COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING COMPETENCES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS

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Abstract. The article analyzes the linguistic and pedagogical potential of digital communication tools, identifies key technological approaches to speaking development, and discusses challenges associated with their implementation. The findings suggest that communication technologies enhance learners' motivation, interaction, and communicative effectiveness when integrated systematically into language instruction. This article examines the role of communication technologies in fostering speaking competences among secondary school pupils from the perspectives of applied linguistics and educational technology.

Keywords: communication technologies, speaking competence, secondary school pupils, digital communication, applied linguistics, educational technology

The rapid development of communication technologies has significantly transformed language education and created new opportunities for developing speaking competences in secondary school pupils. Digital platforms, multimedia tools, and interactive communication environments enable learners to engage in authentic speech practice beyond traditional classroom boundaries. In contemporary language education, the development of speaking competence is considered a central objective, as oral communication plays a decisive role in academic success, social interaction, and personal development. Traditional classroom-based instruction often provides limited opportunities for meaningful oral interaction, which can restrict pupils' speaking development. In this context, communication technologies offer innovative solutions for expanding communicative practice and enhancing speaking competences.

Communication technologies include a wide range of digital tools such as online discussion platforms, video conferencing applications, educational social networks, and multimedia resources. These technologies support interactive, learner-centered, and collaborative learning environments, which are essential for effective speaking development. The integration of communication technologies into secondary education aligns with global educational trends emphasizing digital literacy and communicative competence.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the role of communication technologies in developing speaking competences of secondary school pupils and to identify linguistic and pedagogical conditions that ensure their effective use.

From the perspective of applied linguistics, speaking competence is understood as the ability to produce meaningful, fluent, and contextually appropriate oral speech. It involves the interaction of several components, including lexical, grammatical, discourse, and pragmatic competences. Speaking competence is not limited to linguistic accuracy but also includes fluency, coherence, interactional skills, and

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strategic language use. In secondary school pupils, speaking competence development is influenced by cognitive growth, social interaction, and increased exposure to diverse communicative contexts. Applied linguistics emphasizes that speaking skills are best developed through active use of language in authentic communicative situations. Therefore, instructional approaches should prioritize interaction, negotiation of meaning, and purposeful speech production.

Communication technologies create new linguistic environments that differ significantly from traditional classroom discourse. Digital communication allows pupils to participate in synchronous and asynchronous interactions, engage with diverse interlocutors, and access multimodal language input. Video conferencing tools and voice-based applications enable real-time oral communication, simulating face-to-face interaction. These technologies provide opportunities for dialogue, role-play, debates, and collaborative problem-solving, which are essential for speaking competence development. Linguistically, such interactions promote spontaneous speech, turn-taking skills, and pragmatic awareness. Multimedia technologies integrate audio, visual, and textual elements, supporting comprehension and speech production. Video materials, podcasts, and interactive presentations expose pupils to authentic language models and diverse speech styles. This multimodal input enhances pronunciation, intonation, and lexical usage.

The effective use of communication technologies requires pedagogically grounded approaches. Several technological strategies have proven effective in developing speaking competences in secondary school pupils. Educational forums, learning management systems, and collaborative platforms encourage pupils to express opinions, respond to peers, and participate in structured discussions. Although some interactions are text-based, they often serve as a foundation for oral presentations and debates, strengthening speaking confidence and coherence.

Video recording tools allow pupils to create presentations, narratives, and role-plays. These tasks promote self-reflection and autonomous learning, as pupils can review and improve their speech performance. From a linguistic perspective, video-based tasks support discourse organization and pragmatic appropriateness.

Virtual environments and simulations provide context-rich scenarios for speaking practice, such as interviews, public speaking, or problem-solving situations. These technologies foster authentic language use and reduce anxiety by allowing pupils to rehearse speech in controlled environments.

The successful integration of communication technologies into the process of developing speaking competences in secondary school pupils requires carefully structured pedagogical conditions. Technology itself does not automatically lead to improved speaking outcomes; rather, its effectiveness depends on how well digital tools are embedded within linguistically grounded instructional practices.

Alignment of Technological Tools with Linguistic Objectives - one of the primary pedagogical conditions is the alignment of communication technologies with clearly defined linguistic and communicative objectives. Digital tools should not be used for their own sake but must serve specific speaking goals, such as improving fluency, expanding lexical resources, developing discourse coherence, or enhancing pragmatic awareness. From a linguistic perspective, each technological activity should correspond to a particular component of speaking competence. For example, video conferencing platforms may be employed to practice interactive dialogue and turn-taking, while video recording tools can be used to develop monologic speech and discourse organization. This alignment ensures that technology-supported activities contribute directly to speaking competence development rather than distracting from instructional aims.

Teacher Guidance and Scaffolding of Speaking Tasks - teacher guidance plays a decisive role in technology-enhanced speaking instruction. Communication technologies create new learning environments, but pupils require systematic scaffolding to use these environments effectively. Linguistically informed scaffolding includes modeling appropriate speech patterns, providing lexical and grammatical support, and gradually increasing task complexity. Teachers guide pupils through pre-speaking, while-speaking, and post-speaking stages, ensuring that technological tools support meaningful oral production. Without pedagogical mediation, pupils may engage in superficial or non-communicative use of technology, limiting the development of genuine speaking competence.

Balance Between Accuracy- and Fluency-Oriented Activities - an essential pedagogical condition for effective technology integration is maintaining a balance between accuracy-focused and fluency-focused speaking activities. Communication technologies often encourage spontaneous speech, which is beneficial for fluency development but may lead to reduced attention to linguistic accuracy. From an applied linguistics standpoint, both dimensions are equally important. Technology-based tasks should be designed to include opportunities for free oral interaction as well as guided practice that focuses on pronunciation, grammar, and lexical precision. For instance, live discussions may be complemented by reflective feedback sessions or self-recorded speech analysis, allowing pupils to improve accuracy without inhibiting communicative confidence.

Consideration of Pupils' Digital Competence and Access to Technology - the effectiveness of communication technologies in speaking instruction is also influenced by pupils' level of digital competence and access to technological resources. Secondary school pupils demonstrate varying degrees of familiarity with digital tools, which can affect their participation in technology-mediated speaking activities. Pedagogically, it is important to ensure that technological demands do not overshadow linguistic objectives. Teachers should provide clear instructions and technical support, gradually developing pupils' digital literacy alongside their speaking competences. Additionally, issues of unequal access to technology must be addressed to ensure inclusive participation and equal learning opportunities.

The Teacher's Role in Designing Meaningful Oral Interaction -teachers occupy a central position in transforming communication technologies into effective tools for speaking development. Their role extends beyond technical facilitation to the design of pedagogically meaningful tasks that promote authentic oral interaction. Effective technology-based speaking tasks require purposeful communication, interaction with peers, and opportunities for negotiation of meaning. Teachers must carefully monitor speaking activities, provide timely feedback, and encourage reflective practice. By doing so, they ensure that communication technologies function as instruments for active speech production rather than passive content consumption.

In summary, the pedagogical conditions for effective technology integration emphasize the primacy of linguistic goals, teacher mediation, balanced skill development, and learner accessibility. When these conditions are met, communication technologies can significantly enhance the development of speaking competences in secondary school pupils.

Despite their advantages, communication technologies also present challenges. Technical difficulties, unequal access to digital resources, and potential reduction of face-to-face interaction may limit effectiveness. Additionally, without proper pedagogical design, technology-based activities may focus on form rather than communicative function. From a linguistic standpoint, excessive reliance on scripted or pre-recorded speech may reduce spontaneity. Therefore, a balanced approach that combines digital and traditional speaking activities is essential.

The analysis demonstrates that communication technologies significantly enhance opportunities for speaking competence development by expanding communicative contexts and increasing learner engagement. Applied linguistics supports the view that technology-mediated communication facilitates interaction, negotiation of meaning, and pragmatic development. However, technological tools alone do not guarantee successful speaking development. Their effectiveness depends on purposeful integration into linguistically informed instructional frameworks.

Communication technologies represent a powerful resource for developing speaking competences in secondary school pupils. When integrated within an applied linguistics framework, these technologies support authentic communication, learner autonomy, and discourse development. The findings of this article highlight the necessity of combining technological innovation with pedagogical and linguistic principles to achieve sustainable speaking competence development.

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