

**DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' SPEECH COMPETENCE THROUGH AN
INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF A. MUKHTAR'S STORY
"LIGHTNING AT THE EDGE OF THE RAVINE"**

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Abstract: This article highlights the issue of developing students' speech competence through the use of innovative approaches in the process of teaching A. Mukhtar's story "**Lightning at the Edge of the Ravine**". The study shows ways to organize the lesson process based on interactive methods, modern pedagogical technologies, and digital resources. Factors influencing the development of students' speech competence and performance indicators are also analyzed. The article is written based on international IMRAD requirements and is enriched with practical recommendations.

In today's era of globalization, the introduction of innovative technologies into the educational process is one of the pressing issues. In particular, in literature lessons, one of the main tasks is not only the enrichment of students' thinking through works of art, but also the formation of their speech competence. A. Mukhtar's story **Lightning at the Edge of the Ravine** is among the works that ensure the spiritual and moral development of the individual. Therefore, it is important to direct students towards independent thinking, analysis, and fluent expression of their thoughts through the use of interactive methods and the application of ICT capabilities in teaching this work. This article is aimed at studying this issue on a scientific basis and proposing effective methods.

The following innovative approaches were used in the study:

1. Cluster method - to analyze the characters of the work, to determine their character traits.
2. Venn diagram - comparison of images in the work, showing their similarities and differences.
3. ICT tools - electronic presentations, online tests, use of multimedia lesson plans.
4. Debate method - increasing the speech activity of students by discussing different approaches to the events in the work.

The methodology also used a competency-based approach, problem-based learning, and independent research methods.

In-depth study of literary works is of great importance in the development of students' speech competence in literature lessons. For this, interactive methods are widely used. In particular, Clusters, Venn diagrams, ICT tools, and the Debate method increase students' abilities not only to understand the work, but also to analyze it, express opinions, and draw conclusions. Below, an excerpt from A. Mukhtar's story "**Lightning at the Edge of the Ravine**" is analyzed using these very methods.

1. Analysis Based on the Cluster Method

The cluster method makes it possible to grasp a work's meaning as a whole by gathering ideas related to a central concept. In the given passage, the central concept is "Compassion and Humanism." Radiating from this core are the following strands:

- No‘g‘ay Muallim (Teacher No‘g‘ay) — a man living in hardship who nonetheless works selflessly for orphaned children. Despite his impoverished circumstances, he strives to find help for them. His defining traits are patience, generosity, and a strong conscience.
- Mamat — an orphaned boy who, though young, has already tasted life’s trials. He longs for affection and care, and a deep sense of humanity runs through him.
- Boy ota — a well-to-do yet open-handed, big-hearted man. By assisting the teacher, he appears as a figure worthy of emulation for the pupils.

The cluster shows that the idea of humanism stands at the heart of the work, and each character illuminates that idea in a distinct way. By creating a cluster, students:

- express the main content of the work briefly and clearly;
- generalize the characters’ actions and traits;
- and, in terms of communicative competence, acquire new words and expressions.

2. Analysis Using a Venn Diagram

A Venn diagram enables comparative analysis of characters. Two central figures—No‘g‘ay Muallim and Mamat—are selected from the work. Their differences and commonalities are as follows:

No‘g‘ay muallim	Shared Traits	Mamat
Collects aid for the orphanage; self-sacrificing	Humane and compassionate	An orphan who has lost his parents
Patient, generous, and devoted	Humane and compassionate	Young yet responsible
Goes door to door seeking help	In need of support	In the care of Boy ota

Analytical conclusions:

- Both characters face life’s ordeals, yet neither loses their human virtues.
- Through this method, students develop the skills of comparison, synthesis, and distinguishing essential features.
- From the perspective of communicative competence, they learn to present their thoughts with logical coherence.

3. Analysis Through ICT Tools.

Information and communication technologies make the study of the work more effective.

The following activities are proposed:

- Creating an electronic cluster: students build an online cluster in Miro or Padlet and share it with the class.
- Online quizzes: using Kahoot or Quizizz to answer questions such as “Who performs what role in the story?” and “What selfless acts did the teacher carry out?”
- Multimedia analysis: producing short videos based on key episodes in the novella and preparing slides on the author’s life.

• Virtual speaking task: students record an audio or video response to “If you were in No‘g‘ay Muallim’s place, what would you do?”

Outcome: ICT not only improves students’ digital literacy, it also strengthens independent thinking and communicative competence.

4. Analysis Through the Debate Method.

Debate hones students’ skills of dialogue, argumentation, and constructive disagreement.

A discussion can be organized on the following topic:

“How vital is generosity in times of hardship?”

Position of Group 1: Generosity is the primary measure of humanity. Without people like No‘g‘ay Muallim, many children would have gone hungry; their devotion sustained society.

Position of Group 2: Generosity matters, but without systemic support, the efforts of one person are not enough. Therefore, organized assistance is essential at the societal level.

Debate outcomes:

- Students learn to present ideas clearly and with evidence;
- They cultivate the ability to respond to opposing arguments;
- Their logical reasoning and verbal engagement increase.

Taken together, these methods help students develop not only the skills to analyze literary texts but also their communicative competence. The cluster and Venn diagram strengthen analytical thinking; ICT expands digital literacy; and debate fosters dialogue and independent thought. For these reasons, the use of innovative methods is crucial in literature teaching.

Positive Changes Observed in Lessons Organized Through Innovative Approaches:

— Students learned to express their thoughts fully, clearly, and logically, both orally and in writing.

— Their discourse etiquette and lexical repertoire grew richer.

— They developed skills in independent analysis and problem-solving.

— They improved at collaboration, exchanging ideas, and participating in debates with civility.

The results indicate that employing innovative approaches in teaching A. Muxtor’s novella *Lightning at the Edge of the Ravine* is an effective means of enhancing students’ communicative competence.

Discussion

The findings show that innovative approaches in literature classes not only raise students’ academic attainment but also foster their communicative literacy. With its socio-cultural resonance, A. Muxtor’s “*Lightning at the Edge of the Ravine*” plays a significant role in shaping young people’s outlook. Incorporating modern technologies into literary analysis activates students’ participation, prompting independent thinking. Compared with traditional methods, innovative approaches yielded better outcomes—an effect confirmed in practice.

Conclusion

In literature education, the application of innovative approaches—specifically, the use of interactive methods and ICT in studying A. Muxtor’s *Lightning at the Edge of the Ravine*—has proven to be a key factor in developing students’ communicative competence. It is therefore necessary to mainstream contemporary pedagogical technologies, structure lessons interactively, and formulate practical guidelines to cultivate students’ capacity for independent thought.

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