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DESIGNING MULTIMEDIA-BASED TASKS TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILLS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR ELEMENTARY-LEVEL STUDENTS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Abstract

This article examines the design of multimedia-based tasks aimed at developing speaking skills in elementary-level students of secondary education. Although speaking is widely acknowledged as a central component of communicative competence, young learners often face difficulties in producing language spontaneously due to limited vocabulary, low confidence, and anxiety. Multimedia technologies, when carefully integrated into pedagogy, can create interactive, authentic, and motivating conditions for oral communication. The paper outlines theoretical underpinnings of multimedia-assisted language learning and emphasizes practical strategies for designing effective speaking tasks for younger learners. Task types such as digital storytelling, video role-plays, interactive dialogues, and collaborative multimedia projects are discussed about their classroom implementation. Challenges related to scaffolding, learner anxiety, and resource availability are also addressed. The article concludes that well-designed multimedia-based tasks not only enhance speaking proficiency but also foster confidence, creativity, and engagement among elementary-level learners.

Keywords: *multimedia tasks, speaking skills, foreign language learning, elementary learners, communicative competence, secondary education.*

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ОРТА БІЛІМ БЕРУДЕГІ БАСТАУЫШ СЫНЫП ОҚУШЫЛАРЫНЫҢ ШЕТ ТІЛІН ОҚЫТУДА СӨЙЛЕУ ДАҒДЫЛАРЫН ЖЕТІЛДІРУ ҮШІН МУЛЬТИМЕДИЯЛЫҚ ТАПСЫРМАЛАРДЫ ӘЗІРЛЕУ

Аңдатпа

Бұл мақалада орта білім берудегі бастауыш деңгейдегі оқушылардың сөйлеу дағдыларын дамытуға бағытталған мультимедиялық тапсырмаларды әзірлеу қарастырылады. Сөйлеу коммуникативтік құзыреттіліктің негізгі құрамдас бөлігі ретінде кеңінен танылғанымен, жас оқушылар шектеулі сөздік қорына, өзіне деген сенімнің төмендігіне және уайымға байланысты тілді еркін қолдануда жиі қиындықтарға тап болады. Дұрыс ұйымдастырылған жағдайда мультимедиялық технологиялар ауызекі сөйлеуге арналған интерактивті, шынайы әрі ынталандырушы орта құра алады. Мақалада мультимедияға негізделген тіл үйретудің теориялық негіздері қарастырылып, бастауыш сынып оқушыларына тиімді сөйлеу тапсырмаларын құрастырудың тәжірибелік тәсілдері сипатталады. Сандық әңгімелеу, бейнерөлдік ойындар, интерактивті диалогтар және бірлескен мультимедиялық жобалар сияқты тапсырма түрлерінің сыныптағы қолданылуы талқыланады. Сонымен

қатар, оқытуда қолдау көрсету, оқушылардың уайымы және ресурстардың жеткіліксіздігі сияқты қиындықтар да қарастырылған. Қорытындыда, жақсы жобаланған мультимедиялық тапсырмалар сөйлеу дағдыларын жетілдіріп қана қоймай, сонымен бірге бастауыш деңгейдегі оқушылардың сенімділігін, шығармашылығын және қызығушылығын арттыратыны атап өтіледі.

***Тірек сөздер:** мультимедиялық тапсырмалар, сөйлеу дағдылары, шет тілін үйрену, бастауыш деңгейдегі оқушылар, коммуникативтік құзыреттілік, орта білім беру.*

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РАЗРАБОТКА МУЛЬТИМЕДИЙНЫХ ЗАДАНИЙ ДЛЯ РАЗВИТИЯ НАВЫКОВ ГОВОРЕНИЯ ПРИ ИЗУЧЕНИИ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА У УЧАЩИХСЯ НАЧАЛЬНОГО УРОВНЯ СРЕДНЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматривается разработка мультимедийных заданий, направленных на развитие навыков говорения у учащихся начального уровня в системе среднего образования. Несмотря на то, что говорение широко признаётся ключевым компонентом коммуникативной компетенции, младшие школьники часто сталкиваются с трудностями при спонтанном использовании языка из-за ограниченного словарного запаса, низкой уверенности и тревожности. Мультимедийные технологии, при грамотной интеграции в педагогический процесс, могут создавать интерактивные, аутентичные и мотивирующие условия для устного общения. В статье излагаются теоретические основы мультимедийного обучения иностранным языкам и подчеркиваются практические стратегии проектирования эффективных заданий для развития устной речи у младших школьников. Рассматриваются такие виды заданий, как цифровое сторителлинг, видеоролевая игра, интерактивные диалоги и совместные мультимедийные проекты, а также их применение в учебной аудитории. Также анализируются проблемы, связанные с использованием опоры (scaffolding), тревожностью учащихся и ограниченностью ресурсов. В заключение отмечается, что грамотно разработанные мультимедийные задания не только повышают уровень устной речи, но и способствуют развитию уверенности, творческих способностей и вовлеченности учащихся начального уровня.

***Ключевые слова:** мультимедийные задания, навыки говорения, изучение иностранного языка, учащиеся начального уровня, коммуникативная компетенция, среднее образование.*

Introduction

Speaking is often regarded as one of the most important skills in foreign language learning, yet it is also one of the most challenging to develop, particularly among younger students in secondary education. While curricula frequently highlight oral communication as a key objective, in practice speaking tends to receive less attention than reading, writing, or grammar. Many students' complete years of study without acquiring the confidence to hold basic conversations. This gap between goals and outcomes arises from several factors, including time constraints, large class sizes, and the predominance of accuracy-focused instruction.

Elementary-level learners face unique challenges when developing speaking skills. Their linguistic resources are limited, and they may struggle with pronunciation, sentence formation, or spontaneous speech. Traditional methods, such as memorized dialogues or tightly scripted role-plays, often fail to provide opportunities for authentic interaction. As a result, students may learn

to repeat language forms correctly but remain unable to use them meaningfully in real-life situations.

The integration of multimedia technologies offers promising solutions to these challenges. Multimedia tools can simulate authentic communication, provide rich visual and auditory input, and encourage active learner participation. Videos, images, audio recordings, and interactive platforms transform the language classroom into a dynamic environment where speaking becomes both purposeful and enjoyable. Research shows that multimedia-supported tasks increase motivation, lower speaking anxiety, and promote deeper engagement with language learning [1]. However, the effectiveness of such tools depends less on technology itself and more on the pedagogical design of tasks.

This article explores how multimedia-based tasks can be designed to improve speaking skills among elementary-level learners in secondary schools. It considers both theoretical foundations and practical classroom applications, highlighting the conditions necessary for success as well as the challenges teachers may face.

Multimedia and Task Design in Speaking Instruction

The integration of multimedia into task design is best understood through the lens of multimedia learning theory, which emphasizes that learners process information more effectively when verbal and visual modes are combined [2]. Unlike traditional text-based instruction, multimedia input—such as images, animations, or videos—provides learners with contextual clues that aid comprehension, memory, and ultimately production. In the context of speaking, these multimodal resources allow students not only to understand language in meaningful situations but also to respond to stimuli that resemble authentic communication. For instance, when learners watch a short video clip showing a restaurant scene, they are better equipped to produce dialogues about ordering food than if they were presented with decontextualized vocabulary lists. The integration of visual and auditory cues reduces cognitive load and allows learners to focus on practicing spoken language.

For elementary-level learners, the design of tasks requires special sensitivity to their developmental stage. Young adolescents in secondary education are often enthusiastic but may lack the vocabulary, grammar, or confidence to speak spontaneously. This means tasks must strike a balance between being linguistically accessible and cognitively stimulating. If tasks are too easy, they risk becoming repetitive drills; if they are too complex, learners may feel discouraged and withdraw from participation. Multimedia can bridge this gap by making tasks more engaging and comprehensible. According to Almahasees (2023), multimedia-supported speaking activities promote higher levels of learner engagement because they present content in an authentic, enjoyable, and visually rich format [3]. A simple speaking activity, such as describing one's daily routine, becomes more stimulating when supported by images or animations that illustrate morning, school, and leisure activities. The presence of visuals anchors meaning and enables learners to use language more purposefully.

The principles of task-based language teaching (TBLT) further strengthen the case for multimedia integration. TBLT emphasizes that learners acquire language most effectively when using it to complete meaningful tasks rather than through isolated practice of forms. When combined with multimedia, task-based approaches create opportunities for learners to employ language to achieve clear communicative goals, such as telling a story, giving instructions, or solving a problem. For example, students might be asked to watch a short-animated sequence without dialogue and then work in groups to narrate what happens. This activity is not only linguistically productive but also cognitively demanding, as students must negotiate meaning, sequence events, and express ideas creatively. Thus, multimedia resources enrich TBLT by providing authentic contexts and stimulating input that trigger spoken output.

Designing effective multimedia-based speaking tasks, however, requires more than simply adding digital tools to lessons. Teachers need to carefully balance several interconnected factors: the linguistic demands of the task, its level of cognitive complexity, the motivational appeal of the activity, and the practical conditions of the classroom. If a task demands language far beyond

learners' current abilities, multimedia may not compensate for the difficulty. On the other hand, if multimedia elements are too entertaining but lack clear linguistic goals, the activity risks becoming superficial. The pedagogical value of multimedia depends not on the technology itself but on its integration into purposeful, communicative instruction.

Equally important is the role of scaffolding in supporting learner success. Multimedia can provide models, prompts, and contextual support, but students still need structured guidance from the teacher. For example, when preparing for a digital storytelling activity, learners might first be introduced to key vocabulary through illustrated flashcards, then rehearse simple sentences orally, and finally record their story with visual slides. This layered design ensures that students are not overwhelmed and can gradually build towards more independent production. By carefully calibrating task design, teachers can transform multimedia from a supplementary tool into a medium for authentic and meaningful communication.

Types of Multimedia-Based Speaking Tasks

When designing speaking activities for elementary-level learners, the choice of task type is central to both motivation and learning outcomes. Not all multimedia-supported tasks are equally effective, and their success depends on how well they engage students in meaningful communication while remaining appropriate to their linguistic and cognitive level. Several approaches have proven particularly useful in fostering oral interaction, including digital storytelling, video role-plays, interactive dialogues, and collaborative multimedia projects.

Digital storytelling is one of the most widely adopted multimedia tasks. It allows students to narrate personal or fictional stories using images, slides, or short video clips, which provide strong visual scaffolding. For elementary learners, this reduces the cognitive load and helps them focus on sequencing and vocabulary. A task such as "My Day at School" becomes more engaging when learners use photos or drawings to anchor their narration. Research shows that this approach enhances fluency, expressive delivery, and confidence because students can rehearse and refine their stories before presenting [4].

Video role-plays extend speaking practice by simulating real-life situations in a multimedia format. Recording dialogues on familiar scenarios such as greetings or ordering food offers a low-pressure environment, since learners can repeat and edit their performances. This process encourages attention to both accuracy and communicative effectiveness while gradually building confidence. Technology-mediated role-plays have also been shown to promote awareness of interactional features such as politeness, tone, and turn-taking, as learners reflect on their own recordings [5]. The semi-public nature of the final product often motivates students to perform at a higher level than they might in traditional classroom role-play.

Interactive dialogues supported by multimedia prompts provide another avenue for meaningful speaking practice. With platforms such as Flipgrid or Edpuzzle, teachers can present visual or animated input and invite oral responses. For example, after watching a silent cartoon, students might describe characters' emotions or predict the next part of the story. This task type integrates listening and speaking in a supported yet spontaneous manner, lowering the performance pressure through short, asynchronous responses while still encouraging authentic communication [6].

Finally, collaborative multimedia projects extend practice into group contexts, where learners co-create podcasts, digital presentations, or short videos. A project such as "My Favorite Place" might involve pairs of students combining photos, short interviews, and narration. These tasks enhance teamwork and give learners a tangible end product, which boosts motivation. Although more complex to organize, such projects provide a space for oral fluency, creativity, teamwork, and digital literacy to develop simultaneously, making them a powerful tool for integrated language learning.

Pedagogical Considerations and Challenges

The effectiveness of multimedia-based speaking tasks relies on thoughtful pedagogical design and scaffolding. When introducing new activities, teachers must ensure that instructions are presented in a clear and accessible way, often reinforced through visual support. Visuals not only clarify expectations but also reduce the cognitive load that elementary-level learners may

experience when processing instructions in a foreign language. Alongside this, the provision of language frames, such as sentence starters, guiding phrases, or thematic vocabulary, creates a bridge between comprehension and production, giving students the tools they need to begin speaking without feeling overwhelmed. Equally important is rehearsal, which allows learners to internalize structures and vocabulary before the final performance. This step lowers anxiety, builds fluency, and develops the confidence needed for spontaneous communication. Feedback further consolidates learning, especially when it addresses both linguistic accuracy and communicative effectiveness. In recent years, feedback delivered through digital channels—short video messages, voice recordings, or annotated multimedia responses—has been shown to enhance reflection, since learners can revisit advice multiple times and monitor their own progress.

Despite these pedagogical advantages, teachers frequently encounter challenges when applying multimedia-based tasks in practice. Time is one of the most pressing constraints: effective multimedia projects often require extended planning, rehearsal, and production phases, which can be difficult to accommodate within a standard lesson. Technological access also varies widely, with some schools lacking reliable internet connections, functioning devices, or appropriate software. These disparities risk creating unequal opportunities for participation. Beyond logistics, learner-related factors also influence outcomes. Many adolescents experience heightened sensitivity to peer evaluation, which can make recorded performances intimidating. Large class sizes present additional difficulties, as monitoring group dynamics, ensuring active participation, and providing individual feedback, all become more demanding in crowded classrooms.

To mitigate these challenges, teachers need to approach multimedia integration flexibly. Simplifying tasks, for instance by limiting the scope of projects or using readily available tools such as smartphones, can make activities more manageable. Establishing a classroom culture where errors are treated as part of the learning process is equally important, as it reduces the stigma attached to mistakes and encourages risk-taking in speaking. Teacher training also plays a crucial role, since confidence in using multimedia tools directly affects how effectively they are implemented. The pedagogical value of multimedia depends less on the sophistication of the technology itself and more on how well it is adapted to learners' needs and curricular goals [7]. In this sense, success lies in balancing ambition with practicality, ensuring that multimedia tasks enhance communicative competence without overburdening either students or teachers.

Conclusion

The integration of multimedia into task design offers new possibilities for improving speaking skills among elementary-level learners in secondary education. By providing authentic contexts, stimulating learner motivation, and supporting interaction, multimedia-based tasks go beyond traditional drills and scripted dialogues. Digital storytelling, video role-plays, interactive dialogues, and collaborative projects exemplify how multimedia can transform the classroom into an engaging communicative space.

However, the effectiveness of these tasks depends on thoughtful design that balances linguistic accessibility with cognitive challenge, scaffolds learners through clear input and supportive feedback, and adapts to classroom realities. When implemented successfully, multimedia-based speaking tasks not only enhance oral proficiency but also foster learner confidence, creativity, and collaboration. For younger students, these benefits extend beyond language learning, preparing them to communicate effectively in academic and social contexts. Ultimately, integrating multimedia into foreign language instruction encourages more meaningful interaction, nurtures intrinsic motivation, and equips learners with skills that are essential for lifelong learning and participation in a globalized world.

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