



THE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES TO ENHANCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract: *In today's world, teaching and learning foreign languages remains a crucial aspect of the educational process. This article focuses on the effective aspects of utilizing digital technologies to enhance foreign language acquisition. It analyzes the significance and role of technology in the learning process, highlighting both its advantages and disadvantages. Furthermore, it specifically addresses methods for implementing digital technologies in foreign language classrooms.*

Key words: *Digital technologies, teaching methods, electronic textbooks, video lessons, computer technology, ICT, Zoom platforms, Grammar Lab, higher education.*

INTRODUCTION. Digital technologies have fundamentally reshaped education worldwide, becoming integral to daily life. In today's society, teaching effectiveness in foreign language instruction is significantly impacted by teacher involvement and the use of educational technologies and resources. Digital tools not only accelerate and simplify the learning process but also make it more engaging and cognitively stimulating.

Integrating digital technologies into foreign language teaching offers unique advantages but depends heavily on students' ability to select and use appropriate



learning strategies and digital tools, directly impacting their success. Initially, the use of ICT focused on computer-based exercises for grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. However, this has evolved digital media is now viewed as a crucial tool for global collaboration and literacy. In international language instruction, integrating new technologies is considered vital for boosting student motivation and communication skills, enabling autonomous learning. The use of corpora in language teaching has also become popular, allowing students to create their own learning materials and conduct research using authentic language data. Access to real-world language corpora helps students refine their understanding of language use, identify frequent word combinations, and create effective learning materials based on authentic examples.

Materials and Methods. Information technology transforms social communication, creating new opportunities for interactive learning. Web forums, video conferencing, chat, blogs, email, and digital whiteboards enhance cognitive-communicative interaction online. While online interaction supplements, but doesn't replace, face-to-face communication in foreign language teaching, social media significantly enriches traditional methods. Educators acknowledge that today's students differ from previous generations in their thinking and behavior. Digital resources enhance language learning motivation, stimulate cognitive engagement, and facilitate exploratory learning. This "digital generation," comprising roughly 20% of the world's population, is highly significant. Despite widespread use of digital technology in many educational fields, its integration into English and other foreign language instruction lags behind. This is unfortunate, considering that nearly every member of the younger generation is learning a foreign language.

Teaching strategies need to be adapted to fully engage this digitally native learner population. The primary goal of foreign language instruction is to develop practical communication skills and cultivate communicative competence in



students. Vocabulary acquisition is crucial, requiring not only memorization and correct pronunciation but also an understanding of appropriate word usage in context. New technologies have provided numerous resources for active and independent vocabulary learning. While language labs were once prevalent, computer labs now play a central role in foreign language acquisition.

A comprehensive English language learning system should be implemented across all educational levels from preschool starting with children as young as 5 through higher education. This system aims to provide continuous English language education throughout a child's development. A key aspect is developing and implementing a system of teaching materials utilizing information and communication technologies ICT, creating lesson plans based on these principles. Effective teaching methods and multimedia resources are crucial for comprehensive child development. In preschool settings, specifically, using ICT-based presentations to introduce the alphabet to children under 5 is vital. This approach should be consistently integrated into the curriculum, creating a seamless transition to using ICT to teach the alphabet in first grade. This approach is supported by research showing the effectiveness of visual learning materials for young children.

Strong language skills grammar and vocabulary are essential for reading, listening, speaking, and writing in a foreign language. These skills form the core of language learning and can be taught explicitly or implicitly, emerging naturally from communicative activities.

Foreign language education utilizes digital tools tailored to different student proficiency levels. These digital tools, including interactive multimedia lessons incorporating graphics, sound, video, text, and images, actively engage students in independent learning. Multimedia lessons, often delivered via presentations, showcase both teachers and student technological skills and creativity. However, their effective integration depends on factors such as student proficiency, available



technology, lesson content, and objectives. Electronic testing, whether teacher-administered or self-administered, offers automated assessment, requiring teacher expertise. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) provides a standardized assessment framework for determining language proficiency levels and issuing certificates. Finally, interactive multimedia internet resources offer engaging and varied learning materials.

For higher education English language general and business courses, digital textbooks like "Speak out" offer convenient online learning resources. The "Active Book" component provides access to videos, audio, and exercises. The "My Speak out Lab" feature enables personalized practice with immediate feedback, progress tracking, and online testing.

Three English language learning resources are described: Business Result, Market Leader and My Grammar Lab. Business Result offers a CD-based interactive workbook for self-study of grammar, vocabulary and listening. Market Leader provides a similar CD-ROM workbook, enhanced by the online My English Lab platform for extra practice. My Grammar Lab is a primarily online resource with diagnostic testing, video tutorials, automated feedback, and preparation for standardized exams, supplementing a printed workbook. Each program offers different levels of online support and features.

Results and Discussion. Highly adaptable online learning platforms offer personalized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs, creating optimal learning environments. Online learning offers educators an effective way to deliver lessons to students, utilizing a variety of tools such as videos, PDFs, and podcasts. These resources can be integrated into lesson plans, expanding their scope and enhancing the learning experience. This allows teachers to become more effective educators.

The results strongly suggest that the integrated use of digital technologies in foreign language learning can significantly enhance learner outcomes. The



statistically significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition, grammatical accuracy, and speaking fluency observed in the experimental group support the hypothesis that interactive digital tools can be more effective than traditional methods. The larger improvement in vocabulary acquisition could be attributed to the platform's gamified vocabulary learning activities, which likely increased motivation and engagement. The enhanced grammatical accuracy may reflect the platform's ability to provide immediate feedback and personalized practice exercises.

The significant increase in speaking fluency suggests that the virtual communication tools facilitated more frequent and less intimidating speaking practice opportunities. However, the study also revealed some limitations. The qualitative data indicated that some students in the experimental group experienced technical difficulties and a learning curve with the new platform. Future research should investigate strategies to mitigate these challenges, such as providing more comprehensive training and technical support. Furthermore, the study's sample size was relatively small, and future studies should involve a larger and more diverse population to enhance generalizability. Despite these limitations, the findings provide compelling evidence for the potential of digital technologies to transform foreign language teaching and learning, particularly when implemented effectively and with careful consideration of pedagogical principles. Further research should explore the long-term effects of such interventions and investigate the optimal integration of digital tools within diverse classroom contexts.

This passage describes the use of PowerPoint and Prezi in educational settings. It highlights the versatility of PowerPoint, listing its capabilities for creating various presentation formats (slide shows, lecture notes, handouts) and incorporating diverse media (text, tables, graphs, images, audio). The passage emphasizes PowerPoint's utility not only for presenting information but also for reinforcing learning through checking, consolidating, repeating, generalizing, and



systematizing knowledge. The passage then introduces Prezi as a newer alternative, noting its 2.5D and Parallax capabilities, its online-only creation, and its time-saving features due to readily available online resources. It mentions Prezi's unique templates and offline accessibility of tutorials. Finally, the passage indicates that students in a research study were given the opportunity to use both PowerPoint and Prezi.

Conclusion. The integration of digital technologies in foreign language teaching is a widely discussed topic in international conferences, evidenced by numerous publications. The visual aspect is particularly crucial, playing a vital role in various educational settings, from traditional classrooms to distance learning. In online or virtual learning environments, visualization is integral, enabling teachers to act as tutors rather than just guides. This involves using simulations to develop speaking skills and critical thinking. Presentations are a key visualization tool, fostering creativity, stimulating imagination, and improving both receptive and productive language skills.

Software programs like Elective, Text adaptor, and Live-link enhance productive and analytical skills by improving the comprehensibility of foreign language texts through visual-syntactic formatting. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to virtual learning environments, necessitating the use of innovative platforms such as Zoom, Loom, and Learn Cube. These tools not only facilitate the delivery of lessons and feedback but also enable student interaction and peer collaboration regardless of location. The video conferencing format of these platforms reduces anxiety for less confident students, fostering greater willingness to communicate and ultimately enhancing their communicative competence.

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