

ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫ ҒЫЛЫМ ЖӘНЕ ЖОҒАРЫ БІЛІМ МИНИСТРЛІГІ

«Л.Н. ГУМИЛЕВ АТЫНДАҒЫ ЕУРАЗИЯ ҰЛТТЫҚ УНИВЕРСИТЕТІ» КЕАҚ

**Студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2024»
XIX Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясының
БАЯНДАМАЛАР ЖИНАҒЫ**

**СБОРНИК МАТЕРИАЛОВ
XIX Международной научной конференции
студентов и молодых ученых
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2024»**

**PROCEEDINGS
of the XIX International Scientific Conference
for students and young scholars
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2024»**

**2024
Астана**

УДК 001

ББК 72

G99

«ǴYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2024» студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың XIX Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясы = XIX Международная научная конференция студентов и молодых ученых «ǴYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2024» = The XIX International Scientific Conference for students and young scholars «ǴYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2024». – Астана: – 7478 б. - қазақша, орысша, ағылшынша.

ISBN 978-601-7697-07-5

Жинаққа студенттердің, магистранттардың, докторанттардың және жас ғалымдардың жаратылыстану-техникалық және гуманитарлық ғылымдардың өзекті мәселелері бойынша баяндамалары енгізілген.

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ББК 72

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ISBN 978-601-7697-07-5

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UDC 16.01.45

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL RESOURCES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Introduction

In the evolving landscape of language education, the integration of digital resources has opened new avenues for enhancing teaching and learning methodologies. As technology continues to advance, educators are increasingly harnessing the power of digital tools to create dynamic and interactive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of students. This paradigm shift towards digital integration has sparked a revolution in language instruction, offering unprecedented opportunities for engagement, collaboration, and personalized learning experiences.

Against this backdrop of innovation and transformation, this article embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the impact of digital resources on English language instruction. Through a pedagogical experiment conducted at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (ENU), this study seeks to examine the efficacy of integrating digital tools within the framework of language teaching, with a focus on enhancing student engagement, motivation, and language proficiency.

By delving into key studies and theoretical frameworks in the field of digital language education, we aim to provide insights into the diverse benefits and applications of digital resources. From online dictionaries and multimedia presentations to interactive exercises and educational apps, these digital tools offer a wealth of opportunities for enriching language learning experiences and fostering 21st-century skills.

Literature Review

The integration of digital resources into language teaching has been a subject of growing interest in the field of education. With the advancement of technology, educators have increasingly recognized the potential of digital tools to enhance language learning outcomes and foster student engagement. This literature review provides an overview of key studies and theoretical frameworks relevant to the use of digital resources in English language teaching.

Digital Resources in Language Education: Digital resources encompass a wide range of tools and platforms, including online dictionaries, interactive exercises, multimedia presentations, and educational apps. These resources offer various benefits for language learners, such as access to authentic materials, personalized learning experiences, and opportunities for collaborative learning

[1]. The integration of digital resources into language instruction has been shown to improve student motivation, engagement, and language proficiency [2].

The pedagogical integration of digital resources often draws upon theoretical frameworks that guide instructional design and implementation. One prominent framework is the 5E Model developed by Atkin and Karplus [4]. The 5E Model provides a structured approach to lesson planning, emphasizing phases of Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate. This framework has been widely adopted in language education to promote active learning and conceptual understanding [5].

Engagement and Interaction: Engagement and interaction are fundamental aspects of effective language teaching and learning. Digital resources offer opportunities to enhance student engagement through interactive activities, multimedia content, and gamified learning experiences [6]. Interactive platforms such as Quizizz, Quizlet, and Nearpod facilitate active participation and foster peer collaboration, contributing to a dynamic and learner-centered classroom environment [7].

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of digital resources on language learning outcomes. Research indicates that the strategic integration of digital tools can lead to improvements in language proficiency, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative competence [8,9]. Digital resources also support differentiated instruction, allowing educators to tailor learning activities to individual student needs and preferences [10].

Digital resources have the potential to enhance learner motivation and autonomy by providing opportunities for self-directed learning and exploration [11]. Learners can access online materials at their own pace, engage in interactive exercises, and receive immediate feedback, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment over the learning process [12]. Additionally, the gamified elements and real-world relevance of digital resources appeal to learners' intrinsic motivations and interests [13].

Methodology

Design

The study was conducted over a period of 15 weeks, encompassing both passive and active pedagogical practices. The passive phase involved observation, curriculum development, and needs analysis, while the active phase focused on implementing the designed lesson model enriched with digital resources. The 5E Model by Atkin and Karplus provided the framework for lesson planning, incorporating stages of engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation. Academic performance was assessed through pre- and post-experiment tests, with a focus on lexical and grammatical proficiency. Additionally, student attitudes towards digital resources were gauged through a questionnaire.

Participants

The participants in this pedagogical experiment were first-year students enrolled in the Department of Theory and Practice of Foreign Languages at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. The study involved two distinct groups: a control group and an experimental group. The control group consisted of 14 students, all of whom were first-year students. These students received instruction using traditional teaching methods, without the integration of digital resources. The participants in the control group were selected based on their enrollment in the designated course, "Basic Foreign Language," which formed part of their curriculum.

The experimental group comprised 7 first-year students. These students were exposed to a curriculum enriched with digital resources, following the pedagogical framework developed by the researcher. The selection criteria for the experimental group were similar to those of the control group, ensuring comparability in terms of academic background and enrollment status.

Both groups consisted of students aged between 18 and 20 years, representing a diverse cohort in terms of language proficiency, learning preferences, and academic interests. The participants were informed about the nature and objectives of the study and provided consent to participate voluntarily. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured throughout the data collection and analysis processes.

Procedure

The study was conducted over a period of 15 weeks, encompassing both passive and active pedagogical practices. The passive phase involved observation, curriculum development, and needs analysis, while the active phase focused on implementing the designed lesson model enriched with digital resources. The 5E Model by Atkin and Karplus provided the framework for lesson planning, incorporating stages of engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation. Academic performance was assessed through pre- and post-experiment tests, with a focus on lexical and grammatical proficiency. Additionally, student attitudes towards digital resources were gauged through a questionnaire.

Instruments

The study utilized pre- and post-experiment tests using Socrative platform to assess lexical and grammatical proficiency of the participants. The test consisted of 60 questions, 30 questions for grammar and 30 questions for lexis, respectively. A questionnaire gathered qualitative data on student attitudes towards digital resources. Academic performance metrics quantified learning outcomes, while observational data provided insights into classroom dynamics. Content analysis evaluated the alignment of instructional strategies with the 5E Model and integration of digital resources.

Results and Discussion

The study conducted a meticulous examination of the effects of incorporating digital resources into English language teaching, employing a rigorous comparative analysis of academic performance in both control and experimental groups before and after the experiment. The participants, consisting of 14 students in the control group and 7 students in the experimental group, were first-year students enrolled in the Department of Theory and Practice of Foreign Languages. This ensured homogeneity in terms of academic background and age, with all participants falling within the age range of 18 to 20 years.

To establish baseline proficiency levels, both groups underwent lexical and grammatical proficiency test before the initiation of the experiment. Results revealed that the control group achieved an average academic performance score of 80.355 points, while the experimental group demonstrated slightly higher results, with an average score of 84.7 points. Although there was a discernible difference of 4.3 points between the two groups, statistical analysis indicated that this disparity was not statistically significant (Figure 1).

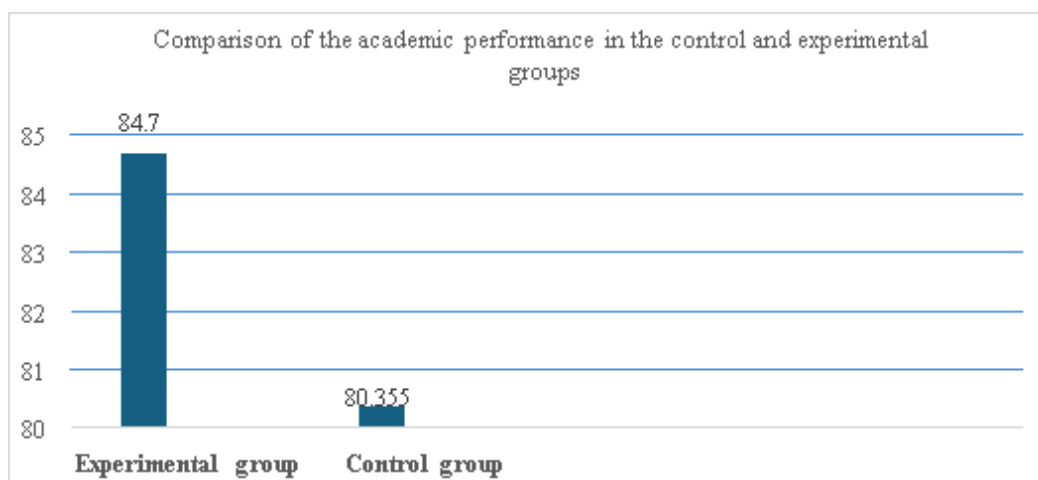


Figure 1 The pre-test results of participants

Following the 15-week experiment, which comprised 12 units with three lessons each, both groups underwent a final assessment to evaluate their academic performance. The control group exhibited a modest improvement, with an average score of 83.13 points. In contrast, the experimental group showcased a remarkable enhancement in academic performance, achieving an

average score of 90.4 points. The graphical representation of the comparative analysis of academic performance after the final tests, as depicted in Figure 2, vividly illustrates the substantial progress made by the experimental group compared to the control group.

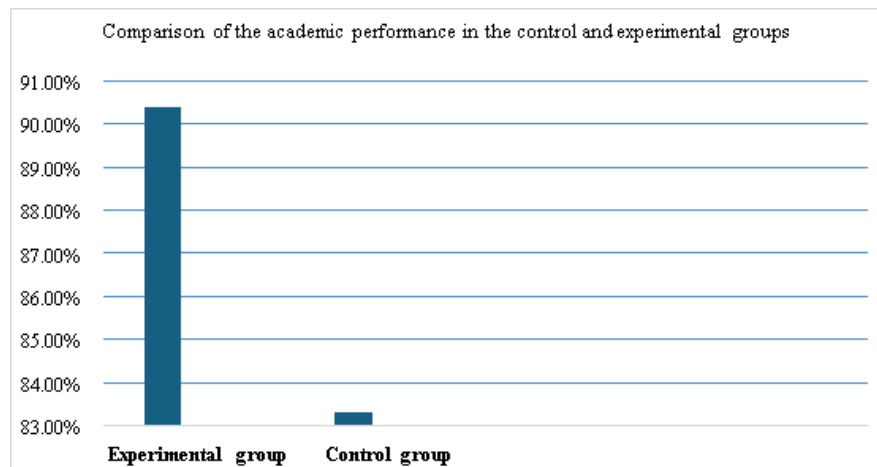


Figure 2 The post-test results of participants

Beyond assessing academic performance, the study delved into student perceptions and attitudes towards digital resources. Through a meticulously crafted questionnaire administered exclusively to the experimental group, valuable insights emerged regarding student motivation and preferences. The findings revealed that 60% of students expressed a keen interest in leveraging digital resources for English language learning, with 30% indicating significantly heightened motivation compared to conventional teaching methods (Figure 3). Noteworthy aspects that resonated with students included the practical applicability, gamified features, convenience, collaborative potential, and personalized learning experiences facilitated by digital resources (Figure 4).

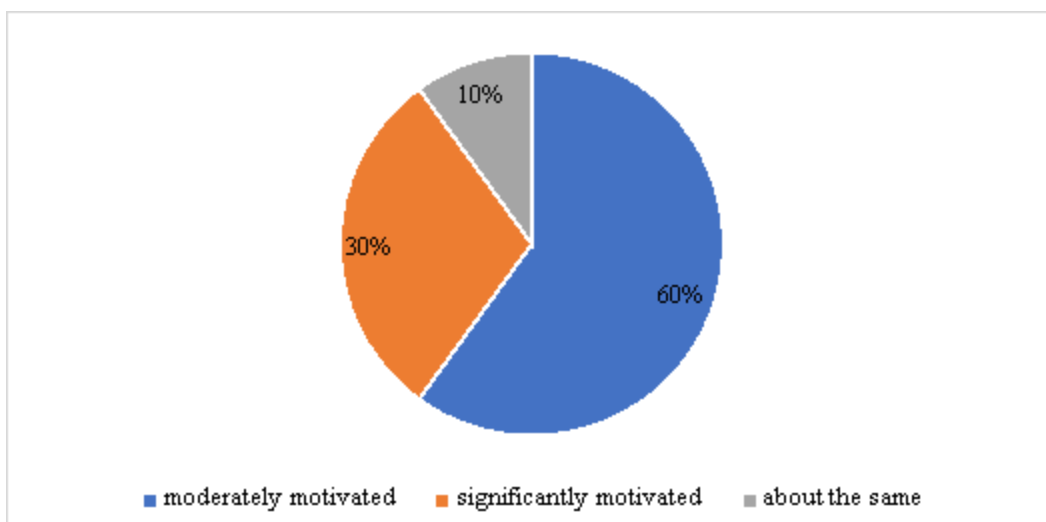


Figure 3 How do you think digital resources contribute to your language learning motivation compared to traditional methods?

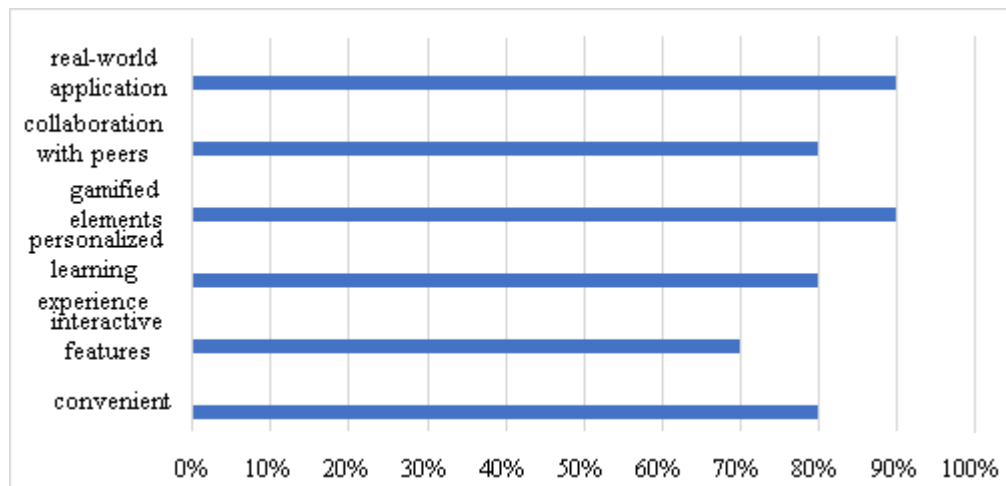


Figure 4 What motivates you to use digital resources for language learning?

Conclusion

The empirical evidence gleaned from the study underscores the transformative potential of integrating digital resources into English language teaching methodologies. While both control and experimental groups exhibited advancements in academic performance, the experimental group consistently outperformed its counterpart, signaling the efficacy of the digital resource-enhanced instructional model. These findings underscore the imperative of embracing technological innovations to optimize language learning outcomes and cultivate student engagement and motivation.

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УДК 372.881.111.1

THE PECULIARITIES OF A BANK OF TASKS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS

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Introduction

This article aims to analyze the peculiar aspects of developing a bank of tasks designed to enhance the communicative English writing skills of high school students. It begins by stating the aim of the bank of tasks, delving into the goals and outcomes. Following this, a detailed examination of the textbooks serving as foundational resources for these tasks is undertaken. Subsequently, the article delves into the exploration of the structure and organization of the bank of tasks. Finally, an analysis is conducted to evaluate how the tasks within the bank effectively address key aspects of language proficiency and writing skills.

The aim of this bank of tasks is to foster the development of high school students' communicative writing skills in English. *Communicative English writing skills* extend beyond mere proficiency in conveying thoughts, ideas, information through writing: they encompass a nuanced understanding of the context, audience, and purpose. Mastering these skills helps students navigate diverse communicative situations effectively, thereby enhancing their overall competence in English language proficiency [1; 2].

When choosing tasks for inclusion in the bank, it was crucial to ensure that they align with the guidelines outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) [3]. Consequently, only textbooks adhering to the CEFR standards were selected as resources for the bank. Given that high school students are expected to possess an Upper Intermediate (B2) level of proficiency, English language textbooks appropriate for this proficiency level were specifically chosen.

Methodology

The analysis of all the materials selected as a resource for the bank of tasks is conducted in this section. The description of each resource from which the tasks were selected is given in the following paragraphs.

“Upstream” is a renowned series of English language coursebooks designed for learners of English at different stages of language proficiency. The textbooks include “Writing” units, offering a wide range of writing activities accompanied by vibrant visuals (pictures, notes, maps, etc.), serving as scaffolding for students [4].

“English File” is a widely used series of English language coursebooks tailored to address the needs of learners at various stages. The series is full of writing activities aimed to enhance students' communicative writing skills [5].

“New Headway” is also a series of English language coursebooks designed for learners at different levels of proficiency. The textbooks contain “Writing” modules, offering writing activities inspired by real-life situations [6].

“Outcomes” is another series of English language teaching textbooks, focusing on developing learners' communication skills in real-life contexts. The textbooks include eight “Writing Units” which teach eight different styles of writing. Each of them features a model text, extra vocabulary and grammar exercises that help to write each of eight kinds of texts [7].