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FASHIONS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

This research explores the evolving trends in language teaching methodology since 2015, focusing on global developments and their application within the Azerbaijani context, particularly in English and Russian language instruction. It examines the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), flipped classrooms, blended learning, and other learner-centered approaches. Drawing on recent literature and survey data, the paper highlights how these methodologies have become dominant worldwide and to what extent they have been adopted in Azerbaijan. The findings indicate that while communicative and collaborative methods are widely used among Azerbaijani educators, the integration of technology-enhanced methods such as flipped and blended learning remains limited. The study underscores the importance of teacher training, infrastructure, and context-sensitive implementation in aligning national practices with global pedagogical fashions.

Key words: language teaching, communicative approach, flipped classroom, blended learning, Azerbaijan, methodology trends

Language teaching methodologies have evolved continuously, reflecting shifts in educational theory, technology, and cultural contexts. In recent years, communicative approaches and learner-centered methods have largely supplanted traditional grammar-translation techniques worldwide. Innovations such as task-based learning (TBLT), project-based learning (PBL), flipped classrooms, and blended learning have gained prominence in the “post-method” era, aiming to enhance interaction, authenticity, and student engagement. These trends accelerated further after 2015, especially under the impetus of digital technology and the COVID-19 pandemic. Azerbaijan – a multilingual, post-Soviet country – has participated in these global shifts, adapting its English and Russian language instruction to contemporary paradigms. This paper reviews the evolution and popularity of major language-teaching methodologies since 2015, comparing international trends with the Azerbaijani context. Emphasis is placed on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), flipped classrooms, blended learning, and related approaches for English

and Russian instruction. Data from recent studies and surveys are analyzed, and the findings are synthesized in tables to highlight methodological trends.

In essence, CLT's global popularity reflects the priorities of 21st-century education: promoting learner autonomy, pair/group work, and authentic language use. Even for languages where traditional pedagogy once prevailed (e.g. in parts of Asia), there is a clear shift towards CLT practices, as documented by comprehensive reviews of classroom research. CLT also provides the theoretical basis for newer approaches: for example, TBLT can be seen as a specific instantiation of CLT, in which tasks serve as vehicles for communication.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) builds on communicative principles by centering instruction around meaningful tasks (e.g. projects, problem-solving activities) rather than on language structures. Globally, TBLT has been a major research and pedagogical focus in the past two decades. Qin and Lei [6] conducted a bibliometric analysis of TBLT from 1985 to 2020 and found continuing strong interest: "TBLT was still mostly approached from the traditional cognitive-interactionist and psycholinguistic perspectives with a focus on tasks, individuals, and task complexity". Importantly, they note growing research on integrating TBLT with technology and individual learner differences, while interest in error correction and grammar recast has waned.

This trend indicates that TBLT remains a dynamic field: researchers and educators are exploring how digital tools (e.g. computer-mediated tasks) can enhance task-based learning and how tasks can accommodate diverse learner profiles. The core idea – that students learn language most effectively by using it to complete real-world tasks – continues to resonate, especially as educators seek to make learning relevant and student-centered. TBLT's global appeal is reflected in many curricula and teacher training programs, where tasks (e.g. role plays, simulations, problem-solving projects) are widely adopted. In summary, like CLT, TBLT remains a vibrant methodology internationally, with a shift in research from purely linguistic outcomes toward broader cognitive, affective, and technological factors [6].

Flipped Classroom: The "flipped classroom" model – where content delivery occurs outside class (often via video lectures or readings) and in-class time is reserved for active, practice-oriented tasks – has become a prominent trend since the 2010s. Many studies report that flipped classrooms can improve language skills by maximizing classroom interaction. A systematic literature review by Qi et al. [5] found that research interest in flipped language learning has grown sharply: publications on the topic rose from only 4–5 per year in 2014–2015 to over 50 per year by 2022–2023. This exponential rise mirrors the adoption of flipped models globally. Flipped learning often leverages technology (video, online quizzes, forums) to engage students before class. In language classrooms, it is praised for allowing more communicative practice during class and fostering student autonomy. However,

challenges include ensuring student compliance with pre-class work and providing the necessary technological infrastructure and teacher support.

Blended Learning: Relatedly, blended learning – which mixes face-to-face instruction with online components – has gained momentum, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Tonbuloglu and Tonbuloglu [8] note that blended learning “combines online and face-to-face education processes and created with the strongest aspects of various teaching approaches”, and its popularity surged notably in recent years under the pandemic’s impact. Their bibliometric analysis shows a steep increase in studies on blended learning since 2006, peaking around the pandemic. In practice, blended models allow flexibility and can enrich language teaching with multimedia content, online collaboration tools, and extended learning outside class. During school closures, many institutions rapidly transitioned to fully online teaching; afterwards, a return to purely face-to-face was often resisted by teachers and students accustomed to digital tools. Surveys indicate that many educators now prefer hybrid or blended approaches as a balance. In short, blended learning is an enduring trend in language education, providing the infrastructure within which methods like flipped classrooms operate.

The rise of flipped and blended models reflects a broader shift toward educational technology and learner autonomy. By delivering lectures or grammar explanations online, instructors free up class time for communicative practice, projects, or individualized feedback – aligning with CLT principles. These modalities have been widely discussed in language teaching forums. For example, Qi et al. [5] emphasize that flipped classrooms in language learning often incorporate gamification and social learning, as researchers seek innovative ways to engage digital-native students. The global trend is clear: technology-enhanced, student-centered modes of instruction are increasingly integral to modern language curricula.

Other Emerging Approaches: Beyond the above, several other methodologies have gained attention. Project-Based Learning (PBL), where students engage in extended projects, is often cited as a powerful way to integrate content and language learning, though empirical research on PBL’s language outcomes is still growing. Collaborative/Cooperative learning (students working in pairs or small groups) is widely promoted, though cultural and classroom-management issues can limit its use (as discussed below). Game-Based Learning and gamification (using game elements) are newer “fashions” tied to digital platforms, appealing to younger learners. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, which emphasizes multiple means of representation and action, is an emerging concept that some language educators have begun to explore [3]. In general, the global trend since 2015 has been toward pluralistic, flexible approaches: teachers increasingly mix communicative activities, task work, digital media, and personalized learning strategies to meet diverse learner needs.

**Table 1. Publications on flipped classroom in language learning
(2014–2023), (source: [6])**

Year	Publications on Flipped Classroom in Language Learning
2014	4
2015	5
2016	12
2017	22
2018	28
2019	34
2020	42
2021	49
2022	54
2023	57

Azerbaijan's linguistic landscape and educational history give it a unique context. English education expanded rapidly after independence (early 1990s) as Azerbaijan embraced global multilingualism [4]. Russian, the Soviet-era lingua franca, remains widely taught as a second language. Both curricula have gradually shifted from Soviet-style methods (heavy on grammar-translation and rote learning) toward communicative and modern approaches, though changes take time in practice. The studies below illuminate how global trends manifest locally.

Several recent studies examine English teaching methods in Azerbaijan. Huseynova's [3] survey of 50 English teachers across Azerbaijani schools and universities provides broad insight. According to her findings, Communicative Language Teaching is by far the most commonly used methodology. In her survey, 82% of teachers reported using the communicative method, making it "the most known and applied method among Azerbaijani teachers". (The remaining 18% of surveyed teachers did not utilize CLT, and a small number had not heard of) By contrast, traditional grammar-translation persists in some pockets, but is gradually giving way as teachers adopt more interactional activities.

Other methods show mixed adoption. Project-based learning (PBL) is supported by national teacher-training programs, yet only 64% of teachers reported using PBL in practice. Differentiated instruction (tailoring tasks to varied skill levels) was practiced by about 64% of teachers (since 36% did not apply it). Flipped classrooms remain rare: just 24% of Huseynova's respondents used the flipped model, while 76% did not. This low uptake suggests that most Azerbaijani teachers have limited experience or support for flipping lessons. Similarly, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is very new to the local context: 68% of teachers had never applied UDL principles, indicating only ~32% had tried [3].

Some interactive approaches are surprisingly popular: for example, Huseynova found that 80% of teachers reported using collaborative/cooperative learning in English classes. (This figure seems to conflict with classroom norms: some report that strict noise rules limit group work. The survey suggests Azerbaijani teachers may interpret “collaborative learning” broadly, possibly including pair work, which they do favor.) Game-based learning was also widely used: during the study, 86% of respondents indicated employing gamification elements (language games, badges, etc.) in their classes. In general, Huseynova notes a diversity of methods in use, though many teachers confuse “activities” with formal methods. The key point is that communicative and active methods have largely supplanted grammar drills. Table 2 summarizes the adoption rates of selected methods from Huseynova’s survey [3].

Table 2. Adoption of various language teaching methods by Azerbaijani English teachers (2023), (source: [3])

Method	% of Azerbaijani English teachers applying it (2023 survey)
Communicative Method (CLT)	82%
Differentiated Instruction	64%
Project-Based Learning (PBL)	64%
Collaborative/Cooperative	80%
Flipped Classroom	24%
Universal Design for Learning	32%

These findings underscore global vs. local differences. While most Azerbaijani teachers use CLT and group activities (echoing global practice), methods reliant on technology or new pedagogy (flipped, UDL) have low uptake. Babayeva and Alekberova [2] similarly note that educators should synthesize the “most popular and effective methods of teaching English in modern conditions,” drawing on current trends and expert recommendations. They emphasize integrating diverse interactive methods to form “competent young professionals” fluent in English. This reflects official goals: English teacher training programs (often with international support) now stress communicative and student-centered pedagogy.

The COVID-19 pandemic also influenced Azerbaijani English education. Ahmadova et al. [1] surveyed 147 language teachers during school closures and found most were reluctant to rely solely on online learning. The study concludes that pure e-learning was not favored by teachers; instead, “blended learning would be beneficial to keep the balance between online and in-class education”. Teachers reported difficulties in delivering engaging online instruction and in students’

adjustment to remote classes. This aligns with global observations that many instructors prefer a hybrid model. In summary, while Azerbaijani schools hastily adopted online tools in 2020–21, both teachers and policymakers recognize the need for a balanced blended approach moving forward.

Despite this progress, Huseynova [3] highlights a gap between practice and research. She notes that Azerbaijani educators are using many modern methods in the classroom, “but the article review shows that most of updated methods are ignored and not researched enough”. In other words, teacher practice is more progressive than academic publication: Azerbaijani journals (2020–2022) contain few studies on CLT or TBLT compared to the actual spread of these methods. This suggests that the “fashionable” methods are known among teachers but still emerging in the scholarly discourse.

Russian remains a major foreign language in Azerbaijan’s education, though its teaching has distinct challenges. During the Soviet era, Russian was taught intensively, often with a grammar-translation emphasis. In the post-Soviet period, Azerbaijan has sought to modernize Russian instruction similarly to English. Sadigova [7] argues for applying communicative approaches in Russian classes: “the effectiveness of the use of interactive methods in teaching Russian as a foreign language” must be recognized. She emphasizes that Russian teachers should act as facilitators, using audiovisual materials and real-world topics to build communicative competence.

While empirical data on Russian-teaching methods in Azerbaijan are scarce, the parallels are clear. Azerbaijani educators generally receive similar methodology training for Russian and English, and the national curriculum for Russian (as a second language) now encourages communicative activities. For example, like English classes, some Russian lessons have adopted pair work, dialogue practice, and project-based assignments in recent years. The cultural context differs – some older teachers still view Russian through a formal lens – but younger teachers increasingly embrace CLT. Sadigova [7] acknowledges that CLT is not universally accepted, but she asserts that its “potential and benefits are to value” in Russian instruction. Thus, the “fashions” affecting English teaching (communicative tasks, role plays, technology integration) are also influencing how Russian is taught in Azerbaijan, albeit at a slower pace.

One complicating factor is the bilingual nature of many learners: older students may code-switch between Azerbaijani and Russian. Teacher-student attitudes towards Russian vary. Nevertheless, current trend is toward harmonizing Russian pedagogy with international standards. The same methods (TBLT, group work, multimedia) promoted for English are increasingly recommended in Russian lessons by local experts.

The evidence shows both convergence and divergence between global methodology trends and Azerbaijani practice. Globally, CLT and TBLT dominate the theoretical discourse and teacher training; Azerbaijan has largely embraced CLT in English instruction, and is promoting task- and project-based activities. Both environments, however, grapple with implementation issues. Internationally, scholars note that CLT's success hinges on teacher expertise and resources; similarly, Azerbaijani teachers report needing more professional development to confidently use new methods. In fact, the Azerbaijani survey suggests a strong preference for interactive and collaborative learning, but classroom constraints (e.g. class size, noise regulations) can limit how these are carried out. Globally, restrictions on group work are seldom discussed, but in Azerbaijan it is an obstacle noted by practitioners.

Regarding technology-based methods, both contexts have seen rapid growth. Worldwide, flipped and blended models surged with new digital tools. In Azerbaijan, COVID-19 forced schools online, after which most teachers became advocates of a blended approach. Yet the actual use of flipped classrooms in Azerbaijani English classes remains low (24%), reflecting that the model is still novel to many teachers. It may take time for faculty to integrate flipped pedagogy or for schools to ensure the necessary student access to technology. This pattern – enthusiasm tempered by practical hurdles – mirrors that in many developing and transitional contexts.

The gap between theory/research and classroom practice is worth noting. Internationally, the literature is rich with studies on CLT and TBLT. In Azerbaijan, although teachers use many innovative methods, academic publishing on these topics is limited. This suggests that Azerbaijani language education is in a transitional phase: teachers are experimenting with new methods out of necessity or personal initiative, but systemic support (research, materials, policy) is still catching up. For instance, while 82% of Azerbaijani teachers use CLT activities, only a few have formally researched CLT outcomes in local contexts.

Looking forward, both global and Azerbaijani educators emphasize integration and balance. Babayeva and Alekberova [2] explicitly call for synthesizing multiple methods to build competency in language learners. On a similar note, the blended learning bibliography by Ahmadova et al. [1] underscores that innovation (online learning) must be blended with effective traditional practices to suit local needs. In practice, this might mean using CLT activities within a flipped or blended format – an approach that some Azerbaijani schools have begun to pilot.

In Azerbaijan, similar themes are evident. English and Russian instruction has progressively moved away from old Soviet-style methods toward CLT and active learning. Recent surveys show that Azerbaijani teachers commonly use communicative and group-based methods, while newer approaches like flipped classrooms are still emerging. However, gaps remain in training, resources, and

research: many teachers lack familiarity with the latest techniques, and academic attention to these methods in Azerbaijan is still limited.

Overall, the evidence suggests that Azerbaijan is on a convergent path with global educational fashions. The success of this transition will depend on continued emphasis on teacher education, curriculum development, and technology support. Future research should monitor how these methods impact learner outcomes in the Azerbaijani context. By integrating CLT, TBLT, and blended approaches within the local framework, Azerbaijan's language education can keep pace with international innovations, preparing learners for the multilingual, digital world ahead.

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S.Z.MECİDLİ

DİL TƏDRİSİ METODOLOGİYASINDA MEYİLLƏR XÜLASƏ

Məqalə 2015-ci ildən etibarən dünya üzrə dil tədrisi metodologiyalarında baş verən dəyişiklikləri və bu tendensiyaaların Azərbaycanda, xüsusilə ingilis və rus dili tədrisində tətbiqini araşdırır. Tədqiqatda Kommunikativ Dil Tədrisi (CLT), Tapşırıq əsaslı öyrənmə (TBLT), çevrilmiş sinif, qarışıq tədris və digər tələbə-mərkəzli

yanaşmaların yayılması təhlil olunur. Ədəbiyyatın və sorğuların təhlilinə əsaslanaraq, nəticələr göstərir ki, Azərbaycanda müəllimlər arasında kommunikativ və əməkdaşlıq əsaslı metodlardan geniş istifadə olunsada, çevrilmiş və qarışıq təlim kimi texnologiyaya əsaslanan metodların tətbiqi məhduddur. Tədqiqat müasir yanaşmaların uğurla tətbiqi üçün müəllim hazırlığı, infrastruktur və yerli şəraitə uyğunlaşmanın vacibliyini vurğulayır.

Açar sözlər: dil tədrisi, kommunikativ yanaşma, çevrilmiş sinif, qarışıq tədris, Azərbaycan, metodoloji tendensiya

С.З.МАДЖИДЛИ

ТЕНДЕНЦИИ В МЕТОДИКАХ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫМ ЯЗЫКАМ РЕЗЮМЕ

В этой статье рассматриваются тенденции в методологии преподавания языка с 2015 года, уделяя особое внимание глобальным разработкам и их применению в контексте Азербайджана, особенно в обучении английскому и русскому языкам. Рассматриваются такие популярные подходы, как коммуникативная методика (CLT), обучение на основе заданий (TBLT), перевёрнутый класс, смешанное обучение и другие ориентированные на учащихся методы. На основе анализа литературы и результатов опросов исследование показывает, что хотя коммуникативные и кооперативные методы широко используются азербайджанскими преподавателями, применение технологий, таких как перевёрнутый класс и смешанное обучение, пока ограничено. Работа подчёркивает важность подготовки учителей, технической базы и адаптации методик к местному контексту для эффективного внедрения современных подходов в обучение.

Ключевые слова: преподавание языков, коммуникативный подход, перевёрнутый класс, смешанное обучение, Азербайджан, методические тенденции

Rəyçi: dosent F.Ə.Hüseynova