

**STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING ENGLISH
FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR: PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Abstract: The article analyzes the theoretical and practical aspects of strengthening the communicative approach in teaching English for the tourism sector. It presents effective methods for developing students' professional communicative competence and preparing them for communication in real tourism environments. In addition, the article substantiates the existing practices of teaching English in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan, modern teaching methods, and proposals in accordance with the requirements of the national qualification framework.

Keywords: tourism, English language, communicative approach, professional competence, interactive methods, practical communication, qualification system.

INTRODUCTION

Today, as the tourism industry is developing rapidly, training qualified specialists in this field has become a strategic priority for every country. In the Republic of Uzbekistan as well, the rapid growth of the tourism sector requires a fundamental renewal of the system of personnel training. Especially, it is crucial that tourism specialists are able to communicate freely and professionally in English. Therefore, shaping the content of English language teaching with a focus on developing professional communicative competence means adapting the content of education to the real needs of the labor market.

In addition, aligning the educational system of the field with the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is also relevant. For example, the Presidential Decree No. PQ-239 dated June 27, 2024, "On additional measures to improve the effectiveness of teaching foreign languages to youth" outlines the improvement of foreign language teaching processes and the expansion of appropriate learning environments.

Knowing foreign languages can open the doors to the world. Moreover, there are several reasons to learn a language. For instance, some people want to study abroad, while others wish to travel around the world. Therefore, people need to know a language that enables them to communicate globally — English, for example, is used in every corner of the world for international communication and to overcome language barriers. However, it is important to recognize the dominance of speech and its diverse impact on the language education system. Hence, the communicative approach is a well-considered and practical approach to teaching and learning languages, as its main focus is communication; it enhances the learner's communicative competence when using the target language.

The communicative approach is a method that aims to teach learners to communicate in real-life situations rather than memorizing grammar or vocabulary. In this approach, the teacher focuses on developing the following skills as an integrated system:

- Listening comprehension
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

In the field of tourism, this approach involves developing the ability to use English in practical situations such as greeting clients, providing hotel services, presenting travel programs, and giving directions.

Advantages of the Communicative Approach for the Tourism Sector

The importance of the communicative approach in the tourism sector is extremely high, as it not only develops language competence but also expands the ability of future specialists to communicate effectively in professional activities. The main advantages of this approach can be explained as follows.

Firstly, the practical orientation is the main advantage of the communicative approach. During the teaching process, students have the opportunity to use English in real tourist situations. For example, through situations such as welcoming guests at a hotel, explaining a travel route, giving directions, or presenting promotional materials, students acquire effective communication skills in professional contexts. As a result, the language learned is formed not as theoretical knowledge but as a practical tool.

Secondly, the communicative approach increases students' motivation. The direct connection of language learning with professional activity strengthens students' intrinsic motivation. They realize that knowledge of English is essential for success in their profession, which encourages them to be active, creative, and inquisitive. Thus, the communicative method not only ensures knowledge acquisition but also fosters a positive attitude toward language learning.

Thirdly, it develops intercultural communication. Since the tourism sector is an activity based on international relations, developing intercultural competence in the process of learning foreign languages is of great importance. Through the communicative approach, students learn not only English but also get acquainted with the customs, values, and communication culture of different nations. This helps them become professionally tolerant, open-minded, and globally thinking individuals.

Fourthly, it fosters creativity and independence. The communicative method does not focus on memorizing prepared texts but encourages students to express their own opinions independently, analyze, and develop problem-solving skills. Through creative activities such as preparing videos, conducting interviews, and participating in role plays, students learn to use the language actively in practice. Consequently, their fluency, independent thinking, and teamwork skills are significantly developed.

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES

In recent years, positive results have been achieved in teaching English based on the communicative approach in higher education institutions of Uzbekistan, especially in the fields of tourism and hospitality. For example:

1. At the Faculty of Tourism of the Tashkent State University of Economics, English teaching practice was implemented through role plays, real communication situations, and interactive dialogues. As a result, students strengthened their ability to communicate freely with foreign tourists and to use appropriate language units in the hotel service process.

2. In the experimental lessons conducted at the Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, the “Task-based learning” method was used. Students completed assignments such as developing a tourist brochure, an introductory video, or travel routes in English. This method significantly developed students’ independent work, teamwork, and creativity skills.

3. At Bukhara State University, a “Cultural Exchange Club” was established to promote intercultural communication in English language teaching. Through this club, students developed practical speaking skills by communicating online with representatives of different nations and conducting excursions for foreign guests. As a result, their ability to use the language in a natural environment improved considerably.

These experiences show that the communicative approach develops not only grammatical knowledge but also speech activity, social adaptation, and professional communication competencies among students.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Update professionally oriented curricula. English textbooks and methodological guides for the tourism sector should be redesigned with a focus on practical communication. They must include lesson modules covering specific topics such as hotel management, airport services, guiding, and restaurant service.

2. Introduce interactive technologies widely in the educational process. Using interactive sessions such as “Virtual tour” and “Online role play” helps students experience a real tourism environment. Moreover, platforms such as “BBC Learning English”, “English for Tourism”, and “FutureLearn” produce effective results.

3. Organize language practice in real environments. Conducting practical lessons for students at tourist sites, hotels, and airports prepares them for real communication situations. Such lessons create opportunities to use English in “live” contexts.

4. Improve teachers’ qualifications. It is necessary to organize special professional development courses for English teachers specialized in the tourism sector. These courses should teach modern approaches related to communicative methodology, intercultural communication, and tourism terminology.

5. Enhance the assessment system. Students’ language knowledge should be evaluated not only through tests but also based on their practical speaking skills, participation in dialogues, and ability to communicate in professional situations.

6. Strengthen cooperation. Educational institutions should establish partnerships with tourism organizations, hotels, and foreign educational centers to launch international internship and language exchange programs for students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the enhancement of the communicative approach in teaching English for the tourism sector plays a decisive role in improving both language proficiency and professional competence. This approach goes far beyond the traditional methods of language instruction focused on grammar and vocabulary acquisition. Instead, it emphasizes meaningful interaction, practical communication, and real-life applications that mirror authentic situations within the tourism industry. By doing so, it prepares learners not only to use English accurately but also appropriately and confidently in diverse cultural and professional contexts.

One of the most significant advantages of the communicative approach is its direct alignment with the demands of the modern tourism market, where successful communication with clients,

colleagues, and international partners determines the quality of service and customer satisfaction. Therefore, students trained through this method develop essential soft skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, cultural sensitivity, and adaptability—qualities that are indispensable for tourism professionals in today's globalized world.

Moreover, the communicative approach encourages creativity, independent thinking, and self-expression. Through interactive tasks such as role plays, simulations, interviews, and project-based learning, students acquire the ability to think critically, respond flexibly to different communicative situations, and act confidently in cross-cultural interactions. This method also fosters motivation by making language learning relevant to students' future careers, thus promoting lifelong learning attitudes.

Equally important is the role of educators and institutions in creating a supportive and authentic learning environment. Integrating technology, virtual tours, and online platforms, as well as establishing partnerships with tourism organizations, can significantly enhance the practical dimension of learning. Continuous professional development of teachers specializing in tourism English ensures that the communicative approach is effectively applied in accordance with international pedagogical standards.

Therefore, strengthening the communicative approach in teaching English for tourism is not merely a methodological improvement—it represents a strategic direction for raising the quality of professional education in Uzbekistan. It ensures the preparation of specialists who are linguistically competent, culturally aware, and capable of engaging in meaningful communication on the global stage. Developing communicative competence in close harmony with the national qualification framework should thus be recognized as a vital step toward modernizing tourism education and aligning it with the expectations of the international labor market.

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