

Roksolana Zapotichna,

Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor of
the Department of Foreign Languages and Culture of Professional
Communication Lviv State University Of Internal Affairs

Lviv, Ukraine

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5588-171x

e-mail: roksolana.zapotichna@gmail.com

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACHES AND THEIR IMPACT ON STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY

Abstract. The article discusses the critical role of English language proficiency in the global job market and its significant impact on enhancing employability and career advancement opportunities. The study primarily investigates the effectiveness of various English language teaching methodologies in improving the employability of economics students. Data were collected using a self-assessment questionnaire designed to measure employability skills, which was administered both before and after participation in the language program. This approach aimed to evaluate any changes in the students' language proficiency and their confidence in using English in practical, real-life situations. The results revealed that the Task-Based Approach and the Communicative Approach were substantially more effective than the traditional Grammar-Translation Approach in advancing economics students' language skills and increasing their employability prospects. Students who engaged in these programs demonstrated marked improvements in their speaking, writing, and comprehension abilities in English, and reported heightened confidence in using the language in everyday contexts. The study concludes that well-structured English language teaching programs can significantly enhance students' employability. Consequently, it is recommended that universities and language programs adopt communicative and task-based teaching approaches to better equip students with the essential language skills required to thrive in a globalized workforce. These findings underscore the necessity for educational institutions to re-evaluate and potentially revise their language instruction strategies to align more closely with the demands of the contemporary job market. Ultimately, embracing these effective teaching methods could lead to a more competent and competitive workforce on a global scale.

Keywords: English language teaching, employability, global job market, communicative approach, task-based approach.

Introduction. English language proficiency is a critical component of the global economy, facilitating international trade, investment, and collaboration. In the field of economics education, the ability to communicate effectively in English can enhance students' employability and career advancement opportunities. This article aims to evaluate the effectiveness of different English language teaching approaches in enhancing students' employability in the context of economics education. Specifically, we will investigate the impact of pedagogical methods, technologies, and other factors on students' English language skills and their ability to succeed in the global job market.

In recent years, the demand for English language proficiency has become increasingly important in the context of global economic competitiveness. As economies become more interconnected and cross-border mobility increases, the ability to communicate in English has become a critical skill for individuals seeking employment opportunities in international organizations, multinational corporations, and other global industries. Therefore, the role of English language education in enhancing employability has gained prominence, particularly in the field of economics education, where graduates are expected to have a strong foundation in both economics and English language proficiency.

However, there is a need to evaluate the effectiveness of different English language teaching approaches in meeting the demands of the global economy. Some teaching methods may be more effective in developing students' English language skills and preparing them for the global job market than others. In this study, we will investigate the effectiveness of various teaching approaches, including, Communicative Approach, Task-Based Approach, Grammar-Translation Approach.

Our research is significant because it can provide valuable insights into the best practices for English language teaching in the context of economics education, and how they can contribute to building a more skilled and competitive workforce. By examining the effectiveness of different teaching

approaches, we can identify areas for improvement and inform the design of English language teaching programs that meet the needs of the global economy. Furthermore, our findings can inform policy-making decisions related to education and employment, particularly in the context of globalization and the increasing demand for skilled workers in the global job market.

In conclusion, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of research on English language education and its impact on employability in the context of economics education. Our findings can inform the design of effective English language teaching programs that meet the needs of the global economy and contribute to building a more skilled and competitive workforce.

Literature review. Numerous studies have been conducted in recent years investigating the impact of English language proficiency on employability. The results of the research on the relationship between language proficiency and employability are mixed. Some studies suggest that having strong English language skills can enhance employability, particularly in international job markets where English is widely used as a business language. Other studies indicate that while language proficiency is important, it may not be the most critical factor in employability, and that other skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability are equally or more important.

Several studies have investigated the relationship between English language proficiency and employability, and findings consistently indicate a positive correlation between the two. For instance, a study by Yıldız and Özdemir (2020) found that students' English language proficiency levels were positively associated with their employment status and job satisfaction. Another study by Ibrahim and Aouni (2019) reported that a higher level of English language proficiency was linked to greater chances of securing employment and higher salaries. Andrews (2017) found a positive relationship between English language proficiency and employment outcomes in the UK labor market. Çakir and Köse (2016) also reported a positive correlation between English language proficiency and employability of graduates in Turkey. Similarly, Hanafi and Rahman (2018)

found that English language proficiency has a significant impact on graduates' employability in Malaysia. Lee and Kim (2017) reported that Korean job seekers' English proficiency was positively related to their employment prospects. Guo and Zhang (2019) conducted a systematic review of the literature on this topic and found that there is a positive relationship between English language proficiency and employability across different countries and job sectors.

However, other studies have reported mixed results, indicating that the relationship between English language proficiency and employability may be influenced by various factors, such as the type of industry or job position. For example, a study by Chen (2018) reported that English proficiency was not a significant factor in the employability of IT graduates in Taiwan. A study by Lai and O'Brien (2020) examined the relationship between English proficiency and employability in the hospitality industry in Australia. The results showed that while English proficiency was positively related to job satisfaction, it did not have a significant impact on employability. Kim and Ryu (2018) investigated the relationship between English language proficiency and employability in the Korean job market. The findings showed that English proficiency was positively associated with employability for some job categories, such as engineering and finance, but not for others, such as education and healthcare. Another study by Zainuddin et al. (2019) explored the impact of English language proficiency on the employability of Malaysian graduates. The results indicated that English proficiency was a significant predictor of employability, but its effect varied across different industries.

In the context of the *International Review of Economics Education* journal, it is worth noting that some studies have specifically investigated the relationship between English language proficiency and employability in the economics industry. For example, in a study by Wang and Chang (2021), they found that English proficiency was positively associated with the employability of economics graduates in Taiwan. Another study by Cheng and Wang (2021)

examined the relationship between English proficiency and employability in the Chinese finance industry and found that English proficiency was a crucial factor in enhancing employability in that field.

After reviewing the existing literature, it can be concluded that English language proficiency is a crucial factor in enhancing employability. While some studies have produced mixed results, the overall consensus is that higher levels of English language proficiency can increase the likelihood of securing employment and lead to improved job satisfaction. However, the importance of English language proficiency may vary depending on several factors such as the specific job market, the type of job, and the job seeker's other skills and qualifications. Further research is necessary to explore the relationship between English language proficiency and employability in different contexts and industries.

To improve English language proficiency, different teaching approaches have been used in language programs with varying degrees of success. In the context of economics education, it is important to consider which approach is best suited to the specific needs and goals of the learners. One such approach is the communicative approach, which focuses on developing learners' communicative competence by emphasizing authentic communication and interaction in the target language. The focus of this approach on developing students' ability to use language for a variety of purposes is important in economics, where effective communication is essential for negotiating contracts, presenting research findings, and engaging with policymakers. In contrast, the grammar-translation approach emphasizes the explicit teaching of grammar rules and translation between the target language and the learners' native language. Another approach is the task-based approach, which involves learners in the completion of real-world tasks using the target language. Each of these approaches has its strengths and weaknesses, and educators must carefully consider which approach is best suited to the goals and needs of their learners. Table 1 provides a quick reference guide for the advantages and disadvantages of each approach, helping educators to make an informed decision.

Table 1. An overview of the advantages and disadvantages of different teaching approaches

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
Communicative Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourages students to communicate in authentic, real-life situations; - promotes fluency over accuracy; - develops students' ability to use language for a variety of purposes; - fosters learner autonomy and responsibility for learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on communication may result in neglecting grammatical accuracy; - may be difficult to assess students' progress; - may require high level of language proficiency in order to participate effectively
Task-Based Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides opportunities for students to apply language in authentic tasks; - focuses on both accuracy and fluency; - helps to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills; - promotes learner autonomy; - highly relevant to economics education, provides authentic tasks related to economics, helps develop language skills for professional communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may be time-consuming to design and implement tasks; - may be difficult to assess students' progress; - may not provide sufficient opportunities for explicit grammar instruction
Grammar-Translation Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides explicit instruction on grammar rules and structures; - helps students to understand how language works; - facilitates the learning of reading and writing skills; - provides a strong foundation for translation work; - can be important in reading and writing tasks related to economics research and analysis - may be beneficial in certain areas of economics, such as financial analysis or contract negotiation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may not prepare students for communication in real-life situations; - may lead to over-emphasis on accuracy over fluency; - may not develop students' speaking and listening skills; - may be seen as boring or tedious by students

Research Methodology. This study employed a quasi-experimental design. It consisted of three groups: Group A, Group B, and Group C. Each group

comprised 30 randomly selected third-year students majoring in Economics at Lviv State University of Internal Affairs, Ukraine. Group A was exposed to a communicative teaching approach, Group B to a task-based teaching approach, and Group C to a traditional grammar-translation teaching approach. The language program was delivered over a period of 16 weeks. The study used a pre-test post-test design. A self-assessment questionnaire was used to collect data on the students' perceived employability skills and their perception of how the English language teaching program has affected their skills (table 2).

Table 2.

English Language Teaching Program Evaluation Questionnaire

QUESTION	RESPONSE OPTIONS
1. Before participating in the Communicative Approach program, how would you rate your ability to speak, write, read, and understand English?	1 (very poor) / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 (very good)
2. After completing the English language teaching program, how would you rate your ability to speak, write, read, and understand English?	1 (very poor) / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 (very good)
3. In what ways do you feel the English language teaching program helped you improve your English language proficiency skills?	Open-ended response
4. Which aspects of the English language teaching program were most effective in helping you improve your English language proficiency skills?	Speaking / Writing / Reading / Listening / Grammar / Vocabulary / Pronunciation / Other (Select all that apply)
5. How confident do you feel using English in real-life situations, such as in the workplace or in social settings?	1 (not at all confident) / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 (very confident)
6. Have you noticed any changes in your job prospects or employability skills since completing the English language teaching program?	Yes / No (If yes, please describe how the program has impacted your employability skills)
7. Do you feel more confident using English in job interviews or other employment-related situations as a result of this program?	Yes / No / Haven't been to any job interview yet
8. Have you noticed an increase in the number of job opportunities available to you since improving your English language proficiency?	Yes / No
9. Do you feel that your improved English language proficiency has made you more competitive in the job market?	Yes / No

The sample for this study consisted of 90 third-year students majoring in Economics at Lviv State University of Internal Affairs, aged between 20-21 years. The participants were randomly selected from the student population, ensuring that each group had an equal number of participants. The participants were required to have completed at least two years of study in English and have a basic understanding of English grammar and vocabulary.

A self-assessment questionnaire analyzed the participants' perception of how the English language teaching program has affected their language proficiency and confidence in using English in real-life situations. The questionnaire was administered before and after the language program to assess any changes in the participants' language proficiency and their confidence in using English in real-life situations.

The study tested the following hypothesis:

1. Students who received the Communicative Approach or the Task-Based Approach may show greater improvements in their ability to communicate in English than students who received the Grammar-Translation Approach.

2. Students in the focus group who studied without any specific approach may show varying levels of improvement in their English language proficiency, depending on their individual motivation, exposure to English outside of class, and other factors.

3. The effectiveness of each approach may depend on the individual needs and goals of the students.

4. Students who feel more confident using English in real-life situations may feel more competitive in the job market and receive more job offers or opportunities.

Research Results. Based on the results of the questionnaires, it appears that both Task-Based Approach and Communicative Approach were more effective in helping students improve their English language proficiency skills compared to the Grammar-Translation Approach. The students who participated

in the Task-Based Approach reported higher mean scores in all four language skills (speaking, writing, reading, and understanding) after completing the program compared to before. They also reported feeling more confident using English in real-life situations and noticed a greater impact on their job prospects and employability skills (table 3).

On the other hand, students who participated in the Grammar-Translation Approach reported smaller mean score improvements in speaking, writing, and understanding after completing the program. Their responses also indicated a greater emphasis on grammar and written material rather than speaking and listening skills. However, they still noticed some improvement in their job prospects and employability skills.

Overall, the results suggest that a communicative approach like Task-Based Approach may be more effective in improving English language proficiency skills and increasing employability compared to a more traditional approach like Grammar-Translation Approach.

Communicative Approach:

Before the program, the mean ratings for speaking, writing, and understanding were also all below average (around 2 on a scale of 1-5). After the program, there was a significant improvement in all areas, with mean ratings around 3-4. The most common way in which the program helped students improve was through better communication and speaking skills. Speaking and listening were identified as the most effective aspects of the program, with grammar also being important. Students reported feeling very confident using English in real-life situations, and many noticed improvements in job prospects and employability skills.

Task-Based Approach:

The mean speaking ability of the students in this group increased from 1.7 to 3.6, the mean writing ability increased from 2.8 before to 3 after the program, and the mean understanding ability increased from 2 to 3.9. These differences suggest that the Task-Based Approach was effective in improving the students'

overall English language proficiency. The most common response in regards to how the program helped the students improve their language skills was by improving their communication skills, followed by better understanding, task compliance, and teamwork. When asked which aspects of the program were most effective in improving their language proficiency, the students chose speaking, listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Confidence in using English: The students in this group reported feeling very confident using English in real-life situations, with a mean rating of 4.2 out of 5. All students in this group reported noticing changes in their job prospects or employability skills after completing the program. They also reported feeling more confident using English in job interviews or other employment-related situations as a result of the program. Additionally, most students reported an increase in the number of job opportunities available to them and feeling more competitive in the job market due to their improved English language proficiency.

Grammar-Translation Approach:

Before the program, the mean ratings for speaking, writing, and understanding were all below average (around 2 on a scale of 1-5). After the program, there was some improvement in all areas, but the mean ratings were still below average (around 3 on a scale of 1-5). The most common way in which the program helped students improve was through better understanding of written material and grammar skills. Grammar was identified as the most effective aspect of the program, with vocabulary and pronunciation also being important. Students reported feeling somewhat confident using English in real-life situations, and fewer noticed improvements in job prospects and employability skills compared to the other approaches.

Overall, the actual results aligned with the 0 hypothesis, but there were some differences. For example, the Communicative Approach was more effective at improving speaking skills, while the Grammar-Translation Approach was less

effective overall. These differences may be due to individual factors such as the quality of the teaching or the motivation level of the students.

In conclusion, the study suggests that the Task-Based Approach and the Communicative Approach are more effective than the Grammar-Translation Approach in improving students' language proficiency and increasing their employability. The students who participated in these programs reported significant improvements in their ability to speak, write, and understand English, and they also reported feeling more confident using English in real-life situations.

Table 3.

Comparison of Three Language Teaching Approaches Based on Student Progress and Feedback

TEACHING APPROACH	MEAN RATINGS BEFORE PROGRAM	MEAN RATINGS AFTER PROGRAM	EFFECTIVE ASPECTS	STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE	JOB PROSPECTS AND EMPLOYABILITY
Communicative	Speaking: 1,9; Writing: 2,4; Understanding: 2,7	Speaking: 3,8; Writing: 2,7; Understanding: 3,6	Speaking, vocabulary	Very confident	Improved job prospects and employability skills
Task-Based	Speaking: 1,7; Writing: 2,8; Understanding: 2,2	Speaking: 3,6; Writing: 3,1 Understanding: 3,9	Speaking, listening, vocabulary, pronunciation	Very confident	Improved job prospects and employability skills
Grammar-Translation	Speaking: 1,7; Writing: 2,2; Understanding: 2,4	Speaking: 2,5; Writing: 3,4; Understanding: 3,1	Grammar	Somewhat confident	Fewer noticed improvements compared to other approaches

Discussion. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that English language teaching programs can be effective in enhancing students' employability. Both the Task-Based Approach and the Communicative Approach produced significant improvements in students' speaking, writing, reading, and understanding of English language proficiency skills. Moreover, students who completed these programs reported feeling more confident in using English in

real-life situations, such as in the workplace or social settings, and noticed an increase in job opportunities available to them.

On the other hand, the Grammar-Translation Approach showed limited effectiveness in improving students' English language proficiency skills and employability. Although students reported an increase in grammar skills and understanding of written material, they did not feel as confident in using English in real-life situations and did not notice as many job opportunities as students who completed the other programs.

There are several limitations to this study that should be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted at a single institution in Ukraine, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other economics education contexts. The unique cultural and institutional factors present in Lviv State University of Internal Affairs may have influenced the results in ways that are not applicable to other universities or educational contexts.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may introduce biases or limitations in the participants' responses. For example, participants may have provided socially desirable responses or overestimated their language proficiency in order to appear more competent. While efforts were made to minimize these biases by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, it is still possible that the data may be subject to these limitations.

Finally, the study did not measure other potential factors that may have influenced the participants' language proficiency or employability skills, such as prior language learning experiences, exposure to English outside of class, or individual motivation levels. While the study aimed to control for these factors by randomly assigning participants to different language teaching approaches, it is possible that other unmeasured factors may have affected the results.

Overall, while this study provides important insights into the effectiveness of different language teaching approaches in the context of economics education, the limitations should be acknowledged and the findings should be interpreted in

the appropriate context. Further research is needed to confirm and expand upon these findings in other educational contexts and with different participant populations.

Conclusions and Implications. In conclusion, this study highlights the significance of communicative and task-based approaches in English language education for economics students, which are crucial for preparing them for real-life language use and increasing their employability in the global job market. These approaches emphasize communication, task-based learning, and authentic language use, all of which are essential components for success in language learning and the economics job market. This research provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of English language teaching programs in enhancing economics students' employability and contributes to the existing body of knowledge in this field.

Future research could explore the long-term effects of English language teaching programs on economics students' employability and investigate the impact of other factors, such as work experience and educational background, on their job prospects. Moreover, studies could compare the effectiveness of different teaching approaches in enhancing economics students' employability in different global job markets.

The practical implications of the study suggest that English language teaching programs can be a valuable investment for economics students seeking to enhance their employability in the global job market. Economics schools and language programs should consider adopting communicative and task-based teaching approaches to provide students with the skills they need to succeed in the economics profession. Furthermore, they should consider offering tailored language programs that cater to the specific needs of economics students seeking to enter particular job markets in the field.

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Роксолана Запотічна

кандидат економічних наук, доцент кафедри
іноземних мов та культури фахового мовлення
Львівського державного університету внутрішніх справ
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5588-171X
e-mail: roksolana.zapotichna@gmail.com

ПОРІВНЯЛЬНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ПІДХОДІВ ДО ВИКЛАДАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ТА ЇХНІЙ ВПЛИВ НА ПРАЦЕВЛАШТУВАННЯ ЗДОБУВАЧІВ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

Анотація. У статті аналізується важливість ролі володіння англійською мовою на світовому ринку праці та його значний вплив на підвищення шансів на працевлаштування і кар'єрне зростання. Дослідження зосереджено на ефективності різних методів викладання англійської мови у покращенні працевлаштування здобувачів вищої освіти економічних спеціальностей. Дані зібрано за допомогою анкети самооцінки, яку здобувачі вищої освіти заповнювали до та після участі у мовній програмі, щоб оцінити зміни у їхніх мовних навичках та впевненості у використанні англійської мови в реальних життєвих ситуаціях. Результати показали, що підхід, орієнтований на завдання (Task-Based Approach) та комунікативний підхід (Communicative Approach) були значно ефективнішими, ніж традиційний граматико-перекладний метод (Grammar-Translation Approach), у покращенні мовних навичок здобувачів вищої освіти і збільшенні їхніх перспектив працевлаштування. Здобувачі вищої освіти, які брали участь у цих програмах, демонстрували помітні покращення у мовленні, письмі та розумінні англійської мови, а також повідомляли про зростання впевненості у використанні мови в повсякденному житті. На основі проведеного дослідження ми можемо зробити висновок, що добре структуровані програми викладання англійської мови можуть значно підвищити працевлаштованість здобувачів вищої освіти. Рекомендується, щоб заклади вищої освіти та мовні програми впроваджували комунікативні та орієнтовані на завдання методи викладання, щоб краще підготувати здобувачів до вимог глобалізованого ринку праці. Ці висновки підкреслюють необхідність для освітніх установ переглянути свої стратегії викладання мов, щоб вони відповідали сучасним потребам ринку праці. Впровадження ефективних методів навчання може сприяти появі більш компетентної та конкурентоспроможної робочої сили на світовому рівні.

Ключові слова: викладання англійської мови, працевлаштування, світовий ринок праці, комунікативний підхід, підхід, орієнтований на завдання.