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DEVELOPING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH ICT-BASED ACTIVITIES IN ENGLISH CLASSES

Annotation

This article investigates the effectiveness of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based activities in developing students' speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Speaking competence is considered one of the most challenging aspects of language learning due to learners' psychological barriers, limited opportunities for authentic communication, and insufficient classroom practice [1]. The study aims to analyze how ICT tools enhance learners' fluency, confidence, motivation, and communicative competence. A qualitative-descriptive research methodology was employed, including classroom observations, analysis of students' oral performances, and learner feedback. ICT-based activities such as digital storytelling, podcasts, video blogging, online discussions, and virtual speaking clubs were integrated into English lessons [2]. The findings demonstrate that the systematic use of ICT significantly improves students' speaking performance, increases participation, and fosters learner autonomy. The article concludes that ICT integration supports the objectives of the "Uzbekistan–2030" strategy by promoting innovative teaching practices and preparing competitive, communicatively competent learners.

Keywords

ICT, speaking skills, EFL learners,English language teaching, motivation, learner autonomy.

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Annotatsiya

Mazkur maqolada ingliz tili xorijiy til sifatida o‘qitiladigan sinflarda axborot-kommunikatsiya texnologiyalari (AKT) asosidagi mashg‘ulotlarning o‘quvchilarning gapirish ko‘nikmalarini rivojlantirishdagi samaradorligi tadqiq etiladi. Gapirish kompetensiyasi til o‘rganish jarayonidagi eng murakkab jihatlardan biri bo‘lib, bu o‘quvchilarning psixologik to‘siqlari, autentik muloqot imkoniyatlarining cheklanganligi hamda sinfda yetarli og‘zaki mashqning yo‘qligi bilan bog‘liq. Tadqiqot AKT vositalarining o‘quvchilarning nutq ravonligi, ishonchi, motivatsiyasi va kommunikativ kompetensiyasiga ta’sirini tahlil qilishga qaratilgan. Tadqiqotda sifat tahliliga asoslangan metodologiya qo‘llanilib, darslarni kuzatish, o‘quvchilarning og‘zaki chiqishlarini tahlil qilish va fikr-mulohazalarni o‘rganish amalga oshirildi. Raqamli hikoyachilik, podkastlar, video bloglar, onlayn munozaralar va virtual nutq klublari ingliz tili darslariga integratsiya qilindi. Natijalar AKTdan tizimli foydalanish o‘quvchilarning gapirish malakasini oshirishini va mustaqil ta’limni rivojlantirishini ko‘rsatdi.

Kalit so‘zlar

AKT, gapirish ko‘nikmalari, EFL,ingliz tili darslari, motivatsiya, mustaqil ta’lim.

Аннотация

В статье рассматривается эффективность использования информационно-коммуникационных технологий (ИКТ) в развитии навыков устной речи учащихся на уроках английского языка как иностранного. Устная речь является одним из наиболее сложных аспектов изучения языка, что связано с психологическими барьерами обучающихся, ограниченными возможностями аутентичного общения и недостаточной практикой говорения в классе. Цель исследования заключается в анализе влияния ИКТ-инструментов на развитие беглости речи, уверенности, мотивации и коммуникативной компетенции учащихся. В исследовании применялась качественно-описательная методология, включающая наблюдение за

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учебными занятиями, анализ устных выступлений учащихся и изучение их обратной связи. В учебный процесс были интегрированы цифровое сторителлинг, подкасты, видеоблоги, онлайн-дискуссии и виртуальные разговорные клубы. Результаты показали, что систематическое использование ИКТ значительно улучшает навыки устной речи, повышает активность учащихся и способствует развитию автономного обучения.

Ключевые слова

ИКТ, навыки говорения, EFL, уроки английского языка, мотивация, автономное обучение.

Introduction

In recent decades, the educational landscape has undergone profound transformations due to the rapid development of digital technologies. The advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has reshaped traditional pedagogical models, providing new opportunities for teaching and learning across disciplines. In particular, foreign language education has benefited substantially from ICT integration, as it facilitates authentic communication, learner autonomy, and engagement in interactive learning activities [3]. English, as a global lingua franca, has emerged not only as a medium of international communication but also as a key tool for academic, professional, and social mobility. Consequently, one of the primary objectives of modern English language teaching is to develop learners' speaking skills, which are essential for meaningful interaction in real-world contexts.

Speaking, unlike receptive skills such as reading or listening, involves complex cognitive and affective processes, including lexical retrieval, syntactic processing, pronunciation control, and pragmatic competence. For EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners, the development of oral proficiency is often hindered by several challenges. Research highlights that learners frequently experience psychological barriers such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and a lack of opportunities for authentic communication [4].

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Furthermore, conventional teacher-centered approaches predominantly emphasize grammar, vocabulary, and written competence, often neglecting oral practice. As a result, learners may acquire strong theoretical knowledge of English but fail to achieve communicative competence, which is the ability to use language effectively in social interactions.

The integration of ICT in English classes offers innovative solutions to these challenges. ICT-based instruction provides a student-centered and interactive learning environment, where learners actively participate in meaningful tasks, receive immediate feedback, and engage in collaborative learning beyond the physical classroom. Digital tools—ranging from multimedia resources, virtual classrooms, and mobile applications to online discussion platforms—allow learners to simulate real-life communicative situations, interact with peers and teachers, and reflect on their speaking performance [5]. By incorporating such tools, educators can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language use, fostering both fluency and accuracy.

Moreover, the use of ICT aligns with contemporary educational policies and national development strategies that emphasize digital literacy, innovation, and 21st-century competencies. In the context of Uzbekistan's educational reforms and the " O'zbekiston–2030" strategy, integrating ICT into language education not only enhances pedagogical effectiveness but also contributes to the formation of a workforce capable of engaging in international academic and professional environments.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of ICT-based activities in developing students' speaking skills in English classes, focusing on how digital tools can improve oral proficiency, boost learner motivation, and provide authentic communicative opportunities. The study further explores methodological recommendations for teachers seeking to integrate ICT effectively, ensuring that instructional practices meet both contemporary pedagogical standards and national educational goals.

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Methods

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative-descriptive research design to examine the impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration on students' speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms [6]. A qualitative approach was selected as it allows for an in-depth exploration of learners' experiences, attitudes, and observable changes in speaking performance within authentic classroom settings. The descriptive nature of the study made it possible to analyze how ICT-based activities influence students' oral communication without manipulating variables, ensuring ecological validity.

Participants

The participants consisted of 60 secondary school students aged 14–16 who were studying English as a foreign language at the intermediate level. The sample included learners with mixed proficiency levels and diverse learning styles to ensure representativeness. In addition, two English language teachers with professional experience in ICT-supported instruction participated in the study. Both teachers had previously received training in digital pedagogy and regularly integrated ICT tools into their teaching practice.

ICT Tools and Learning Environment

A variety of ICT tools were systematically integrated into the teaching process to support speaking development. Multimedia presentation tools such as PowerPoint and Google Slides were used to introduce topics and stimulate discussion. Audio and video platforms, including YouTube, BBC Learning English, and TED-Ed, provided authentic language input and exposure to native and non-native speakers. Mobile applications such as Duolingo, HelloTalk, and Elsa Speak were employed to support pronunciation practice, vocabulary development, and interactive speaking tasks. Online communication platforms, including Zoom and Google Meet, facilitated virtual discussions, role-plays, and speaking clubs.

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Messaging applications such as Telegram and WhatsApp were used for voice-message exchanges, peer feedback, and asynchronous speaking practice.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected using multiple qualitative instruments to ensure triangulation and reliability [7]. Classroom observations were conducted over several weeks to document student participation, interaction patterns, and engagement during ICT-based speaking activities. Students' audio and video recordings, including presentations, role-plays, and storytelling tasks, were collected and analyzed. In addition, structured questionnaires were administered to measure students' motivation, confidence, and attitudes toward ICT-based learning. A comparative analysis of speaking performance before and after the implementation of ICT-based instruction was also conducted to identify observable progress.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed through qualitative content and thematic analysis. Students' speaking performances were evaluated based on fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, and coherence. Learner feedback and teacher observations were coded and categorized to identify recurring themes related to motivation, confidence, participation, and learner autonomy. This systematic analysis enabled the identification of patterns and relationships between ICT use and improvements in speaking skills.

Results

The results of the study indicate that the integration of ICT-based activities has a significant and positive impact on the development of students' speaking skills in English language classrooms. Data obtained from classroom observations, analysis of oral performances, and learner feedback consistently demonstrate noticeable improvements in several key aspects of speaking competence.

Firstly, a marked increase in students' motivation and engagement was observed during ICT-supported lessons. Learners showed higher levels of interest

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and active involvement when participating in digital storytelling, video blogging, and online discussion tasks. Compared to traditional speaking activities, ICT-based tasks created a more interactive and supportive learning environment, which encouraged students to express their ideas more willingly. These findings align with previous research highlighting the motivational benefits of digital learning environments [8].

Secondly, regular participation in ICT-based speaking activities contributed significantly to improvements in fluency and coherence. Students demonstrated greater ability to organize their thoughts, maintain longer speech turns, and speak with fewer pauses and hesitations. Activities such as podcasts and virtual discussions provided repeated opportunities for meaningful practice, which resulted in more natural and continuous speech production.

Thirdly, exposure to authentic multimedia materials, including videos, audio recordings, and interactive applications, supported vocabulary expansion and more accurate language use. Learners were able to acquire new lexical items in context and apply them appropriately in spoken communication. Pronunciation accuracy and intonation also showed gradual improvement as students repeatedly listened to and imitated authentic language models [9].

In addition, self-recording tasks and asynchronous online speaking activities played a crucial role in reducing speaking anxiety and enhancing learners' confidence. Students reported feeling less pressure when recording their speech and were more willing to take risks and experiment with language. This led to increased self-awareness and self-correction in oral performance.

Finally, ICT integration resulted in higher overall participation rates, particularly among shy or less active learners. The use of small-group online tasks, voice messages, and virtual speaking clubs created a more inclusive environment, allowing all students to contribute. As a result, ICT-based instruction promoted learner autonomy and more balanced classroom interaction, confirming the effectiveness of technology-enhanced speaking instruction.

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Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide strong evidence that the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) fundamentally transforms traditional English language classrooms into interactive, learner-centered, and communicative learning environments. The results discussed in the previous section demonstrate that ICT-based speaking activities effectively address many of the challenges commonly faced by EFL learners, including low motivation, speaking anxiety, limited participation, and insufficient exposure to authentic language use.

The observed increase in learners' motivation and engagement supports the assumption that digital tools create more meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences. ICT-based tasks such as digital storytelling, podcasts, and online discussions enable learners to take an active role in the learning process, thereby shifting the focus from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered interaction. This finding is consistent with contemporary theories of communicative language teaching and learner autonomy, which emphasize active participation and meaningful communication as key factors in language development [10].

Furthermore, the improvement in fluency, vocabulary usage, and confidence confirms that repeated and authentic speaking practice facilitated by ICT contributes to the development of communicative competence. Multimedia resources expose learners to real-life language models, while self-recording and asynchronous speaking tasks reduce psychological pressure and allow learners to reflect on their own performance. As a result, students become more confident and independent language users, capable of self-monitoring and self-correction.

The study also highlights the inclusive nature of ICT-based instruction. Shy and less active learners benefited significantly from online and small-group speaking activities, which created a supportive environment for participation. This suggests that ICT integration promotes equitable learning opportunities and encourages balanced classroom interaction.

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Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges were identified, including limited access to technological resources, occasional technical difficulties, and varying levels of digital competence among teachers. However, the findings indicate that these challenges are not insurmountable. The adoption of blended learning approaches, the use of offline digital resources, and continuous professional development for teachers can effectively mitigate these limitations.

In conclusion, the study confirms that systematic and purposeful integration of ICT in English language teaching significantly enhances students' speaking skills and aligns with the objectives of modern educational reforms and the "Uzbekistan–2030" strategy. By fostering learner autonomy, communicative competence, and digital literacy, ICT-based instruction contributes to the preparation of competitive, innovative, and communicatively competent learners who are well-equipped to meet the demands of the 21st century.

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