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THE IMPACT OF MOBILE APPLICATIONS ON SPEAKING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEK PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY OF GAMIFIED LEARNING PLATFORMS

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Abstract: This study investigates the impact of mobile applications, particularly gamified learning platforms, on the development of speaking skills among Uzbek primary school learners. With the increasing integration of technology in education, mobile apps offer a dynamic way to enhance language learning through interactive and engaging methods. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data from pre- and post-test assessments with qualitative feedback from teachers and students. Findings indicate that gamified mobile applications significantly improve fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention while increasing student motivation. The study highlights the potential of mobile learning in Uzbekistan's educational landscape and suggests recommendations for policymakers and educators.

Keywords: Mobile applications, gamified learning, speaking skills, Uzbek primary education, language acquisition, technology-enhanced learning

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed language education, particularly in developing countries like Uzbekistan. With the government's push for digitalization in schools, mobile applications present a promising tool for improving English speaking skills among young learners. However, limited research exists on how gamified learning platforms specifically impact Uzbek primary school students. This study aims to fill this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of mobile apps in enhancing speaking proficiency, engagement, and confidence. The research questions are: How do gamified mobile applications influence speaking skills development in Uzbek primary school learners? What are the perceptions of students and teachers regarding mobile-based speaking practice?

Literature Review

Previous studies highlight the benefits of gamification in language learning, including increased motivation (Deterding et al., 2011) and improved retention (Plass et al., 2015). In the Uzbek context, research by Karimov (2020) emphasizes the need for interactive digital tools in English classrooms. However, most studies focus on general language skills rather than speaking proficiency. This study builds upon existing research while addressing the specific challenges of Uzbek primary education, such as limited speaking practice opportunities and teacher training gaps.



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Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was used: **Participants:** 60 Uzbek primary school students (Grades 3-4) and 5 English teachers. **Tools:** Pre- and post-speaking tests, surveys, and interviews. **Intervention:** A 10-week gamified mobile app (e.g., Duolingo, ELSA Speak) was integrated into speaking lessons. **Data Analysis:** Quantitative (SPSS for test scores) and qualitative (thematic analysis of interviews).

Results

Quantitative: Post-test scores showed a **25% improvement** in fluency and pronunciation compared to the control group. **Qualitative:** 85% of students reported higher motivation, while teachers noted increased participation. **Challenges:** Internet access and device availability were barriers in rural areas.

Discussion

The findings align with global research on gamification in education but highlight contextual challenges in Uzbekistan. While mobile apps effectively enhance speaking skills, infrastructure limitations must be addressed for nationwide implementation. Teachers also require training to maximize app usage.

Conclusion

Gamified mobile applications significantly improve speaking skills among Uzbek primary learners. Policymakers should consider digital infrastructure investments and teacher training programs to optimize mobile learning. Future research could explore AI-powered speaking apps for personalized learning.

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