

THE USE OF TABLETS IN TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND SPEAKING FOR UZBEK EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20321174>

Abstract: The use of tablets significantly enhances English language learning for university students. This study examined the effectiveness of providing each student with a tablet to improve grammar and speaking skills. Sixty students from UzJMCU were selected and divided equally into two groups: Group A and Group B. Professors and psychologists supervised students' attitudes and monitored outcomes. All participants were pre-tested to ensure similar knowledge levels. The three-month experiment showed that during the first month, both groups were motivated and performed well. In the second month, Group A exhibited decreased effort, facing difficulties in grammar mastery and speaking confidence, resulting in a 9% decline in performance. By the third month, Group A continued to struggle, while Group B maintained and further improved their skills. Interviews indicated that tablets contributed significantly to language development, with animated videos, colorful graphics, shadowing techniques, and the ability to choose communication modes helping students learn grammar more effectively and reduce speaking anxiety.

Key words: Use of tablets, English language, EFL University students, Grammar, Speaking, Animated videos, Shadowing techniques

Introduction

Nowadays, in a rapidly developing world, it is well known that our lives are directly connected to technology. Language learning is fundamentally a social activity, where learners gain understanding of the target language through their interactions with both teachers and classmates. Within the classroom, these interactions allow teachers and students to collaboratively construct a shared knowledge base. Therefore, electronic devices like tablets play a significant role in enhancing Uzbek EFL University students' qualifications.

It is found that most students suffer from difficulties in learning grammar and speaking fluently, which leads to disappointment and demotivation. Language learning is fundamentally a social activity, where learners gain understanding of the target language through their interactions with both teachers and classmates. However, digital devices offer several opportunities, such as enjoyable apps and interesting graphics, which are convenient for mastering English as a Second Language.

Literature view

SMBM et al. stated that following the advent of the Internet, web-based literature study has been regarded as one of the most significant central means of communication in modern society.

The web-based learning method provides numerous opportunities, such as gaining a wide range of information related to legal vocabulary, creative expressions, aesthetic ideas, and everyday sentence structures.

Dryden & Vos (1994) suggest that through the use of social media, language teachers can implement several techniques to combine language skills, including shadowing YouTube videos, writing emails, completing questionnaires, and giving comments online.

Kayapinar et al. (2019) mention that the findings of the study indicate a significant correlation between students' self-assessed digital device skills, their age, and their perceptions of the use of tablets in EFL. Furthermore, the results show that students who use tablets in EFL classes evaluate their mobile device skills more highly than those who do not use them.

Loewen et al. (2020) argue that in the field of English as a foreign language, various language learning applications (e.g., ABA English, Busuu, Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, and Voxy), compatible with both mobile devices and personal computers, can provide learners with reliable access to learning materials anytime and anywhere. Their study on second language acquisition involved a group of nine students who acquired Turkish for one semester to assess the effectiveness of Duolingo.

Albadry (2017) mentioned that students could choose the appropriate mode of communication based on their circumstances and needs. Whether using synchronous or asynchronous tools, each student had the opportunity to select the method that was most convenient for them. For example, at the beginning of the study, many students tended to rely on asynchronous tools, such as email, to communicate with their teacher and groupmates.

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to determine the benefits of using tablets for grammar and speaking skills and the difference between traditional teaching and tablet-assisted teaching.

Sixty students with equal levels of cognizance were taken from UzJMCU and separated into two groups: Group A and Group B. The study continued for three months. Before the research both groups were tested to ensure their proficiency, and their daily English study results were recorded. Well-educated professors were assigned as teachers for both groups; however, Group B was provided with digital devices. They used various apps such as Duolingo and Elsa Speak. Furthermore, they learned grammar through short animated videos and sang to relax, which also improved their speaking skills. With the tablets, students watched fun content and did shadowing exercises, which results in developing natural speech.

Result and Discussion

The data analysis and findings bring out the representation of data which were collected through Uzbek EFL students, at the beginning of the study, no significant difference was observed between the two groups, all participants were active, and their results were promising.

However, in the second month, Group A's performance decreased by 9% while Group B maintained their scores. Psychologists accompanying the students found that participants of Group A witnessed boredom, some misunderstandings in grammar, and anxiety when speaking. Although the psychologists motivated and encouraged the learners, the results did not visibly improve. Group B, on the other hand, progressed step by step in each course via tablets. Especially, the ELSA Speak app helped them with improving pronunciation and fluency. The Duolingo app, which includes engaging tests, led to better results and reduced previous difficulties.

By the third period, students in Group A reported weak retention and comprehension. The results indicated that the performance of Group A student declined further by 17%. In contrast, Group B showed a slight decrease but quickly recovered and regained their previous performance level, animated videos and graphics helped Group B understand and memorize grammar rules more effectively. The members of Group B were also able to improve their cognitive skills,

Journal: <https://ifsmrc.org/index.php/aijrm>

additionally, shadowing their fan content improved their speaking skills and reduced anxiety when speaking.

Conclusion

In a fast-changing world, it is clear that technology is closely tied to our daily lives. Learning a language is a social process where students enhance their understanding of the target language through interactions with teachers and peers. In the classroom, this communication allows both teachers and learners to build knowledge together. For this reason, electronic tools like tablets are important for improving the skills of Uzbek EFL university students. Many students struggle with mastering grammar and speaking fluently, which can lead to frustration and a loss of motivation. Since language learning relies heavily on social interaction, communication with teachers and classmates is crucial. Digital devices offer several benefits, such as engaging applications and attractive visuals, which make learning English as a second language more effective and enjoyable.

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