

INNOVATIVE METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN UZBEKISTAN

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In Uzbekistan, the importance of English has been increasingly recognized as a global language of communication, business, and academia. As a result, the country's educational system has undergone significant reforms to enhance English language learning at all levels. While traditional methods have long been dominant, recent innovations in teaching methods reflect the need for more dynamic and interactive approaches to ensure that students not only learn English but also become proficient in using it in real-life situations. This article explores the innovative methods being employed in Uzbekistan's school education to teach English, emphasizing their impact on student learning, teacher development, and future educational goals.

Before diving into the innovative methods, it is important to understand the context in which these changes are taking place. In recent years, the government of Uzbekistan has prioritized the development of English language skills among its youth. The introduction of English from the early grades, alongside a shift towards communicative language teaching, marks a significant move away from rote memorization and grammar-focused instruction. Nevertheless, challenges such as insufficient teacher training, outdated teaching materials, and a lack of resources for students in remote areas still exist. Therefore, the need for innovative methods to overcome these obstacles is more pressing than ever.

One of the most significant innovations in English language teaching (ELT) in Uzbekistan is the adoption of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). CLT emphasizes real-world communication, where students actively engage in conversations, debates, and discussions to develop their speaking and listening skills. This approach moves away from traditional grammar-translation methods, where the focus was primarily on grammar rules and vocabulary memorization. In the Uzbek context, CLT has been particularly effective because it helps students become more confident in using English in authentic situations. Teachers employ role-plays, pair work, and group activities, which encourage students to practice their speaking skills in realistic contexts. These activities help learners gain fluency and increase their motivation to use English outside of the classroom [3, 24-30].

Another innovative approach is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which focuses on using tasks as the central component of language learning. In TBLT, students complete meaningful tasks that require them to use English in practical ways. For example, students may work together to create a travel brochure in English, simulate an interview, or plan a project in groups. Task-based learning provides a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. It encourages students to use English as a tool for communication rather than as a subject to be studied. This method has been gaining traction in Uzbekistan's schools, especially because it promotes problem-solving and collaborative learning—skills that are essential for success in the modern world.

The integration of technology in language learning has revolutionized English education in Uzbekistan. With the rise of digital platforms and multimedia resources, teachers can now provide interactive lessons that engage students in a variety of ways. Online tools, such as language learning apps, educational games, and video conferencing platforms, make learning more engaging and accessible. For example, the use of language learning apps like Duolingo, Babbel, and Memrise has become popular among students of all ages. These apps allow students to practice their language skills in a fun and interactive way, outside the confines of the traditional classroom setting. Furthermore, the use of smartboards and interactive whiteboards in classrooms allows for a more engaging and visually appealing teaching experience, which caters to different learning styles. Additionally, virtual classrooms and online language exchange programs have become valuable tools in expanding students' exposure to native English speakers. These digital platforms

enable students to communicate with peers or teachers from around the world, providing them with an authentic learning experience [2, 218-220].

Another innovative method being implemented in Uzbekistan's schools is Project-Based Learning (PBL). PBL allows students to explore real-world problems through research, collaboration, and the production of tangible outcomes. In the context of English language education, PBL encourages students to work on projects that require the use of English for research, communication, and presentation. For example, students may be tasked with creating a multimedia presentation on a global issue, conducting interviews in English, or producing a documentary in which they discuss topics they find important. By working on projects, students not only practice their English but also develop critical thinking, teamwork, and presentation skills—important competencies in the modern workforce.

The blended learning approach, which combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning, has also become increasingly popular in Uzbekistan's schools. This method allows teachers to create a more flexible and personalized learning environment for students. While some lessons take place in the classroom, others are conducted online, allowing students to access educational materials at their own pace. The flip classroom model, a subset of blended learning, has gained traction in some schools. In this model, students learn new content at home through videos and online resources, and classroom time is dedicated to discussing the material, clarifying doubts, and engaging in interactive activities. This approach has proven to be effective in helping students take more responsibility for their learning and develop independent study habits [5, 1-5].

While innovative teaching methods are important, their success largely depends on the effectiveness of teachers. In Uzbekistan, there has been a strong emphasis on improving teacher training and professional development. In particular, the Ministry of Education has implemented various training programs to equip English teachers with the necessary skills to effectively use modern teaching methods. Teachers are encouraged to attend workshops, participate in online courses, and engage in peer learning to enhance their teaching practices. For instance, the British Council has partnered with local educational institutions to provide teachers with access to resources, training, and support in using modern ELT methodologies. These initiatives help ensure that teachers are not only aware of new teaching methods but also confident in their ability to implement them effectively in the classroom.

Despite the promising developments, there are still several challenges that hinder the full implementation of these innovative methods. One of the primary challenges is the unequal distribution of resources across different regions of Uzbekistan. While urban schools have access to modern technology and well-trained teachers, rural schools often struggle with outdated materials and insufficient teacher expertise. Furthermore, there is a need for greater collaboration between schools, educational institutions, and the private sector to ensure that innovative teaching methods are effectively integrated into the curriculum and supported by adequate resources. Future efforts should focus on creating a more inclusive education system, where all students, regardless of their location, have access to high-quality English language education.

In conclusion, innovative methods of teaching English in Uzbekistan's school education have brought about significant improvements in language proficiency and student engagement. By integrating methods such as Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Learning, the use of technology, Project-Based Learning, and Blended Learning, the education system is evolving to meet the demands of a globalized world. However, continued investment in teacher training, resource allocation, and technology integration will be essential to ensure the long-term success of these initiatives. With ongoing reforms and a commitment to innovation, Uzbekistan is poised to produce a generation of students who are not only proficient in English but also capable of using it to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

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