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**THEME: INCREASING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL
ENGLISH LESSONS USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE**

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Abstract: This article describes the methodical advantages of using modern digital technologies, educational mobile applications, and artificial intelligence (AI) tools in teaching English in secondary schools. The study analyzes the ways to overcome the "language barrier", speech anxiety, and psycholinguistic obstacles observed in school students. The author substantiates the digital platforms that can be used in the lesson process and their practical effectiveness in developing students' speaking skills.

Keywords: digital education, artificial intelligence, speech competence, communicative approach, language barrier, Flip platform, chatbots, innovative methodology.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, digitizing the education system and integrating modern information technologies into the lesson process has become a requirement of the time. In teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), forming students' communicative abilities is the main goal. However, in traditional school education, students often have a good command of grammatical rules and a rich vocabulary, but find it difficult to express their thoughts freely in real life. One of the main reasons for this is the psycholinguistic factor, i.e., the "fear of making mistakes" (xenoglossophobia). Due to the limited time in the classroom (45 minutes), the teacher may not be able to perform individual speaking exercises with each student. In solving this problem, artificial intelligence (AI) and digital tools open doors to new opportunities.

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

Within the framework of the tasks set in the concept of developing the public education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, it is required to introduce innovative methods of teaching foreign languages. This article is relevant because it shows practical solutions for creating an English-speaking environment for students using a simple smartphone and the Internet in the conditions of secondary schools, especially in remote areas.

METHODOLOGY

During the research, traditional and digitized teaching methods were compared on the example of upper-grade students of Secondary School No. 20 in Bostanlyk district. During empirical observations and lesson practice, the following three digital directions were tested:



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- **AI Voice Chatbots:** Students were assigned to have a voice dialogue with a virtual interlocutor on a given topic (e.g., "My Future Profession") on ChatGPT Voice or Character.ai platforms as homework and class activity.
- **Asynchronous Video Communication (Flip platform):** Students recorded their thoughts on the topic covered in the lesson in the form of a 1-2 minute video and uploaded it to a special closed platform. Classmates left voiced or written feedback in English on these videos.
- **Mobile Speech Recognition Applications:** Elsa Speak program features were used to correct students' word stress and intonation.

Integration of Digital Tools in the Learning Process:

- **AI Voice Chatbots (ChatGPT Voice / Character.ai):** Students were given tasks to simulate real-life interviews. For instance, in the "My Future Profession" topic, students configured the AI to act as a hiring manager. This allowed them to practice spontaneous answering, which significantly reduced their response latency.
- **Asynchronous Video Communication (Flip platform):** The teacher created a grid named "Weekly Speaking Challenges". Students recorded their short video presentations where they had to use at least 5 new vocabulary words learned in class. The peer-review system encouraged students to listen critically to each other and formulate constructive feedback in English.
- **Mobile Speech Recognition Applications (Elsa Speak):** This tool was utilized as a warm-up activity during the first 5-7 minutes of the lesson or as individual homework. Students scanned texts from their English textbooks and read them aloud into the app, receiving instant phonological feedback on word stress and intonation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a result of the pedagogical experimental work, the effectiveness of digital educational technologies in school conditions was proved. This can be seen in the following indicators:

- **Reduction of psychological barrier:** When a student speaks in front of a computer or smartphone program, rather than a person (teacher or classmate), the stress level drops to a minimum. AI does not mock mistakes and allows endless repetitions.
- **Optimization of class time:** Usually, only 4-5 students out of 25-30 in a class manage to speak fully during the lesson. With the help of digital applications, all students had the opportunity to record and develop their speech at the same time (even outside the classroom).
- **Fluency of speech:** Constant communication with AI increased students' speed of thinking. They began to move from translating words from their native language into English to directly thinking in English.

Psycholinguistic and Pedagogical Analysis: The empirical data indicates that shifting the speaking practice from a traditional teacher-centered classroom to a digital environment alters the students' affective filter. According to Krashen's Affective Filter



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Hypothesis, high anxiety blocks language acquisition. Our study showed that practicing with AI tools lowered this filter substantially. Since the AI chatbot provides a low-stakes environment, students expressed less fear of negative evaluation by peers or the teacher.

Furthermore, the use of speech recognition software transformed passive vocabulary into active speech. Students who previously struggled with phonetic accuracy gained confidence after achieving higher percentage scores on the Elsa Speak platform. The asynchronous nature of the Flip platform also provided introverted students with sufficient time to plan, draft, and rehearse their speech before recording, which inherently increased the fluency and grammatical accuracy of their final output.

Table 1. Comparative Indicators of Students' Communicative Activity and Motivation (Before and After the Experiment)

Indicators	Traditional method (Before experiment)	Digital method (After experiment)
Students' speaking activity in class	15-20%	75-80%
Language barrier and fear level	High (65%)	Low (20%)
Motivation for self-study	Low	Very high

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, modern digital technologies and artificial intelligence are powerful tools that radically improve the quality of English language teaching in secondary schools. They cannot replace the teacher's place, but they save the teacher's time and help organize the lesson in an interesting, purposeful, and effective way. The experience of Secondary School No. 20 in Bostanlyk district showed that through the systematic application of technologies, students' Speaking competence can be significantly increased in a short period.

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