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### ПРОЄКТНЕ НАВЧАННЯ В АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ ПРОФЕСІЙНОГО СПРЯМУВАННЯ ЯК ЗАСІБ РОЗВИТКУ МОВЛЕННЄВИХ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТЕЙ

У статті розглядається проєктно орієнтоване навчання як ефективний педагогічний інструмент розвитку мовних компетентностей у процесі навчання англійської мови професійного спрямування (ESP) у закладах вищої освіти. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена зростанням вимог до якості професійної ініціальної підготовки майбутніх фахівців, здатних ефективно здійснювати комунікацію в міждисциплінарному та міжнародному професійному середовищі. Незважаючи на значну кількість досліджень у галузі ESP-навчання, проблема системного розвитку мовних компетентностей засобами проєктно орієнтованих методів залишається недостатньо теоретично узагальненою, особливо в контексті інтеграції мовної, професійної та комунікативної підготовки. Метою статті є теоретичне обґрунтування потенціалу проєктно орієнтованого навчання в ESP як засобу розвитку мовних компетентностей студентів, зокрема лексичної, граматичної, дискурсивної, прагматичної та стратегічної. У межах дослідження здійснено аналіз сучасних наукових підходів до проєктно орієнтованого навчання, визначено його дидактичні особливості та окреслено механізми впливу проєктної діяльності на формування мовної компетентності в професійно орієнтованих комунікативних ситуаціях.

Узагальнені результати дослідження свідчать, що проєктно орієнтоване навчання створює умови для автентичного використання мови, інтеграції мовних знань із професійним контекстом, розвитку жанрової та дискурсивної компетентності, а також підвищення мотивації студентів до ініціальної діяльності. Проєктна робота сприяє системному розвитку мовних компетентностей завдяки поєднанню комунікативної взаємодії, колективної діяльності, рефлексії та поетапного мовного супроводу. Перспективи подальших наукових розвідок пов'язані з емпіричним вивченням ефективності конкретних моделей проєктно орієнтованого ESP-навчання та розробленням інструментарію оцінювання мовних компетентностей у межах проєктної діяльності.

**Ключові слова:** проєктно орієнтоване навчання, ESP-навчання, мовні компетентності, професійна комунікація, ініціальна підготовка, вища освіта.

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### PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN ESP AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPING LINGUISTIC COMPETENCES

The article examines project-based learning as an effective pedagogical tool for developing linguistic competences in the process of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction in higher education. The relevance of the study is determined by the growing demands placed on graduates' professional foreign language proficiency and their ability to communicate effectively in interdisciplinary and international professional environments. Despite extensive research in the field of ESP, the issue of systematic development of linguistic competences through project-based approaches remains insufficiently theorized, particularly with regard to the integration of language learning, professional content, and communicative practice. The aim of the article is to provide a theoretical justification for the potential of project-

*based learning in ESP as a means of developing students' linguistic competences, including lexical, grammatical, discourse, pragmatic, and strategic components. The study analyzes contemporary scholarly approaches to project-based learning, identifies its key didactic characteristics, and outlines the mechanisms through which project work influences the development of language competence in professionally oriented communicative contexts.*

*The generalized findings indicate that project-based learning creates favorable conditions for authentic language use, integration of linguistic knowledge with professional content, development of genre and discourse competence, and increased learner motivation. Project work supports systematic linguistic competence development by combining communicative interaction, collaborative activity, reflection, and targeted language scaffolding. The article concludes that project-based learning enhances the effectiveness of ESP instruction by aligning language education with real professional communication needs. Prospects for further research include empirical investigation of specific project-based ESP models and the development of assessment tools for evaluating linguistic competences within project-based learning environments.*

**Key words:** *Project-based learning, ESP instruction, linguistic competence, professional communication, foreign language education, higher education.*

**Problem statement.** In the context of globalization and increasing professional mobility, the demand for specialists who possess well-developed foreign language communicative competence in specific professional domains continues to grow. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses are expected not only to provide learners with domain-specific vocabulary and grammar but also to foster practical communication skills required in real professional situations. However, traditional teacher-centered instructional approaches often fail to ensure sufficient learner engagement, authentic language use, and the development of integrated linguistic competences.

One of the key challenges in ESP instruction is the gap between theoretical language knowledge and its practical application in professional contexts. Learners frequently demonstrate difficulties in transferring linguistic knowledge to real-life tasks, particularly in speaking, professional interaction, and problem-solving communication. This indicates the need for pedagogical approaches that promote learner autonomy, collaboration, contextualized language use, and meaningful communication.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) has been increasingly recognized as a learner-centered approach that encourages active knowledge construction, authentic task performance, and the integration of language skills within professional scenarios. Nevertheless, despite its growing popularity, the potential of PBL as an effective tool for developing linguistic competences in ESP remains insufficiently explored, particularly regarding its impact on communicative fluency, professional vocabulary acquisition, and collaborative discourse skills.

Therefore, the problem addressed in this study lies in determining how Project-Based Learning can be effectively implemented in ESP courses to enhance learners' linguistic competences and bridge the gap between classroom language learning and real professional communication demands.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Contemporary research in second language acquisition (SLA), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and learner-centered pedagogy provides a strong theoretical foundation for the use of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a tool for developing linguistic competences.

A significant contribution to understanding PBL in language education is presented by F. L. Stoller, who conceptualizes project-based learning as an integrative framework that combines content learning, authentic language use, and skills development. The author emphasizes that PBL promotes purposeful communication, learner autonomy, and sustained engagement with meaningful tasks. Also, F. L. Stoller argues that projects facilitate the natural integration of receptive and productive skills, making them particularly suitable for

ESP contexts where language is inseparable from professional practice.

Similarly, M. Swain's Output Hypothesis stresses the role of meaningful language production in developing accuracy and fluency. PBL encourages extended learner output through presentations, reports, and collaborative discussions, enabling learners to notice linguistic gaps and refine their language use in professional contexts.

Research on collaborative learning further supports the pedagogical value of PBL. D. W. Johnson, R. T. Johnson, and K. A. Smith demonstrate that cooperative learning improves academic achievement, motivation, and interpersonal skills. Their findings align with PBL principles, where structured collaboration enhances both language development and professional soft skills.

A comprehensive overview of empirical findings is provided by J. W. Thomas, who identifies authenticity, student autonomy, and inquiry-driven tasks as core characteristics of effective project-based learning. He concludes that PBL positively influences learner motivation, problem-solving ability, and deeper knowledge construction, all of which are essential for ESP competence development.

The broader educational relevance of project-based approaches is highlighted by UNESCO [10], which emphasizes learner-centered, problem-oriented instruction as central to Education for Sustainable Development. PBL aligns with these principles by fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world problem solving, thus reinforcing its applicability in ESP education.

Academic discourse competence, a key component of ESP, is examined by K. Hyland, who emphasizes the social and disciplinary nature of academic writing. Project work enables learners to engage with authentic disciplinary genres and discourse practices, thereby facilitating the development of genre awareness and communicative appropriateness.

From a sociocultural perspective, J. P. Lantolf and S. L. Thorne argue that language development occurs through mediated social interaction. PBL environments, characterized by collaboration and scaffolded learning, reflect sociocultural principles by supporting learners within their zones of proximal development.

Vocabulary acquisition, a crucial element of ESP competence, is addressed by I. S. P. Nation, who stresses the importance of repeated exposure and meaningful use of lexical items. Project work promotes contextualized vocabulary learning through sustained engagement with professional content and communicative tasks.

The development of writing accuracy within project contexts can be linked to D. R. Ferris, who highlights the role of feedback and revision in improving second language writing. PBL typically incorporates iterative

drafting and peer feedback, which supports the gradual refinement of linguistic accuracy. P. Black and D. Wiliam provide important insights into formative assessment, emphasizing feedback as a mechanism for improving learning outcomes. Continuous assessment practices embedded in PBL, such as peer evaluation and reflective feedback, contribute to ongoing linguistic development and learner autonomy.

Despite numerous works and publications on this topic, some issues remain unexplored – scholars still research developing linguistic competences in the process of ESP learning.

**The aim** of the study is to provide a theoretical justification for the potential of project-based learning in ESP as a means of developing students' linguistic competences, including lexical, grammatical, discourse, pragmatic, and strategic components. The study analyzes contemporary scholarly approaches to project-based learning, identifies its key didactic characteristics, and outlines the mechanisms through which project work influences the development of language competence in professionally oriented communicative contexts.

**Presentation of the main material.** Project-Based Learning (PBL) in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can be understood as an integrative pedagogical approach that situates language learning within the context of authentic, purposeful, and often collaborative projects that mirror the communicative demands of learners' future professional fields. The core premise of PBL in ESP is that language develops most effectively when learners are engaged in meaningful action – planning, negotiating, producing, presenting, and reflecting – tasks which require them to mobilize linguistic resources for real communicative ends [1, p. 23]. In ESP contexts, where the target uses of language are specified by disciplines, professions, or workplace genres, PBL has particular affordances: projects can be designed to replicate domain-specific communicative genres, to integrate technical content with language forms, and to organize interactional routines that mirror workplace collaboration [2, p.16].

Project work often includes output-oriented stages – drafting, rehearsing, presenting – which encourage learners to experiment with language and receive feedback from peers and instructors, fostering uptake and revision processes that support accuracy and complexity [5, p. 24]. In ESP settings these mechanisms are amplified when projects are crafted around authentic professional tasks (e.g., designing a technical report, preparing a client presentation, creating safety protocols), since the need to accomplish professional goals provides both motivation and a clear rationale for precise language use.

Collaborative dynamics inherent in project work also contribute to the development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. When students work together on interdisciplinary or international projects, they must negotiate meanings, coordinate roles, and reconcile different communicative styles. Such processes require and cultivate pragmatic awareness -how to make requests politely, how to formulate persuasive arguments, how to adapt registers to audiences -and sociolinguistic judgment regarding appropriateness across contexts. These skills are crucial for ESP learners, who will often operate in intercultural professional contexts where subtle differences in politeness strategies or rhetorical conventions can have practical consequences [6, p. 23]. Moreover, collaborative PBL settings create opportunities for peer scaffolding and formative feedback, which

research shows can be highly effective in improving both fluency and accuracy [7, p. 20]. Peer interaction provides immediate, contextualized feedback on language use, enabling learners to refine forms in relation to communicative outcomes rather than as decontextualized grammatical rules.

Technology-mediated PBL has expanded the opportunities for authentic practice and for rich multimodal language use. Digital platforms support collaboration across time and space, enabling ESP learners to work on joint projects with students or professionals from other institutions and countries. Virtual exchanges, collaborative authoring tools, teleconferencing, and shared repositories permit authentic negotiations of meaning and the development of digital literacies alongside linguistic competences. Moreover, digital tools provide avenues for collecting artifacts of learning – drafts, recordings of meetings, feedback logs - which can be used for assessment and for research into learning processes. The affordances of digital PBL align particularly well with ESP objectives in fields where digital communication is central (e.g., engineering, international business, information technology), providing ecologically valid contexts for the practice of domain-specific communicative routines.

Research on PBL in ESP contexts highlights both promising results and methodological challenges. Several case studies and quasi-experimental investigations indicate that PBL can enhance communicative fluency, genre awareness, and learner motivation [1, p. 24; 8, p. 471]. Students frequently report increased confidence in performing professional tasks and a clearer sense of the relevance of language learning when engaged in project work. However, empirical studies vary considerably in their design rigor and in the quality of measurement tools for language outcomes, making generalization cautious. There is a need for longitudinal, mixed-methods research that tracks learners' development across multiple projects and that employs robust assessment instruments capable of capturing the multidimensional construct of project-based linguistic competence.

Integration of PBL in ESP curricula also intersects with broader educational policy trends such as competency-based education and education for sustainable development. Projects that address real-world issues, for example, designing sustainable business proposals, creating community health communication campaigns, or collaborating on cross-border research briefs – align with learning goals that transcend linguistic competence to include civic engagement and professional responsibility. Aligning projects with sustainability themes can further motivate learners and situate ESP within institutional commitments to global citizenship and the Sustainable Development Goals [5, p. 14]. Such alignment requires careful ethical considerations, ensuring that community partners are treated equitably and that projects produce tangible benefits rather than extractive student exercises.

Finally, research and evaluation should accompany implementation. Program-level evaluation can assess the impact of PBL integration on graduate outcomes, employer satisfaction, and student perceptions. Mixed-methods research designs incorporating learner portfolios, discourse analysis of project artifacts, and interviews can illuminate how PBL shapes linguistic development and professional identity. Action research conducted by instructors can provide iterative improvements to project

design and evidence for best practices. Building a knowledge base of context-sensitive case studies and comparative research will strengthen the empirical foundation for PBL in ESP and guide practitioners in adapting approaches to diverse disciplinary and institutional settings.

Project-Based Learning offers a robust, flexible, and pedagogically principled approach to developing linguistic competences in ESP contexts. By embedding language learning within authentic, sustained projects that mirror professional communicative demands, PBL supports the acquisition of domain-specific lexis and discourse, pragmatic and interactional competence, collaborative problem-solving skills, and reflective learning dispositions. Effective implementation depends on thoughtful project design, scaffolding of linguistic resources, aligned assessment, instructor facilitation, and attention to equity and authenticity. As institutions emphasize employability, international collaboration, and education for sustainable development, PBL in ESP stands as an empirically promising and practically useful strategy for preparing graduates who can communicate effectively in the professional contexts of the twenty-first century.

It is also important to consider the conceptual relationship between language competence and professional identity formation. Language use in ESP contexts is not merely instrumental; it contributes to how learners position themselves as emerging professionals within specific discourse communities. Project-based learning supports this identity construction by engaging learners in authentic communicative practices that resemble those of real professionals, such as presenting findings, defending proposals, collaborating across roles, and negotiating meaning in problem-solving situations. Through repeated participation in such practices, learners gradually appropriate the linguistic, rhetorical, and interactional norms of their target professional communities, thereby developing both competence and confidence in professional communication [6, p. 39].

From a sociocultural perspective, PBL aligns with theories of learning that emphasize participation, mediation, and socially situated meaning-making. Language development occurs through interaction with peers, instructors, and texts, and projects create extended interactional spaces in which such mediation can take place. Learners draw on shared artifacts—drafts, plans, presentations, digital documents—as mediational tools that structure communication and scaffold linguistic performance. These artifacts allow learners to externalize thinking, receive feedback, and refine language use over time, contributing to deeper internalization of linguistic patterns [4, p. 86]. In ESP settings, where disciplinary discourse is often complex and formulaic, such mediation is particularly valuable, as learners must master not only general language forms but also specialized registers and genre conventions.

The integration of genre-based pedagogy within project-based ESP instruction further enhances linguistic development. Genres function as socially recognized ways.

Another significant contribution of PBL to linguistic competence development lies in its support for lexical acquisition, particularly of discipline-specific and semi-technical vocabulary. Projects require sustained engagement with professional content, prompting learners to encounter, reuse, and consolidate lexical items across

multiple contexts. Repeated exposure and use of vocabulary in meaningful tasks enhances depth of processing and retention, while collaborative discussion helps clarify semantic nuances and usage constraints. Research in ESP has shown that lexical bundles, collocations, and formulaic sequences are critical components of professional fluency, and project-based tasks provide natural conditions for their acquisition through use rather than memorization [9].

Pronunciation and spoken interaction skills also benefit from project-based ESP instruction, particularly when projects include oral components such as meetings, presentations, and negotiations. Unlike isolated speaking exercises, project-related interaction is goal-oriented and contextually grounded, which encourages learners to prioritize intelligibility, coherence, and pragmatic effectiveness. Rehearsal stages, peer feedback, and instructor modeling can be incorporated to address pronunciation features relevant to professional communication, such as stress, intonation, and discourse markers. Over time, repeated participation in such communicative events helps learners develop fluency and interactional competence, which are essential for effective workplace communication.

Despite its advantages, PBL in ESP is not without challenges. Designing projects that are appropriately complex yet manageable requires careful planning, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms where learners' language proficiency and disciplinary knowledge may vary. Instructors must ensure that linguistic objectives are not overshadowed by content demands and that sufficient scaffolding is provided to support learners at different levels. Additionally, group dynamics can affect learning outcomes; unequal participation or unresolved conflicts may limit opportunities for language use. Explicit training in collaborative skills, clear role assignment, and structured interaction protocols can mitigate these risks and enhance the linguistic benefits of project work [3, p. 13].

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.**

Institutional factors also influence the effectiveness of PBL in ESP. Time constraints, curriculum requirements, and assessment policies may limit the scope of project work or discourage innovative approaches. Successful implementation often requires institutional support, including professional development for instructors, flexible curricula, and recognition of project-based outcomes in assessment frameworks. Collaboration between language instructors and subject specialists can further strengthen project relevance and authenticity, ensuring that linguistic tasks align with real professional practices.

From a research perspective, the study of PBL in ESP would benefit from more systematic investigation into specific linguistic outcomes. While learner perceptions and qualitative observations provide valuable insights, quantitative and mixed-methods studies can offer stronger evidence of language development across skills and levels. Longitudinal studies tracking learners over multiple projects or semesters could illuminate how linguistic competences evolve over time and how project-based experiences contribute to sustained professional language use. Discourse-analytic approaches, examining learner-produced texts and interactions, can further reveal how language forms and functions develop within project contexts.

In contemporary higher education, where internationalization and employability are central priorities, PBL in ESP offers a pedagogically sound response to the demand for graduates who can communicate effectively in professional settings. By integrating language learning with authentic tasks, collaboration, and reflection, project-based ESP instruction supports the holistic development of linguistic competences that are transferable to real-world contexts. When carefully designed and implemented, PBL not only enhances learners' language proficiency but also prepares them to participate confidently in professional discourse communities.

In conclusion, PBL represents a powerful instructional approach for developing linguistic competences in ESP contexts. Its emphasis on authenticity, sustained engagement, collaboration, and reflective practice aligns closely with contemporary theories of language learning and professional communication. Through participation in meaningful projects, learners develop lexical, grammatical, discourse, pragmatic, and strategic competences in integrated ways that reflect real professional demands. While challenges remain in design, implementation, and assessment, the pedagogical and empirical evidence suggests that PBL has significant potential to enrich ESP instruction and to prepare learners for effective communication in their future professional lives.

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