language skills. Through team-based projects and activities, students can develop their communicative competencies in the process of working in a collaborative learning environment. These strategies allow students to learn from each other, understand meaning, and achieve mutual understanding, thereby developing their interpersonal communication skills.

The use of educational technologies is another noteworthy aspect. The integration of digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) allows students to access additional resources and new opportunities for practice. The capabilities of these technologies, for example, online discussions, video conferencing, and interactive multimedia content, provide students with a variety of communication contexts.

Experiential learning opportunities, such as professional communication courses, practical classes, and cooperative education programs, also create great potential. They provide students with "first-hand" experience in professional settings, which allows them to apply and improve their communication skills in a real-world environment (Knouse & Fontenot, 2008).

#### **Shortcomings:**

Despite these strengths, current technologies also have certain limitations. For example, English language courses are often too general, and there is visible lack of deeper approach and of specificity, necessary to fully prepare students for the communicative demands of their technical fields. More attention needs to be paid to the specific language and speech practices related to the students' specific fields of study.

While Task-Based Learning (TBL) is effective, its implementation often encounters logistical challenges. Large groups, limited class time, and a lack of resources can hinder the full realization of TBLT's potential benefits.

Although collaborative learning has many advantages, it can sometimes lead to unequal participation and hinder the language development of individual learners. Some students may dominate group activities, while others may become passive participants, limiting their opportunities for language practice.

While educational technologies offer new opportunities for communication practice, they can exacerbate inequalities among students due to the digital divide, the gap between those who can effectively use digital and information technologies and those who do not have access. Furthermore, the effectiveness of online language learning is largely dependent on self-discipline and motivation, which can vary greatly among students.

Finally, while professional communication courses and internships are valuable, they may not be available to all students due to limited resources or program constraints. In addition, the quality and relevance of these experiences can vary significantly depending on the coaching provided and the internship or collaborative environment.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, while the existing technologies for developing communicative competence in technical higher education have a number of advantages, they also have certain limitations. Future initiatives should be focused on leveraging their strengths while

addressing the shortcomings of these mechanisms.

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