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THE USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR
MIXED-ABILITY CLASSES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UZBEKISTAN

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola O'zbekiston o'rta maktablarida turli qobiliyatli sinflarda ingliz tilini o'qitishda raqamli vositalardan foydalanish samaradorligini o'rganadi. Maqolada adaptiv platformalar, interaktiv ilovalar va onlayn resurslarning individual yondashuvni ta'minlashdagi o'rni tahlil etiladi.

Kalit so'zlar. Raqamli vositalar, turli qobiliyatli sinflar, ingliz tilini o'qitish, moslashuvchan ta'lim, O'zbekiston, EFL.

Аннотация. Данная статья исследует эффективность применения цифровых инструментов при обучении английскому языку в разноуровневых классах средних школ Узбекистана. Анализируется роль адаптивных платформ, интерактивных приложений и онлайн-ресурсов в обеспечении индивидуального подхода.

Ключевые слова. Цифровые инструменты, разноуровневые классы, обучение английскому языку, адаптивное обучение, Узбекистан, EFL.

Annotation. This article examines the effectiveness of digital tools in English language teaching for mixed-ability classes in secondary schools in Uzbekistan. The study analyses how adaptive platforms, interactive applications, and online resources can support differentiated instruction and address the diverse learning needs of students within the same classroom.

Key words. Digital tools, mixed-ability classes, English language teaching, adaptive learning, secondary school, Uzbekistan, EFL, differentiated instruction.

In contemporary Uzbekistan, education reform has placed increasing emphasis on English language proficiency across secondary schools, aiming to produce graduates equipped for participation in the global economy.²⁸ This goal is complicated, however, by the reality of mixed-ability classes, in which students differ substantially in linguistic proficiency, cognitive readiness, and motivation. Such heterogeneity is the standard condition in most Uzbek secondary English classrooms, where learners at A1 and B2 proficiency may sit side by side, each requiring a fundamentally different level of challenge and support. Traditional whole-class instruction, delivering uniform content at a uniform pace, is widely recognized as insufficient to meet such diversity.²⁹ Digital tools — adaptive platforms, multimedia applications, and collaborative online environments —

²⁸ Mirziyoyev Sh. M. *Yoshlarga murojaat*. Toshkent: O'zbekiston, 2017. — 96 b. 12-b.

²⁹ Warschauer M. *Technology and Social Inclusion*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003. — 260 p. p. 14.



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offer systematic solutions by enabling teachers to differentiate instruction, provide individualized feedback, and engage all learners within a single lesson. This article examines the theoretical basis, practical applications, and contextual challenges of integrating digital tools into mixed-ability EFL classrooms in Uzbekistan.

The integration of digital tools in mixed-ability EFL instruction is grounded in three converging frameworks. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) holds that effective instruction targets what learners can accomplish with support rather than independently.³⁰ Adaptive platforms operationalize this principle by calibrating task difficulty to each student's demonstrated level, providing appropriate scaffolding for weaker learners while challenging stronger ones. Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences argues that students possess different cognitive strengths and that multimodal instruction engages a broader range of learners.³¹ Digital tools, combining text, audio, video, and interactive tasks, align naturally with this view. Tomlinson's model of differentiated instruction further holds that teachers should adjust content, process, and product in response to learner readiness.³² Digital environments support all three dimensions simultaneously: adaptive systems adjust difficulty automatically, varied tasks offer multiple pathways through material, and digital portfolios provide diverse modes of demonstrating achievement.

In practice, useful digital tools for mixed-ability EFL classrooms fall into three categories. First, adaptive learning platforms such as Duolingo, Khan Academy, and Cambridge LMS assess each learner algorithmically and present exercises calibrated to their proficiency, simultaneously scaffolding weaker students and extending stronger ones without requiring the teacher to prepare separate materials.³³ Second, interactive multimedia resources — videos with subtitles, animated grammar explanations, and audio dialogues — lower the affective filter for lower-proficiency learners while allowing stronger students to engage analytically with the same content. Third, collaborative tools such as Google Docs, Kahoot, and Padlet enable real-time peer interaction and provide teachers with instant formative data, allowing lesson adjustments based on live evidence of student understanding. Research consistently shows that blended learning models combining these tool types produce measurable gains in language proficiency, with the largest improvements among lower-proficiency learners — precisely those most disadvantaged by conventional whole-class instruction.³⁴

Implementing digital tools in Uzbekistan's secondary schools requires attention to specific national conditions. While investment in school digitization has been substantial in

³⁰ Vygotsky L. S. *Mind in Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978. — 159 p. p. 74.

³¹ Gardner H. *Frames of Mind*. New York: Basic Books, 1983. — 440 p. p. 47.

³² Tomlinson C. A. *The Differentiated Classroom*. Alexandria: ASCD, 2014. — 197 p. p. 34.

³³ Beatty K. *Teaching and Researching CALL*. 2nd ed. London: Longman, 2010. — 264 p. p. 88.

³⁴ Hattie J. *Visible Learning*. London: Routledge, 2009. — 392 p. p. 58.



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urban centres, access to devices and reliable internet remains uneven in rural districts.³⁵ Teachers in under-resourced settings must prioritize offline-capable tools and low-bandwidth applications. Teacher readiness is an equally significant barrier: research by Abdullayeva indicates that many secondary English teachers in Uzbekistan recognize the potential of digital technologies but lack sufficient training in their pedagogical application.³⁶ Professional development focused on integrating digital tools into differentiated lesson planning — rather than on device operation alone — is therefore an institutional priority. Without such preparation, digital tools risk being used superficially, as novelties rather than as genuine instruments of differentiated instruction.

The evidence reviewed in this article confirms that digital tools, when deliberately implemented, can address the fundamental challenge of mixed-ability EFL instruction: providing each learner with appropriately demanding content and timely feedback within a single classroom.³⁷ The convergence of Vygotsky's ZPD, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, and Tomlinson's differentiated instruction model provides strong theoretical justification for technology-enhanced approaches to heterogeneous EFL teaching. Realizing this potential at scale, however, demands equitable infrastructure investment, institutionally supported teacher training, and curriculum frameworks that align digital tool use with differentiated learning objectives. As Uzbekistan's secondary education system continues its reform trajectory, the capacity of English teachers to leverage digital tools in service of learner diversity will be a defining measure of educational quality and equity nationwide.

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³⁵ Xoshimov N. B. *O'zbekiston maktablarida ingliz tili ta'limi*. Samarqand: SamDU, 2019. — 112 b. 78-b.

³⁶ Abdullayeva M. R. *Ingliz tilini o'qitishda axborot texnologiyalarining o'rni*. Toshkent: Fan, 2020. — 148 b. 55-b.

³⁷ Council of Europe. CEFR. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2001. — 260 p. p. 22.



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