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THE ROLE OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN DEVELOPING EFL STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning a foreign language because it enables learners to communicate their ideas, opinions, and experiences effectively. However, many EFL students experience difficulties with speaking fluently and confidently because of limited vocabulary, pronunciation problems, fear of making mistakes, and lack of opportunities for meaningful communication. Digital storytelling has become a useful technology-based approach that can provide learners with opportunities to practise speaking in an engaging and creative environment. This article examines the role of digital storytelling in developing EFL students' speaking skills. It focuses on how digital storytelling can contribute to speaking fluency, vocabulary development, pronunciation, communicative competence, learner confidence, and motivation. Previous studies indicate that digital storytelling can create meaningful speaking practice and encourage students to become more active participants in the learning process. The article also considers the role of teachers and the possible challenges of implementing digital storytelling in EFL classrooms.

РОЛЬ ЦИФРОВОГО СТОРИТЕЛЛИНГА В РАЗВИТИИ НАВЫКОВ УСТНОЙ РЕЧИ У УЧАЩИХСЯ, ИЗУЧАЮЩИХ АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК КАК ИНОСТРАННЫЙ

ИНФОРМАЦИЯ СТАТЬИ

Ключевые слова:

цифровой сторителлинг,
учащиеся EFL,
навыки говорения,
беглость речи,
произношение,
развитие словарного запаса,
коммуникативная
компетенция,

АННОТАЦИЯ

Говорение является одним из наиболее важных навыков при изучении иностранного языка, поскольку оно позволяет учащимся эффективно выражать свои идеи, мнения и опыт. Однако многие учащиеся, изучающие английский язык как иностранный (EFL), испытывают трудности с беглостью и уверенностью в устной речи из-за ограниченного словарного запаса, проблем с произношением, страха совершить ошибку и недостатка возможностей для содержательного общения. Цифровой сторителлинг, основанный на использовании технологий, становится полезным подходом, который может предоставить

*цифровые технологии,
вовлечённость учащихся.*

учащимся возможности для практики устной речи в увлекательной и творческой среде. В данной статье рассматривается роль цифрового сторителлинга в развитии навыков говорения у учащихся EFL. Основное внимание уделяется тому, как цифровой сторителлинг может способствовать развитию беглости речи, словарного запаса, произношения, коммуникативной компетенции, уверенности учащихся и мотивации. Результаты предыдущих исследований показывают, что цифровой сторителлинг способен создавать условия для содержательной речевой практики и стимулировать учащихся к более активному участию в образовательном процессе. Кроме того, в статье рассматриваются роль преподавателя и возможные проблемы внедрения цифрового сторителлинга в учебный процесс EFL.

RAQAMLI HIKOYALASHNING EFL TALABALARINING GAPIRISH KO'NIKMALARINI RIVOJLANTIRISHDAGI ROLI

MAQOLA MA'LUMOTI

Kalit so'zlar:

*raqamli hikoyalash,
EFL o'rganuvchilari,
gapirish ko'nikmalari,
gapirish ravonligi,
talaffuz,
lug'at boyligini rivojlantirish,
kommunikativ kompetensiya,
raqamli texnologiyalar,
o'quvchilarning faolligi.*

ANNOTATSIYA

Gapirish chet tilini o'rganishdagi eng muhim ko'nikmalardan biridir, chunki u o'quvchilarga o'z fikrlari, qarashlari va tajribalarini samarali tarzda ifodalash imkonini beradi. Biroq ko'plab EFL (ingliz tili chet tili sifatida o'rganiladigan) talabalar cheklangan lug'at boyligi, talaffuzdagi muammolar, xato qilishdan qo'rqish va mazmunli muloqot uchun imkoniyatlarning yetishmasligi sababli ravon va ishonchli gapirishda qiyinchiliklarga duch keladilar. Raqamli hikoyalash texnologiyaga asoslangan foydali yondashuv sifatida o'quvchilarga qiziqarli va ijodiy muhitda gapirishni mashq qilish imkoniyatini yaratishi mumkin. Mazkur maqolada raqamli hikoyalashning EFL talabalarining gapirish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishdagi o'rni tahlil qilinadi. Unda raqamli hikoyalashning gapirish ravonligi, lug'at boyligini rivojlantirish, talaffuz, kommunikativ kompetensiya, o'quvchilarning o'ziga bo'lgan ishonchi va motivatsiyasiga qanday hissa qo'shishi yoritiladi. Avvalgi tadqiqotlar raqamli hikoyalash mazmunli gapirish amaliyotini yaratishi va talabalarni o'quv jarayonining faol ishtirokchilariga aylanishga undashi mumkinligini ko'rsatmoqda. Shuningdek, maqolada EFL darslarida raqamli hikoyalashni joriy etishda o'qituvchining roli va yuzaga kelishi mumkin bo'lgan muammolar ham ko'rib chiqiladi.

INTRODUCTION

The development of speaking skills is an essential part of foreign language education. EFL learners need regular opportunities to use English in meaningful situations rather than only memorising grammatical rules and vocabulary. In traditional classrooms, however, speaking practice can sometimes be limited because students may have insufficient time to speak or may feel uncomfortable speaking in front of their classmates. Research has shown that digital storytelling can support the development of L2 speaking skills and can positively influence aspects such as fluency, vocabulary, accuracy, and pronunciation [1].

Digital storytelling is particularly useful because students are not simply repeating sentences prepared by the teacher. They have the opportunity to create content based on their own ideas and experiences. This can make speaking practice more meaningful and communicative. In EFL classes, authentic digital storytelling has also been identified as an alternative teaching strategy for developing students' speaking skills [2].

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative literature review method to examine the role of digital storytelling in developing EFL students' speaking skills. Previous academic studies focusing on digital storytelling, EFL speaking skills, vocabulary development, pronunciation, fluency, communicative competence, motivation, and learner confidence were reviewed and analysed. The selected studies were compared according to their research objectives, methodologies, key findings, and contributions to EFL speaking instruction. The analysis focused particularly on how digital storytelling influences speaking fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, communicative competence, motivation, and learner confidence.

RESULTS

Fluency is an important component of successful oral communication. Students may know many English words and grammatical structures but still experience difficulties when they need to speak spontaneously. Digital storytelling can provide learners with repeated opportunities to organise their thoughts and practise oral production before presenting their final story. When preparing a digital story, students normally decide what they want to communicate, organise their ideas, write or develop a script, and practise their narration. This process allows them to become more familiar with the language they are going to use. Repeated practice can reduce hesitation and help learners speak more naturally. Exploring the interplay of digital storytelling, L2 speaking skills, self-regulation, and anxiety in an IELTS preparation course, Humanities and Social Sciences Communications - Exploring the interplay of digital storytelling, L2 speaking skills, self-regulation, and anxiety in an IELTS preparation course, Bai and Xian [1] investigated digital storytelling in an IELTS preparation context and reported positive effects on learners' L2 speaking skills.

Vocabulary knowledge is another important factor in speaking development. Learners need an adequate range of words to express their thoughts clearly and appropriately. During the preparation of a digital story, students have to select vocabulary that is relevant to their topic and meaningful to their intended message. As a result, vocabulary can be learnt and practised in context rather than as isolated words. Digital storytelling can also support pronunciation practice. Students can record their narration and listen to it before producing the final version. This gives them an opportunity to notice pronunciation problems and practise difficult words or expressions. Soler Pardo [3] examined digital storytelling created and narrated by EFL learners and demonstrated how learners can participate actively in the creation and narration of stories. The ultimate purpose of learning a foreign language is not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability

to communicate effectively. Communicative competence involves using language appropriately in different situations. Digital storytelling can contribute to this development because learners have to think about what they want to say, how they want to say it, and how their message can be understood by others. Al-Amri [4] describes digital storytelling as a communicative language teaching-based method in EFL classrooms. From this perspective, digital storytelling can provide learners with opportunities to use language for a communicative purpose rather than completing only mechanical language exercises. Students can create stories about personal experiences, social issues, cultural topics, imaginary situations, or academic subjects. While preparing these stories, they practise organising information, describing events, expressing opinions, and connecting ideas. These activities can help learners develop different aspects of communicative competence.

DISCUSSION

Although digital storytelling encourages learner autonomy, the teacher continues to play an important role in the learning process. Teachers can introduce the task, provide examples, help students choose appropriate topics, give linguistic support, and provide feedback on students' work. The teacher should also make sure that the digital element does not become more important than the language-learning objective. Students should use technology as a tool for communication and language practice. Teachers can therefore focus students' attention on vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and the organisation of ideas while allowing learners to demonstrate creativity. Another important responsibility of the teacher is providing constructive feedback. Feedback can help students identify areas for improvement and revise their stories before the final presentation. In this way, digital storytelling can become a process of planning, practising, receiving feedback, and improving rather than a single speaking activity.

Learner motivation and confidence are closely connected with successful speaking

development. Students who are afraid of making mistakes may avoid speaking activities or produce very short answers. Digital storytelling can create a less threatening environment because students can prepare and practise their narration before sharing it with others. The creative nature of digital storytelling may also increase learner engagement. Students can select images, organise scenes, record their voices, and create a story that reflects their own ideas. Yang and Wu [5] found that digital storytelling could enhance students' academic achievement, critical thinking, and learning motivation. For EFL learners, this type of activity can provide a sense of ownership. Instead of simply responding to questions from a textbook, students become creators of their own content. This may encourage them to use English more actively and take greater responsibility for their learning.

Despite its potential benefits, digital storytelling also has some challenges. One possible difficulty is access to appropriate technological devices and reliable internet connections. Not every learner may have the same level of access to technology. Therefore, teachers need to consider the resources available to their students. Another challenge is the amount of time required to prepare a digital story. Students need time to select a topic, organise ideas, prepare language, create the digital content, and practise narration. If the activity is not carefully planned, the technological aspect may take more time than the actual language practice. Students may also have different levels of digital literacy. Some learners may be comfortable using digital tools, while others may require additional guidance. Teachers should therefore provide clear instructions and select tools that are appropriate for students' level and available resources.

CONCLUSION

Digital storytelling can be an effective technology-based approach for developing EFL students' speaking skills. It provides learners with opportunities to practise speaking through meaningful and creative tasks and can support fluency, vocabulary development, pronunciation, communicative competence, motivation, and confidence. Previous research has demonstrated positive connections between digital storytelling and language-learning outcomes, particularly in speaking-related areas [1; 2]. The effectiveness of digital storytelling depends on appropriate task design and teacher guidance. Technology itself does not automatically improve language ability; rather, its value comes from how it is integrated into purposeful language-learning activities. When students are given opportunities to plan, practise, record, revise, and present their stories, digital storytelling can create a learner-centred environment in which English is used for genuine communication. Therefore, digital storytelling can be considered a valuable supplementary method for EFL speaking instruction.

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