# THE ROLE OF ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS TO YOUNG LEARNERS

**Atajonova Kumush Ulug’bek qizi**
English Language Teacher at Khiso School
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**Abstract:** This article examines how adaptive technologies can support the development of English speaking skills among young learners. Adaptive tools can adjust the difficulty of a task, offer repeated practice and provide feedback based on a pupil’s response. These features may help children practise pronunciation, vocabulary and short conversations at a suitable pace. The article presents classroom examples and discusses the teacher’s role in turning individual digital practice into meaningful communication with classmates. It also considers the need to choose age-appropriate activities and protect children’s data.

**Key words:** adaptive technologies, young learners, English language teaching, speaking skills, pronunciation, digital feedback.

Speaking a new language requires children to do several things at once: remember words, form sentences, pronounce them and respond to another person. In a class, pupils develop these abilities at different speeds. Some are ready to answer a question immediately, while others need to hear a model and rehearse their answer first. Teaching young learners therefore calls for short, purposeful tasks and support suited to their stage of development.[1] (cambridge.org)

Adaptive technologies offer one way to provide that support. A speaking activity might begin with a model sentence, give a pupil another chance after an unclear response, or move to a longer question when the pupil is ready. The educational value lies in what the child learns to say and understand, rather than in the amount of time spent using a device.[2] (cambridge.org)

An adaptive speaking tool can give every pupil a chance to rehearse before speaking in front of the class. For example, in a lesson on animals, pupils first hear “It is a rabbit” and record the sentence. A pupil who needs support can listen again and repeat it. A pupil who completes it confidently can receive a follow-up prompt: “What can the rabbit do?” and answer, “It can jump.” The teacher then asks pairs to use the same language to describe animals without showing their pictures. In this sequence, digital practice prepares pupils for a conversation with another child. The tasks should remain familiar and manageable. Pictures, stories and simple choices can help children understand why they are speaking. Giving a pupil a choice between describing a pet or a favourite toy, for instance, can make the answer more personal while keeping the language goal clear.[3] (Annamaria Pinter)

Recorded responses let pupils hear their own speech and try again. A tool may also flag a word that it has difficulty recognizing. This can be useful, but the teacher should check the response before deciding that the pupil pronounced it incorrectly: speech recognition can misread a child’s voice. Consider the sentence “I have a blue bag.” After listening to a model, a pupil records it twice and compares the recordings. The teacher can then draw attention to a particular sound or to whether the sentence is understandable. Later, pupils ask each other “What do you have?” and answer using objects in their schoolbags. The aim is to use clearer speech in a real exchange, not simply to obtain a favourable score from an application. Research on technology and second-language speaking provides a useful basis



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for examining such activities, while their suitability must still be judged in the classroom.[4] (The Cambridge Handbook of ...)

Adaptive practice works best when the teacher sets a specific speaking goal and observes what pupils do with the language. In a lesson on daily routines, for example, pupils might record “I get up at seven” and receive a simpler or more challenging follow-up question. The teacher can listen for recurring difficulties, model an answer where needed, and finish with a pair activity in which pupils ask about each other’s routines. This gives the teacher evidence of whether practice on the device carries over into conversation. Tool selection also matters. Activities should suit children’s ages, be accessible to the whole class and collect only the information needed for learning. Evidence about educational technology is mixed across settings, so teachers should evaluate whether a tool improves the intended speaking activity rather than assume that adaptation alone produces progress.[5] (2023 GEM Report)

Adaptive technologies can give young learners more opportunities to rehearse English, receive feedback and progress through speaking tasks at an appropriate pace. Their strongest classroom use is to prepare children to express their own ideas and respond to other people. A teacher can support this by choosing a clear language goal, checking digital feedback, and following individual practice with conversation among pupils.

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6. The classroom scenarios are illustrative examples; they are not reported results from an experiment.



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