



## CHARACTERISTICS OF REFLECTING “SOFT SKILLS” IN CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN NON-PHILOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL FIELDS

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“Soft skills” are intrinsic and interpersonal skills essential for an individual’s development, social activity, personal life, and professional success, regardless of their field of expertise. While professional skills are limited to a specific area of activity, “soft skills” play a crucial role in all aspects of life, from daily routines to professional and social activities.

It is known that a working curriculum is a regulatory document developed for a specific course within a university’s educational program. It is based on the academic curriculum of a particular subject, incorporating necessary additions and modifications while maintaining the sequence of topics and specifying the allocated hours for the subject. The working curriculum concretizes relevant educational standards and ensures the methodological, informational, and technical organization of the learning process. It also reflects the peculiarities of student training and instruction at higher educational institutions.

The content of foreign language education—including the knowledge, skills, and competencies that students need to acquire—is reflected in academic plans, curricula, textbooks, and methodological guidelines. The curriculum provides general information related to each subject's instruction. As mentioned earlier, the development of students' "soft skills" is closely linked to the educational approaches, methods, techniques, and technologies purposefully applied in the learning process.

According to regulations for designing course curricula, one of the key components of the working curriculum is the inclusion of modern information and pedagogical technologies used in teaching the subject. From this perspective, it is essential to examine the methods and technologies applied in teaching foreign languages at selected universities. A study of the subject’s curricula indicates that each higher education institution incorporates specific methods and technologies for teaching foreign languages in its working curriculum.

The Reflection of Teaching Methods in the Working Curricula of Selected Higher Educational Institutions



TSEI	JSPI	GuLSU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task-based teaching method</li> <li>- Essay, thesis, and article writing method</li> <li>- Case method</li> <li>- Process-oriented teaching method</li> <li>- Discussion</li> <li>- Working in mini-groups</li> <li>- Project work</li> <li>- Independent work</li> <li>- Presentation</li> <li>- Test-solving method</li> <li>- Survey method</li> <li>- Problem-solving method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pedagogical mastery technology</li> <li>- Intellectual debate</li> <li>- Case method</li> <li>- INSERT method</li> <li>- Cluster method</li> <li>- Case technique</li> <li>- Delphi method</li> <li>- Black box method</li> <li>- Brainstorming</li> <li>- Group brainstorming</li> <li>- Diaries method</li> <li>- Synectics method</li> <li>- ARIZ-TRIZ method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Practical application method of learned grammar material</li> <li>- Working with new vocabulary method</li> <li>- Text analysis method</li> <li>- Identifying key information in the text method</li> <li>- Role-playing using an active vocabulary related to the topic</li> <li>- Exercise completion method</li> <li>- Working on words and phrases method</li> <li>- Text translation method</li> <li>- Discussion technique</li> <li>- Oral text retelling method</li> </ul>

The methodological support section of the curricula of TDIU and JizDPI outlines the pedagogical technologies used in teaching the subject, in accordance with the regulations. However, in the GulDU curriculum, no methodological support section has been developed. Instead, the practical sessions section includes the teaching methods applied after each lesson topic. Upon reviewing these methods, it was observed that most of them involve general tasks such as working with new vocabulary, reading and translating texts, and completing exercises. Moreover, these methods are repeated uniformly across all topics.

To determine the frequency of application of the selected teaching technologies in the educational process and to identify which methods students prefer, interviews and surveys were conducted with selected student groups. The results revealed that students were completely unfamiliar with several teaching methods outlined in the official documents. Specifically, TDIU students were unaware of methods such as project work, conducting surveys, case technology, and process-oriented teaching technologies, despite these being listed in the working curriculum. This analysis suggests that the structure and content of the working curricula do not accurately reflect the real educational process. According to the requirements for developing and approving curricula, a working curriculum must follow a methodological sequence and include teaching types, interactive teaching methods, and tools, as well as mechanisms that optimize the educational process. From this perspective, the GulDU curriculum does not meet the requirements for curriculum development and approval.



The study examined the number of hours allocated to practical lessons and independent learning for first- and second-year students in the working curricula of the selected universities for English language instruction. Teaching a foreign language, particularly English for Specific Purposes (ESP), relies heavily on textbooks as one of the main tools of instruction. Textbooks are an essential component of the educational system, reflecting the conceptual approach to foreign language teaching at universities. They also define the goals, principles, and content of language teaching strategies and tactics. Therefore, it is impossible to assess the state of “soft skills” development in university students without analyzing the textbooks used.

Joshua Mikli’s article "ESL Textbook Evaluation Checklist" outlines a widely used framework for evaluating English language textbooks. This framework establishes key criteria for assessing textbook quality, including content, grammatical and lexical enrichment, as well as the structure of tasks and exercises. Agreeing with this approach, we argue that the structure of exercises and assignments not only develops students' language proficiency but also plays a crucial role in improving their soft skills. Specific task formats can simultaneously fulfill practical, educational, and developmental objectives in language teaching.

During the study, it was found that in all three universities, lessons were occasionally supplemented by additional internet resources provided by teachers. Moreover, textbooks specifically selected for corporate governance programs were used as primary course materials. At TDIU, first-year students have been using *The Business 2.0* (B1 pre-intermediate level) by J. Allison and P. Emmerson, while second-year students use *Straightforward* (intermediate level) by F. Kerr and K. Jones. At JizDPI, first-year students use *Total Business 1* by Rolf Cook and Mara Pedretti, while second-year students use *Total Business 2*.

At GulDU, since the 2020/2021 academic year, the single corporate governance group has been using *English on Economics* by D. Innomiddinova. The "Pedagogical Qualimetry" educational-methodological complex outlines four levels at which students acquire knowledge and skills in the learning process:

Reproductive level – students answer questions and complete tasks without modifying the original content of the material, and teachers design tasks accordingly.

Productive level – students process and reapply learned knowledge in familiar and typical situations.

Partially research-based level – students apply their acquired knowledge and skills in new contexts.



Creative level – students use their knowledge and skills in unexpected, non-standard situations.

In our study, we analyzed components of soft skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity, along with their key subcomponents. The findings indicate that developing these soft skills requires an increased focus on tasks designed for the partially research-based and creative levels.

In conclusion, students' acquisition of knowledge and skills at different levels is directly related to the implementation of tasks corresponding to each level.

### **References**

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