

Innovative Methods and Contemporary Lesson Models in Foreign Language Teaching

Ayshan İmanli

Lecturer, Nakhchivan Teachers Institute, Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan

Email: ayshan_imanli@hotmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-2209-8201>

© 2026 Ayshan İmanli. This is an open-access article published in *Global Spectrum of Research and Humanities (GSRH)*. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) — free to share, adapt and use commercially, with attribution.

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69760/gsrh.0260304022>

Abstract

This article examines innovative methods in foreign language teaching and the lesson models that support them in contemporary educational settings. Drawing on theoretical frameworks from second language acquisition and recent empirical research, the study analyzes Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), the flipped classroom, gamification, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and technology-enhanced approaches including Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), artificial intelligence (AI), and immersive technologies. Particular attention is given to how these methods reshape traditional lesson structures into more interactive, learner-centered models. Findings from the literature indicate that such approaches enhance communicative competence, motivation, and learner autonomy while requiring careful pedagogical design and teacher preparation. The article concludes with implications for curriculum development and classroom practice in multilingual contexts.

Keywords: *innovative methods; foreign language teaching; lesson models; task-based language teaching; flipped classroom; gamification; CLIL; technology-enhanced learning*

1. Introduction

Foreign language education has undergone significant transformation in recent decades, driven by advances in second language acquisition theory, technological innovation, and evolving learner needs in a globalized world. Traditional grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods, while historically influential, have been increasingly supplemented or replaced by approaches that prioritize meaningful communication, learner engagement, and authentic language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Innovative methods seek to address the limitations of earlier paradigms by integrating cognitive, social, and technological dimensions of learning.

The purpose of this article is to examine key innovative methods in foreign language teaching and the lesson models associated with them. Specifically, it explores Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), flipped classroom pedagogy, gamification, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and technology-mediated approaches. By analyzing both theoretical underpinnings and practical implementations, the study aims to provide a

coherent overview of how these methods inform the design of contemporary lessons. The discussion draws on established scholars in applied linguistics as well as recent contributions from researchers focusing on digital tools and motivational frameworks.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Innovative Language Teaching

Innovative methods in language teaching are grounded in several complementary theoretical perspectives. Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Affective Filter Hypothesis emphasize the importance of comprehensible input and low-anxiety environments for language acquisition. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory highlights the role of social interaction and scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development, supporting collaborative and task-oriented approaches. These foundations align with communicative language teaching principles that prioritize authentic use of language over isolated form practice (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

More recent frameworks incorporate technology and motivation. Self-determination theory underpins many gamification and technology-enhanced designs by addressing learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the Azerbaijani context, researchers have explored motivational frameworks tailored to diverse learner profiles. Mammadova (2024a) demonstrated that combining goal-setting, positive reinforcement, and real-world contextual learning significantly improved speaking and listening skills among weak learners, underscoring the practical value of motivation-oriented pedagogy.

3. Key Innovative Methods in Foreign Language Teaching

3.1. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task-Based Language Teaching centers instruction around meaningful tasks that require learners to use language to achieve non-linguistic outcomes. Ellis (2003, 2009) defines a task as an activity with a primary focus on meaning, a communicative gap, and a clear outcome, distinguishing it from form-focused exercises. Willis (1996) proposed a classic three-stage lesson model — pre-task, task cycle, and language focus — that has influenced countless classroom designs. Long (2015) further refined the approach by integrating focus on form within primarily meaning-oriented interaction. TBLT lessons typically invert traditional structures by placing authentic performance at the center rather than beginning with explicit grammar presentation (Nunan, 2004).

3.2. The Flipped Classroom Model

The flipped classroom, popularized by Bergmann and Sams (2012), reverses the conventional instructional sequence. Learners engage with new content (often via video or digital materials) before class, freeing face-to-face time for interactive practice, problem-solving, and personalized support. In language education, this model has been shown to increase opportunities for oral production and collaborative activities. Zou et al. (2020), in a systematic review of flipped language classrooms, found positive effects on academic performance, motivation, self-regulation, and higher-order thinking skills. The associated lesson model typically includes pre-class content acquisition, in-class active application, and post-class reflection or extension.

3.3. Gamification and Game-Based Learning

Gamification involves the application of game design elements — such as points, badges, leaderboards, and narrative — to non-game educational contexts (Deterding et al., 2011). In foreign language teaching, these elements can increase engagement and provide low-

stakes opportunities for repeated practice. Sadigzade and Alisoy (2024) reported that level-appropriate games enhanced vocabulary, grammar, and critical thinking among Azerbaijani learners across proficiency levels. Sadigzade (2025a) further explored immersive and gamified approaches using virtual and augmented reality, noting their potential to create authentic communicative scenarios. Lesson models incorporating gamification often feature clear goals, immediate feedback, and progressive challenges that align with communicative objectives.

3.4. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL is a dual-focused approach in which an additional language is used for the learning of both content and language (Coyle et al., 2010). The 4Cs framework — Content, Communication, Cognition, and Culture — guides lesson design to ensure balanced attention to subject matter and linguistic development. CLIL lessons typically integrate language support within content tasks, fostering deeper cognitive engagement than language-only instruction. This model has proven particularly relevant in contexts seeking to develop bilingual or multilingual competences without separating language and subject learning.

3.5. Technology-Enhanced Approaches: MALL, AI, and Immersive Technologies

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) leverages ubiquitous devices to support flexible, personalized practice. Alisoy and Sadigzade (2024) examined MALL's theoretical foundations and practical applications, highlighting its role in autonomous learning and classroom integration. Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008) earlier established the shift from content delivery toward collaborative and interactive mobile uses. Artificial intelligence further expands possibilities: Mammadova et al. (2025) analyzed how AI is reshaping assessment practices in higher education, while Sadigzade (2025b) explored AI-powered feedback in ESL writing classes, identifying both pedagogical opportunities and ethical concerns. These technologies support lesson models that blend synchronous interaction with adaptive, data-informed individualization.

Music and songs represent another accessible innovative pathway. Sadigzade (2024) documented the positive effects of music on memory, pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and cultural awareness, offering teachers a culturally resonant tool that can be embedded in various lesson models. Proverbs and cultural content similarly enrich input; Mammadova (2024b) illustrated how proverbs support cognitive and cultural dimensions of language learning, providing authentic materials for task-based or CLIL-oriented lessons.

4. Contemporary Lesson Models Supporting Innovative Methods

Innovative methods necessitate corresponding lesson models that differ from the traditional Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) sequence. In TBLT, the lesson typically begins with a pre-task phase that activates schemata and introduces necessary language support, followed by a task cycle in which learners perform the main communicative activity, and concludes with a language focus stage that draws attention to form after meaning has been negotiated (Willis, 1996; Ellis, 2003). This model prioritizes fluency and authentic interaction while providing opportunities for accuracy development.

Flipped lesson models reallocate time: content delivery occurs outside class through videos or digital resources, while classroom time is devoted to collaborative tasks, peer feedback, and teacher-guided practice (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). Gamified lessons often incorporate progressive challenges, immediate feedback loops, and reflective debriefs. CLIL lessons integrate the 4Cs framework across phases of input, processing, and output, ensuring that language support is embedded within content objectives (Coyle et al., 2010). Hybrid

models that combine elements of these approaches — such as a flipped TBLT lesson with gamified elements — are increasingly common and allow teachers to address diverse learner needs within a single instructional sequence.

5. Empirical Evidence and Implementation Challenges

Empirical studies consistently indicate benefits of innovative methods. Systematic reviews of flipped language classrooms report gains in performance and motivation (Zou et al., 2020). Gamification research demonstrates increased engagement when elements are aligned with learning objectives rather than used merely as extrinsic rewards. MALL and AI applications show promise for personalization, though equity of access and data privacy remain concerns. Mammadova's (2024a) empirical work on motivational frameworks for weak learners provides evidence that targeted, practical interventions can produce measurable improvements in proficiency and confidence.

Challenges include the need for substantial teacher preparation, reliable technological infrastructure, and careful task design that maintains a balance between meaning and form. The selection and quality of instructional materials also shape outcomes, since well-designed resources mediate between a chosen method and its realization in the classroom (Babayev, 2021). Over-reliance on technology without pedagogical integration can undermine learning outcomes. Cultural and contextual adaptation is also essential; methods developed in one educational system require thoughtful modification to succeed in others. Addressing these challenges through professional development and ongoing research remains a priority for the field.

6. Conclusion

Innovative methods in foreign language teaching — TBLT, the flipped classroom, gamification, CLIL, and technology-enhanced approaches — offer powerful alternatives and complements to traditional instruction. When supported by coherent lesson models that prioritize meaningful interaction, learner autonomy, and balanced attention to form and meaning, these methods can enhance communicative competence, motivation, and engagement. Contributions from scholars such as Ellis, Coyle, Bergmann and Sams, alongside recent research by Mammadova and Sadigzade, illustrate both the theoretical depth and practical applicability of these approaches. Future work should continue to examine long-term outcomes, contextual adaptations, and the ethical dimensions of technology integration. For educators, the central task remains designing lessons that place authentic language use at the center while providing the scaffolding necessary for successful learning.

Declarations

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Ethics and Data Availability: This article is a literature-based review and reports no newly collected participant data.

Use of Generative AI: Generative AI assisted with structural organization and language editing; all content was reviewed and verified by the author.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, analysis, drafting, and revision: A.İ.

How to Cite:

İmanlı, A. (2026). Innovative methods and contemporary lesson models in foreign language teaching. *Global Spectrum of Research and Humanities*, 3(4), 227-232. <https://doi.org/10.69760/gsrh.0260304022>

References

- Alisoy, H., & Sadigzade, Z. (2024). Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL): Revolutionizing language education. *Luminis Applied Science and Engineering*, 1(1), 60–72.
- Babayev, J. S. (2021). The role of instructional materials in language learning. *Lənkəran Dövlət Universitetinin Elmi Xəbərləri, II seriya*.
- Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2012). *Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day*. International Society for Technology in Education.
- Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Deterding, S., Dixon, D., Khaled, R., & Nacke, L. (2011). From game design elements to gamefulness: Defining “gamification.” In *Proceedings of the 15th International Academic MindTrek Conference* (pp. 9–15). ACM.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based language teaching: Sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19(3), 221–246.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Kukulska-Hulme, A., & Shield, L. (2008). An overview of mobile assisted language learning: From content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction. *ReCALL*, 20(3), 271–289.
- Long, M. H. (2015). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mammadova, I. (2024a). Motivational and practical frameworks for teaching English to weak learners: An empirical study. *Acta Globalis Humanitatis et Linguarum*, 1(1), 30–38.
- Mammadova, I. (2024b). The role of proverbs in language learning: A cognitive and cultural perspective. *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, 1(1), 40–45.
- Mammadova, I., Ismayilli, F., Aliyeva, E., & Mammadova, N. (2025). The role of artificial intelligence in shaping assessment practices in higher education. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 18, e2025439.
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

- Sadigzade, Z. (2024). The impact of music on language learning: A harmonious path to mastery. *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, 1(1), 134–140.
- Sadigzade, Z. (2025a). Immersive and gamified approaches: VR/AR in language learning. *Porta Universorum*, 1(6), 15–24.
- Sadigzade, Z. (2025b). AI-powered feedback in ESL writing classes: Pedagogical opportunities and ethical concerns. *Journal of Azerbaijan Language and Education Studies*, 2(4), 5–17.
- Sadigzade, Z., & Alisoy, H. (2024). Level-up learning: Using games to teach English across student levels. *EuroGlobal Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, 1(3), 181–194.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Willis, J. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Longman.
- Zou, D., Luo, S., Xie, H., & Hwang, G. J. (2020). A systematic review of research on flipped language classrooms: Theoretical foundations, learning activities, tools, research topics and findings. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 35(8), 1811–1837.

Received: 5 September 2026

Accepted: 20 October 2026

Published: 22 October 2026