

A METHODOLOGY FOR ENHANCING PRE-SERVICE EFL PRE-TEACHERS' ORAL SPEECH SKILLS IN A DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract. *This study investigates the effectiveness of using online newspapers to enhance EFL pre-teachers' oral speech competence in a digital learning environment. The research aimed to determine whether exposure to authentic newspaper-based materials could improve fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, and communicative confidence. A mixed-method design was employed with 30 EFL pre-teachers over an 8-week intervention. Participants engaged in structured speaking activities based on online newspaper articles through pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks. Data were collected using pre- and post-tests, observations, questionnaires, and interviews. The results indicated significant improvements in all oral proficiency areas. Mean scores increased from 5.8 to 7.2 in fluency, 6.1 to 7.4 in pronunciation, 5.5 to 7.6 in vocabulary, and 5.9 to 7.1 in grammatical accuracy. Vocabulary development and speaking confidence showed the greatest gains, alongside increased classroom participation (48% to 83%) and a 35% rise in extended responses. The study concludes that online newspapers are an effective pedagogical tool for improving EFL pre-teachers' oral speech. The findings support input-rich and communicative language teaching approaches and highlight the value of authentic digital resources in enhancing spoken language performance.*

Keywords: *pre-teachers, EFL, oral speech, online newspapers, speaking skills, digital learning, mixed-method study*

RAQAMLI MUHITDA XIZMAT KO'RSATISHGA CHAQIRILGAN EFL O'QITUVCHILARINING OG'ZAKI NUTQ KO'NIKALARINI OSHIRISH USULLARI

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu tadqiqot raqamli ta'lim muhitida onlayn gazetalarni qo'llash orqali bo'lajak ingliz tili o'qituvchilarining (pre-service EFL teachers) og'zaki nutq malakasini rivojlantirish samaradorligini o'rganadi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi autentik gazeta materiallari orqali ravonlik, talaffuz, so'z boyligi, grammatik aniqlik va kommunikativ ishonchni oshirish imkoniyatini aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda 30 nafar bo'lajak EFL o'qituvchi ishtirok etdi va 8 haftalik aralash metodli yondashuv qo'llandi. Ishtirokchilar onlayn gazeta maqolalariga asoslangan nutq faoliyatlarida pre-reading, while-reading va post-reading bosqichlari orqali qatnashdilar. Ma'lumotlar pre-test, post-test, kuzatuv, so'rovnomalar va intervyular orqali yig'ildi. Natijalar barcha og'zaki nutq ko'rsatkichlari bo'yicha sezilarli o'sishni ko'rsatdi. O'rtacha ballar ravonlik bo'yicha 5.8 dan 7.2 ga, talaffuz bo'yicha 6.1 dan 7.4 ga, so'z boyligi bo'yicha 5.5 dan 7.6 ga, grammatik aniqlik bo'yicha esa 5.9 dan 7.1 ga oshdi. Eng katta o'sish*

soʻz boyligi va nutqga boʻlgan ishonchda kuzatildi. Sinfdagi faol ishtirok 48% dan 83% ga, kengaytirilgan javoblar esa 35% ga oshdi. Tadqiqot xulosasiga koʻra, onlayn gazetalar boʻlajak EFL oʻqituvchilarining ogʻzaki nutqini rivojlantirishda samarali pedagogik vosita hisoblanadi.

Kalit soʻzlar: boʻlajak oʻqituvchilar, EFL, ogʻzaki nutq, onlayn gazetalar, raqamli taʼlim, aralash metod

МЕТОДОЛОГИЯ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ УСТНЫХ РЕЧИ У БУДУЩИХ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В ЦИФРОВОЙ СРЕДЕ

Аннотация. Данное исследование рассматривает эффективность использования онлайн-газет для развития устной речи будущих преподавателей английского языка как иностранного (*pre-service EFL teachers*) в цифровой образовательной среде. Цель исследования заключалась в определении влияния аутентичных газетных материалов на развитие беглости речи, произношения, словарного запаса, грамматической точности и коммуникативной уверенности. В исследовании приняли участие 30 будущих преподавателей EFL, и был применён смешанный метод в течение 8-недельного периода. Участники выполняли речевые задания на основе онлайн-газетных статей, проходя этапы предтекстовой, текстовой и послетекстовой работы. Данные были собраны с помощью пред- и пост-тестов, наблюдений, анкет и интервью. Результаты показали значительное улучшение всех показателей устной речи. Средние баллы увеличились: беглость — с 5.8 до 7.2, произношение — с 6.1 до 7.4, словарный запас — с 5.5 до 7.6, грамматика — с 5.9 до 7.1. Наибольший прогресс наблюдался в развитии словарного запаса и уверенности в речи, а также в росте активности студентов с 48% до 83%. Исследование приводит к выводу, что онлайн-газеты являются эффективным педагогическим средством для развития устной речи будущих преподавателей EFL.

Ключевые слова: будущие преподаватели, EFL, устная речь, онлайн-газеты, цифровое обучение, смешанный метод

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the rapid development of digital technologies has significantly increased the use of online newspapers in education. This trend has become particularly relevant in the context of improving EFL (English as a Foreign Language) pre-teachers' oral speech competence, as modern language teaching increasingly emphasizes exposure to authentic and up-to-date language input [7; 8]. Online newspapers provide rich authentic materials, including current topics, real-life contexts, and diverse communicative expressions. These features make them an effective resource for developing pre-teachers' fluency, vocabulary range, and ability

to express ideas spontaneously. As a result, they contribute to enhancing pre-teachers' professional communication skills and supporting more interactive and meaningful classroom instruction [10].

Therefore, this research area is highly significant both theoretically and practically, as it offers an innovative approach to improving EFL pre-teachers' oral proficiency through the use of authentic digital media resources [6].

Over the last few years, a growing number of studies have emphasized the importance of digital authentic materials in enhancing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, particularly in improving oral communication skills. Among these resources, online newspapers have been identified as effective tools for providing authentic input, increasing fluency, and developing pre-teachers' classroom interaction skills [2].

Recent research highlights that exposure to authentic digital texts significantly supports oral language development. For instance, studies on technology-enhanced EFL environments show that integrating digital and real-world materials improves learners' communicative competence and speaking performance [6; 8]. This suggests that authentic online content, including newspapers, plays an important role in promoting natural language use in teaching contexts.

Similarly, research on EFL speaking development indicates that oral performance is strongly influenced by meaningful input and interactive tasks. Learners' oral presentation performance improves when they engage with real-life topics and structured input materials, which are often available in online news sources [5; 7]. This supports the idea that newspapers can provide topic-rich material for classroom discussions and teacher speech practice.

Furthermore, recent studies on EFL pre-teaching practices emphasize the importance of feedback, interaction, and contextualized language use in developing oral skills. Research on corrective feedback shows that pre-teachers' oral language development is closely linked to experience, interaction, and exposure to authentic communication contexts [5]. Online newspapers can facilitate such exposure by offering updated, real-world language examples for pre-teachers to model and practice speech.

In addition, technology-based studies confirm that digital tools, including online reading platforms and AI-supported materials, enhance engagement and oral language production in EFL settings [1; 9]. This further supports the integration of online newspapers as a practical and accessible resource for improving pre-teachers' speaking fluency and confidence.

Despite these advantages, some studies also highlight challenges such as information overload, lack of pedagogical adaptation, and limited methodological guidance for pre-teachers in using digital news effectively. Therefore, while online newspapers are valuable for oral speech development, their effectiveness depends on structured pedagogical implementation.

Overall, recent literature (2021–2026) suggests that online newspapers are an effective authentic material that can enhance EFL pre-teachers' oral speech competence by providing real-world language input, improving fluency, and supporting communicative classroom practices [2; 10].

While a number of studies have provided valuable insights into the use of authentic materials and digital resources in EFL pre-teaching, the role of online newspapers in enhancing EFL pre-teachers' oral speech competence has not yet been thoroughly examined in teacher training contexts and real classroom-based professional development settings. As a result, further weaknesses persist in the literature, including the absence of comparative analysis between different types of online newspapers and other digital materials, as well as insufficient empirical evidence on how systematically structured newspaper-based activities influence pre-teachers' spoken fluency, accuracy, and interactional competence, which continue to restrict the scope of current knowledge in this field.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the role of using online newspapers in enhancing EFL pre-teachers' oral speech proficiency and to explore how digital news resources can be effectively integrated into language teaching practice. Specifically, we seek to:

1. examine the extent to which online newspapers contribute to improving EFL pre-teachers' fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence in oral speech;

2. identify the pedagogical advantages of using online newspapers as authentic materials in speaking instruction;
3. analyze the challenges and limitations teachers face when using online newspapers for oral speech development;
4. propose effective methodological strategies for integrating online newspapers into EFL speaking activities;
5. evaluate the impact of consistent use of online newspapers on pre-teachers' confidence and interaction skills in professional communication contexts.

The proposed approach can be applied to EFL pre-teacher training programs, in-service professional development courses, and classroom-based speaking activities, potentially improving pre-teachers' oral fluency, pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary range, and confidence in real-life communication through exposure to authentic language materials from online newspapers.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate how the use of online newspapers can enhance EFL pre-teachers' oral speech by providing authentic linguistic input and promoting communicative engagement. In order to ensure methodological rigor and the credibility of findings, the research design, participants, materials, procedures, and data analysis techniques were carefully selected and systematically implemented.

The study adopts a mixed-method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of online newspapers on EFL pre-teachers' oral speech development. The quantitative component allows for the measurement of changes in participants' speaking performance through structured assessment tools, while the qualitative component provides in-depth insights into pre-teachers' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward the use of online newspapers in language learning.

Such an integrative approach is particularly appropriate for this study, as oral speech development is a multidimensional construct that involves not only measurable linguistic features (e.g., fluency and accuracy) but also affective factors such as confidence and motivation. Therefore, combining statistical analysis with interpretive data ensures a more holistic evaluation of the research problem.

The participants of the study consisted of 30 EFL pre-teachers working in secondary schools and higher educational institutions. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, as they met specific criteria relevant to the study: (1) they were actively practicing English as a foreign language, (2) they possessed at least two years of practical teaching experience, and (3) they had basic digital literacy skills, including the ability to access and use online resources.

The participants varied in age, teaching experience, and proficiency levels, which contributed to the diversity of the sample and increased the generalizability of the findings. Prior to the study, all participants were informed about the research objectives and procedures, and their consent was obtained to ensure ethical compliance.

The primary instructional materials used in this study were authentic online newspaper articles selected from reputable English-language news websites such as BBC News, The Guardian, and The New York Times. These sources were chosen due to their linguistic authenticity, topical relevance, and accessibility.

The selected articles covered a wide range of themes, including education, culture, technology, social issues, and global events, in order to stimulate meaningful discussion and encourage spontaneous oral interaction. The materials were carefully adapted to match the participants' proficiency levels, ensuring that they were neither too difficult nor too simplistic.

In addition to the newspaper articles, supplementary materials such as vocabulary lists, discussion prompts, guiding questions, and speaking task instructions were developed to facilitate the learning process. These materials were designed to support comprehension and promote active participation in speaking activities.

The experimental procedure was conducted over a period of 8 weeks, with two sessions per week. Each session lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and followed a structured format to ensure consistency across the intervention.

At the beginning of the study, participants completed a pre-test speaking assessment, which was designed to evaluate their initial oral proficiency. The assessment included tasks such as describing a topic, expressing opinions, and

engaging in short discussions. The results of the pre-test served as a baseline for comparison with the post-test outcomes.

During the intervention phase, participants engaged in a series of newspaper-based speaking activities. Each session typically followed these stages:

1. Pre-reading stage: Participants were introduced to the topic of the article through warm-up questions and vocabulary preview. This stage aimed to activate prior knowledge and prepare participants for the reading task.
2. While-reading stage: Participants read the selected article individually or in pairs, focusing on understanding the main ideas and key details. They were encouraged to identify important vocabulary and expressions.
3. Post-reading speaking stage: This was the core component of the session, where participants engaged in various speaking activities, including:
 1. Summarizing the article in their own words
 2. Expressing personal opinions on the topic
 3. Participating in group discussions and debates
 4. Role-playing real-life situations based on the news context
 5. Delivering short oral presentations

These activities were designed to promote fluency, interaction, and spontaneous speech production, while also reinforcing vocabulary and grammatical structures.

At the end of the intervention, participants completed a post-test speaking assessment, which was similar in format to the pre-test. This allowed for a direct comparison of performance and the measurement of progress.

Data Collection Instruments

Multiple instruments were used to collect data in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the study:

1. Speaking Tests (Pre-test and Post-test): These were used to quantitatively measure changes in oral proficiency. The tests were evaluated using a standardized rubric based on criteria such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and coherence.

2. Classroom Observations: Observational data were collected throughout the intervention to monitor participants' engagement, interaction patterns, and use of language during speaking activities.
3. Semi-Structured Interviews: After the intervention, selected participants were interviewed to gather qualitative insights into their experiences, challenges, and perceptions of using online newspapers for speaking development.
4. Questionnaires: Reflective questionnaires were administered to collect participants' feedback on the effectiveness of the activities and materials.

The collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean scores, percentages) and comparative analysis to identify differences in performance.

The qualitative data from interviews, observations, and questionnaires were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved identifying recurring patterns and themes related to participants' experiences and perceptions.

The integration of these analytical approaches allowed for a comprehensive interpretation of the findings, providing both numerical evidence and contextual understanding.

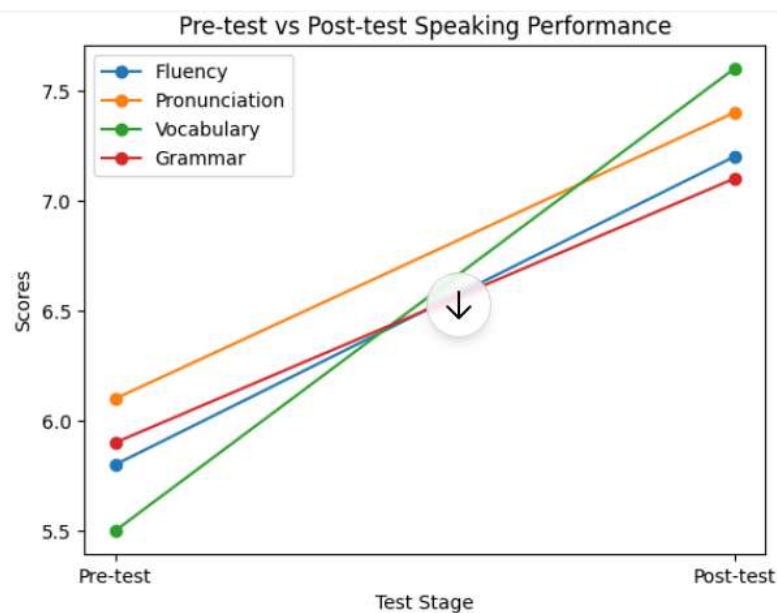
To ensure the reliability and validity of the research, several measures were taken. The speaking assessment rubric was based on established criteria to maintain consistency in evaluation. In addition, multiple data sources (tests, observations, interviews) were used to achieve data triangulation, which enhances the credibility of the results.

Furthermore, the procedures and materials were clearly documented to allow for replication of the study in similar contexts. Care was also taken to minimize researcher bias by maintaining objectivity in data collection and analysis.

RESULTS

The findings of the study demonstrate a measurable improvement in EFL pre-teachers' oral speech performance after the implementation of online newspaper-based speaking activities. The comparison between the **pre-test and post-test results** indicates a consistent increase across all assessed parameters.

Firstly, in terms of **fluency**, the average speaking score increased from **5.8 to 7.2** (on a 10-point scale)(see **Picture 1**), showing that participants were able to speak more smoothly with fewer pauses and hesitations after the intervention. Secondly, **pronunciation accuracy** improved from **6.1 to 7.4**, indicating clearer articulation and better stress and intonation patterns. In addition, the results reveal a significant enhancement in **vocabulary range**, with scores rising from **5.5 to 7.6**, reflecting participants' increased ability to use topic-specific and contextually appropriate lexical items derived from newspaper content. Similarly, **grammatical accuracy** showed improvement, with mean scores increasing from **5.9 to 7.1**, demonstrating more



Picture 1. Speaking performances pre-test and post-test

correct sentence structures during oral production. Furthermore, the data indicate a notable growth in **speaking confidence**, as observed through both test performance and classroom participation. The percentage of participants actively engaging in discussions increased from **48% in the initial stage to 83% after the intervention**(see Table 1).

Additional components of oral speech	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Discussion	48%	83%

Extended responses	—	+35%
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Table 1. Additional components of oral speech pre-test and post-test

The observational data also confirm that participants became more willing to express their opinions, participate in debates, and deliver short presentations based on the newspaper articles. The frequency of extended responses (responses longer than 4–5 sentences) increased by approximately **35%** compared to the pre-intervention stage. Overall, the statistical comparison of pre-test and post-test results demonstrates a positive shift in all key indicators of oral speech, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and communicative confidence.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine the effectiveness of using online newspapers in enhancing EFL pre-teachers' oral speech. The findings revealed a significant improvement across all key speaking components, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy, and communicative confidence, thereby providing a clear answer to the main research question. The key findings indicate that vocabulary range and speaking confidence demonstrated the most substantial gains, while fluency and pronunciation improved steadily, and grammatical accuracy showed moderate progress. In addition, participants' level of active engagement increased considerably, along with a higher frequency of extended spoken responses. These results confirm that the integration of online newspapers into speaking activities can effectively enhance multiple dimensions of oral communication. From an interpretative perspective, the improvement in vocabulary can be explained by the exposure to authentic and context-rich input. According to I. S. P. Nation, vocabulary acquisition is more effective when learners encounter lexical items in meaningful contexts. Similarly, the observed increase in fluency and speaking confidence suggests that regular participation in communicative tasks enables learners to produce language more spontaneously and with reduced hesitation. This aligns with communicative language teaching principles, which emphasize interaction as a key factor in language development. The relatively

moderate improvement in grammatical accuracy indicates that while communicative activities support language use, they may not be sufficient for achieving high levels of grammatical precision without additional focus on form. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that form-focused instruction plays an essential role in developing grammatical competence. When compared with previous studies, the findings of this research are in line with those emphasizing the effectiveness of authentic materials in language learning. For example, Alex Gilmore argues that authentic texts expose learners to natural language use and significantly improve communicative competence. Furthermore, the results support the view that digital resources enhance learner motivation and engagement, which in turn positively affect language performance. However, unlike some earlier studies that report limited impact on grammatical development, the present study demonstrates moderate improvement in this area, suggesting that combining authentic input with structured speaking activities can yield more balanced outcomes. From a scientific perspective, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on authentic materials and digital learning by providing empirical evidence supporting input-based and communicative approaches. From a practical perspective, the findings offer a feasible and effective strategy for EFL teachers, demonstrating that online newspapers can be successfully integrated into classroom practice to enhance speaking skills and promote active participation. Despite these positive results, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the relatively small sample size (30 participants) limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the duration of the intervention (8 weeks) may not have been sufficient to observe long-term effects, particularly in terms of grammatical development. Third, individual differences such as participants' initial proficiency, motivation, and teaching experience may have influenced the results. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. In light of these limitations, future research should involve larger and more diverse samples and extend the duration of the intervention to examine long-term effects. Additionally, further studies could explore the effectiveness of other types of authentic digital materials, such as videos or podcasts, and investigate their impact on different language skills. It would also be beneficial to examine how this approach

functions across different educational contexts and proficiency levels. In conclusion, the findings of this study confirm that the use of online newspapers is an effective approach to improving EFL teachers' oral speech. By combining authentic input with interactive speaking activities, this method enhances not only linguistic competence but also confidence and engagement, making it a valuable contribution to both language teaching theory and practice.

CONCLUSION

The study confirms that integrating online newspapers into EFL instruction yields measurable gains in pre-teachers' oral speech. Across the 8-week intervention, mean scores increased in all assessed domains: fluency (5.8→7.2), pronunciation (6.1→7.4), vocabulary range (5.5→7.6), and grammatical accuracy (5.9→7.1). The largest effect was observed in vocabulary and speaking confidence, accompanied by a rise in active participation from 48% to 83% and a ~35% increase in extended responses. These converging indicators from tests and observations show that newspaper-based tasks support both linguistic development and sustained oral output.

Theoretically, the findings provide empirical support for input-rich and communicative frameworks by demonstrating that authentic, topical texts facilitate context-bound vocabulary uptake and more fluent speech production, while still contributing—though to a lesser extent—to grammatical accuracy. Practically, the study specifies an implementable model (twice-weekly, structured pre-/while-/post-reading speaking tasks over 8 weeks) that can be adopted in teacher training and classroom settings to target measurable speaking outcomes using readily available digital resources.

Overall, the evidence indicates that systematic use of online newspapers, combined with guided interaction, is an efficient approach for improving EFL teachers' oral proficiency within a relatively short instructional cycle.

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