

DIGITAL TOOLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING. BENEFITS, CHALLENGES AND INTEGRATION OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

The rapid digitalization of education has intensified the debate regarding its positive or negative impact. While some individuals argue about the drawbacks others point to the increase in motivation level of learners. Moreover, the teachers report the reduced workload due to the use of digital tools such as Duolingo, Quizlet, and artificial intelligence. The study is based on the comparative analysis of recent scientific studies that were dedicated to English language teaching (ELT). The analysis reveals that digitalization influences not only drawbacks such as digital inequality but also demonstrates benefits in fostering the engagement in youth generation. The findings suggest that successful integration depends on both digital competence and effective teaching methodology.

Key words: English language teaching, digitalization, education, Duolingo, Quizlet, artificial intelligence, digital tools, educational technology.

INTRODUCTION

Over recent years, the digitalization of education has transformed the teaching approach not only for science, but also for language teaching. The new generation of teachers faces the challenge of engaging students in the subject, which leads to a need not only to integrate the digital technologies into teaching process, but also gamify lessons. Fortunately, today we have a wide range of tools that can be used in the educational process, such as Duolingo, AI, and Quizlet.

Despite numerous controversies, the integration of digital technologies into English language teaching provides teachers with several significant advantages. With the use of artificial intelligence and various lesson gamification tools, a teacher can save not only time but also energy, allowing them to redirect it towards explaining new topics. Thanks to artificial intelligence, teachers can significantly

reduce the time spent on checking homework and focus on providing feedback to students. However, despite all the advantages of integrating technology into education, a crucial aspect of this process is the teacher's digital competence. To properly integrate technologies into their teaching methodology, a teacher must know how to use them effectively. [2]

Advantages of Using Digital Technologies in Language Learning:

1. **Personalized Learning.** Modern online platforms like Duolingo provide a personalized approach for each user. The user can adapt the program to their own level, which significantly increases engagement.

2. **Better Access of Resources.** Today, the internet and mass media offer an immense number of resources on any topic. With media literacy, this can greatly boost the educational process.

3. **Interactive Learning and Gamification.** In recent years, gamification has become a powerful teaching tool, especially for younger students. The use of game-based methods helps to increase engagement in the learning process and create a competitive atmosphere.

4. **Rapid Feedback.** Thanks to well-built algorithms, modern technologies provide quick feedback, saving our time and energy. [1]

One of the most famous examples of popular digital tools for learning foreign languages is the language platform called “Duolingo”. It provides clear interface, competitive atmosphere, and the gamification helps to retain the attention of many users over an extended period. The tasks are designed to develop vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills. [3]

According to some research, the online platform called “Quizlet” has been recognized as extremely convenient for learning English, not only for students but also for the application of its features by teachers. The platform provides the ability to create vocabulary entries with immediate translation and a visual image, which aids significantly in memorization.

Another important feature is the ability to import words from formats like Word, Excel, Google Docs. Additionally, the program offers a wide range of functions that help to develop different skills during the process of learning English.

1. **Flashcard Function:** This function is very convenient for teacher use. Creating flashcards with visual images and translations requires little time, and there is also the option to use ready-made flashcards from other users available in the mass media.

2. **"Learn" Mode:** This is an intelligent, adaptive mode for memorizing words that can be customized to the student's level. The mode provides various questions of

different difficulty levels, requiring users to perform different tasks, such as choosing the correct answer from four options, or writing the translation in Russian or English.

3. **"Write" Mode:** The platform also offers a mode where users must type the translation in the required language (Russian or English). The word can also be provided with an image.

4. **"Spell" Mode:** The platform includes a mode where users must pronounce words. The algorithm and artificial intelligence check the quality of pronunciation.

5. **Critical Thinking Tasks:** The platform also offers tasks to develop critical thinking, for example, a matching exercise where students must pair words with their translations by matching elements with each other.

6. **"Test" Mode:** There is, of course, also a testing mode that offers various types of questions, such as True/False or multiple-choice questions. [4]

The use of artificial intelligence in education remains a topic of extensive debate. Some argue that artificial intelligence lacks sufficient competence to be included in the educational process, while others suggest that, conversely, it is humans who need a sufficient level of digital competence to use artificial intelligence effectively for the benefit of education and language learning.

To add more points, in recent years, the role of artificial intelligence and digital tools in education has grown significantly, as AI offers advantages not only for learners but also for teachers. Today, there is a wide choice of artificial intelligence tools offering diverse capabilities, from generating images to creating tests and even checking assignments. Proper use of artificial intelligence provides teachers with a range of advantages, such as:

1. Personalized approach
2. Interactivity and increased engagement
3. Saving teacher's time and energy
4. Generating assignments for students
5. The ability to adapt and personalize tasks easily [5]

To conclude, the digitalization of learning is a very complex and multifaceted process that will continue to develop alongside technological advancement. The most crucial point to make is that, despite the debates of many people, the digitalization of learning and the use of artificial intelligence in education constitute an irreversible process for the development of the educational system. The most critical aspect of this process is the professionalism and digital competence of teachers, who will be able to control this process and apply it in the right direction.

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