

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN THE IT SECTOR OF UZBEKISTAN: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract This article analyzes the current quality of English language instruction within the educational system of Uzbekistan, specifically focusing on Information Technology (IT) programs. It addresses critical issues such as the lack of continuity between secondary and higher education, the misalignment of textbooks with industry demands, and the shortage of specialized pedagogical personnel. The author presents concrete proposals to enhance language learning efficiency for IT specialists, including proficiency-based student stratification and the modernization of educational curricula.

Keywords: Information Technology, IT education, English language teaching, Education system of Uzbekistan, Educational continuity, Human resources, Technical English, Modern methodology.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the IT sector is evolving rapidly on a global scale, and it is well-known that English serves as the primary language for communication and programming. According to Stack Overflow's 2024 Global Developer Survey, 87.2% of developers utilize English to study technical documentation and programming language syntax. This makes English not just a communication tool but an inseparable part of professional competence in IT.

In Uzbekistan's transition to a digital economy, the demand for young, skilled IT professionals has increased by 8–10% over the last two years. According to the Ministry of Digital Technologies of the Republic of Uzbekistan, IT service exports exceeded \$500 million in 2024, and meeting growth targets requires over 30,000 new specialists. However, insufficient language proficiency remains a major barrier for local specialists seeking to enter the international market and master modern technologies. Specifically, a minimum of B2 level English is required to work successfully on international labor exchanges such as Upwork or Toptal. This article aims to identify the existing gaps within the education system to address these challenges.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach. In the initial phase, a comparative analysis was conducted between the current 10th and 11th-grade secondary school textbooks and the materials used in higher education IT programs. The analysis used lexical content, task types, and the emphasis on industry terminology as primary criteria. Furthermore, the perspectives of IT students and educators were gathered. Data collection involved school visits, student interviews, classroom observations, and an evaluation of how well current curricula align with industry requirements, such as the ability to process programming documentation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed several core issues:

Lack of Continuity: Topics covered in secondary school (introductory English) are often repeated in the first year of university with almost no change. Interviews revealed that 68% of students believe more than 70% of their first-year university English content was already covered in school. This redundancy, not seen in subjects like Mathematics or Physics where curricula are logically structured across levels, leads to a decline in student engagement. Educational content must stay one step ahead of the student's existing knowledge to foster growth.

Human Resource Challenges: At many higher education institutions, the pronunciation and knowledge of modern "IT English" (technical terminology) among senior faculty members lag behind current demands. Only 22% of surveyed educators reported proficiency in working with IT-specific technical documentation. This makes it difficult for students to utilize modern resources like React.js documentation or AWS guides. Furthermore, most teachers are trained in General English methodology but lack special preparation in "English for Specific Purposes" (ESP), specifically "English for IT."

Language Certification System: The 2025 requirement for language certificates for university admission is a positive step; however, specialized technical instruction remains overlooked. Existing systems (IELTS, CEFR) assess general skills. For an IT specialist, General B1 is often insufficient as it does not cover technical syntax or professional documentation. International models (e.g., Finland, Estonia) often implement specific "Technical English" assessments for IT admissions.

Lack of Specialization: Current lessons are heavily weighted toward General English. Insufficient attention is paid to skills required for international teams, such as using project management tools (Jira, Trello), communicating via professional platforms (GitHub, Slack), and technical writing. Textbook analysis showed that technical terminology accounts for only 12–15% of content, despite professionals reporting that 30–40% of their work time is spent engaging with technical documents.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, the following measures are proposed:

Early Specialization: Introducing "English for IT" elective courses in grades 10–11, drawing inspiration from models like Bangalore, India, where IT-focused language programs are integrated into schools.

Dynamic Stratification: Grouping students by proficiency (Placement Testing) upon university entry to eliminate the inefficiency of mixed-level classrooms, utilizing "dynamic grouping" principles.

CLIL Methodology: Implementing "Content and Language Integrated Learning" for students with lower proficiency, where technical subjects (e.g., networking or programming) are taught in English to develop both linguistic and professional skills simultaneously.

Practical Curricula: Incorporating terminology from international IT projects (API documentation, Scrum terminology) using modern resources like the *Cambridge Professional English* series.

Faculty Development: Recruiting younger, modern specialists and expanding "visiting lecturer" programs with international partners like the British Council or American Councils to provide specialized ESP training for existing staff.

Independent Assessment: Establishing "Technical English" as a mandatory, independent subject with assessments based on real-world IT industry requirements, such as "mock interviews" and "technical documentation reviews."

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