# ORGANIZING EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE CLASSES: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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**ABSTRACT**

As the demand for learning foreign languages is increasing at a rapid rate, many educators are forced to explore new ways of teaching foreign languages to improve the engagement of students. Due to the advancement in modern information technologies and intelligent computing system, many teachers can provide their students with new tools for their learning productivity and higher academic achievements. The particular reason for this circumstance is that these systems can help teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of language learners through using universally designed curriculum and assessment. This scientific article aims to present a conceptual framework that includes the use of digital technologies and Universal Design for Learning principles to improve the language learning process. By applying UDL principles and advanced information technologies, foreign language teachers can move away from traditional methods that only focus on teacher-centered classrooms into a more modern and effective way of teaching.

*Keywords:* UDL principles, digital technologies, language classes, language learners, inclusive learning environment, accessible, language teaching, innovative technologies,

# ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЭФФЕКТИВНЫХ ЯЗЫКОВЫХ ЗАНЯТИЙ: УНИВЕРСАЛЬНЫЙ ДИЗАЙН ДЛЯ ОБУЧЕНИЯ И ЦИФРОВЫЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ
## АБСТРАКТНЫЙ

Поскольку спрос на изучение иностранных языков растет быстрыми темпами, многие преподаватели вынуждены изучать новые способы преподавания иностранных языков, чтобы повысить вовлеченность учащихся. Благодаря развитию современных информационных технологий и

интеллектуальных вычислительных систем многие учителя могут предоставить своим ученикам новые инструменты для повышения продуктивности обучения и более высоких академических достижений. Особая причина этого обстоятельства заключается в том, что эти системы могут помочь учителям удовлетворить разнообразные учебные потребности изучающих язык посредством использования универсально разработанной учебной программы и оценки. Целью этой научной статьи является представление концептуальной основы, которая включает использование цифровых технологий и принципов универсального дизайна для обучения для улучшения процесса изучения языка. Применяя принципы UDL и передовые информационные технологии, преподаватели иностранных языков могут перейти от традиционных методов, которые ориентированы только на классы, ориентированные на учителя, к более современному и эффективному способу преподавания.

**Ключевые слова:** принципы UDL, цифровые технологии, языковые занятия, изучающие язык, инклюзивная среда обучения, доступность, преподавание языка, инновационные технологии,

## INTRODUCTION

As the number of language learners is increasingly rising, many educators are trying to transfer their traditional language teaching methods into effective and innovative ones to improve the achievements of language learners in their academic development. Furthermore, as many students are enrolling in language classes with diverse learning backgrounds and abilities, some pedagogues are facing different problems during the language teaching process. For some language teachers, educating languages effectively to a board range of diverse students is an urgent problem that every language educator needs to solve. Integrating the three principles of UDL and innovative technologies into language classes is one of the most effective solutions to this exciting problem. Integrating Universal Design for Learning principles and digital technologies into language classes can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment for all students. UDL is a framework that guides the development of learning environments that are accessible to all learners, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or learning styles. By incorporating UDL principles into digital language classes, educators can ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and
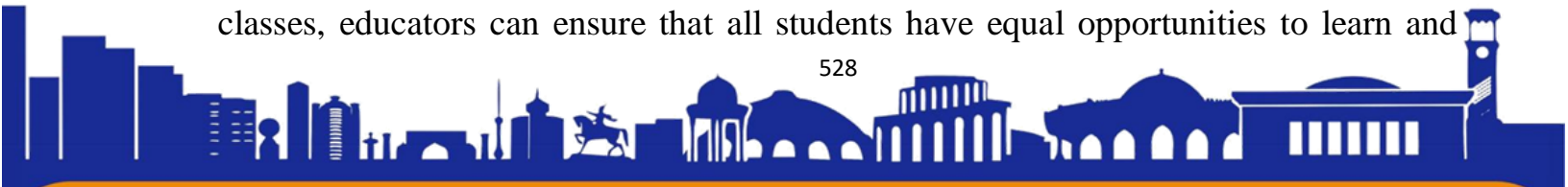
succeed. By integrating UDL and advanced digital devices in languages classes, language educators can create more accessible learning environments that are personalized, engaging, collaborative, and authentic. This can lead to improved language learning outcomes for all students.

## METHODS

This paper includes qualitative and secondary data analysis to identify the benefits of incorporating the principles of UDL and innovative techniques in languages classes. To conduct this scientific research, a corpus of scholarly articles was gathered from reputable scientific journals. To assess the impact of the principles of UDL and digital technologies on students' language learning, a corpus of scholarly articles spanning various disciplines was analyzed.

## LITERATURE REVIEW OF UDL

Universal Design for Learning is an educational framework that aims to give equal opportunity to all students to education in the class by removing obstacles faced by many learners. According to Rose and Meyer (2000), UDL is a theoretical framework that guides the development of learning curricula that can meet all the needs of learners equally. The creation of easily navigable interactive educational resources is one aspect of this new paradigm. These materials would empower the student and engage them in fresh ways that fit their individual learning style. These educational resources can be modified and scaffold according to the demands and cognitive styles of the learners (Michael Abell, 2006).

**Multiple means of representation** is one of the three main principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). It refers to the idea of presenting information in different ways to accommodate the diverse learning styles and needs of all students.

Why is multiple means of representation important?

• All students have their learning styles. Some students may prefer to learn by reading text, while others may prefer to learn by listening to audio or watching videos. By providing multiple means of representation, educators can ensure that all students have access to the same information and can learn in the way that best suits them.

• Multiple means of representation can help to eliminate cognitive load for students with disabilities. For example, a student with dyslexia may find it easier to learn from a video than from a text document. By providing multiple means of representation, teachers can help to level the playing field for all students.

• Multiple means of representation can also make learning more engaging and motivating for students. When students are able to choose how they learn, they are more likely to be actively involved in the learning process.

Examples of multiple means of representation:

• **Text:** Textbooks, articles, handouts, online text documents
• **Audio:** Lectures, podcasts, audiobooks, music
• **Video:** Videos, simulations, animations, documentaries
• **Images:** Photographs, charts, graphs, diagrams
• **Manipulatives:** Physical objects, models, games
• **Real-world experiences:** Field trips, guest speakers, community projects

**Multiple means of engagement**. It refers to the idea of providing students with different ways to interact with and participate in learning activities.

Why is multiple means of engagement important?

• All students have different interests and learning styles. Some students may prefer to learn by actively participating in discussions, while others may prefer to learn by listening or observing. By providing multiple means of engagement, educators can ensure that all students are able to participate in learning activities in ways that are meaningful and motivating to them.

• Multiple means of engagement can help to reduce boredom and frustration for students. When students are able to choose how they want to learn, they are more likely to be actively involved in the learning process.

• Multiple means of engagement can also help to build a more inclusive learning environment. When students feel that they can participate in learning activities in ways that are comfortable and accessible to them, they are more likely to feel valued and included in the classroom community.

Examples of multiple means of engagement:

• **Active learning:** Discussions, group work, simulations, role-playing
• **Passive learning:** Listening to lectures, reading text, watching videos
• **Individual learning:** Independent study, self-paced learning, online learning
• **Collaborative learning:** Group projects, peer review, team presentations
• **Sensory learning:** Hands-on activities, manipulatives, field trips
• **Social learning:** Social media, online forums, peer support groups

**Multiple means of action and expression** is the third principle of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). It refers to the idea of providing students with different ways to demonstrate their learning and express their understanding.

Why is multiple means of action and expression important?

• All students have different strengths and abilities. Some students may prefer to express their learning through writing, while others may prefer to express their learning through speaking, drawing, or building. By providing multiple means of action and expression, educators can ensure that all students are able to demonstrate their learning in ways that are meaningful and accessible to them.

• Multiple means of action and expression can help to reduce anxiety and stress for students. When students are able to choose how they want to demonstrate their learning, they are more likely to feel confident and comfortable in the learning process.

• Multiple means of action and expression can also help to build a more inclusive learning environment. When students feel that they can express their learning in ways that are comfortable and accessible to them, they are more likely to feel valued and included in the classroom community.

Examples of multiple means of action and expression:

• **Writing:** Essays, reports, articles, stories, poems
• **Speaking:** Presentations, speeches, debates, discussions
• **Drawing:** Diagrams, charts, graphs, illustrations, comics
• **Building:** Models, sculptures, dioramas, inventions
• **Movement:** Dance, drama, physical activities, sports
• **Technology:** Digital presentations, videos, podcasts, websites

**RESULTS**

By analyzing several articles and some pieces of research we found different potential benefits of using state-of-the-art technologies and UDL principles in classes.

Benefits of Integrating UDL and Digital Technologies in Language Classes:

• **Increased accessibility:** Digital technologies can provide multiple means of representation, engagement, and assessment, making language learning more accessible for students with diverse learning needs. For example, students can access text-to-speech tools, closed captions, and interactive simulations to support their learning.
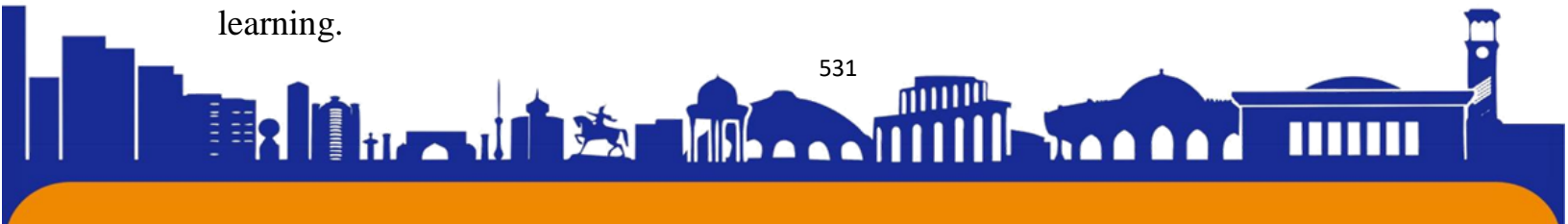
• **Personalized learning:** Digital technologies allow educators to tailor instruction to the individual needs of each student. Students can learn at their own pace, choose learning activities that align with their interests, and receive personalized feedback.

• **Enhanced engagement:** Digital technologies can make language learning more engaging and motivating for students. Interactive games, simulations, and multimedia resources can help students stay focused and actively involved in the learning process.

• **Improved collaboration:** Digital technologies facilitate collaboration among students, both inside and outside the classroom. Students can use online forums, video conferencing, and social media to communicate with their peers and work on projects together.

• **Authentic language experiences:** Digital technologies provide opportunities for students to engage with authentic language materials and interact with native speakers. By using these advanced information technologies, language learners can improve their language skills in more natural ways, as they can have the opportunity to interact with native speakers.

## DISCUSSIONS

It is undeniable that there are a number of challenges associated with integrating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and digital technologies into language classes. Some of the most common challenges include:

• Cost: Digital technologies can be expensive to purchase and maintain. This can be a barrier for schools and districts with limited budgets.

• Access: Not all students have equal access to digital technologies. This can be due to factors such as poverty, lack of internet connectivity, or disability.

• Training: Teachers need to be trained on how to use UDL and digital technologies effectively in the classroom. This training can be time-consuming and expensive.

• Time: It takes time to integrate UDL and digital technologies into language classes. Teachers need to plan and develop new lessons and activities, and they need to learn how to use new technologies.
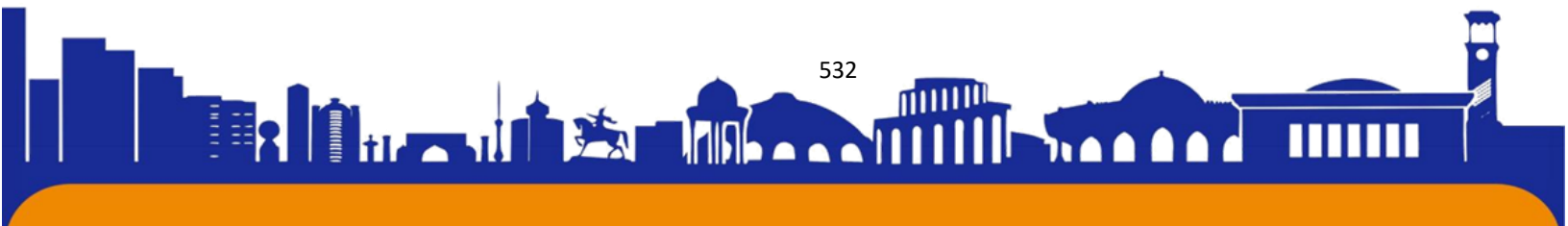
• Technical issues: Digital technologies can sometimes experience technical issues, such as software crashes and internet outages. This can disrupt learning and be frustrating for students and teachers.

Despite the challenges, there are many benefits to integrating UDL and digital technologies into language classes mentioned above. By overcoming these challenges, teachers can create more inclusive and effective learning environments for all students.

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