

Applying the Task-based English learning method to improve communication skill in professional practice for students majoring in Midwifery at University of Medicine and Pharmacy

Nguyễn Thị Khánh Ly

ThS. Thái Nguyên University of Medicine and Pharmacy

Received: 29/3/2024; Accepted: 4/4/2024; Published: 8/4/2024

Abstract: The aim of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of Midwifery sophomores' use of Task-based learning in English for specific purpose to improve communication skills in professional practice at University of Medicine and Pharmacy. The experimental study was conducted with 100 Midwifery sophomores in three months, divided into controlled group and experimental group. The data source for this study included the Pre- and Post-Speaking test results of both groups. The research results collected from pre-test and post-test between the controlled group and experimental group showed that there was statistically significant difference between the Pre-test and Post-test scores of students with $P = 0.00 < 0.05$ (with 95% confidence interval of the difference from -1.79 to -1.11). Average Pre-test score of 5.89 with $Sd \approx 1.96$ was lower than average of Post-test score of 7.34 with $Sd \approx 1.33$. It meant that the experimental group that was taught by the Task-based learning method including communicative activities in gynecological examinations, contraceptive counselling, labor and delivery care has significantly improved in speaking competence in comparison with the controlled group. The research results suggested that the use of task-based learning method should be widely applied in foreign language teaching to help midwifery students become more confident in communicative activities in professional practice.

Keywords: Task-based learning, English for Specific purpose, communicative ability, Midwifery students

1. Introduction

Currently, the teaching method applied in universities is the task-based foreign language teaching method that is considered effective because through performing tasks, learners grasp skills. language and use foreign languages in professional practice using their own communication abilities. The task-based English learning method will emphasize learning to communicate through interaction with each other, providing learners with a focus not only on the language itself but also on the learning process. Instructors use this method during classroom learning with the aim of incorporating the use of that language in professional practice as well as real life.

The task-based method of learning foreign languages is being widely applied in teaching abroad and at a number of universities specializing in foreign language training in Vietnam and has brought positive results. However, the use of task-based foreign language learning methods in non-major English teaching has not been widely developed due to difficulties such as large class sizes, uneven

proficiency levels, and student learning motivation. not tall...

2. Content

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Definitions Task-based learning

Task-Based Learning is also known as Task-Based Language Teaching and Task-Based Instruction. Its principal focus is on the completion of meaningful tasks. Such tasks can include creating a poster, producing a newsletter, video, or pamphlet, or designing a map of the school or neighborhood.

Task-based Learning is an active teaching method initiated by American philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952). With the doctrine of "learning by doing". and experiencing" (learning through action and experience), Dewey advocates teaching students learning methods through building a specific task and finding reasonable solutions to bring the task to success.

Various research documents that task-based learning has the potential to serve as a significantly beneficial approach to language instruction, It

promotes communication in many forms. According to Alan & Stoller (2005); Stoller (2006): Project-based learning requires learners to research a real-world problem or topic and create a product or presentation to demonstrate their learning. Learners who make decisions about topic choice or learning style will present their task and collaborate with classmates on at least part of the task. Ruby Jackeline Pinzón Castaneda (2014) emphasized in her article: Problems, as starting points, help learners build knowledge about any subject. Learners engage in problem solving while they use language as an essential tool. So it creates the need to use language throughout the entire process.

A number of domestic studies have also mentioned this issue, notably the research of Nguyen Thi Lan Phuong (2018): Project-based teaching encourages participation and develops learners' sense of initiative. In the process of acquiring knowledge, training learners with important soft skills in a modern working environment such as teamwork, information technology, communication, presentation... Article by author Nguyen Dinh Ba, Dang Thuy Lien (2020) emphasize the advantages of learning a foreign language in the form of task-based teaching, allowing learners to "research on their own" under the guidance and support of instructors.

2.1.2. The role of Task-based learning in teaching English

Task-based learning has an important role to play in current language pedagogy (Solares, 2006). A task-based approach is more likely to enable teachers to see if students are developing the ability to communicate in second language. Due to its interactive nature, this type of learning is very enjoyable and motivating. Moreover, Task-based learning is useful in shifting the focus of the learning process from the teacher to the student. It gives the student a different way of understanding language as a tool instead of as a specific goal. It brings teaching from abstract knowledge to real world application.

2.2. The study

2.2.1. Participants

100 full-time university students majoring in Midwifery at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Thai Nguyen University.

2.2.2. Research method

The goal of this study is to to evaluate the effectiveness of Midwifery sophomores' use of Task-based learning in English for specific purpose

to improve communication skills in professional practice at University of Medicine and Pharmacy. An Experimental research method (experimental method) was applied in 3 months. The data collection instruments were Pre-test and Post-test which was based on the indicators in the theory of traditional method for group 1, Task-based Learning method for group 2. They were given to the students at the end of every cycle to measure the student improvement of communication skills in professional practice.

2.3. Findings and discussion

Distribute questionnaires to investigate students' needs to improve communication skills, collect and analyze, and give results based on the data obtained.

Have students take the Pretest according to the assigned topic, collect the results of the test scores students achieve after taking the test.

Divide students into 2 groups in the theory of traditional method and Task-based Learning method. Have students in both groups take the Posttest according to the assigned topic, collect the results of the test scores students achieve after taking the test. Take regular test scores and final exam scores for the oral module to compare the results achieved

The purpose of investigating students' opinions based on the questionnaire is to collect students' language abilities and practice communication skills according to tasks. From there, grouping can be done more effectively. Investigation results show:

Question 1: How is your ability to learn English?

The number of students who self-assessed their ability to learn English as very good or good accounted for only 12%, while more than half of the students surveyed chose the normal level, reaching 56%. In fact, the number of students who rated themselves as poor was 32%, accounting for 1/3 of the total number of students participating in the survey.

Question 2: What do you think about developing English communication skills in a medical environment?

Research shows that 56% of students see themselves making progress in English communication skills in a medical environment, 27% of students self-assess no progress, and 17% do not self-assess their ability. mine.

Question 3: Is learning vocabulary by topic important in communicating in English?

The results table shows that only 4% of students did not choose learning vocabulary by topic as important, while 82% of students identified the

