



UDC 378.013:371.2:4.

[https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-6165-2025-4\(34\)-192-200](https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-6165-2025-4(34)-192-200)

**Shevelova-Harkusha Natalia** PhD in Philological Sciences, Associate Professor, Associate Professor at the English Language Department for Maritime Officers (abridged programme) of Kherson State Maritime Academy, Kherson, tel. (0552) 49-59-02, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1440-5098>.

### LANGUAGE LEARNING AND THE CASE STUDY METHOD. GENERAL GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Abstract.** The case study method has emerged as a valuable tool for enhancing language learning by providing students with authentic and contextualized experiences. This paper examines how case-based approaches facilitate deeper comprehension, critical thinking, and practical language application. By engaging learners in real-world scenarios, case studies improve problem-solving skills, foster interactive communication, and encourage active participation. The study outlines general guidelines for implementing case studies effectively in language instruction, emphasizing the importance of structured frameworks, collaborative engagement, and reflective analysis. Recommendations focus on optimizing case selection, integrating multimedia resources, and adapting tasks to various proficiency levels. The findings highlight the pedagogical advantages of using case studies to bridge the gap between theoretical language knowledge and practical usage, ultimately contributing to a more dynamic and meaningful learning experience. The case study method is a powerful approach to language learning that integrates real-world scenarios to enhance critical thinking, discourse skills, and contextual understanding. This method immerses learners in authentic situations, encouraging problem-solving, role-playing, and interactive discussions that develop both linguistic fluency and analytical reasoning. By focusing on structured tasks, educators can guide students through case introduction, active engagement, application, and reflection, ensuring deeper comprehension and practical language use. Assessment within the case study framework evaluates communication ability, adaptability, and collaborative effectiveness, reinforcing real-world applicability. The article explores how case-based learning optimizes engagement, fostering dynamic student participation and lifelong language acquisition. By integrating guiding questions, interdisciplinary themes, and interactive components, this method transforms language education into a meaningful, skill-building process.

**Keywords:** Case Study Method, Language Learning, Pedagogical Strategies, Interactive Communication, Problem-Solving in Education, Student Engagement, Critical Thinking.



**Шевельова-Гаркуша Наталя Василівна** кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри Англійської мови з підготовки морських фахівців (за скороченою програмою) Херсонської державної морської академії, м. Херсон, тел. (0552) 49-59-02, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1440-5098>.

## **ВИВЧЕННЯ МОВИ ТА МЕТОД ВИВЧЕННЯ КЕЙСІВ. ЗАГАЛЬНІ РЕКОМЕНДАЦІЇ ТА ВКАЗІВКИ**

**Анотація.** Метод вивчення кейсів став цінним інструментом для покращення вивчення мови, надаючи учням автентичний та контекстуалізований досвід. У цій статті досліджується, як підходи, засновані на кейсах, сприяють глибшому розумінню, критичному мисленню та практичному застосуванню мови. Залучаючи учнів до реальних сценаріїв, кейс-навчання покращує навички вирішення проблем, сприяє інтерактивному спілкуванню та заохочує активну участь курсантів. У дослідженні окреслено загальні рекомендації щодо ефективного впровадження кейс-методу у викладанні мови, підкреслюючи важливість структурованої роботи, спільної участі та рефлексивного аналізу кейсів. Рекомендації зосереджені на оптимізації вибору кейсів, інтеграції мультимедійних ресурсів та адаптації завдань до різних рівнів володіння мовою. Результати дослідження підкреслюють педагогічні переваги використання кейс-методу для подолання розриву між теоретичними знаннями мови та її практичним використанням, що зрештою сприяє більш динамічному та змістовному навчальному процесу. Метод вивчення кейсів – це потужний підхід до вивчення мови, який інтегрує реальні сценарії для покращення критичного мислення, навичок дискурсивності та контекстуального розуміння. Цей метод занурює учнів в автентичні ситуації, заохочуючи до вирішення проблем, рольових ігор та інтерактивних дискусій, що розвивають як лінгвістичну гнучкість, так і аналітичне мислення. Зосереджуючись на структурованих завданнях, викладачі можуть вести учнів через представлення кейсів, прийняття активної участі, застосування та рефлексію, забезпечуючи глибше розуміння та практичне використання мови. Оцінювання в рамках кейс-стаді визначає комунікативні здібності, адаптивність та ефективність співпраці, посилюючи застосування мови у реальному світі. У статті досліджується, як навчання на основі кейсів оптимізує залученість, сприяючи динамічній участі учнів та вивченню мови протягом усього життя. Інтегруючи навідні питання, міждисциплінарні теми та інтерактивні компоненти, цей метод перетворює мовну освіту на змістовний процес розвитку розмовних комунікативних навичок.



**Ключові слова:** Метод вивчення кейсів, вивчення мови, педагогічні стратегії, інтерактивне спілкування, вирішення проблем в освіті, залучення студентів, критичне мислення.

**The formulation of the problem.** In language learning, traditional instructional methods often focus on memorization and grammatical structures, lacking real-world applicability. The case study method addresses this gap by immersing students in authentic scenarios that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and applied communication. However, its integration into language education presents challenges related to structure, adaptability, and student engagement.

This study aims to analyze how case-based learning can enhance language acquisition, particularly in developing communicative competence and contextual understanding. The problem lies in determining effective strategies for selecting, structuring, and implementing case studies to maximize their impact on learners' engagement and proficiency.

**The relevance of the study of the problem.** In the modern educational landscape, effective language acquisition is critical for professional and interpersonal communication. While traditional teaching methods often emphasize grammar and vocabulary memorization, they frequently lack real-world applicability, resulting in challenges when learners apply their knowledge in authentic contexts. The case study method offers a solution by integrating practical scenarios that develop linguistic proficiency and critical thinking skills.

This study is relevant as it addresses the gap between theoretical language knowledge and practical usage, ensuring learners engage actively with authentic communication challenges. The increasing global reliance on contextualized learning approaches highlights the necessity of refining case-based teaching methodologies for greater student engagement, comprehension, and retention. By examining effective implementation strategies, this research contributes to advancing pedagogical practices in language instruction, fostering more dynamic and applicable learning experiences.

**Analysis of recent researches and publications.** The problem of using case-technologies has been examined by many scientists: Louis Barnes, John Boehrer, David Dunne, Lynn Laurence, David Schodt, Ann Velenchik, and others. Notwithstanding the contribution made by native and foreign scientists in the solution of the issues related to the use of the case-technologies, there are still some contradictions in the use of case-technologies in teaching future deck officers to communicate in English [1].



Recent research on Maritime English education highlights the growing importance of case-based learning and standardized communication phrases in maritime training. Here are some key findings from recent publications:

**1. Trends in Maritime English Research.** A 40-year bibliometric analysis of Maritime English research identifies key themes such as Maritime English education and communication strategies. Studies emphasize the role of quantitative analysis in evaluating language proficiency and communication effectiveness.

**2. Case Studies in Maritime English Lessons.** Research suggests that case studies enhance situational awareness and problem-solving skills in maritime communication. The use of Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) in case-based learning improves clarity and safety in ship-to-shore interactions [4].

**3. Practical Applications and Future Directions.** Integration of real-life scenarios in Maritime English lessons improves professional readiness. Role-playing and simulations are recommended for training maritime personnel in effective communication. Multilingual crew challenges highlight the need for structured language training to prevent miscommunication.

**4. Case Study Research in Applied Linguistics.** A study by Patricia Duff explores how case studies provide a nuanced understanding of second language acquisition, teacher development, and multilingualism. Research emphasizes the role of qualitative case studies in analyzing learners' linguistic identities and developmental pathways [3].

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze the role of case studies in enhancing Maritime English comprehension and usage; to assess the impact of case-based learning on the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills in maritime communication; to identify the benefits of real-life scenarios in improving accuracy, fluency, and confidence in professional dialogue; to explore students' engagement with case studies as a tool for interactive and experiential learning; to provide recommendations for optimizing Maritime English teaching methodologies using case-based approaches.

**Main material presentation.** The case study method has gained recognition as an effective strategy for improving language learning through real-world application, critical thinking, and active engagement. This section explores the core aspects of case-based learning, its advantages, and its implementation in Maritime English instruction and broader language acquisition contexts [2].

**Theoretical Foundations of Case-Based Learning.** Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) emphasizes learning through experience,



aligning with the case study approach where students engage with realistic scenarios. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) supports case studies as a means to enhance practical language use, focusing on interaction and problem-solving rather than rote memorization. Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1998) highlights the importance of structured learning materials, suggesting that well-designed case studies help students process information efficiently [7].

***Case Studies in Maritime English Education.*** Contextualized learning and Case studies simulate real-world maritime communication, improving students' ability to respond to operational situations. It encourages the use of standard maritime terminology and structured dialogue. It also enhances decision-making and problem solving skills and trains students to assess situations critically and apply linguistic knowledge effectively. Case-based exercises foster teamwork and interaction, mirroring real-world maritime settings [5].

### ***General Guidelines for Implementing Case Studies in Language Learning.***

**1. Case Selection.** A teacher must ensure that scenarios are relevant to students' learning goals and linguistic challenges. They must be relevant to learning objectives and align with linguistic goals, such as vocabulary expansion, grammar structures, or cultural context. As for authenticity, it's better to use real-world scenarios or adapted cases that reflect natural language use. Selected cases must be thought-provoking, relatable, and encourage discussion.

As for the complexity level, a teacher should adapt cases to match learners' proficiency levels, ensuring accessibility while promoting growth. *Interdisciplinary approach* helps to incorporate cases that connect language learning with other subjects, like history, business, or social studies. It's possible to explore *cross-cultural perspectives*, comparing linguistic and cultural nuances across regions. A teacher can promote specific language functions, such as persuasion, description, negotiation, or storytelling. *Project-based case studies* are able to promote deeper learning through real-world tasks [1].

The cases can also be authentic or simulated. Authentic cases use real-life language situations, while simulated ones are adapted for educational purposes. They can be historical or contemporary. In this way it helps learners to connect past cultural language evolution with modern usage. General and specialized cases can focus on everyday conversational language or domain-specific terminology (e.g., business, maritime, legal language, etc.).

*Scaffolding strategies*, such as glossaries or guided discussions, can also be provided for accessibility. It's necessary to use *gradual case progression*, moving from simple dialogues to complex problem-solving scenarios [3].



**2. Structured Tasks.** A tutor must provide guiding questions and expected outcomes to enhance learning effectiveness. Here are the following guidelines for teachers (Table 1):

Table 1.

**Guidelines for Case-Study Implementation**

Stage	Guidelines for Implementation
<b>1. Case Introduction &amp; Contextualization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- present the case background (historical, cultural, or thematic relevance);</li> <li>- define learning objectives (grammar focus, vocabulary expansion, discourse analysis);</li> <li>- ensure students understand the key challenges within the case scenario.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Pre-Case Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide guiding questions for reflection before engaging with the case;</li> <li>- introduce essential vocabulary and concepts to facilitate comprehension;</li> <li>- assign roles or perspectives to encourage critical analysis and discussion.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Case Engagement &amp; Active Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read, listen, or watch case material in stages, allowing for gradual comprehension;</li> <li>- encourage collaborative discussion to explore different viewpoints;</li> <li>- implement structured tasks such as summarizing, debating, or role-playing case aspects.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Application &amp; Language Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- have learners apply insights from the case to real-life or simulated situations;</li> <li>- assign writing tasks (essays, reports, summaries) that connect language learning to case-based conclusions;</li> <li>- use interactive activities (problem-solving exercises, presentations, storytelling).</li> </ul>
<b>5). Reflection &amp; Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- facilitate a debrief discussion focusing on language development and thematic understanding;</li> <li>- ask learners to critically assess their use of vocabulary and expressions within the case;</li> <li>- provide feedback and revisions, encouraging iterative improvement in linguistic fluency.</li> </ul>

**3. Interactive Components.** A teacher should encourage discussion, role-playing, and real-time problem-solving tasks. Here are the following guidelines for teachers:



1). **Encouraging Discussion:** - use open-ended questions to stimulate debate and deeper analysis. Integrate peer feedback sessions to refine language use: - apply Socratic questioning to guide learners toward insightful conclusions.

2). **Role-Playing Activities:** - assign roles relevant to the case, fostering authentic language practice: - simulate real-world interactions, such as interviews or negotiations: - adapt roles based on proficiency level, ensuring accessibility and engagement [2].

3). **Real-Time Problem-Solving Tasks:** - introduce scenarios requiring collaborative decision-making; - use time-constrained exercises to promote quick thinking and fluency; - provide alternative solutions, challenging students to explore multiple perspectives [6]

4. **Assessment Criteria.** Developed metrics should be compiled to evaluate students' application of language skills within case-based exercises. Here is the example of the assessment criteria (Table 2):

Table 2.

Assessment Criteria for Case-Based Language Learning

Criterion	Description	Evaluation Methods
<b>Language Proficiency</b>	Use of correct grammar, vocabulary, and structure.	Oral presentations, written summaries, role-plays.
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Ability to analyze and apply case study insights.	Group discussions, problem-solving exercises.
<b>Engagement &amp; Participation</b>	Active involvement in discussions and role-playing.	Observational feedback, peer assessment.
<b>Creativity &amp; Adaptability</b>	Innovative use of language and problem-solving strategies.	Scenario-based tasks, alternative solutions.
<b>Collaboration &amp; Communication</b>	Effectiveness in expressing ideas and working with peers.	Group projects, dialogue exercises.

A case study should be based on the description of a particular situation or conflict-arousing issue to which students can relate. Teachers can use ready-made cases studies that are included in some coursebook packs and found on reputable Internet sites, or they can write their own cases. Teachers can create original cases based on current affairs or on topics contained in the coursebook [5].

Here are some advantages and challenges of using case studies to support language learning (Table 3):



Table 3.

**advantages and challenges of using case studies**

Advantages	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task-based learning can be implemented, and language is used to communicate;</li> <li>- Language skills are used in combination with other skills (e.g., business, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills);</li> <li>- Integration of various language skills is possible;</li> <li>- Different media can be included;</li> <li>- Some cases can incorporate role plays;</li> <li>- Students may generate their own cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers must find case studies that are suitable for their learners regarding content, complexity, and linguistic level, or they must write the case studies themselves;</li> <li>- Reading and analyzing longer case studies can be time-consuming;</li> <li>- Assessment criteria need to be carefully.</li> </ul>

***Recommendations for Optimizing Case-Based Language Learning.***

Using multimedia support a teacher can incorporate videos, simulations, and authentic maritime communication recordings. Adapting cases to proficiency levels, a tutor can adjust complexity based on students' linguistic competence. He should also promote self-reflection of the students and encourage learners to analyze their own responses and decision-making processes. Integrating cross-disciplinary learning can help to combine linguistic training with technical maritime knowledge for holistic education [2].

**Conclusions.** Case-based language learning is a powerful educational approach that enhances linguistic proficiency, critical thinking, and real-world application. To maximize its effectiveness, educators should integrate structured methodologies, interactive components, and student-centered engagement strategies.

Implementing case-based learning effectively requires careful case selection, interactive teaching methods, structured guidance, and thoughtful assessment. By focusing on student engagement, critical thinking, and real-world applications, educators can create an immersive environment that fosters deep linguistic proficiency.

The integration of guiding questions, discussion-based activities, and reflective learning helps learners develop fluency, confidence, and analytical skills. Additionally, progressive challenges and interdisciplinary connections ensure that case studies remain dynamic and relevant to various learning contexts.

Evaluating language use should go beyond grammar and vocabulary, incorporating fluency, coherence, and cultural appropriateness. Both qualitative and quantitative assessments are needed to measure analytical depth and communication skills. Iterative feedback refines learners' language use by



focusing on areas for growth. Peer and self-assessment promote reflection, helping learners actively engage in skill enhancement.

Different learners require customized assessment approaches based on proficiency level and learning objectives. Flexible rubrics allow for personalized evaluation, ensuring both accuracy and creativity in language use.

By applying these recommendations, teachers can make case-based learning not just an instructional tool, but a transformative approach, equipping students with the skills necessary for effective communication in diverse situations.

#### **References:**

1. Boehrer, J. and M. Linsky. Teaching with Cases: Learning to Question. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, no. 42. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990. – P.41-57.
2. Bonney K.M. Case study teaching method improves student performance and perceptions of learning gains. – Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education 16 (1), 2015: 21-28.
3. Calhoun, J, Rowney, R, Eng, E, Hoffman, Y. Competency mapping and analysis for public health preparedness training initiatives. Public Health Reports. 2005; 120(suppl): 91-99.
4. Davis, C., and E. Wilcock. 2003. Teaching materials using case studies. University of Liverpool: UK Centre for Materials Education. Available at: <http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp>
5. Goodman V. A brief overview of qualitative research. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/computer-science/case-study>.
6. Hoogveld, A, Pass, F, Jochems, W. 2005. Training higher education teachers for instructional design of competency – based education: product – oriented vs. process – oriented worked examples. Teaching and Teacher Education. 2005; 21(pt 3): P. 287-297.
7. Velenchik, A. Teaching with the Case Method. Available at: <http://serc.carleton.edu/econ/cases/index.html>.

#### **Література:**

1. Boehrer, J. and M. Linsky. Teaching with Cases: Learning to Question. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, no. 42. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990. – P.41-57.
2. Bonney K.M. Case study teaching method improves student performance and perceptions of learning gains. – Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education 16 (1), 2015: 21-28.
3. Calhoun, J, Rowney, R, Eng, E, Hoffman, Y. Competency mapping and analysis for public health preparedness training initiatives. Public Health Reports. 2005; 120(suppl): 91-99.
4. Davis, C., and E. Wilcock. 2003. Teaching materials using case studies. University of Liverpool: UK Centre for Materials Education. Available at: <http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp>
5. Goodman V. A brief overview of qualitative research. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/computer-science/case-study>.
6. Hoogveld, A, Pass, F, Jochems, W. 2005. Training higher education teachers for instructional design of competency – based education: product – oriented vs. process – oriented worked examples. Teaching and Teacher Education. 2005; 21(pt 3): P. 287-297.
7. Velenchik, A. Teaching with the Case Method. Available at: <http://serc.carleton.edu/econ/cases/index.html>.