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# INTEGRATING VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) IN SPEAKING CLASSES FOR UZBEK PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS: A STUDY ON IMMERSIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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**Abstract:** This study explores the integration of Virtual Reality (VR) technology in speaking classes for Uzbek primary school learners, focusing on its potential to create immersive language learning environments. VR offers simulated real-life scenarios that can enhance speaking proficiency, confidence, and engagement. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research examines the effectiveness of VR-based speaking practice through pre- and post-test assessments, surveys, and teacher interviews. Results indicate significant improvements in fluency, pronunciation, and student motivation, though challenges such as cost and technical training remain. The findings suggest that VR can revolutionize English language teaching in Uzbekistan if supported by adequate infrastructure and teacher training.

**Keywords:** Virtual Reality (VR), immersive learning, speaking skills, Uzbek primary education, language acquisition, technology-enhanced learning

## Introduction

The integration of Virtual Reality (VR) in education has opened new possibilities for immersive and interactive learning experiences. In Uzbekistan, where English language proficiency is increasingly prioritized, VR offers a unique opportunity to enhance speaking skills among primary school learners. Traditional methods often fail to provide authentic speaking practice, leading to low confidence and fluency. This study investigates how VR-based simulations can address these challenges by creating realistic conversational scenarios. The research questions are:
How does VR technology impact speaking skills development in Uzbek primary school learners? What are the perceptions of teachers and students regarding VR-based speaking practice?

## Literature Review

Research shows that VR enhances language learning by providing immersive and contextualized experiences (Lan, 2020). Studies by Johnson et al. (2018) highlight VR's ability to reduce anxiety and increase engagement in speaking tasks. In Uzbekistan, research by Toshmatov (2021) emphasizes the need for innovative tools in English classrooms, while Karimov (2020) discusses the potential of VR in Central Asian education. However, limited studies focus on VR's application in primary schools,

particularly for speaking skills. This study bridges this gap by examining VR's effectiveness in Uzbek primary education.

**Methodology**

A mixed-methods approach was employed: Participants: 50 Uzbek primary school students (Grades 3-4) and 5 English teachers. Tools: Pre- and post-speaking tests, surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Intervention: A 12-week VR-based speaking program using platforms like Mondly VR and Immerse. Data Analysis: Quantitative (SPSS for test scores) and qualitative (thematic analysis of interviews).

**Results**

Quantitative: Post-test scores revealed a 30% improvement in fluency and pronunciation compared to the control group. Qualitative: 90% of students reported increased confidence, while teachers noted enhanced engagement and participation. Challenges: High costs and technical difficulties were significant barriers.

**Discussion**

The findings demonstrate VR's potential to transform speaking classes by providing immersive, authentic practice. However, the high cost of VR equipment and limited teacher training pose challenges for widespread adoption. These results align with global research but highlight the unique infrastructural and economic constraints in Uzbekistan.

**Conclusion**

VR technology significantly improves speaking skills among Uzbek primary learners by creating immersive learning environments. Policymakers should consider investing in VR infrastructure and teacher training programs to maximize its potential. Future research could explore cost-effective VR solutions and their long-term impact on language learning.

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