# THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPING DISCOURSE COMPETENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS (BASED ON A2 LEVEL LEARNERS)

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**Abstract:** This paper investigates the impact of educational technologies on the development of discourse competence among secondary school learners, particularly at the A2 level. Discourse competence refers to the ability to produce and understand coherent spoken or written texts within communicative contexts. With the integration of digital tools and platforms in education, learners today have access to immersive, interactive, and personalized language learning environments. Through qualitative analysis and synthesis of recent literature, this paper demonstrates how technology-enhanced language instruction supports learners' acquisition of discourse structures, promotes meaningful communication, and fosters autonomous learning. The findings suggest that when effectively implemented, educational technologies serve as a catalyst for improving discourse competence and preparing learners for real-world communication.

**Keywords:** discourse competence, educational technologies, language learning, A2 learners, digital pedagogy, communicative competence

**INTRODUCTION** In the 21st-century educational landscape, the integration of technology has transformed traditional modes of language instruction. Particularly for A2-level learners—those with basic understanding and limited fluency—the development of discourse competence is essential in progressing to higher stages of communicative proficiency. Discourse competence, a subcomponent of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), refers to the learner's ability to arrange sentences and utterances into meaningful, logical, and contextually appropriate sequences. The use of educational technologies—ranging from interactive applications to collaborative online platforms—has shown promise in enabling students to engage in authentic discourse practices. Given the diverse linguistic and cognitive challenges faced by A2 learners, especially in secondary school settings, integrating educational technologies provides scaffolding and motivation that traditional methods may lack. This paper aims to explore how these tools contribute to enhancing discourse competence in young English language learners.

**LITERATURE REVIEW** The theory of communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972) and elaborated by Canale and Swain (1980) outlines four core competencies: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic. Among these, discourse competence plays a pivotal role in enabling learners to construct and interpret extended texts. Educational technology offers various affordances that directly support this development. According to Warschauer and Healey (1998), Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) environments facilitate contextual learning through multimedia input, immediate feedback, and autonomous learning paths. More recently, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) framework has been expanded to incorporate digital resources that promote interaction and learner agency. Studies (Stockwell, 2010; Godwin-Jones, 2014) show that A2 learners benefit significantly from technology-based discourse tasks, such as dialogue simulations, story sequencing, and discussion forums. These activities enable them to internalize cohesion markers, discourse connectors, and narrative structures in a supportive environment. Furthermore, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory underlines the importance of interaction and mediation in language learning. Digital tools such as voice recorders, virtual classrooms, and AI-based feedback systems serve as

mediators that extend learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), especially in discourse practice.

**DISCUSSION AND RESULTS** The discourse competence of A2-level learners is often limited by their vocabulary, grammatical control, and lack of exposure to varied communicative contexts. Educational technologies provide a multidimensional approach to address these challenges.

1. Digital Storytelling Platforms: Tools such as Storybird, Book Creator, and Toontastic enable learners to create narratives using visual aids. These platforms guide students in organizing ideas coherently and using appropriate discourse markers (e.g., first, then, after that, finally).

2. Virtual Role-plays and Chatbots: Language learning applications with AI-driven conversation partners (e.g., Duolingo's chatbot, Mondly's speech engine) help learners simulate real-life dialogues. This repeated interaction in contextual scenarios strengthens discourse cohesion and pragmatic awareness.

3. Video Conferencing and Collaborative Projects: Platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, and Padlet facilitate peer-to-peer communication and collaborative writing, essential for practicing discourse-level language use. These activities not only improve linguistic performance but also foster intercultural communication skills.

4. Feedback Mechanisms: Online platforms offer immediate and personalized feedback, enabling learners to revise and improve their discourse output. Feedback on coherence, structure, and relevance is particularly valuable for A2 learners working toward B1 proficiency. A qualitative analysis of several classroom observations and case studies shows that students engaged in technology-mediated learning tasks exhibit more structured speech, improved narrative coherence, and greater confidence in communication. Teachers report increased student motivation and participation, especially among learners who previously struggled with oral and written production.

**CONCLUSION** The development of discourse competence is fundamental for secondary school students aiming to attain communicative fluency in English. Educational

technologies, when thoughtfully integrated into language curricula, create enriched learning environments that support this goal. They provide opportunities for contextualized language use, scaffolded interaction, and reflective learning—all crucial for A2 learners transitioning to more advanced stages. While challenges such as digital literacy and resource availability persist, the potential of technology to enhance discourse competence cannot be overlooked. It is essential for educators to receive training in effective digital pedagogy and for curriculum designers to align technological tools with communicative objectives. As global communication demands increase, preparing students with strong discourse competence through innovative educational technologies is both a necessity and a responsibility.

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